

Stephan Krismer. Ein Glaubenspionier in bewegten Zeiten (1777–1869). Priester in Tiroler Freiheitskampf von 1809 und Klostergründer. By Johannes Laichner. (Studien zur Kirchengeschichte, 31.) Pp. 91 incl. 50 ills. Hamburg: Verlag Dr Kovač, 2017. €59.90 (paper). 978 3 8300 9793 8

JEH (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046918001653

The new book by Johannes Laichner on the priest Stephan Krismer takes the form of a short biography. Born at Christmas 1777 in the Austrian Karres near Tirol (p. 14), the young Stephan Krismer decided early to become a priest, and was ordained in 1803 (pp.16–17). The area around Tirol in this period was Catholic (p. 20) but challenged by the French Revolution and the Enlightenment (p. 22). The Hapsburgs had to cede this area to Bavaria in 1805 (p. 30). Krismer was assigned in 1807 to the parish of Arzl, close to his place of birth (p. 28). The transition to Bavarian control had brought many changes. It upset many patriots that Bavaria restricted its Christian traditions. Krismer condemned this (p. 31). His ‘Schrofe-Loch’ homily of 1808, in which he swore allegiance to Tirol’s Catholic traditions and rejected, passively and peacefully, Bavarian influence, became famous (p. 33). An uprising against the Bavarians began in Tirol with Krismer in the field as a military pastor. Initially successful (p. 36), it was finally defeated by French and Bavarian troops in November 1809 (p. 39). Continuing disturbances near Arzl, under Krismer, were put down by the Bavarians (p. 45). Krismer became famous in the Tiroler area. He did not suffer any consequences for his involvement in the uprising, but was transferred to other parishes, first to Fiss (p. 48) where, after 1830, he promoted new monasteries (p. 52). He did the same later in Kronburg (p. 56). Krismer retired to Brennbichl in 1851 (p. 60). He was much respected by the people and continued his interest in the monasteries (p. 66). He died at the age of ninety-two in 1869 (p. 68). Johannes Laichner honours Krismer as a pioneer of the faith in Tirol and as a strong promoter and patron of monasteries (p. 72); he uses a wide range of historical and archival sources to elucidate his importance as a priest of Tirol. Although the many illustrations are an attractive complement to the text, the book’s brevity means that the treatment of its subject is fundamentally superficial. Only a snapshot is given of the ecclesiastical history of Tirol and its remarkable priest. The topic should be discussed at a much deeper and wider level. Research on Stephan Krismer should continue.

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Religious renewal in France, 1789–1870. The Roman Catholic Church between catastrophe and triumph. By Roger Price. Pp. xii + 416 incl. 1 table. London–New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. £80. 978 3 319 67195 6

JEH (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046918001744

The French Catholic Church, after the revolutionary and Napoleonic decades, made a concerted effort to recover its former position of political and social supremacy. This latest instalment by Roger Price picks up the story of this remarkable reconstruction from where he left off in his first volume, *The Church and State*

in France, 1789–1870: 'fear of God is the basis of social order' (London–New York 2017). While this previous work had charted the complex relationship between Church and State in post-Napoleonic France, the volume under review is much more sociological/anthropological in its focus. It seeks to analyse how a less elitist ultramontane Church sought to reconnect with its increasingly wayward parishioners. The chapters are structured in a logical fashion, starting with an analysis of the hierarchy, moving sideways to discuss the transition to more ultramontane allegiances, while the main body of the book is composed of four hefty chapters detailing the daily realities and problems of ministering the sacraments and teaching the faith to the many heterogenous communities of France. The conclusion outlines growing anticlericalism and the Church's fragility in the face of modernity.

Price has researched deeply in the archives, and has been through dozens of dossiers from the ministries of religion, justice and education. The bulk of the material covers the Second Empire (1852–70) which makes sense as it is not very well known in terms of anglophone scholarship. This volume shows that the nineteenth-century Catholic Church in France could be viewed as a success story in terms of the growth in numbers of clergy and parishes. Yet, from a more qualitative perspective, assessing such growth is no easy matter. The archives are brimming with complaints about ignorant bigoted pastors who behaved like petty tyrants venting their frustrations and delusions of grandeur on their parishioners. The conclusion that emerges is that the need for sustained growth meant that 'bad priests were better than no priests at all'. The institution that is portrayed in these pages is one that was greedy for power and status, and deaf to calls for liberalisation in terms of politics, society and *mores*. This is a thought-provoking and well-researched book, but I did wonder whether it tended to caricature rather than reflect realities. The state archives have been mined thoroughly for negative information, while diocesan and parish records have been left untouched. Admittedly, visiting over eighty cathedral cities (let alone 40,000 parishes) would be impossible but the picture produced is slanted too much towards the disgruntled consumer rather than the satisfied customer. There is undoubtedly some mileage in this negative reading of the Catholic renewal during the nineteenth century, but one wonders whether an institution as self-referential and anti-social would have been able to grow and attract followers as steadily as it clearly did. Price's work, especially the controversial (highly speculative) section on child abuse, opens many intriguing questions which future scholars will need to address. Although this study does not exhaust the subject by any means, it is the mark of a good book that leaves its readers wanting to know more. One hopes that future PhD students and scholars will pick up the challenge, explore further and test Price's conclusions.

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Among the early Evangelicals. The transatlantic origins of the Stone-Campbell movement. By James L. Gorman. Pp. 240. Abilene, Tx: Abilene Christian University Press, 2017. \$22.99. 978 0 89112 582 2
JEH (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046918001549

Among the early Evangelicals began as James Gorman's PhD dissertation, completed in 2015 under the supervision of William L. Pitts at Baylor University in Waco,