

*Power of Sisterhood: Women Religious Tell the Story of the Apostolic Visitation.* Edited by Margaret Cain McCarthy and Mary Ann Zollmann. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2014. Pp. xvi + 220.

In 2008 the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life announced, with no preparation or reason given, that it would conduct an Apostolic Visitation of congregations of women religious in the United States, focusing on apostolic congregations as contrasted with contemplative religious orders. It took women religious by surprise.

This work answers many of the questions women religious pondered throughout the visitation, and it fills in some of the gaps that have not been clear. At the time this study went to press in 2014, there was strong support from many lay Catholics and congregations of male religious but there still had been no response to the women religious investigated from the Vatican committee in charge of the investigation.

The prologue of this important work thus positions the Apostolic Visitation as a story with all that it entails: what the experience meant in lived reality; how it felt; why women religious cared so deeply. It does this most effectively. The next two essays define and explain the history and theology of an Apostolic Visitation along with a study of the documents that the various congregations of women received. The work speaks strongly, clearly, and respectfully of the response of women religious to this initiative.

In preparation for initiating *Power of Sisterhood*, a grassroots group of eight sisters formed and invited Margaret Cain McCarthy to develop a questionnaire to survey the experiences of the various religious orders of women who were visited. Of the 328 surveys sent to participating congregational leaders, 143 responded. Based partly on experiences reported in the surveys, the book explores the process, content, theology, and the personal experiences of the sisters involved. By the end of the study, one cannot but be impressed by the power sisterhoods claimed and rejoiced in throughout this controversial exercise. The last chapter sums up the shared experience of women religious with the words “Remembered, Revisioned, Reclaimed, Released” (181).

The Epilogue states that in the long silence, “We have been pro-active in claiming our own outcomes to the experience of the Visitation” (206). Clearly, sisterhood prevails.

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*The Church in the Modern World Fifty Years after Gaudium et spes.* Edited by Erin Brigham. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2015. Pp. xi + 218. \$90.

These essays advance the foundations and tentative new directions set by *Gaudium et spes* 50 years ago. The editor Erin Brigham and five of the authors are all associated with the University of San Francisco. Despite this potentially limited perspective for