

The Challenge of God: Continental Philosophy and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. Edited by Colby Dickinson, Hugh Miller, and Kathleen McNutt. London and New York: T & T Clark, 2020. ix + 173 pages. \$39.95 (paper). doi: 10.1017/hor.2021.33

In the preface to *The Challenge of God*, its editors state simply and rightly the importance of this volume insofar as it “bring[s] both Continental philosophy of religion and the Catholic intellectual heritage into dialogue” (ix). Gathered from the eponymous Loyola Chicago’s 2016 Hank Center conference, this collection on the whole testifies not only to the role Catholicism has played in the development of Continental philosophy, but also to the persistent viability of Catholic thought to it and the critical importance of Catholic figures in it. Such edited volumes seem to fall under one of two categories—either definitive statements of a particular school or movement or cross-sections of the conditions of the present moment. If we classify Dominique Janicaud’s classic 1992 *Phenomenology and the “Theological Turn”* (Fordham University Press) an instance of the former, *The Challenge of God* would seem to be an example of the latter.

By assembling a remarkable complement of both magisterial figures and contemporary theorists, this volume provides a valuable measure of the current state of the (predominantly Anglophone) engagement between Continental philosophy and Catholic thought. One of its main strengths is its dialogical pairing of main contributors with respondents—Peperzak with Tracy, McNutt with Miller, Horner with Molina, Caputo with McCarthy, Altizer with Kotsko, Kearney with Manoussakis—which occasions some of its more intellectually interesting moments, as well as some indication of where the conversation is moving. On this point, the responses by Molina, Kotsko, and Manoussakis are exemplary. Overall, *The Challenge of God* centers largely around phenomenology, with the notable exceptions of Caputo, Altizer, and Kearney, who each set their own respective courses.

Benson’s introduction is a splendid entrée to the conversation, rehearsing key figures, concepts, and developments. Peperzak perhaps addresses the question of the challenge of God most directly, offering a foundation for conceiving the relationship among philosophy, theology, and spirituality, outlining the main characteristics of modern philosophy, and suggesting how the figure of Jesus might offer a new horizon for philosophical thinking. Marion revisits familiar themes of God and Being, Being and beings, and gift and the event, yet concludes with a new question, namely, what happens to the question of Being when it is posed from the divine perspective. Horner turns a phenomenological eye to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, linking the Ignatian notion of consolation with Marion’s saturated

phenomena. Caputo offers a radical rethinking of tradition, biblical interpretation, pneumatology, and ecclesiology, prompted by the recent firing of a lesbian Catholic school teacher in Philadelphia, and proposes an analogous radicalization of the Catholic principle, which would intervene upon the hierarchicalism and authoritarianism he sees in the contemporary church. Altizer, ever *sui generis*, sets forth a radical agenda in which the death of God is conceived of as “epic” in continuity with the apocalyptic and antinomian yet cruciform enactments of Dante, Blake, and Joyce. Kearney presents a more synthetic, constructive mapping of his trademark themes—atheism, theopoetics, and so forth—proposing a return to the notions of God, Trinity, and Christian imagining that takes its departure from art and poetry rather than theology and doctrine.

Edited volumes are notoriously strange creatures, very often lacking the balance and vision of better monographs. Yet *The Challenge of God* is a collection of essays for which such lacunae count in its favor. It gathers instances of engagement, offers occasions for intellectual provocation, and lets its constitutive tensions and contradictions lie. Its center of gravity is certainly what one is tempted to call “Chicagoland phenomenology” insofar as it resonates with the phenomenology-forward philosophy that (thankfully) flourishes at Loyola Chicago and the University of Chicago. One might note the absence of certain developments (deconstruction, poststructuralism, psychoanalysis, Marxism, *inter alia*) and voices (Falque most notably), but a book need not be all things to all people. *The Challenge of God* should be of interest to continental philosophers, systematic and moral theologians, and would be an ideal text for upper-level undergraduates and graduate students familiar with phenomenology and the Continental philosophy of religion.

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A Prophetic Public Church: Witness to Hope Amid the Global Crises of the 21st Century. By Mary Doak. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2020. xxi + 234 pages. \$29.95 (paper).

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In 1965, the Second Vatican Council in its conciliar documents, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*, reminded the Catholic Church of its mission in the world as a sign and instrument of prophetic service. From the beginning of his papacy, Pope Francis has strongly recommended that Catholics be the public church out there in the field advocating justice for all God’s people, especially for the poor and those on the margins. In her