

A Service of Love: Papal Primacy, the Eucharist, and Church Unity with a New Postscript. By Paul McPartlan. Washington: Catholic University of America, 2016. Pp. x + 108. \$16.95.

Since the Second Vatican Council numerous ecumenical dialogues, both bilateral and multilateral, have occurred and statements have been published. The difficulty, however, remains on how to get these documents widely distributed, read, discussed, and hopefully implemented. In brief, this is the process of reception that can be from above—where ecclesial authorities adopt the statement, or from below—where there is grassroots acceptance. With this in mind, McPartlan turns his attention to two bilateral dialogues produced by the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. The first dates to 1982, the so-called Munich document, and it is entitled “The Mystery of the Church and the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Trinity.” The second dates to 2007, frequently referred to as the Ravenna document, and is entitled “Ecclesiological and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Nature of the Church: Ecclesial Communion, Conciliarity, and Authority.” At stake in these discussions are primacy and conciliarity, mutually interdependent ideas. Furthermore, primacy involves local, regional as well as universal dimensions of consideration alongside of, and within, the context of conciliarity, and vice versa.

The author examines this topic in three succinct and well-written chapters. In the first chapter he looks in broad strokes at the early church to Vatican II, from Ignatius of Antioch and *The Apostolic Tradition* to *Lumen Gentium* and beyond. Chapter 2 focuses on the second millennium taking into consideration the Great Schism of 1054 and the eleventh-century Gregorian Reform (Gregory VII; 1073–85) in the West in which a strong juridical understanding of the papacy developed. In this context the link between the Eucharist and the church was neglected and forgotten. In the third chapter the author returns to the first millennium in search of a solution to the theological and ecclesial problems brought about in the second millennium. Spoiler alert: the reader will have to discover what solutions are proposed to bring about greater church unity.

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The McCabe Reader. Edited by Brian Davies and Paul Kucharski. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016. Pp. ix + 369. \$114; \$29.95.

A group of us invited by Enda McDonagh were gathered in his “rooms” for the second bicentenary of Maynooth—as Irish love to celebrate—when a Texas voice blared out: “Herbert, when is the big book on Aquinas coming out?” “Stanley,” was the answer: “you don’t do that; your students do.” This is that book, named for Herbert yet replete with Aquinas, as Herbert himself was. Now readers of this generation will be able to

imbibe Thomas from Herbert, as we all did: from the master among us to our master Thomas, to the Master whose word suffuses the prose.

We discover how exciting and surprising that is, as we relish a wit and prose we wish we could deliver ourselves—without envy, in sheer delight. Astute editors waste no time plunging us into the metaphysics of divine action, where we quickly learn how speaking of God outstrips our ordinary prose. Yet nothing heavy burdens these metaphysical forays, lightened by Herbert's incisive wit with prescient examples. So we are reminded forcibly how this God is closer to us than our jugular vein, renewing us daily by a sustaining presence: that is to be created, as we each are. And everything turns on the *ur-fact* of our creation, which alone delivers our creator God to us, and us to ourselves. Yet be prepared for one surprise after another as we learn that we cannot even say that "God is good" lest we end up passing judgment on our creator. And that we can hope to "know God" only as the "unknown."

Thanks to editors and author, this is no "compendium" of sacred doctrine, though each of the neuralgic issues emerge. Now Herbert is known as an "ethicist," yet that portion of this study turns centrally on politics, as we are led by Aristotle beyond the "eighteenth-century abstraction of the individual" (MacIntyre) to those among whom we live, flawed as we each are, and as Jesus's genealogy reminds us he is too (325–31)! So, enjoy this daunting passage through "sacred doctrine" as Thomas practiced it and Herbert delivers it, a journey amazingly up-to-date as we contrast it with "sound bites" assaulting us today on every side. Let the leisure this exercise affords reanimate our own spirit of inquiry.

Faith offers "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb 11:1). With what we do not see but hope for: "the journey of Abraham into the unknown, a journey simply based on a promise" (Heb. 11:9). "In a way the whole thing is a bit like growing up, becoming in fact fully human" (323). That is the journey Herbert undertook and recommends us to take. Are we ready for it?

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Interreligious Comparisons in Religious Studies and Theology. Edited by Perry Schmidt-Leukel and Andreas Nehring. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016. Pp. viii + 228. \$114.

Whereas the method of comparison had gradually become suspect in the area of religious studies, it is again gaining some credibility, in particular in the emerging field of comparative theology. This volume therefore seeks to explore the possibilities for "an exciting cross-fertilization between the theological and the non-theological employment of comparative methods" (6). To that end, it builds on Arvind Sharma's notion of "mutual illumination" which may be applied not only to the encounter between religions, but also to the encounter between the disciplines of comparative religion and comparative theology.