

means ignored, my sense is that a clear and inviting note of the Spirit's gifts of peace and joy sounds in many of Sr Delores' texts. There are often metaphors of "light" and invitations to thanksgiving and praise, e.g., "The Rising Sun Will Bless the World," "See What Goodness God Has Shown Us."

Issues of social concern are not addressed as frequently as would be the case with a Fred Kaan or a Fred Pratt Green, but when Sr Delores speaks to them, she does so from the christological center that is dominant in her theology. Christ is proclaimed as the ultimate hope of the world, the one with power to heal its brokenness and the source of the peace for which "all creation groans." In "The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve," she charges the church with its ministry as God's agent in the world.

Fine crafting has always been a characteristic of Sr Delores' texts. Her care with accent and meter must make setting her texts a joy for composers. Words are chosen with precision not only in terms of their sense but with a keen ear for how they will sound alongside or near neighboring words:

The hollow reed by wind is swayed
to beat of cosmic heart;
the pipe by Spirit's breath is played
disclosing heaven's art.

Reading through this collection has impressed me not only with the unity that binds all the verses within the whole of a text but with the unity she is able to create within each verse. Sometimes she creates the unity by a judicious use of refrains. At other times she employs the device of a similar but subtly varied line in each of the verses. Often a repeated image or recurrent word pattern provides the common thread.

The Monastery of St Benedict is fortunate indeed to have such a resident hymn writer, and we who in many places sing her texts are grateful that we can be enriched by the sharing of her gift.

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Political Worship: Ethics for Christian Citizens. By Bernd Wannewetsch. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Oxford Studies in Theological Ethics. New York: Oxford University Press 2004. Pages, xiv + 402. Hardcover, \$145.00. ISBN: 0-19-925387-0.

In the preface to this English translation of his work (German original, 1997), Wannewetsch notes how German scholarly journals have more often reviewed the book under the categories of liturgical studies or sys-

Book Reviews

tematic theology than ethics. He comments that this “curious imbalance” (vi) would seem to indicate both the way theologians frame the subject of ethics, in general, and the great challenge of engaging the philosophical-theological conversation about worship and ethics, in particular. One senses frustration in Wannenwetsch’s remarks and can only imagine that this present review, by a systematic theologian in a liturgical journal, might only contribute further evidence for the general problem, as he sees it. On the other hand, this reviewer can offer strong appreciation for the depth of scholarly sources and argumentation Wannenwetsch brings to a topic of great interest to many liturgical theologians: “to what extent worship can be seen as regulative for Christian ethics” (35).

Wannenwetsch, University Lecturer in Theological Ethics at Oxford, describes in his text what the location of those reviews confirms, namely, the extent to which theological ethics remains influenced by the Kantian and Hegelian legacies of the autonomous subject and abstract interiority coming to sacramental expression. The church’s worship and biblical word are left functioning as tools for personal ethical motivation. Wannenwetsch will have none of it. Liturgy, as the church’s ritual worship, cannot be instrumentalized if it is to serve its proper function in the entire Christian life as worship of God, as well as offer a singular resource for political-ethical theory. The key, he argues, lies in liturgy’s non-utilitarian public purpose, from which it follows that “the primary task of political ethics for the Christian churches today must be looked for not so much in political influence in particular cases or sectors, as in regaining the position *and* function of the congregation in worship, where they can develop their political form of life in accordance with the gospel” (163).

The public performance of the entire assembly in liturgical worship is central to what Wannenwetsch is arguing for and against. The church finds itself assembled by the Spirit to perform the grammar of biblical faith, the ritual enactment of the Word as an experience of revelation that interrupts all totalizing social agendas, including those of the church *ad intra* and its acceptance of a merely functional role in the structure of modern society *ad extra*. Practices of ontology are primary culprits in the church’s failure to carry out its mission of political worship. These support skewed ideologies of transformation. Clericalism continues to locate liturgical transformation in an exclusivist domain of ontologically changed sacramental objects and personages, rendering the laity liturgically and politically passive. Meanwhile, Christians across the denominational spectrum have ontologized the status of persons morally excluded from their liturgical worship, rather than practicing the church’s ancient liturgical tradition of calling members to penitence and supporting *that* transformation of spirit *within* its worshiping body. Only by undertaking liturgy

as the weekly sabbatical wherein the risk of faith meets the assurance of Scripture in a ritual practice of reconciliation can Christians accept their mission of seeking justice for the neighbor in the world. What makes Christian worship political is not the feel-good liturgical immediacy of “a morally indifferent participationalism” (165) but, rather, “the free formation of conviction in the community” (215).

Wannenwetsch’s theory aligns with that of such liturgical theologians as Lathrop, Saliers, Schmemmann, and Chauvet, although he only draws explicitly (and aptly) on Kavanagh and Wainwright. His generalized bias against political theologies leads him to miss some crucial developments in the later work of Metz and Schillebeeckx that would lend support to his arguments about liturgy as interruption and the dialectical relationship between mysticism and ethics. Setting aside such temptations to quibble, one can only commend the contribution this philosophically demanding text makes to scholarly efforts at reestablishing the ancient integral relationship between liturgy and ethics.

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