

in both the pre- and post-Vatican II church was found wanting, resulting in a failure to develop and nurture native or indigenous vocations. The lack of vocations was indicative of a failure of the sisters to immerse themselves fully into the Garifuna culture. Even the attempt in the 1970s to incorporate Creole, the language of the people, into their communal prayer became a source of contention for the sisters. An English-only policy for house prayers reflected an imperialistic and paternalistic attitude within the HFS administration and church hierarchy. B. contrasts the out-of-touch approach with that of Holy Family Sister Judith Barial, who, reading the signs of the times in the 1980s, established the Christian Youth Enrichment program, which provided training and support for teenage women not attending regular school. Quite successfully, the operation and that of all HFS apostolic operations would eventually rely on the efforts of the laity.

While the HFS may not have developed a vibrant local branch of the congregation in Belize, they did establish an educational and pastoral presence that had a lasting effect. Many of the Garifuna political and commercial leadership were educated by the HFS. Furthermore, and more importantly, the HFS provided catechetical education to the lay leaders of the church. And the sisters did educate the first indigenous bishop of the country, O. P. Martin.

This volume is a welcome addition to the study of Black Catholic history, the examination of missiological approaches, insights into the lives of women religious, and Caribbean Catholic culture. B.'s research will appeal to both the general reader and the specialist, and is appropriate for both undergraduate and graduate courses.

Fordham University, NY

R. BENTLEY ANDERSON, S.J.

SOLDIER OF CHRIST: THE LIFE OF POPE PIUS XII. By Robert A. Ventresca. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2013. Pp. 405. \$35.

In opening his lecture for the Royal Foundation of Saint Katharine in London in April 2000, Francis J. Coppa, author of numerous studies on Pope Pius XII, made the point that the published works on the Pacelli papacy far outnumbered those dedicated to all his predecessors. Coppa's observation was a timely reflection on the interest aroused in historians, scholars, journalists, and casual observers of one of the most controversial and influential figures of the 20th century.

From the concluding phase of the Second World War onward—and increasingly so since the mid-1960s—the debate over Pius XII and the official acts of his papacy has been a central question in contemporary historiography. Generally speaking, the debate has focused on—and to

some extent has exhausted—several specific themes: the relationship between the pope and the totalitarian regimes of the last century, his stance on the Holocaust, and the need for the papacy and the Catholic Church to rethink their roles and positions in the bipolar context of the Cold War.

The dialectics established between the different sides of the debate have prevented any shared conclusions. Even today, with or without the availability of new archival sources, the figure of Pius XII continues to be divisive in both ecclesiastical and historical circles. The decree of December 19, 2009, attesting to his “heroic virtues” has been a further cause of polemic. One of the fundamental points behind this debate is the perspective from which most readings of Pacelli’s papacy embark: the excessive attention given to single arguments; they do not provide the kind of complete picture that a biography can.

With this context in mind, Ventresca’s book represents a precious and authoritative contribution. Pairing a lucid analysis with an involving prose style, V. retraces the principal phases of the life of Eugenio Pacelli, “the man, priest, diplomat and Pope” (6). V. approaches the most complicated areas of the historical debate with expertise and scientific rigor, and he provides appropriate answers to complex questions. He ably refutes the more extreme theses and presents a portrait of Pacelli that is balanced, accurate, and fascinating.

From Pacelli’s family background to his entry into the Secretariat of State following his ordination to the priesthood and his pastoral experience in a Roman parish, V. meticulously describes the development of the young Pacelli. Those were the years in which Catholicism was shaken by the loss of temporal power and by confrontation with modernity. The settlement of the Roman Question seemed far off, yet it was still pressing on the minds of Catholics.

V. demonstrates how Pacelli combined a solid preparation and a strong sense of duty with an extraordinary work ethic. The future pope viewed the juxtaposition between the two banks of the Tiber with realism, developing a deep conviction that dialogue was an indispensable instrument in the church’s approach to politics. His prudence and pragmatism were honed and then exercised within the Secretariat of State, where diplomacy was formal and reserved, and where treaties were judged by how they were actually observed. Pacelli was a faithful interpreter of the Vatican approach that saw the concordat model as an exemplary way of satisfying a dual need, that of building bridges between the Holy See and other states and of guaranteeing protection and rights for Catholics.

For V., Pacelli’s years of diplomatic service are crucial for understanding his actions toward Nazi Germany and its atrocities, a theme the author treats in depth. Architect of the agreements with Bavaria (1924) and Prussia (1929) that opened the way to the concordat (1929) between the Holy See and the

Third Reich (1933), Pacelli remained tied to a “conciliatory” vision, convinced that there was no viable alternative to the imposition of and respect for the rules of the concordat and public silence in the face of oppression. As Secretary of State (1930–1939) and then as head of the Catholic Church (1939–1958), Pacelli did not veer from his commitments, almost to the extent of appearing their prisoner. During the darkest and most dramatic events of the 20th century, Pacelli placed his trust in discreet political-diplomatic initiatives and abstained from making explicit denunciations or condemnations. His measured and wary conduct during the Second World War reflected a solid methodological background rather than an inability to oppose regimes that used propaganda as a forceful weapon.

V.’s arguments, supported by the most recent and respected historiography, are persuasive. However, as he indicates, it is difficult not to notice the extent to which the legacy of the conflict weighed upon the last decade of Pius XII’s papacy, especially in terms of official acts. The determination and firmness with which Pius fought the “Communist threat,” advocated the cause of a “Christian” Europe, and intervened in the affairs of the young Italian Republic all bear witness to a hitherto unexpected course of action for making papal authority felt. Caution seemed to be replaced by resolve.

Most scholars find it hard to avoid the temptation to compare Pius XII with his successors. The advent of Pope John XXIII brought about a renewal of the papacy and its outward expressions. The appeal for peace during the Cuban Missile Crisis was the summation of the new level of importance given to papal action, and it provided the church with unprecedented room to maneuver on the international stage—space within which both Popes Paul VI and John Paul II moved and operated with consummate ability.

Such a comparison may seem risky, but it is useful to clarify, as V.’s impressive book reminds us, that Eugenio Pacelli should be studied and judged within the specific framework of his time.

University of New Hampshire in Italy
Ascoli Piceno, Italy

ANDREA DI STEFANO

CHANGING HORIZONS: EXPLORATIONS IN FEMINIST INTERPRETATION. By Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013. Pp. x + 307. \$49.

In this new volume of 19 collected essays, readers now have access to the full development of Schüssler Fiorenza’s thought over nearly 40 years of scholarship. Her work as a biblical scholar, critical feminist theorist, and prophetic theologian is unmatched in its lasting impact. Characteristically poetic and provocative, each essay charts the very specific concerns and methods S. has blazed in the course of her career. A benefit of the