

the church to do much more to confront the “subordination, abuse, and exploitation of women in church and society” (59).

Part 2 addresses ecclesiology and theological method. It contends more explicitly with fissures in African cultures as the church contends with chaos and confusion over competing interpretations of globalization and how to negotiate the transformations of the emerging century.

Part 3’s essays offer prophetic visions of a future church. Tina Beattie untangles the intricate complexities of religion, motherhood, and poverty that silence women’s wisdom and suffering. The full and equal participation of women is a prerequisite for a thriving future church. Marquerite Akossi-Mvongo uncovers deep contradictions in ecclesial teaching and practice concerning women and offers a biblical vision of how women ought to be celebrated as prophets, priests, and kings. I highly recommend this rich collection of essays for courses addressing ecclesiology, theological method, contextual theologies, and spirituality in the transforming twenty-first century.

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Polarization in the US Catholic Church: Naming the Wounds, Beginning to Heal. Edited by Mary Ellen Konieczny, Charles C. Camosy, and Tricia C. Bruce. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2016. Pp. xix + 175. \$19.95.

The product of a 2015 conference at the University of Notre Dame, this volume includes perspectives from 19 contributors, including theologians, church leaders, and sociologists who speak from a diverse range of perspectives.

The authors are divided over whether ordinary American Catholics are as polarized as Catholic elites are, or even whether the loudest, most partisan voices who capture the most media attention reflect the reality of American Catholic life. Either way, they agree that polarization, whether defined as left–right or orthodox–progressive, has had a negative impact on Catholic life.

Sociologist Tricia Bruce highlights the degree to which Catholics are shifting allegiance from territorial parishes to ones where they can find a preferred style of worship and like-minded worshippers. Susan Crawford Sullivan sees this phenomenon, but suggests that most parishes try to skate down the middle and steer clear of controversy. As she experiences it in the academy and her parish, there is a disconnect between elite and ordinary discourses, and experiences of polarization in the church.

As the authors helpfully point out, the issues that polarize are not the same across ethnic groups, or age groups. Writing about Latino Catholics, Hosffman Ospino suggests that the “hot-button issues that galvanize liberal and conservative constituencies . . . don’t arouse the passions and the energy of the polarized margins . . . which happens to be largely Hispanic” (141). Christian Smith argues that younger Catholics often tune out of church life precisely because of the debates than engulf many older

Catholics. He makes the case that “JPII-type” gen-x Catholics may be polarized to the right, “[b]ut statistically, they are quite rare” (18).

A good many contributors focus on ways to have difficult conversations across cultural, political, and theological differences. Theologically, they advocate for a culture of listening and encounter as a way forward.

As helpful a contribution as this book is, it could have been significantly enhanced if it had taken a comparative approach, examining a few other countries to help zero in on the real causes here.

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The Believing Scientist: Essays on Science and Religion. By Stephen M. Barr. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016. Pp. vi + 226. \$25.

Barr is professor of theoretical particle physics at the University of Delaware, and also a member of the Academy of Catholic Theology. This book is a collection of his lectures, book reviews, and essays, written originally between 1997 and 2012, many of them published in *First Things*. They cover a range of important and engaging topics at the interface of science and theology, including the big issues, the origin of the observable universe and the possibility of multiverses, evolution, quantum physics, and neuroscience. He engages in dialogue with the views of Richard Dawkins, Stephen Jay Gould, David Chalmers, Thomas Nagel, Edward O. Wilson, and Francis Collins, and with the advocates of Intelligent Design.

B. writes with great deal of authority on the sciences and his theology is informed by Aquinas and by the broad Catholic tradition. There is repetition in the book, and the use of the word “man” for the human being. There were times when I thought the discussion might have been enriched by insights from recent theology. But B. writes with clarity and depth about important issues. His style is lively, sometimes humorous. He communicates a well-based confidence that there is every reason to embrace fully both science and Christian faith. While accepting the scientific strategy of reductionism, he strongly challenges metaphysical reductionism, physicalism, and the scientific atheism.

As a theologian, I found particularly helpful his brief but clear explanations of quantum theory in relation to theology and his discussion of a post-Einstein view of time in relation to the eternity of God. Because B. is a “believing scientist” and a gifted communicator, this book will be a very helpful and accessible resource for students of theology, for young Catholics studying science, and for the many people today who are searching for a way to make sense of their developing scientific worldview in relation to their Christian faith.

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