

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Ecumenical Quest. By Keith Clements. Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2015. xv + 328 pages. \$20.00.

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In this age of political and religious division, Keith Clements' exploration of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's engagement with and commitment to ecumenism is timely. Clements tells the intricate and complicated story of Bonhoeffer's life-long involvement with the ecumenical movement in a way not possible, and not ventured, by Bonhoeffer biographers. In so doing, he makes the strong case that the clear thread of continuity through Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life is his ecumenical work, including his rich theological reflection on the nature of the church, the relationship of the church and the state, and the role of the church, broadly and ecumenically construed, to speak to and act on international problems. Moreover, Clements argues that Bonhoeffer's ecumenical involvement is an area of Bonhoeffer studies that has been largely overlooked, and he is right about that.

As the story of Bonhoeffer's engagement in the ecumenical movement unfolds, Clements describes, in interesting detail, the meetings, connections, and friendships, and responsibilities, that Bonhoeffer amasses, while skillfully and clearly threading Bonhoeffer's important theological themes into his narrative. Clements helps readers understand how Bonhoeffer's ecumenical commitments, as well as his earnest quest to know what it meant *to be church* in the world, are grounded in his long-standing reflections about Christ existing as community and *Stellvertretung* (vicarious representative action).

Clements' account of Bonhoeffer's role in the movement follows the contours of changing political realities. Hitler's rise to power in January 1933 shifted the work of the international ecumenical community and increased its urgency. Clements cites Eberhard Bethge, Bonhoeffer's best friend and biographer: "[January 30, 1933] did not require a reorientation of [Bonhoeffer's] personal convictions or his theology, but it became increasingly clear that academic discussion must give way to action" (90). Theological reflection, for Bonhoeffer, never ceased, but the intersection of ecumenism with his involvement in the German Church Struggle and the Confessing Church cannot be overstated. In fact, Bonhoeffer was emphatic in drawing the lines of connection. Clements notes Bonhoeffer's important claim that "the German Church Struggle is the second great stage in the history of the ecumenical movement and will be decisive for its future" (168).

Clements continues to trace Bonhoeffer's ecumenical thinking to the end of his life, through the onset of war, through Bonhoeffer's deep disappointment with the churches in Germany, as a means—by way of his connections throughout the international community—to create his *Abwehr* profile, which

enabled his appointment to the German military intelligence and, consequently, his participation in the conspiracy, to his time in prison. In a beautiful paragraph at the end of his chapter titled “Ecumenism from Prison,” Clements captures Bonhoeffer’s lifelong commitment to the theology and activism of the ecumenical community. He writes of Bonhoeffer’s challenge to the ecumenical community to recognize itself *as* the church, to act on behalf of the others, to be united as the Body of Christ. Clements suggests that Bonhoeffer’s prison theology could provide the lens for this community to reorient itself to the world in just that way. “Religionless Christianity is the ultimate logic of ecumenism” (269).

To readers interested in Bonhoeffer, in ecumenism, and in peace and justice in the world, specifically the role of the church in those endeavors, I highly commend this book. Keith Clements is an accomplished Bonhoeffer scholar and long-serving general secretary of the Conference of European Churches. No one is better prepared to offer and interpret this material. In a time when many people are asking, “Is this a Bonhoeffer moment?” perhaps the better questions are “Is this an ecumenical moment?” and “How does Bonhoeffer help us affirm and understand that question?”

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Catholic Sexual Theology and Adolescent Girls: Embodied Flourishing. By Doris M. Kieser. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2015. x + 211 pages. \$38.99.

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Doris Kieser offers refreshing insight into the intersection of Catholic sexual theology and the lived experience of female adolescents. Kieser’s work with teenagers addresses a notable lacuna in the Catholic Church’s sexual theology, which presumes its moral agents have both the knowledge and maturity level of well-educated adults. They do not. To this end, Kieser’s work not only adds to the church’s treatment of female subjectivity but makes significant strides in developing a Catholic understanding of the moral subjectivity of adolescents.

The slim volume’s eight chapters cover an impressive amount of theological ground. Following an introduction, Kieser uses six chapters to develop the elements necessary for grounding the revisionist sexual theology of flourishing she offers in the final chapter. Her introduction helpfully contextualizes key concepts, lays out her methodology, and offers a practical outline for the reader. The meat of the work begins with a concise recapitulation of