

as something that has to be obeyed at all costs. Knuckling down is the only thing he seems to think of.

For a book purporting to be about what Vatican II thought about the Church, this one fails to do anything like justice to the issue of collegiality, the discussion of which in the Council's documents has been called 'the backbone' of Vatican II, and its 'centre of gravity'. One would never know this from reading this book—the author is content to repeat the mantra that the Church is not a democracy. But not being a democracy need not lead to the view, which appears to be the author's, of the Church as some kind of Oracular System, a hierarchical institution with the Pope at the top issuing decrees and judgments to which the rest of us, and bishops most of all, are bound to submit. Whitehead is correct when he blames the culture of clericalism for its role in the sexual abuse scandal (p. 107) but it is hard to see how such a culture could be avoided in the rigorously hierarchical Church to which he subscribes. He attempts to link clerical sexual abuse with the sexual revolution and liberalism of the 1960s (p. 165) when, as a matter of historical fact, the occurrence of such abuse began long before then, and he makes the alarmist and utterly false claim that the world today is 'facing depopulation' as a result of its failure to comply with the Church's teaching on contraception (p. 146). The book is a product of the polarised Church in the US, in which the words 'radical' and 'liberal' bear only a pejorative sense, and is most likely to reinforce those on the right and confirm them in their sense of 'right'. It is unlikely to win many converts from the other side or, most unfortunately, to narrow the gap between the two.

Despite its undoubted strengths – quotations are faithful to the *letter* of the Council documents and the author's discussion of the document dealing with relations between the 'Latin' Church and the Churches in the East is all the better for being free of *parti pris* – it is not a work of reputable scholarship but a polemical tract, the true nature of which is shown when the author takes to task the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (p. 197) for failing to endorse organisations that have remained 'loyal' to the Church (such as, no doubt, Ave Maria University).

The Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University has produced some fine scholarly works, but for the sake of its reputation it should avoid polemical tracts such as this.

JOSEPH FITZPATRICK

HEAVENLY PARTICIPATION: THE WEAVING OF A SACRAMENTAL TAPESTRY
 by Hans Boersma, *William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, pp. xii + 206, \$20.00 / £12.99*

Just prior to Stephen's martyrdom, the author of the Acts of the Apostles recounts some of what we are left to believe are among Stephen's final words: 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' Some may speculate that Stephen's ability to gaze into heaven was determined by significant emotional duress, an aid in coping with his impending death. Perhaps, though, Stephen's ability is the end result of being filled with the Holy Spirit and thus sharing in a participatory experience with God.

In *Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry*, Hans Boersma, the J.I.Packer Chair in Theology at Regent College in Vancouver, makes the argument that can lead one to believe this latter explanation is the more probable in Stephen's case. Historical criticism and the reduction of theology to rational propositions have run their course, shipwrecking theological reflection upon the shores of the mere material. Evangelicals and Catholics alike are awakening to

this devastation and thus turning in greater numbers to the conviction that the 'citizenship of Christians is incompatible with attempts to turn earthly ends into ultimate concerns' (p. 4). Anyone who shares in this dissatisfaction would be well served by reading Boersma's impressive book. Although he may not offer a full set of details for the way forward, Boersma provides an indispensable framework for further reflection.

Lest I begin to give the impression that Boersma was the first to conceive of such a way forward, he would likely be among the first to contend his project is more one of recovery than anything else. In one way, his project is focused on the recovery of the wisdom of the Church Fathers. In another way, it is focused on the recovery of the wisdom of the Church Fathers by introducing evangelicals in particular 'to join *nouvelle théologie* in this journey of rediscovery' (p. 16). The bulk of Boersma's work is thus an introduction to the work of Henri de Lubac and others who labored to correct the onslaught of rational excess.

However, the purpose of Boersma's book is not limited to these introductory efforts. To his credit, he firmly believes cultivating such an appreciation will accelerate constructive relations between evangelicals and Catholics (as exemplified in the efforts Boersma and Matthew Levering are making with the Center for Catholic-Evangelical Dialogue — see www.cccedprograms.org for more details). Boersma is also quick to note he is not the first to realize the considerable promise of *nouvelle théologie* as 'John Milbank, David Grumett, Rudolf Voderholzer, and Bryan Hollon have all contributed to the retrieval of de Lubac's theology' (p. 106). However, Boersma's work is unique in the sense that he specifically targets evangelicals as the potential beneficiaries of his efforts.

For individuals not entirely convinced of the imperiled state of modern theology, Boersma commits the first half of his text to providing an exploration of what he identifies as the fraying of a sacramental tapestry. According to Boersma, the early centuries of the Christian faith witnessed the emergence of an understanding of mystery that refers 'to realities behind the appearances that one could observe by means of the senses. That is to say, though our hands, eyes, ears, nose, and tongue are able to access reality, they cannot *fully* grasp this reality' (p. 21). In the end, what many of the Church Fathers believed this reality afforded them was a 'connection with God [that] is a *participatory*, or real, connection — not just an *external*, or nominal, connection' (p. 24). This way of thinking would face two formidable challenges in the later Middle Ages in the forms of univocity and nominalism. By the time modernity had run its course the horizon of theological possibility was reduced to the mere material.

The second half of Boersma's project is thus an effort to reconnect the threads defining this sacramental tapestry. By exploring how de Lubac and some of his sympathizers conceived of the Eucharist, time, Biblical interpretation, truth, and, in the end, theology as a whole, Boersma hopes to reignite an expanded view of the world in which we live. For Boersma, this world is not simply the material reality to which we have become accustomed to thinking we have immediate access. In addition, this world is one where the material and the immaterial are permeable to the point of becoming one. In the end, theology then becomes a sacramental discipline 'in which our ordinary created existence is taken up into the truth, goodness, and beauty of the eternal Word of God and thus participates by grace in the triune life of God' (p. 174). Our understanding of the Eucharist, time, Biblical interpretation, and truth give 'direction to the process of initiation' (p. 174).

While perhaps not part of the scope of Boersma's book, he does not fully detail a constructive way forward for evangelicals. He indicates he has 'become convinced that the only faithful way forward — not only theologically but also ecumenically — is by way of a sacramental ontology' (p. 189). His reference to the ecumenical dimensions of that way forward rightfully points to blossoming

relations between evangelicals and Catholics. However, the practical details prove not to be part of what Boersma covers in his book. Tempted formally to label this void as a weakness of this book, I believe that another way to look at it is to view such a void as an invitation to others to take up Boersma's argument.

Recorded as the first Christian martyr, Stephen provides a narrative portrait of a man who accepted this calling and, in the end, asked the Lord not to hold the sins of his transgressors against them. The seemingly inconceivable quality of Stephen's request becomes conceivable when what Hans Boersma identified in *Heavenly Participation* as the sacramental tapestry is firmly in place. The modernist illusion of separation between heaven and earth is exposed. Like Stephen, evangelicals (and Catholics alike) can go forward, regardless of their circumstances with the belief that life on earth is not an end but a beginning to a larger participation in life with God. Boersma and the work of theologians such as Henri de Lubac who shaped the *nouvelle théologie* are to be commended for their contributions.

TODD C. REAM

DARWIN AND CATHOLICISM: THE PAST AND PRESENT DYNAMICS OF A CULTURAL ENCOUNTER edited by Louis Caruana SJ, *T&T Clark*, London, 2009, pp. x + 225, £17.99

2009 was a doubly Darwinian anniversary: two hundred years since the great naturalist's birth, and one hundred and fifty years since his epoch-making *The Origin of Species*. Among a great many events and publications marking the occasion, two Catholic ones stand out: the Pontifical Council for Culture's conference 'Biological Evolution: Facts and Theories', and this, the Heythrop-based Jesuit Louis Caruana's edited collection, surveying and examining 'the impact of Darwin on Catholicism' (p. 2).

Caruana is, as one might expect, careful to stake out the limits of the enquiry early on: this is not a book on evolutionary biology. It does not deal directly with the scientific content of Darwin's ideas and of his intellectual heritage. It is certainly not intended as a scientific justification of the Catholic Faith. And neither is it an attempt at making scientists change their methods and ignore pertinent data, or an attempt at making theologians discard their characteristic task, which essentially involves interpretation and historical mediation (pp. 3–4).

Disclaimers declaimed, he introduces the main areas that *are* explored, each corresponding 'to major characteristic orientations within Catholic scholarship' (p. 4): history, philosophy, and theology. (Though oddly, it is the book's latter section that is the shortest!)

As befits such a dominant and well-evidenced 'cultural paradigm' and 'megathory' – without which, in the phrase of the Orthodox geneticist Theodosius Dobzhansky, 'nothing in biology makes sense' – the chapters here are wide-ranging. We move from Pius XII and Aquinas to Teilhard and Lonergan, from ethics to economics (via cognitive anthropology), and approach intelligent design twice from different directions. Creation comes towards the end, and the book (though thankfully not the reader) concludes with suffering. Like the apparent pathways of evolution itself, this is a meandering, often surprising, and altogether stimulating journey.

Three chapters, in particular, are worthy of special comment. In the history section, Pawel Kapusta's 'Darwinism from *Humani Generis* to the Present Day' focuses importantly on the magisterium. Arguably its most significant statements to date – Pius XII's heavily qualified *Humani Generis* ('the first recognition in a document of the Magisterium [...] that some form of "evolutionism" may