

and theological thinking. Importantly, Duns' book can speak to persons in the field of education, including Catholic higher education, reminding educators that their colleges and universities should orient students toward an integrated way of life. At the end of their education, college graduates can perceive a meaningful whole and not merely matriculate with a broad general education.

Lastly, and as a humble suggestion, I hope that Duns' next book project bears a stronger Christological impression. The Christian spiritual life is Christo-centric, trinitarian, and ecclesial. Such a retrieval can advance his work on the philosophy and theology of spiritual exercises.

PETER NGUYEN, SJ  
*Creighton University*

*Joe Biden and Catholicism in the United States.* By Massimo Faggioli. New London, CT: Bayard, 2021. xiv + 161 pages. \$22.95 (paper).  
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Concurrent with his work in historical theology, Massimo Faggioli has maintained a transatlantic dialogue between the Catholic Church in his adopted country, the United States, his homeland of Italy and, by extension, western Europe, through his work as a columnist and contributor in both Catholic and secular media outlets. This book is a product of that dialogue. He uses the election of Joseph R. Biden to the US presidency as a moment to analyze the place of the Catholic Church in the United States and its linkages to shifts in the global church since the election of Pope Francis.

Faggioli introduces his book comparing Biden with the only other Catholic who held the US presidency, John F. Kennedy. Their administrations invite the question of what it means to be Catholic and a US citizen, centered on six issues: the Catholic relationship to Protestant America, US democracy, racism, debates on immigration, the role of government and the state, and debates surrounding sexual morality and abortion. Chapter 2 gives a historical survey of the evolution of this question through the lens of the experiences of the four Catholics (all Democrats) who won their party's nomination to the presidency: Alfred E. Smith, Kennedy, John F. Kerry, and Biden. Chapter 3 surveys the history of official relations between the United States and the Holy See. This historically uneasy and conflicted relationship enjoyed a strong alignment of views during the presidency of Ronald Reagan and the papacy of John Paul II based on their shared opposition to communism. This alliance ended with the elections of Barack Obama followed by Pope Francis, but the conflict of views between the United States and the Vatican

under Francis came to the fore with Donald Trump's presidency. Trump and his Catholic supporters, who believe in US nationalism and exceptionalism, political right-wingers who, unlike their grandparents and great-grandparents, have no living memory combating fascism, live in racially homogeneous suburban and rural settings, are often hostile to migrants and refugees, and are culture warriors to the point that some Catholics wish to establish enclaves and clash with Pope Francis and his worldview, which is broadly caricatured and dismissed as "leftist." Francis seeks to reorient the Roman Catholic Church to engage a world of unprecedented diversity, not centered on Europe and North America but inclusive of Asia and the Global South, and reject extreme right-wing ideologies, the culture wars, and the move toward neo-traditionalism. That sets up chapter 4, where the US church is shown to reflect and amplify the political differences of its own country. Many US Catholics, including clergy, who once held conservative interpretations of Catholic teachings, including Vatican II, have evolved into a potentially schismatic neo-traditionalist and Catholic fundamentalist faction. They hold more in common with conservative Protestant evangelicals than their fellow Catholics. Some go so far as to reject the legitimacy of Vatican II and Pope Francis himself. This split carries global import due to the institutional strength and global reach of the US church. Faggioli attempts to close the book on a hopeful note about the potential of a new synthesis on being distinctively Catholic in the United States, one that avoids the collapse of Catholic identity on the left and rejects Catholic tribalism of the right. However, Faggioli is wise to avoid overly firm conclusions in his book, leaving the reader sufficient space to contemplate where the Catholic Church is going both in the United States and globally.

Faggioli's book constitutes an exercise of in-depth journalism supported by his expertise in church history and ecclesiology. Being a first draft of church history, this book is limited to a contemporary panoramic snapshot of a still-evolving situation. Faggioli's transatlantic perspective of church history, applied to our times, makes this book a thought-provoking read. Regardless of how one receives Faggioli's arguments, few would disagree with his statement in the last chapter that these theological and political struggles will produce no winner, only losers in a split church where too many of its clergy and laity practice their faith in a state of what Faggioli describes as "soft schism."

RAMÓN LUZÁRRAGA  
*Saint Martin's University*