

torture and the role and responsibilities of professionals, both of which have emerged as key questions in our twenty-first-century culture.

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The Limits of Hospitality. By Jessica Wroblewski. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012. xvi + 168 pages. \$19.95 (paper).
doi: 10.1017/hor.2015.29

In *The Limits of Hospitality*, Jessica Wroblewski weaves together personal accounts and theological arguments to make the case for robust practices of Christian hospitality. The book is laid out in five clear chapters, followed by an afterword, with a selected bibliography and an index. Wroblewski defines hospitality as “a host’s willing and gracious reception of a guest into a safe and friendly space” (xi; emphasis in the original), which entails opening space particularly to those who are different or unfamiliar. She argues that what is most distinctive about a Christian community is not its orthodoxy or even its moral performance, but rather its orientation to hospitality, for at the center of this community is Christ, who gave of himself freely even to the point of death. Yet she recognizes that certain limits or boundaries to hospitality are necessary for it to exist at all. For example, she writes that hospitality requires that a distinction between host (the one who gives) and guest (the one who receives) be maintained, and that the host retain some kind of possession over the place of hospitality in order to be able to gift a space to the guest. Nonetheless, while recognizing these limits, Wroblewski also urges people to push themselves beyond limits imposed for the sake of their own comfort and perceived security. Moreover, always cognizant of structural injustices that perpetuate societal inequality, *The Limits of Hospitality* carefully balances its call to offer hospitality to the poor while challenging racial and economic inequalities that make such hospitality necessary.

Wroblewski is forthright about the impact the Catholic Worker movement has had on her theology and personal practices of hospitality. She also draws favorably from spiritual authors Henri Nouwen and Parker Palmer. Though she engages prominent academic authors (e.g., Jacques Derrida, Thomas Ogletree, and Hans Boersma), it is Catholic Worker and the aforementioned spiritual writers who have the greatest influence on her work. In fact, she develops the strongest elements of her book in conversation with these sources.

Her chapter on spirituality (chapter 2), in which Nouwen and Palmer figure prominently, is a beautifully crafted explanation of how the disciplines of prayer, solitude, fasting, celebration, and service prepare Christians for hospitality to others. She argues that these spiritual disciplines, which “cultivate receptivity to the Spirit of God[,] are necessary to a full and flourishing practice of hospitality” (41). In this way, she unifies the all-too-often separated internal/external, spiritual/worldly states of being, showing that a person becomes better able to live hospitably with others as she lives hospitably in her own spiritual life.

Nowhere is the influence of Catholic Worker more apparent than in chapter 5, where Wroblewski discusses the writings of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, as well as the practices of Catholic Worker communities around the country. She does not call everyone to follow exactly in the footsteps of the Catholic Worker and founders, since she realizes that people are capable of offering hospitality to different degrees. Instead, she offers Catholic Worker as a prophetic voice urging people to move beyond their comfort zones toward a more hospitable presence in their homes, churches, and even political lives. This chapter illustrates the most important points of Wroblewski’s theological arguments in a relatable format that even students not well versed in theology will understand, which makes it accessible to a wide audience.

As the title suggests, *The Limits of Hospitality* addresses the limits that people must place to make hospitality possible. However, the arc of Wroblewski’s argument challenges the excessive limits to hospitality that the privileged erect either out of fear or for their own comfort. Through well-constructed theological arguments and compelling examples, Wroblewski gently nudges her readers beyond their limitations and into lives lived in the expansive embrace of God. Because it is laced with personal illustrations that make her theological arguments accessible, the book is well suited for undergraduates and will be a valuable resource in any academic or church library. Moreover, because it challenges the status quo while being theologically and spiritually sound, this book will be valuable to graduate and divinity students who are preparing their minds and hearts for a life better lived in Christ’s hospitable grace.

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Kierkegaard’s Concept of Faith. By Merold Westphal. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014. x + 284 pages. \$35.00 (paper).

doi: 10.1017/hor.2015.30