

on Lonerganian lines, this last chapter is a brave attempt at bringing down to earth and rendering practical the somewhat academic discussions of Lonergan's ideas that have dominated the three preceding chapters. It also, I suspect, reflects a well-founded anxiety – on the part of the author or possibly of his doctoral supervisor – that some sorting and clarification of the plethora of ideas covered in chapters 2, 3 and 4 are very much in order.

Orji holds a doctorate in theology from Marquette University and my reckoning is that this book is the product of the doctoral thesis. While he is to be commended for his industry, especially in his grasp of many aspects of Lonergan's thought, his work suffers a good deal when considered as a book. He would have been wise to wield the editorial pen more freely in order to reduce the book's intellectual density. Lonergan is a highly systematic thinker and one part of his thinking tends to link with and support another; this makes it difficult to deal with selected aspects of his thought and creates the temptation, which ought to be resisted, to present the reader with the whole works – but in a highly compressed form, without the spaciousness and exemplification to be found in Lonergan's own writings (which the late Eric Mascall perceptively described as “at once voluminous and condensed.”) The result is writing that must appear fairly impenetrable to those not already familiar with Lonergan's ideas. I have to say that Orji's text suffers from such impenetrability in places. It is my experience that Lonergan's writings more often require further expansion and not further reduction. When adapting his thesis to book form Orji would have been well advised to select his material more narrowly, to reduce the references to the secondary literature on Lonergan and, most especially, to refrain from giving us the benefit of the various stages of development Lonergan's ideas went through and of the influences that shaped these developments. Not enough attention is paid to the needs of the reader: the book is too condensed and over-stuffed, especially in the sections dealing with Lonergan, the Index does not do full justice to the book's content (“Bismarck” and the “Berlin Conference” do not appear), and the list of Lonergan's writings fails to indicate the date of their first publication. It is also spoiled by a great many typographical errors, ranging from the omission of words – in one case the word “not” – to the running of words together, from bizarre punctuation to the confusion of singulars and plurals. All of this gets in the way of the reader's concentration and makes the book hard to digest and almost impossible to enjoy.

JOSEPH FITZPATRICK

A CATHOLIC REPLIES TO PROFESSOR DAWKINS by Thomas Crean OP
(*Family Publications, Oxford, 2007*) Pp. 160, £8.50

What distinguishes Thomas Crean's *A Catholic Replies to Professor Dawkins* from other responses to Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* (2006), such as Alister McGrath's *The Dawkins Delusion* (2007) and John Cornwell's *Darwin's Angel* (2007), is immediately apparent in the title. Thomas Crean is a Catholic, a Dominican friar, and a priest. The title also betrays the author's intention to write a book of classical apologetics in the mode of such eminent Catholics as John Henry Newman, Herbert Thurston, and Ronald Knox. One can expect, therefore, a book that is neither dense nor technical in argument or prose style, full of wit and humour, yet refreshingly fair, courteous, and even-handed. Crean has no wish to expose Dawkins as an unscientific biologist or as a fundamentalist atheist but to prove that Dawkins is wrong about Christianity. His book is primarily a defence of theism and only secondarily a defence of Catholicism. While he argues from a Catholic point of view using Catholic theologians throughout his book, it is only

the penultimate chapter that Crean specifically devotes to defending Catholicism from Dawkins' attacks.

Crean begins his apology by going straight to the heart of the matter, examining Richard Dawkins' argument against belief in God. Simply stated, Dawkins argues that God is too complex a being to have created the universe. A complex being must have evolved from some more simple being and that simple being cannot be God. Because something or someone preceded this complex being, then that complex being could not have created everything, i.e. the universe. Dawkins seems to be rather clever in coming up with this argument, for it essentially turns the argument from design on its head: if a complex universe can only be explained by appealing to an intelligent designer, Dawkins asks who created the intelligent designer? The flaw in Dawkins' argument is that Christians do not believe God to be a complex being but an utterly simple one. Even the Neo-Platonic tradition held that the many evolved from the One. When the present reviewer raised this point in an audience with Professor Dawkins, his question was dismissed as quibbling over words. Clearly Dawkins has no taste for metaphysics. Yet if Dawkins was not speaking metaphysically about simple and complex beings, then what did he mean by it? Surely he did not mean it in a purely biological sense?

Crean's response to Dawkins is to show that God really is simple. He argues by analogy that even though the idea of a cathedral may be simple, the actual, physical cathedral is not. But God is not exactly commensurate with an idea; rather, it is the architect who is. Although mostly he keeps the argument on the level of common sense, Crean fumbles when considering the objection that 'the architect himself is more complex than the cathedral, even if his idea is not' (p. 16). He makes the mistake of bringing in angels to prove his point, which has the effect of steering the argument in a distinctly theological direction. His argument is that even if a human being is complex because of the interaction of mind and body, an angel is not, since it has no body; therefore a designer without a body need not be complex. While this argument works on analogy, it is not an exact comparison since angels too are complex and only God is utterly simple. Crean's response to Dawkins is incoherent for the same reasons that Dawkins' argument is incoherent — both are guilty of mixing sciences. Whereas Dawkins turns metaphysics into biology, Crean turns philosophy of religion into theology. If this were the only such instance it might be overlooked, but Crean brings up angels again a few pages later (p. 20).

As a Dominican formed in the Thomist theological tradition, Crean is on considerably more comfortable ground in his second chapter, 'Professor Dawkins and St Thomas Aquinas', much of which is concerned with an examination of the first and fifth of St Thomas' Five Ways. Dawkins is not here objecting to the existence of a first cause, but to the identity of that first cause with God. While Crean does answer the objection, he spends more time explaining the first cause than answering Dawkins. Concerning St Thomas' fifth way, Crean shows that Dawkins has misunderstood it as an argument from design, which he (Dawkins) assumes to have been proved false by Darwinian evolution. The fifth way, Crean argues, 'doesn't depend on an order that might be claimed to have arisen from different beings struggling for survival. It depends on an order that is prior to any such interaction between beings; the ordering of any agent, animate or inanimate, to its own natural activity' (p. 46).

Some of Dawkins' objections to theism really are pathetic and Crean has no trouble disposing of them, such as when Dawkins attempts to show that God could not be both omnipotent and omniscient. This is too much like the philosophy of religion question 'could God create such a large stone that he could not move it'. This is perhaps one of the instances when he takes Dawkins too seriously, but this does not prevent Crean from exercising his dry sense of humour. For example, after a puzzling quotation from Dawkins listing various

divine and human attributes Crean asks, 'Why is goodness not a human quality when the power to read other people's innermost thoughts apparently is? Surely this cannot be a reflection of Oxford academic life?' (p. 41). Another example of his sense of humour, that could be rather offensive to some readers, though not, he assumes, to his Catholic readers, is his footnote to the statement, in the context of Dawkins' discussion of the moral education of children, that 'it is probably harder to convince children than adults of something patently false' (p. 110). The footnote in question reads: 'For example, that two people of the same sex can marry each other.'

Crean's third chapter, 'Professor Dawkins and Miracles', instead of discussing subjects more typical of the philosophy of religion, is almost wholly taken up with a discussion of the miracle of Fatima. While the miracle in question is very interesting, it is difficult to see how it is to the point, let alone that it proves the existence of God. How could the event be taken as evidence that God exists when Catholics are not even obliged to believe that it happened? In effect, Crean himself answers this objection when he strongly affirms the role of free will in belief, arguing that nothing can force one to believe. The fourth and longest chapter of Crean's book adequately defends the reliability of the manuscript tradition of the Gospels, argues for the apostolicity of the Gospels, the reliability of the Evangelists, the truth of the Resurrection, and the reliability, more specifically, of the Infancy Narratives. In this connection Crean very deftly explains John 7:41–42, which, contra Dawkins, is certainly not a denial of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem (pp. 78–79). Most importantly, Crean argues that Jesus really is who he says he is, namely God, which Dawkins denies; it is not only the Fourth Gospel that shows Jesus to be, or claiming to be God, but the Synoptics too (p. 91).

Crean shows himself at his logical best in chapters five and six on the origins of morality and religion. In one of his rare biological moments Dawkins illustrates altruistic behaviour in animals. Crean asks 'what foundation do they lay for morality? Precisely none' (p. 98). While this is true, such illustrations, nonetheless, show that morality is firmly embedded in the natural order, an interesting argument in this direction being Philippa Foot's *Natural Goodness* (Oxford, 2003). To give another example of Crean's logic, he writes, 'Let me repeat at this point that even if Professor Dawkins' attempts to show that religious belief could emerge as the misfiring of otherwise useful traits were successful, religious believers need not be bothered in the slightest. To show that a belief could emerge in some non-rational way is not to show that it must do so. It is not to show that it could not also emerge in perfectly rational ways' (p. 113). Indeed, Dawkins would probably agree, though objecting that Christianity is not one such rational way.

One of the dangers into which apologetics is apt to fall, is that of misrepresenting one's own tradition, since in refuting the opposition one often takes a rather strict, narrow stance. Crean does this occasionally in his apologia, but nowhere more obviously than in stating that 'without duty, there is no morality' (p. 101), for such a statement flies in the face of virtue ethics, which is favoured by many Dominicans and, not least, by the eminent moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre. Again, when he denies Dawkins' account of the natural origins of religion, he ignores the fact that many Catholic theologians have written extensively on natural or cosmic religion and how it prepares the way for and is fulfilled in Christianity. This is especially evident in his penultimate chapter defending Catholicism, for he leaves no place at all for doubt in matters of faith.

A Catholic Replies to Professor Dawkins is an enjoyable and well-written book. While it is surely being read by many Catholics and others interested in the relationship between science and religion, it might even be read by Professor Dawkins who admits to reading the work of his opponents and even to watching

the gross misrepresentations of his thought available on YouTube. The book would have benefited by having more extensive footnotes citing the sources of quotations and other information, and by having a bibliography suggesting further reading. The response of Thomas Crean and others will hopefully show the world, and Professor Dawkins, that sloppy scholarship does not prove anything, let alone that God is a delusion.

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THE MIND THAT IS CATHOLIC: PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL ESSAYS
 by James V. Schall (*The Catholic University of America Press, Washington DC, 2008*). Pp. 325 \$34.95 (or £30.95)

‘I am not mad, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking the sober truth’ (Acts of the Apostles 26:24–25). Thus responded St Paul to Festus when charged ‘your learning is driving you mad.’ James Schall sees that same tension between “the sober truth” and “great learning” driving us mad, as at the heart of the reception of revelation among the learned. Schall sees both tragedy and amusement as characterising the coming together of that which he seeks to portray through his collection of essays, “the mind that is Catholic.”

The Mind That Is Catholic brings together a retrospective collection of essays from one whose literary oeuvre spans the disciplines of theology and philosophy: the concerns of warfare, the beauty of friendship, the nature of the Trinity, are among the themes he has considered in the course of his career. The breadth of his reading is displayed in the disparity of works mentioned and digested, from the Greek philosophers to the medieval theologians, and incorporating some of the great figures of literature in the English language. It is this that Schall sees as symptomatic of the Catholic mind: a mind that seeks the whole and leaves nothing out. So his work seeks to construct the geography of his own thought through a long career, and to allow this geography to display the kind of mind that is truly Catholic. While Schall points out that the term “Christian” would be synonymous here, he wishes to use the term “Catholic” to capture the universality of the reality with which the human mind is challenged.

The ‘mind that is Catholic’ therefore seeks to recognise a consistency between the concrete evidence of reason and the definite facts of revelation. It seeks to see these two sources of its thought belonging together in a fruitful manner rather than remaining necessarily irreconcilable. At the same time it wishes both reason and revelation to remain what each is in itself. Each can usefully profit from the other, and it is in their ultimate cohesion that the truth is found, this truth being the highest object of the mind that is Catholic.

The essays gathered together in this book and divided into seven sub-sections are a raucous scramble through the various issues and problems that will fascinate the Catholic mind. Schall offers a quirky style and vision, at times marked with a ponderous sobriety while at others with a probing humour. It is with great command of imagery that he makes pertinent points. This is a mind that is fascinated by many things and one that has a clear vision of the coherence of reality when seen in a full light. In all areas of his thought, Schall is guided by faith, and wants that to remain his guide when he approaches literary, philosophical or political things.

It is a book of thinking actively, or ‘thinking in action,’ and so rather than describe the Catholic mind, Schall gives the reader practical experience of that mind at work, willing to be enthralled by God and all his creation. Schall seeks in every place for kindred minds, and finds one in C.S. Lewis: “Though C.S. Lewis was not Catholic, I think his mind was.” This is not to suggest that C.S.