

Stevens. Gallagher uses ideas from John Henry Newman, Paul Ricoeur, Bernard Lonergan, William Lynch, and Charles Taylor to provide criteria for the “reverent” imagination in literature: its openness to self, others, world, and transcendence. He also provides an illuminating reading of Terence Malik’s film *Tree of Life*. Later essays in this volume provide close readings of spirituality in the poetry of Henry Constable, Rainer Maria Rilke, Eliot, and Denise Levertov. Some original ideas emerge in other essays on “reading poetry as” *lectio divina*, spiritual transformation, or active contemplation.

David Leigh, S.J.
Seattle University

Signs: Seven Words of Hope. Jean Vanier. New York: Paulist, 2014. Pp. vii + 94.
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On the heels of the 50th anniversary of the final sessions of Vatican II comes the newest work from Roman Catholic philosopher Jean Vanier. In this slender volume Vanier recalls the Council imperative to read the “signs of the times” in order to reinvigorate the church’s mission. Fundamental to the church’s authentic participation in the *missio Dei* is a recommitment to the most marginalized members of society. When the church honestly approaches the poor not in a spirit of power but admitting its sinful complicity in injustice, true encounter can happen, bringing about mutual transformation and communion. At the heart of V.’s “humiliated and humbled Church” (70) is a call to create communities with the poor at the center, where the marginalized evangelize others in the gospel of peace.

V.’s most penetrating and welcome accomplishment is in considering the “new evangelization” with a “hermeneutic with the poor,” one honed through 50 years of relationships with people with intellectual disabilities in L’Arche. Although V. writes specifically to the Roman Catholic Church, his insights should apply to all. V. peppers the text with stories and examples, showing glimpses of what a “missional” church might actually confront and look like. V.’s particular invocation of the martyrs of Algeria offers a particularly compelling icon for how the church might faithfully encounter Islam and other faiths in a pluralistic world. The final image V. offers—Jesus washing the disciples’ feet—prophetically presents the mystery of Christ’s peace gravely needed in a violent and distracted world.

Certainly more substantial theological and philosophical work on missiology would have been welcome, as well as a more in-depth discussion of how to transform more structural forms of oppression. Yet V. effectively contributes to the attempt at renewal of the mission and life of the church from someone both committed to faith as well as open to the wider world.

Jason Reimer Greig
VU Free University of Amsterdam