

service of a “better” theology. There are plenty of open questions to ascertain what might be even “better” in the future.

The volume presupposes more than a nodding acquaintance with both Barth and Althaus-Reid. Despite its contemporary vibe, it is laced with language that may make another generation of theological students fear theology the way premed students fear organic chemistry. Words such as “systematicity,” “hamatological,” and “interdigitate” need more explanation if even the most interested of readers is to follow the arguments.

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*Teresa of Calcutta: Dark Night, Active Love.* By Jon M. Sweeney. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2022. xxi + 162 pages. \$19.95.

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It has long seemed incongruous that one of the most universally recognized people on the planet was a small nun who lived with the poor in Calcutta. In his new book *Teresa of Calcutta: Dark Night, Active Love*, Jon M. Sweeney beautifully reveals the holy woman at the heart of this incongruity.

Sweeney’s biography is divided into three sections. The first part, “Preparation,” covers Mother Teresa’s family and early life in Skopje, Albania, and her initial vocation to join the Sisters of Loretto. The second, “Call,” continues the chronological trajectory by walking through her “call within a call” (35) to serve the poor in India, her creation of the Missionaries of Charity, and the early years of that ministry before she burst onto the international scene. The third section, “Legacy,” is not as chronologically organized as the previous two. Although it does cover the major events of the second half of her life, it is primarily structured around the key topics of Mother Teresa’s celebrity, travel, critics and her responses, her intersections with the world of politics, her experience of the dark night, and finally her sainthood.

Throughout all three sections, the narrative is often guided by three recurring themes. The strongest is Sweeney’s focus on sanctity. Sweeney notes several times that Mother Teresa was the rare figure who was almost universally described as a saint during her lifetime; Pope John Paul II even waived the usual five-year waiting period for opening a cause for canonization in her case not long after her death in 1997. But Sweeney also uses the lives of other religious figures to explain aspects of Mother Teresa’s vocation and works. In particular, Sweeney draws comparisons to Catholic saints, including

St. Francis of Assisi, St. Therese of Lisieux, and St. John Paul II himself, while also noting resonances with non-Catholic figures such as Gandhi.

Second, Sweeney emphasizes the role of Mother Teresa's dark night. This experience, which only became public knowledge with the publication of *Come Be My Light* in 2007, began around 1950. Sweeney effectively notes how this private experience was connected with her increasingly public image as a holy figure, highlighting in many cases how knowledge of the dark night colors some of the statements in her letters and speeches. Third, Sweeney does a fine job of showing the role of technology in Mother Teresa's public image. He highlights that although she never advanced technologically beyond the typewriter herself, the spread of her vocation and the ubiquity of her image were a result of broadcast (and later digital) technologies, even describing her as "the first great saint of the television age" (xi).

Like other volumes in Liturgical Press's "People of God" series, *Teresa of Calcutta* is targeted at more of a general than a scholarly audience. Sweeney writes well in this format, having previously written the series' entry on Fr. James Martin, SJ, in 2020. The main text is a fairly brisk 132 pages that cover the full sweep of her life and includes many illuminating anecdotes without getting too bogged down into details. This biography is suitable for all readers who want an easy introduction to the life of this remarkable and contemporary saint, but those looking for a fuller account of Mother Teresa's life or for a deeper analysis of her work, theological commitments, or impact will want to look elsewhere. Happily, Sweeney does include a good set of endnotes and a brief annotated bibliography of books and films about her life that could give some direction to those looking for further resources.

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*The Karamazov Case: Dostoevsky's Argument for His Vision.* By Terrence W. Tilley. London: T&T Clark, 2023. vii + 172 pages. \$115.00.

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Rejecting the common (mis)reading of Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* as a contest between faith and reason, Tilley finds six alternative forms of life of varying degrees of reasonableness depicted in this novel. These include materialism (Ivan), sensualism (Fyodor), superstition (Fr. Ferapont), religious naivete (pilgrims), manipulation (Rakitin), and realism (Alyosha).