

to the institutional levels of being church. This book makes a minor contribution: where it shines a light on lessons we can learn from the past, all must take heed; where it falls short, it signals to academics and students, church officials and pastoral ministers—ordained, vowed, and laity alike—how much work remains. The abuse of minors is not a problem of the past and does little to help us better understand the causes and effects of the abuse of adults, which continues today. There is still much more research and writing to be done to advance the transparency, accountability, and prevention that are often promised but rarely delivered. This anthology fills in some gaps and points to evidence of needed ecclesial reforms to ensure the church can be a safe space for all. May it spur a wave of new and better scholarship from all parts of the globe.

MARCUS MESCHER

*Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH, USA*  
[mescherm@xavier.edu](mailto:mescherm@xavier.edu)

*Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching.* By Theodora Hawksley. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020. x + 324 pages. \$42.00 (paper).  
 doi: 10.1017/hor.2023.30

Forty years ago, the US Catholic bishops released their 1983 peace pastoral, *The Challenge of Peace*. Emerging out of the depths of the Cold War, the letter is perhaps best remembered for introducing Catholics to the idea that they had “two distinct but interdependent methods of evaluating warfare”: pacifism and the just war theory. While many initially celebrated this newfound recognition of pacifism, in the decades since, this embrace of theological pluralism has led to debates between proponents of each position. It has even been suggested that these debates have all too readily taken on the tone of “culture wars” between left- and right-leaning Catholics, each insisting that their viewpoint is the most—or only—faithful path. This has led a growing number of Catholic scholars and activists to look for a kind of third way between pacifism and the just war theory. It is as such a third way that Catholic peacebuilding has begun to taken on momentum. Theodora Hawksley’s recent publication, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, is the latest contribution.

For those unfamiliar with this new momentum, advocates of Catholic peacebuilding argue that it offers a corrective to what they see as pacifism’s more sectarian tendencies, which prevent it from being a responsible (in the Weberian sense) Christian position and also as a corrective to the just

war theory, which they see as being too at odds with gospel nonviolence. As Hawksley explains, peacebuilding encourages dialogue and mediation between parties in conflict; it facilitates negotiations between military and political leaders, and seeks to transform inhumane social, political, or economic structures. In short, for Hawksley, peacebuilding names a “collection of strategies and practices aimed at fostering a sustainable, dynamic, and just peace” (7). That said, the relationship between peacebuilding and “just peace,” another often discussed alternative, remains an open question—for while the latter firmly rejects any use of violence, the peacebuilding approach seems much more open to its (limited) use.

Hawksley presents her account of peacebuilding over seven chapters. The first two chapters offer an account of the historical and theological development of Catholic thinking about peace, while the remaining five chapters explore ways that various themes within Catholic social teaching can be applied to peacebuilding. These include chapters on accompaniment, solidarity, social sin, reconciliation, and a final chapter on the desire for peace, which Hawksley describes as a core conviction of Catholic social teaching “that all people genuinely desire peace and that all conflicts are therefore resolvable by reason and dialogue” (13). Hawksley also peppers these chapters with encouraging real-world examples of contemporary attempts at peacebuilding in the face of conflicts throughout the world.

One caveat: missing from *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, as it often is in discussions of Catholic peacebuilding, is any account of the rise of the modern nation-state and Randolph Bourne’s clear-eyed observation that “war is the health of the state.” This lacuna is problematic given at least some recognition of the nature of the modern state (and the “migration of the holy” that followed in its wake) would foster more skepticism regarding dialogue and negotiations with state actors—a skepticism that Dorothy Day articulated when she wrote (citing Trotsky), “Those who seek to win the state will be won by the state.”

Despite this, Hawksley provides a helpful theological reflection on Catholic thinking and practice on war and peace, suitable for both undergraduate and graduate students. And in a time of cyberattacks, drone warfare, and the ever-increasing possibility that some kind of nuclear war will be the end result of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, such reflections are more necessary than ever.

BENJAMIN PETERS

*University of Saint Joseph, USA*

*bpeters@usj.edu*