

recover the former does not necessarily mean dispensing altogether with the latter. At its strongest, ecumenical theology allows the coexistence of mutually informing models in tension with another.

That said, within a context like my own of contemporary Roman Catholicism, which includes ambivalence about meal terminology and requires that one be able to distinguish the Eucharist from ordinary food to receive it, O'L.'s vision of the Eucharist as a meal at which thanks is rendered to the Father emerges as a welcome challenge. Not only scholars and students but also preachers and lay readers will find much food for thought here. Through a well-informed survey of the diversity of Christian practice in its early origins, O'L. suggests a model that recognizes the Eucharist (thanksgiving) not only in the liturgical rites of other Christians, but even in ordinary table blessings.

In the first two chapters, O'L. argues that the Christocentric understanding of the Eucharist as an encounter with Christ is a late deviation from the "giving thanks" to the Father that was characteristic of all Jewish meal prayers and gave the Eucharist its name. In chapters 3–5, which are especially valuable, he grounds the theological meaning of the Eucharist in the cosmic, human, and cultural meaning of food and memory. Chapters 6 and 7 model a rereading of the NT evidence.

O'L. recovers a sense of the cosmic and anthropological significance of human food, and thus recognizes food as a reminder of our deep dependence on creation, human beings, and cultural structures. This is an invaluable reminder to those of us whose meat is packaged, frozen, and seemingly in infinite supply. Thanks given to the Father for food in the face of want is already eucharistic, absent any consecration: "the vision of a life lived under the care of a loving God finds its simplest expression in being thankful for food" (78). This insight, supported with abundant evidence from the first and second century, not only ties the Eucharist to ordinary dining but also calls for an ecumenical outlook that questions criteria for a "valid" Eucharist (cf. 96).

On the undervalued cosmic and human importance of the eucharistic meal in the earliest church and today, O'L. is a persuasive and knowledgeable guide, but for a genealogy that explains how eucharistic theology got where it is today—and how to reincorporate those early insights into a tradition also formed by Ephrem, Ambrose, and Charles Wesley—his work must be complemented by those with a less restrictive view of history.

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*The Catholic Church: Nature, Reality and Mission.* By Walter Kasper. Trans. from German by Thomas Hoebel. Edited by R. David Nelson. New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2015. Pp. xvii + 463. \$60.

An English translation of Walter Cardinal Kasper's 2011 monograph on the Church, *Katholische Kirche: Wesen—Wirklichkeit—Sendung*, has finally appeared. The present volume is the last of his trilogy on systematics that began with *Jesus der Christus*

(1974, ET: *Jesus the Christ*, 1976) and *Der Gott Jesu Christi* (1982, ET: *The God of Jesus Christ*, 1986). This book can be considered K.'s culmination of more than 20 years of reflection and writing on the main topics of ecclesiology as an academic theologian, a bishop, and a member of the Roman Curia in charge of ecumenical affairs.

The book begins with an intellectual autobiography—a rare approach in any theological treatise—that traces K.'s “journey in and with the Church” (1–37). Of significance to his understanding of the church was his background as a student at Tübingen and later as professor and dean at Münster and Tübingen (1964–1989). Living through the post-conciliar controversies, K. experienced a “breakthrough” at the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, when he decisively embraced *communio* as a paradigm for ecclesiology. His pastoral experiences as bishop of Rottenburg-Stuttgart (1989–1999) and his ecumenical involvement as the secretary of Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promotion Christian Unity (1999–2013) further expanded his vision of the church internationally and ecumenically. His multifaceted experiences of church deepened his commitment to foster a “renewed Catholic ecclesiology,” one that can give the church “a new impetus, a refocused vision, and concrete perspectives for the future” (37).

K.'s approach to ecclesiology is ecumenical, drawing from the great tradition of the Old Church (Catholic-Orthodox) as well as contribution of the churches of the Reformation, in particular the Lutherans. After laying out his methodology and philosophical consideration (chap. 1), K. discusses the mystery of *ecclesia* both as a *congregatio fidelium* and *communio sacramentorum* (chap. 2), and situates it in the mystery of salvation and in relation to the Kingdom of God. His presentation on the nature of the church (chap. 3) is grounded in the biblical images of the people of God, the body and bride of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit as well as in the patristic, medieval, and modern exposition of these images. In his discussion of the church's four traditional marks (chap. 4), K. was careful in treating many Catholic-Protestant controversies, including the different understanding of unity, the “true” church, structural holiness, denominationalism, and apostolicity, among others.

In chapter 5, on the *communio* ecclesiology, the author applies the theoretical foundations of the previous chapters into analyzing the concrete issues regarding *ecclesia ad intra*: the understanding of ministry and ecclesial offices, the vocation of the laity and women, priestly identity, the role of the papacy, the magisterium, collegiality, and the future of parish community and of religious life. In these discussions, K. upholds traditional conclusions, even when he attempts to include other views. Chapter 6 deals with *ecclesia ad extra* concerns. Here, K. characterizes the church as being missionary and dialogical—a much-needed reminder in any contemporary discussion on the church. Unfortunately, this chapter is much shorter than the last four, and does not deal in depth with contemporary concerns experienced in the worldwide church—issues of globalization, migration, modern communication, and church-state relations. Likewise, in the last chapter, which deals with the direction and future of the church, K. focuses much on the new evangelization in a secularized Western society.

The strength of the book, and also its weakness, is its dogmatic nature and the background of the author. His treatment of *communio* ecclesiology is coherent and lucid.

However, the book is very Eurocentric in its outlook and concerns, and it displays a lack of engagement with the ecclesial development from the global south. The author's presentation of the church is still very much from a traditional, doctrinal approach. Questions raised by some contemporary Catholics regarding ministry and authority in the church have not been adequately addressed, nor were the experiences of the non-Western local churches discussed.

A shortcoming of this work, perhaps, is due more to the editorial decisions of the translator and publisher themselves, rather than of the author. Given that the English edition of K.'s *The Catholic Church* appears after Pope Francis was elected to the papacy, the book could benefit from a short epilogue on the present direction of the Catholic Church since the election of Pope Francis.

As with other works of K., this volume is rich in historical details and presents a balanced, erudite exegesis of Vatican II's understanding of the church. As a useful resource and reference to understand the many issues in Catholic ecclesiology, the book is a fine textbook in a graduate course on theology, but it should be supplemented with other works that can bring forward emerging contemporary global concerns.

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*A Church with Open Doors: Catholic Ecclesiology for the Third Millennium.* Edited by Richard R. Gaillardetz and Edward P. Hahnenberg. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2015. Pp. xvi + 220. \$24.95.

In September 2014, Boston College hosted a gathering of invited ecclesialogists from all over the United States. The folk gathered there were young and old, esteemed veterans, mid-career scholars, and the emerging voices of today and tomorrow. Across several days they explored many questions and perspectives pertaining to the prospects for Catholic ecclesiology in the third millennium. The gathering was organized by Richard R. Gaillardetz, Edward P. Hahnenberg, and Vincent Miller, ably assisted by B. Kevin Brown. The symposium was, in fact, also a gathering to honor Thomas O'Meara, OP, a true giant of Catholic theology, and the volume that came out of it was to serve as a *Festschrift* in his honor. The vast majority of folk who attended had either been taught by or worked alongside Professor O'Meara or had been influenced by his numerous and groundbreaking works in many differing areas of theological enquiry. Typical of his graciousness and humility, when told of the plans for such a gathering, he had not wanted the symposium to be about him. Instead, he relented only if it would explore a much wider field of enquiry—no less than that of the church for these and future times itself.

The symposium was very well planned and executed with precision. This book features most of the papers that were prepared well in advance of that September. They