

*Christian Spirituality: Lived Expressions in the Life of the Church.* By Peter Feldmeier. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2015. Pp. 345. \$28.95.

With this text Feldmeier offers a relatively rare entry in the field of Christian spirituality: a textbook for undergraduates.

F. begins his text with two introductory chapters: “What is Spirituality?” and “What is Mysticism?” followed by 13 chapters, from biblical spirituality to twenty-first century comparative spirituality, arranged chronologically. The final chapter focuses on three “modern witnesses” to the varieties of Christian spirituality: Dorothy Day (lay social activism), Thomas Merton (monasticism), and Rick Warren (evangelism). Each chapter is clearly organized with appropriate subheadings, questions for review, questions for discussion, bibliographic references, Internet resources, and suggested films. Also helpful are a six-page glossary and well-documented 26-page index.

In defining what he means by “spirituality” F. notes, “This book will address Christian spirituality mostly through the interpretive lenses of both [Sandra] Schneiders’s and [Michael] Buckley’s models” (10). Emphases within the *study* of spirituality, he notes, include lived experience, Scripture, theological categories, and history. Characteristics of Christian spirituality as lived include a life that is Christocentric, trinitarian, communal, just, prayerful, and that sees divinization as the ultimate horizon. F.’s treatment of mysticism is quite balanced. He explains both the perennialist view of mysticism (a universal experience that is similar in all traditions) and the particularist view (mystical experiences, like all experiences, are mediated by historical and cultural context). He discusses both kataphatic and apophatic mysticism.

F.’s text succeeds on several levels. Organizing the text chronologically enables him to cover a great deal of territory in a logical, organic manner; the text flows nicely. His discussions of theologians from the various historical periods are well organized. In discussing these thinkers F. locates them in their intellectual and cultural context, provides an overview of some of their main ideas, and explores how those ideas influenced the lifestyles of these figures. F. also covers a variety of spiritualities. His focus is primarily on Roman Catholicism, but he also treats Eastern Orthodoxy, various traditions within Protestantism (Lutheran, Reformed, Presbyterian, Evangelical, and Pentecostal), and interreligious dialogue. The “Questions for Discussion” at the end of each chapter are particularly thoughtful and encourage students to interact with the material presented in the chapter in terms of their own experience. Finally, in listing additional resources at the end of each chapter F. has provided a treasure trove for both student and teacher. He has up-to-date bibliographies, Internet resources (including YouTube videos), and, in some cases, films. Students who wish to pursue further study on a topic have ample resources to explore.

The subtitle of F.’s book is “Lived Expressions in the Life of the Church.” Despite his references to lived experience in his introductory chapters, however, he explores theological backgrounds much more than lived expressions. As one example, he discusses early monastic theologians such as Athanasius, Pachomius, and Evagrius but has little to no discussion of such practices as meditation on Scripture, discernment of spirits, and spiritual direction, all of which were highly valued in the lived expression

of monasticism. (In his defense, in discussing Ignatian spirituality he does discuss the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatian prayer, consciousness examen, and discernment of spirits.) The classroom is obviously not a novitiate, but recent scholarship affirms that engaging in practice can lead to forms of knowledge that cannot be known by simply reading about a topic. F.'s text would be strengthened by closer attention to spiritual practices and perhaps even an invitation to students to try some.

No one-semester textbook can cover all aspects of a subject. Yet there are a number of topics which F. decided not to cover. Despite the growing awareness of the dangers of climate change, the book contains no references to ecological spirituality. Similarly, there are no references to cosmology (despite recent advances in understanding the universe), feminist spirituality (though there are some references to feminine piety), or Latino/a or African American spirituality. F. does not discuss popular piety or the history of devotions, which have been important to the lived expression of the faith of many Catholics. Some of these topics would presumably be of interest to undergraduate students.

Teachers seeking a text for an undergraduate course in Christian spirituality are well served by this book, which could also function as a good introduction to the field for a general reader. *Christian Spirituality* could serve as a core text for such a course, especially if supplemented with other resources to give a fuller and richer experience to students.

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*Politics for a Pilgrim Church: A Thomistic Theory of Virtue.* By Thomas J. Bushlack. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015. Pp. viii + 271. \$35.

How are virtue ethics and Catholic social thought related? This question motivates Bushlack's engaging attempt to outline a Thomistic understanding of Christian civic virtue in the context of twenty-first-century liberal democracies.

The author situates his viewpoint relative to three schools of interpretation of Catholic social thought. B. criticizes neoconservative interpreters, such as Michael Novak and George Weigel, for attenuating the role of civic virtue: the former because of his reliance on neoclassical economic theory, and the latter due to a narrow focus on sexual moral issues. B. is more sympathetic to those who emphasize local communities and ecclesial identity, such as William Cavanaugh and Michael Baxter, but fears that their disdain for the higher-level institutions of the nation-state undermines positive Christian political engagement. Finally, there is the liberal political theology familiar from the work of David Hollenbach and others.

B. is closest to this latter school, and in its defense, he helpfully distinguishes the "doctrinaire liberalism," which advocates a purely secular political realm, from a "positive laicity" or moderate political liberalism that is consistent with Catholic social thinking and gives greater space for the civic engagement of the faithful. His careful