

Here too the discussion is insightful and instructive though, compared with its preceding chapters, less complete and at times imprecise. Most notably, the explication of Aquinas' concept of grace lacks the care and precision of the earlier sections. Such shortcomings, however, are minor blemishes and easily offset by the book's many strengths.

Doubtless, experts will judge that the authors have not fully entitled themselves to the integrationist reading they suggest. But no book of this sort can be expected to account for the strengths and weaknesses of the competing interpretations on offer. To do so would require holding forth on myriad interpretative disputes, a task which, to their credit, the authors have deliberately avoided. And yet, one wonders if the challenges to their reading run deeper than the limits set by its intended audience. Is an integrated reading of Thomas' ethics – one which gives virtue, law and grace their proper due – possible with almost no attention to Aquinas' Christology? For Aquinas, Christ, the God-man, is not only the way to but also just is the goal of human existence. So too is Christ the one from whom grace and the virtues flow. He is the moral exemplar, the legislator of the New Law and the one whose Spirit makes evangelical obedience possible. Metaphysics and action theory are undoubtedly indispensable aspects of Aquinas' moral theology. But a strong case could be made that Aquinas' Christology, not his metaphysics of nature and action theory, is the true key to integrating his concepts of law, grace and the virtues. Whatever the case, the strengths of this volume would have been enhanced by a stronger Christological focus.

Still, *Aquinas's Ethics* deserves a place among the best introductions to Aquinas. It is excellently organised, elegantly written and, unlike most other volumes of its kind, throws light on Aquinas' technical claims with recourse to numerous vivid, real-life examples. Those responsible for teaching Aquinas will, for these (among other) reasons, also find this book to be an exceedingly helpful pedagogical resource.

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doi:10.1017/S003693061000092X

Gordon S. Mikoski, *Baptism and Christian Identity: Teaching in the Triune Name* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), pp. xxvii + 253. \$30.00/£16.99.

With some peculiar exceptions in recent decades, baptismal rites of the classic churches of East and West, as well as of the Reformation, have at their core a trinitarian formula naming Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Yet the core formula should sum up the ethos of the whole rite and, beyond that, the very heart of

Christian life – namely a life in union with the Trinity. But how is this actually articulated in Christian catechesis? This is the question that Mikoski seeks to explore in dialogue with the 1993 PECUSA baptismal rite, Gregory of Nyssa, John Calvin and some contemporary insights into Christian pedagogy.

Mikoski begins by outlining the inner dynamic and trinitarian basis of the 1993 rite in the Book of Common Order, and as it is celebrated at St Peter's Presbyterian Church. There is quite commonly a gap, or at least difference, between rites in books and their actual celebration, the 'local customary', and this is an extremely helpful exposition of the rite as practised in one congregation, which for Mikoski 'begins to point towards ways by which baptism, the doctrine of the Trinity, and ecclesial pedagogy may be held together in dynamic tension'. This leads into a discussion of how this relates to pedagogy, and how Christian pedagogy works, and the relationship of belief and prayer, together with the rediscovery of the importance of trinitarian belief, from Barth and Rahner, through Moltmann and LaCuna, to Miroslav Volf.

Mikoski's conclusion to this chapter is that baptism has to do with the life and character of the church, and so does a properly conceived doctrine of the Trinity as seen in water dripping from fussing babies.

Mikoski next turns to consider the intersection of baptism, Trinity and ecclesial pedagogy in Gregory of Nyssa, on the grounds that, even if complaints against Augustinian trinitarian theology have been one-sided and exaggerated, nevertheless, the Cappadocian 'social' Trinity as represented by Gregory is a superb paradigm. A further chapter then does the same with Calvin. Drawing conclusions and insights from both, in a final chapter Mikoski paints brush strokes suggesting how St Peter's and other contemporary congregations can draw deeply on the doctrine of the Trinity and its articulation in the baptismal rite in its teaching of a Christian way of life. In Mikoski's words: 'Let ecclesial pedagogy reclaim its full-fledged status as mystagogical catechesis leading the baptized (and the communicants) into ever more fulsome apprehensions of the Triune reality that has grasped them in these sacraments'.

This is an exciting work, well written, and has a great many valuable insights which make it not only a useful work on liturgical theology, but also one which will appeal to many parish clergy. However, there are some problems of scholarship and interpretation. To begin with, it is indeed extremely important to give an example of the PECUSA rite as practised, but it would have been useful to explore the making of the rite – documented by Harold Daniels and Horace Allan. That in turn might have shed some light on the place of both neo-orthodoxy and insights from liturgical history which formed the background to the work. Second, although we have no baptismal rite authored by Gregory of Nyssa, we do have the Byzantine rite and the

Syrian Orthodox rites which help to shed some light on what Gregory may have known. Instead, Mikoski gives a generic Eastern format derived from Whitaker's collection. He also draws heavily on Maxwell Johnson's work, which is quite sound, but in contrast to his up-to-date bibliography on the thought of Gregory, he has relied on the first edition of Johnson. He ignores entirely this reviewer's own work on baptism, which in turn was used by Johnson in his revised second edition. This becomes more problematic with Calvin. Mikoski seems to have not known or totally ignored this reviewer's essay on Calvin in this journal (vol. 48, 1995, pp. 55–78) which corrected H. O. Old's account, and showed clearly the disconnect between Calvin's trinitarian baptismal theology and the Genevan liturgy. This is because Calvin used Farel's rite, and most changes were made in the explications and not in the prayers. Thus we need to know what is from Calvin and what is from Farel. It may well be that the final result illustrates Mikoski's thesis, but not to acknowledge the disconnect between Calvin's theology and Farel's liturgical antecedent seems misleading and calls into question the soundness of some of the conclusions drawn in this chapter. To the broad brush strokes in the concluding chapter, Mikoski could have added that preaching on the Trinity other than on Trinity Sunday, and on baptism other than just at baptisms, might also be important ingredients in a pedagogy for a trinitarian life. But most alarming is the suggestion that the baptismal liturgy needs to be more pedagogical. Most liturgical scholars would feel that it needs to become more doxological, because people learn their theology from prayer, not explication. Even so, this book is an important stimulus for working out a practical approach to trinitarian teaching.

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doi:10.1017/S0036930610000931

Jean-Luc Marion, *The Erotic Phenomenon*, trans. Stephen E. Lewis (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. ix + 230. £13.00.

This contribution to contemporary French philosophical phenomenology is a decisive response to the texture of love – both human and divine. Marion invites the reader to join him in this (necessarily) first-person meditation on the logic, coherence and ultimacy of love (pp. 4, 9). As an apology for love's logic, this *Phenomenon* presents itself as an amorous performance. As a demonstration of love's coherence, Marion shows that the erotic phenomenon is consistent 'all the way up' – neither *eros* and *agape*, nor any other, can divide where love unites in difference. This insight deconstructs the platitudinous division