

B. encourages counseling, supportive participation in twelve-step programs, and family encouragement as vital to recovery, but he places primacy of effort on spiritual resources like mass, eucharistic adoration, daily prayer, and most especially the sacrament of reconciliation.

B. places the addictive progression into darkness in its historical context: our current American cultural mandate to “acquire pleasure quickly” (82) is rooted in the industrial revolution (acquire), the sexual revolution (pleasure), and the digital revolution (quickly). He concludes with a call to a different perspective, that found in Pope John Paul II’s theology of the body, which B. explains concisely and precisely.

I have recommended this book to a spiritual directee of mine with great effect, and will continue to suggest it to others who suffer from the scourge of Internet pornography. Even readers not facing this problem will learn much from B.’s compassionate and competent exposition.

William J. Sneck, S.J.
Loyola University Maryland

Take the Plunge: Living Baptism and Confirmation. By Timothy Radcliffe, O.P. New York: Bloomsbury, 2012. Pp. viii + 298. \$16.95.

In this volume Radcliffe presents an engrossing description of Christian life. This is not a historical work about baptism and confirmation. R. presents the challenges and realities of the Christian life into which baptism and confirmation initiate people. While each chapter briefly describes the chief ritual elements of baptism, this is a mystagogical work, a gentle, witty, and sober explanation of what it means to become a child in Christ through baptism.

R. shapes his presentation with this thesis: baptism makes everyone into a child, and the child’s vocation is to play. He offers neither an apology for infant baptism nor a trite attempt to promote an archaic rite; rather he shows that becoming like a child ignites imagination and capacitates in each Christian to confront what is new. Life in Christ applies to each new circumstance, environment, challenge, and danger for Christians. To demonstrate his thesis R. draws from an impressive array of ancient and contemporary sources.

Two features stand out among the many admirable qualities of this book: honesty and reality. R. does not conceal the problems that challenge Christianity, but confronts them honestly. For example, he admits that the challenges of “secularism, relativism and indifference” can be addressed only by releasing “the creativity of the whole people of God” (189). His message here is twofold: leaders should encourage people to exercise the priesthood imparted to them at baptism and confirmation, and laypeople will experience tension with clergy who hesitate to share power. The reality of Christian life is that it is rarely rosy: Christians are called to die in Christ, and death is prefigured by illness, persecution, and other sufferings. R.’s realistic depiction shows

the reader that while the immersion of baptism demands death, the covenant of baptism promises life in community with God and the saints.

R.'s inclusion of numerous stories, including his own pastoral experiences, makes this book appealing to a broad audience. It is a fine resource for pastoral ministry, and I recommend it for students, pastors, and general readers.

Nicholas Denysenko
Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles

In the Company of the Poor: Conversations with Dr. Paul Farmer and Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez.
Edited by Michael Griffin and Jennie Weiss Block.
Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2013. Pp. xv + 206. \$24.

The theology of liberation has spawned a range of coordinates for mapping the theological and pastoral imagination: the preferential option for the poor, theology from below, structural sin and violence, social suffering, social analysis, accompaniment, solidarity, and praxis, to name a few. Taken together, these ideas constitute a theological framework for doing the work of the gospel. Yet theologians outside of a Latin American context have often found it challenging to transpose this framework into a context beyond Latin America. For instance, how does one actually practice solidarity with the suffering poor of the majority world? This highly readable book, the outcome of a three-day, 2011 symposium at the University of Notre Dame featuring conversations between Farmer and Gutiérrez, offers some inspiring indications. Gutiérrez, the "father of liberation theology," is joined by Paul Farmer, founder of Partners in Health, a nonprofit organization delivering health care to and advocacy for the very poor in developing countries, notably Haiti and Peru.

The book contains some already published material from both interlocutors and, for theological leverage, leans primarily on Gutiérrez's earlier *We Drink from Our Own Wells* (1984), which is an intermittent point of reference. In that regard, the book serves as an excellent introduction to liberation theology. Gutiérrez's passionate, even lyrical, pastoral voice sounds clearly here, particularly in his symposium contribution, "Saying and Showing to the Poor: 'God Loves You.'" Here Gutiérrez demonstrates how Farmer's work is a realization of the principles of the gospel and of the aims of liberation theology.

The impact of the book comes in Farmer's essays, however; in particular his "Conversion in the Time of Cholera: A Reflection on Structural Violence and Social Change." I have read nothing, not even by a theologian (which Farmer is not), as compelling and clear an exposition of what liberation theology means and requires, namely, that theology start with and engage the problem of social suffering and its structural causes. Farmer unfolds here (and in other parts of the book) his own journey toward a preferential option for the poor in health care, partly through his encounter with Gutiérrez's theology. Farmer's analysis of the genealogy of disease (in this case, cholera and a drug-resistant form of tuberculosis) out of entrenched poverty and his