

peppers her argument with analysis of American public arguments about torture, abortion, race, and stem cell research. Her precise prose and careful analysis can enlighten us about the special care with which we should engage prophetic indictment rather than the more usual moral deliberation in our public discourse.

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*The Preaching Church: The Poor as Sacra Praedicatio.* By Vincent J. Pastro. Eugene, OR: Resource, 2016. Pp. xv + 165. \$41; \$23.

Most books on preaching focus on the method, the “how.” This work by Father and Doctor Vincent Pastro of the Archdiocese of Seattle focuses instead on the “who.” As someone who has worked with and among Mexican immigrant communities for many years, he exhorts the reader to pay attention to the voice of the Spirit, particularly present in the church’s poor communities. Having assembled an impressive theological apparatus which includes insights gleaned from renown and lesser-known theologians throughout the centuries as the church’s “Fathers and Mothers,” Dominican preachers such as St. Dominic of Guzman and Antonio de Montesinos, the defender of indigenous peoples in the new world, Jesuits Karl Rahner and Jon Sobrino, as well as the distinguished German Lutheran theologian, pastor, preacher, and martyr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, P. draws from an impressive geographical diversity, as in his inclusion of Latin Americanists Gustavo Gutiérrez, Ivone Gebara, and Victor Codina as well as the more European-Asian perspectives of Raimon Panikkar. This notable range of viewpoints or perspectival windows, a concept he borrows from Panikkar, does not exclude the church’s many teachers and pastors, women and men such as Archbishop Romero of El Salvador; the promoters of *comunidades de base*, (ecclesial base communities), Fr. José Marins and Sr. Teolide María Trevisan; and Teresa Montes Lara, OP, who directs the Instituto Hispano, a program in Spanish for the theological formation of lay leaders at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, and who penned the book’s foreword. These persons serve as examples of those who have listened to the voice of the Spirit present in the community, particularly those who have suffered greatly.

P. not only draws from his rich knowledge of these writers and leaders but also from his own vast pastoral experience among Mexican immigrants in the US Northwest. His fertile examples of how he learned to keep his ear close to the Trinity’s conversation by staying close to these people are very thought-provoking. Now and then, given that few of us are as gifted with such an ability to bring together so well the academic and the pastoral, it would have been helpful to hear even more of these inspiring anecdotes.

Upon reading the work, one walks away with the question and challenge of, “What if we preached today as if theology and preaching itself, really mattered?” “What if we really took seriously the ‘real presence’ of Christ in the poor?” Having tackled such

theological foundations behind our post-Vatican II understanding of ecclesiology, soteriology, and pneumatology as they relate to proclaiming the Good News in word and deed, P. summarizes much of the thick theological reflection which surfaced from centuries of living the Christian faith. The preacher, ordained or not, is reminded again and again that ultimately, we must listen to where the Spirit is leading. Although reading P.'s book requires some theological sophistication, as the list of names above will attest, he is very good at explaining terms and putting them in context. Bonhoeffer is aptly portrayed as a contextual theologian. Moreover, his book's scholarly apparatus, such as the detail he provides in explaining the "Our Father" in chapter 9, is a caution for the more systematic thinker to take seriously the faith of the people, not as recipients of a "trickle-down" theology made simple for them but as their contribution as one of the major sources of our theologizing. Such a theological treatise, moreover, cannot be undertaken without recourse to Scripture, and the significant "Scripture Index" at the back of the book provides ample evidence of the use of this key source.

P.'s poetic conclusion summarizes well the prophetic power of the Word:

They [the poor] reflect the privileged *perichoeresis* of the creative *oikonomia*, the preaching center at the heart of the praxis of the living God. The Sacramental Word is emptied of riches and fame, prestige and power. The presence of the living Christ walks among the *pueblo*, the voice of the Spirit resounds in weakness, and the Holy Preaching, the preaching Church of the poor, is enfleshed in the vulnerable Word "community." (142)

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