

immediate philosophical context (Kant, Victor Cousin, Alexander Hamilton, John Stuart Mill) – this chapter is important for keeping a balanced sense of Newman’s actual study of earlier and contemporary philosophers; a third is a commentary on each of the fourteen topics of Part One; and the fourth argues that Newman’s mode of argumentation can hold its own in contemporary philosophical speculation. In defending Hamilton against Mill, Newman shares common ground with Walter Pater and Gottlob Frege.

In that fourth chapter of Part Two, Myers seeks to relate Newman’s work with contemporary phenomenology, cognitive philosophy and physics. He cites Husserl, Turing, Gödel, Dennett, Fodor, Searle, Penrose, and Galen Strawson. It means his final chapter becomes a bit like the *Notebook*, giving us enough information and reflection to be suggestive and intriguing.

We should be grateful to William Myers for his clear and very helpful presentation of the *Notebook*. This book is a valuable addition to the bibliography on Newman, and further confirms the great cardinal’s status as one of the greatest religious thinkers of recent centuries.

VIVIAN BOLAND OP

NO TURNING BACK: THE FUTURE OF ECUMENISM by Margaret O’Gara, edited by Michael Vertin, *Liturgical Press*, Collegeville, 2014, pp. 253, \$29.95, pbk

Attempting to envisage what might constitute the content of a course of lectures on ecumenical theology in a Catholic institution, a graduate student in a non-theological discipline at a secular university recently suggested to me that such a series would perhaps consist of eight discrete hour-long discourses on ‘how to be nice’ to members of various non-Catholic churches and ecclesial communions in turn. No turning back is not, in that sense, a ‘nice’ book, though it does contain a good deal of niceness in an older and richer acceptance of the word, being marked by a stimulating subtlety and precision of thought. It is also a notably gracious and irenic text which would provide an ideal initiation into the ethos as well as the issues of contemporary ecumenical dialogue.

It is all but inevitable that the constituent parts of a collection of essays will be of varying weight, perhaps especially in a work such as this, drawn together by friends and colleagues as a posthumous tribute to its author, and those responsible for seeing this representative and retrospective sample of Professor Margaret O’Gara’s work through the press are clearly aware of its attendant imperfections and idiosyncrasies. The author of the foreword explicitly draws attention to the occasional nature of much of the material – a feature, he notes, especially characteristic of ecumenical theology whose typical milieu is the dialogue meeting

rather than the study. The editor, meanwhile, acknowledges the rather frequently repetitious quality of the writing, not only in terms of anecdotal illustration – one example, happily enough, being the reiterated presentation of the same gift between a married couple which O’Gara invokes on several occasions as an image of receptive ecumenism – but also as regards thematic content and even phraseology.

All of this makes the text a somewhat uneven, at times even a frustrating, read, but this should not be allowed to distract from its seriousness. Relatedly, the editor has taken the decision to divide the contributions into two main categories, with a number of shorter and more accessible articles gathered together under the rubric of ‘introducing the ecumenical perspective’, followed by a series of rather more lengthy essays addressed to ‘specialists’ in ecumenism and ecclesiology. It would be unfortunate if this were allowed to mask the methodological profundity implicit in the first section of the book. It would also be a pity if the material in the second part were read only by professional ecumenists.

Amongst the most striking and distinctive emphases in the introductory articles is a stress on friendship as the necessary environment for fruitful ecumenical theological conversation. It is a fascinating observation well-made, and one, as O’Gara implies, with significance for theological method extending far beyond the explicitly ecumenical. Doubtless the constraint – or, as one imagines O’Gara herself might say, the liberation – involved in working on bilateral commissions with the consequent necessity for framing agreed statements, does provide particularly fertile soil in which the virtues of friendship may grow, in which collaboration is exalted over competition, for instance, and in which a particular kind of painstaking intellectual courtesy might be expected most naturally to flourish. But, if so, ecumenical theology has perhaps thus developed a gift to be shared with the wider theological community. As O’Gara suggests, the intrinsically communitarian thrust of ecumenical theology is currently ‘counter-cultural’ within the academy, but it may yet prove to be of exemplary significance.

O’Gara is aware, however, that such theological companionship is not cheaply won, and writes movingly of the ascetic dimension of the ecumenist’s vocation. Again, though some of the specific elements of this *askesis* are located primarily in the ecumenical context itself – the hard discipline of refraining from intercommunion at dialogue meetings being an obvious case in point – others, such as the necessity of engaging rigorously yet sympathetically with positions that are not one’s own, are of more general application. The particular article which deals with all this, on the theological significance of friendship within the ecumenical movement, would, I suggest, be a valuable addition to any preliminary reading list for those beginning theological study, whether or not the course in question included an explicitly ecumenical component.

There are many other fine and suggestive things in the first part of the book; notably the idea of exploiting St John of the Cross’s concept

of the purification of memory as an aid to dismantling false images of both self and other in ecumenical dialogue. Throughout, the ecumenical perspective that O’Gara here introduces is at once intellectually credible and ecclesially committed.

The more substantial contributions in the section devoted to deepening the ecumenical perspective’ continue to manifest this double allegiance to church and academy, and with a degree of sophistication not invariably found in ecumenical theology. O’Gara is refreshingly prepared to root her treatment of the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the magisterium, for instance in a robust typological exposition of a series of fundamental theological and philosophical options. Although this is in one sense little more than a ground clearing exercise, it is a necessary, though often neglected one, if proponents of varying positions are not to argue past each other but truly to engage in dialogue: a point which, for the Catholic ecclesiologist, incidentally, has significance *ad intra* as well as *ad extra*

Essays on scripture and tradition, Anglican Orders and the Vatican I primacy debate all exhibit sensitivity to historical context and to theological complexity. Even where one might want to take issue with O’Gara’s conclusions – it is by no means self-evident, for instance, that the centre of ecclesiological gravity is precisely where she places it in her treatment of the Vatican II *subsistit* controversy – the voice that emerges from this collection is a consistently attractive and compelling one.

ANN SWAILES OP

A TRINITARIAN ANTHROPOLOGY: ADRIENNE VON SPEYR & HANS URS VON BALTHASAR IN DIALOGUE WITH THOMAS AQUINAS by Michele M. Schumacher, *Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2014, pp. xiii + 451, \$ 79.95, hbk*

Despite the sub-title, this substantial work is essentially a study of the theological writing of the Swiss physician and devout Catholic lay-woman Adrienne von Speyr. The references to Balthasar and Aquinas are, however, by no means superfluous in the book’s titling. Its author, a *Privatdozent* in the University of Fribourg, recognizes the symbiotic relation between Adrienne’s work and that of her countryman, the dogmatician Hans Urs von Balthasar who was her theological instructor, spiritual director, stenographer, editor and interpreter. Those are five very different roles which point up the hazards of establishing the direction of influence between them on any given matter, yet at the same time strongly indicate the likelihood of their possessing a common mind. As to Thomas Aquinas, he enters the picture not only because Schumacher takes him to be the classical Latin theologian whose function as a touchstone of probity in doctrine has been asserted by modern popes, from Leo XIII to John Paul II. Probably of greater consequence