

Book Reviews

God's Quad: Small Faith Communities on Campus and Beyond. Edited by Kevin Ahern and Christopher Derige Malano. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2018. xxvi + 228 pages. \$20.00 (paper).

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In this small volume, Kevin Ahern and Christopher Derige Malano accomplish the three goals they set out in their introduction. They hope to “draw more attention to the needs and realities of the ‘student church,’... to highlight some of the ‘good news’ stories and best practices of small student groups, ... [and] to provide concrete and practical tools for student leaders and chaplains” (xx–xxii). A rich premise of their project is the recognition that Christian life is best formed and sustained in small communities. Small faith communities, which are often student led, have the ability to reach wide and diverse audiences of Catholic and non-Catholic college students just as these same students are asking big questions of belonging, meaning, and purpose. They are settings for student transformation and from which students transform the world.

The book is in four parts. Part 1 is composed of two chapters that set up the rest of the book. Ahern draws from Pope Francis’ call in *Evangelii Gaudium* for the church to take on “a missionary key.” The assistant professor at Manhattan College argues in chapter 1 that a missionary perspective is important when looking to serve college students today, who “have little access to targeted pastoral care at a critical moment in their lives” (6). Joseph Healy, an American Maryknoll missionary priest, reports in chapter 2 on several listening sessions conducted with youth in a variety of ecclesial and academic settings in eastern Africa and in the United States. These students name themes that recur throughout the book: a desire to be heard by the church; request for guidance in the face of difficult life issues; opportunities to socialize and build relationships; desire for accountability and transparency in the church; and hope to build a more just world. In these two chapters, the book expresses the desire of the Catholic Church to reach the youth and of the youth to reach the church. What follows in Parts 2 and 3 are accounts of diverse opportunities of church and youth to meet in the settings of small faith communities.

The five chapters of Part 2 give accounts of small faith communities from international settings: Italy, Peru, India, Mali, and eastern Africa. Several of these are local iterations of international organizations, and many take on a see-judge-act format in their curriculum and facilitation. Part 3 offers nine accounts from the United States. These come from small- to medium-sized Catholic colleges and universities, state schools, and elite private universities. Some efforts are supported by the college's own campus ministry offices and others by diocesan Newman Centers. There are accounts of service-learning and immersion preparation, as well as lectionary-based faith sharing. All share the commitment to faith-based formation in small groups. Finally, Part 4 offers valuable resources for those developing small faith communities.

In all, there are twenty-six contributing authors, ranging from long-term professional campus ministers to young student-leaders, each representing diverse geographic and academic locations. This diversity of voices is both a grace and a weakness of the book. The grace comes from the book doing that for which it advocates: supporting the leadership of diverse students. The weakness comes from the repetitiveness of the reports, for there are many common themes and formats used both in the United States and globally. In one respect the book's goals may have been more expeditiously accomplished if the editors chose to serve as reporting authors. The first-person reports, however, offer a sense of the freshness and hope that may to be found in this most ancient of ecclesial expressions. I commend this work as a valuable resource to those who hope to learn what is happening in various small faith communities with college-age adults.

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Interreligious Encounters: Opportunities and Challenges. By Michael Amaladoss, SJ. Edited by Jonathan Tan. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017. xxxv + 250 pages. \$45.00 (paper).

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Michael Amaladoss is one of the leading Catholic intellectuals in India today, a respected writer and teacher, talented musician, and leader in shaping the Society of Jesus in India in the past decades. He is known globally for his writing on interreligious dialogue, Christian culture and religion in India and across Asia, and the cross-cultural learning required for distinctively Indian and Asian Christian theologies. He knows the seminaries and has worked with the bishops; he is quite familiar with the Christian ashram tradition and has been director of a Jesuit center for interreligious dialogue