

I find myself deeply impressed by the author's ability to grasp and to communicate the complex interdependence of the many topics needed to offer this very plausible defence of what all Christians believe, that in reading the scriptures we encounter our Creator in a unique way. I also find myself envious of Wright's manifest teaching ability, and of his students. I encourage you to become one yourself in a small way, by reading this most impressive book.

RICHARD J. OUNSWORTH OP

**AQUINAS'S ESCHATOLOGICAL ETHICS AND THE VIRTUE OF TEMPERANCE**  
by Matthew Levering, *University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana,*  
2019, pp. xi + 432, £54.00, hbk

The project of this book is an interesting one. The structure of the argument comes from the works of N.T. Wright in which are identified three dimensions of how the Bible speaks of eschatological fulfilment. These three are the renewal of the Temple, the restoration of the people, and the forgiveness of sins with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Levering seeks to map onto these three aspects the exposition of the cardinal virtue of temperance, which Aquinas gives in *Summa theologiae* II-II, qq. 141–170. Specifically, he aligns with the biblical data the various parts of temperance considered by Aquinas: integral parts (without which a virtue cannot be itself), subjective parts (which are specific forms of the virtue), and potential parts (which are virtues accessory to or allied with the main virtue).

The pattern of each chapter is then the following: a short introduction, a consideration of the biblical material relevant to the virtue or part of the virtue being discussed, a summary of Aquinas's presentation, particularly in order to see how he uses the biblical material, and a conclusion. In speaking of the renewal of the Temple, Levering treats of shame (*verecundia*) and honesty (*honestas*), integral parts of temperance. In speaking of the restoration of the people he considers abstinence, fasting, sobriety, and chastity, which are among its subjective parts. Finally, in speaking of the forgiveness of sins and the outpouring of the Spirit he speaks of the potential parts of temperance that are clemency (*clementia*), meekness (*mansuetudo*), humility, and studiousness. There are many references to other philosophers and theologians besides Aquinas, and at certain points one or another of them contributes significantly to the development of the argument, in particular John Webster to the chapter on humility and Paul Griffiths to the chapter on studiousness. But for the most part the primary sources are the Bible, Aquinas, and N.T. Wright.

The title of the book might be a bit misleading, therefore, since it is not a complete presentation of Aquinas's treatment of this virtue, far less a full

commentary on that section of *Summa theologiae*. But it is a presentation of Aquinas's moral theology as thoroughly biblical and eschatological. There are many ways in which too exclusively philosophical a presentation of Aquinas's ethics needs to be corrected by seeing more clearly not only its connection with biblical material but that the life flowing in its veins, as it were, is the grace of the Holy Spirit. This book can therefore be placed alongside other works that seek to recover a sense of the primacy of the Holy Spirit in Aquinas's moral theology, a project initiated some decades ago by Congar and Pinckaers, and being worthily carried on now by Levering and others.

More than half the book consists of endnotes to the main text. There are hundreds of notes, some paragraphs of the main text are graced with three or four notes, and some of these notes run to a page, two pages, and in at least one case three pages (n.43, pp.176-79). On the other hand, there is an excellent index which enables the reader to find their way to the material and bibliography given in the notes on particular points. So best to think of it as a book whose first half is to be read and whose second half is to be used.

The extent of reading to which the endnotes testify is obviously impressive and sustains one's confidence that the author knows what he is talking about. It is then disconcerting to begin finding mistakes (e.g. Joachim of Fiore was a Cistercian, not a Franciscan, p.19 – it is important not to confuse the Cistercian visionary with the use made of his visions decades later by 'spiritual' Franciscans) or to find no note where one would have thought it was necessary (e.g. the 'shock horror' statement that incest is 'now' legal in some European countries [p. 101] seems to imply that it is a recent development when most of the relevant laws apparently date from 1810, those laws clarifying which degrees of relationship are intended, and neither are such unions criminalized in many non-European countries).

Levering is clearly on the side of there being a 'specifically Christian ethics', to use a phrase from the recent past. It is the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount, the ethics of the inaugurated kingdom; its law is the grace of the Holy Spirit; and its practices are the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, with the infused moral virtues to which these give rise, enabling the Christian to live out the life he or she is receiving through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Stressing these aspects of Aquinas's ethics is important to counteract a tendency to reduce his work to being simply an Aristotelian ethics decorated with a few biblical references. At the same time the question remains about how to relate nature and grace in this matter. Are Christian ethics only for Christians? Obviously not, or at least obviously to Christians. Might it be that only Christians (in the true rather than nominal sense) can live up to them? That seems more plausible. What about natural law and the ability of reason (albeit fallen) to arrive at some understanding of the moral law and even at some capacity to observe it through the same virtues acquired rather than infused? Perhaps more space

should have been given to explaining the relationship between ‘acquired’ and ‘infused’ moral virtues.

It is beyond his scope to venture into pastoral theology. There is just one brief consideration of alcoholism, but clearly the areas of human experience considered – food, drink, sex, humility, knowledge, self-esteem, shame, assertiveness – are areas to which other disciplines contribute in important ways, ‘potential parts’ of moral theology as it needs to be undertaken today.

Thomas Aquinas’s work encourages us to continue exploring points of contact and mutual collaboration between scientific, philosophical and theological understandings of ethics, of the human search for happiness. Levering’s book is a valuable, thought-provoking, addition to that on-going mission.

VIVIAN BOLAND OP

**MY BODY GIVEN FOR YOU: HISTORY AND THEOLOGY OF THE EUCHARIST**  
by Helmut Hoping, translated by M.J. Miller from the second expanded German edition, *Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2019, pp. 538, \$35.95, pbk*

This book opens by observing that writers on the Eucharist either approach the topic from a theological and dogmatic point of view or from a liturgical angle. The former discuss the meaning of the Eucharist, and the latter its form. This book claims to be the first that combines the two approaches. This, however, it does not do, for the theology and the liturgy are largely dealt with separately in parallel strands rather than interwoven. In order to meet his claim, the author would have had to show more clearly how the theology of the Eucharist grew out of the liturgy in use in different ages or, conversely, how the thought of, say, the Fathers influenced the prayers of the Mass. The book is, therefore, more a history of the Eucharist, as its subtitle suggests. It is, however, a very useful history.

The book builds on a scriptural basis and works methodically through all the main stages of the development of the doctrine of the Eucharist from the Patristic age up to the Reformation. After the Council of Trent the development lies in liturgical reform up to the present time rather than in the theology of the Eucharist, although there is a useful, if short, section on contemporary views about the real presence towards the end. The author confines himself almost wholly to the Western Latin tradition, but refers to Greek Fathers in the patristic section (40 pages long), especially St John Chrysostom. He deals thoroughly with St Ambrose and successfully reconciles the realist and spiritual aspects of St Augustine’s thought about the Eucharist. Helmut Hoping seems to move more into his own field with the early middle ages, starting from a lengthy treatment of Paschasius Radbestus up to Lanfranc, but his summary of St Thomas Aquinas,