

this. For instance many physicists are willing to speculate that there are trillions of parallel universes with different constants of physics rather than concede that the anthropic principle implies any final causality. But if one is not willing to accept such radical solutions, contemporary science does seem to make Aristotelian notions of causality rather more plausible.

With this fuller understanding of causality, Dodds argues that it is once again becoming philosophically tenable for scientists to embrace Thomistic theology: God is totally transcendent but is also immanently present; God does not compete with nature, but gives things their nature; God is not one cause among many, but causes causality. Dodds goes on to discuss divine action in the context of providence, prayers and miracles. Something on divine action in the context of the sacraments would have been interesting, but Dodds does not discuss this.

Despite the new openness that contemporary science presents to theology, Dodds observes that many contributors to the science and religion debate continue to think of causality in terms of the old Newtonian paradigm. Rather than seeking a fuller understanding of causality that is compatible with traditional theism, modern scientific discoveries are instead interpreted in a way so as to explain how God might act as an efficient cause in the world without violating the laws of nature. For example, the indeterminacy in quantum mechanics could give God space to act without getting noticed. Dodds goes to some detail in explaining such approaches, but he also highlights the great difficulties they can entail. Indeed, these approaches are heavily dependent on a particular scientific interpretation, and so if a more convincing scientific interpretation should present itself, belief in God could be undermined. Also these approaches are usually incompatible with traditional theism and they tend to lead to notions such as pantheism, process theology or a self-limiting God. By clearly highlighting these dangers and presenting a viable alternative, Dodds makes a valuable contribution to the science and religion debate on divine action.

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**AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY: LEADERSHIP, MISSION AND LEGACY** by Robin Mackintosh, *Canterbury Press*, Norwich, 2013, pp. 192, £10.50, pbk

In *Augustine of Canterbury: Leadership, Mission and Legacy*, the Reverend Canon Robin Mackintosh, who for the past two decades has run a popular training programme on ecclesiastical leadership, concisely delivers a meticulously-researched history of the mission from Rome that founded the English Catholic church at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> Century. Politicians, kings and military commanders of that eventful time may have left broader, deeper trails of historical evidence, but Mackintosh demonstrates that Augustine of Canterbury did more to shape modern England than any other figure in the pre-medieval era.

The author skilfully draws from the scant historical record profound insights on what it means to be a successful leader, in both Augustine's time and now. Mackintosh's story of Augustine's mission shows us that for any organisation to subsist, it must possess in equal measure two key attributes. First, it must pursue and attain a visionary, collective purpose. Secondly, it must have strong coherence as a community. (An organisation without either attainment or community, or which temporarily loses one or the other, risks dissolution; its former members will simply seek out a more promising group to join.) Successful leadership thus

comprises a ceaseless effort to promote, by decisiveness and persuasion, a balance of both visionary attainment and community coherence.

Augustine's mission started, of course, with Pope Gregory the Great. In Gregory's time, the papacy was suffering a diminishing power base, as loyal followers of Catholicism on the Italian peninsula were confined to Rome, Naples and Ravenna and, further afield, to Constantinople and parts of modern-day Spain, North Africa and France. Rome and its environs in the 590s were twice besieged by Lombard conquerors, a Germanic tribe of Arian Christians who spurned orthodox Catholic Creeds and punitively taxed the rural peasantry, many of whom fled to the cities for protection.

Pope Gregory, driven by a belief that these were truly the 'last days', established St Andrew's monastery on the Caelian Hill in the ancient city, where Augustine was made prior. Far from seeing monastic life as a way to withdraw from a troubled world, Gregory believed that only a dedicated, monastic-style devotion to God and prayer could offer the world any future.

When Bertha, the Frankish Catholic bride of the pagan King Ethelbert of Kent, solicited Pope Gregory's help in the Catholic conversion of her subjects, the foundations were laid for Augustine's historical success as the founder of the English Church. The monastic life at St Andrew's gave healthy coherence to Augustine's little band of missionaries, while Rome's accelerating decline and periodic sieges gave urgency to his mission to extend the faith to fresh horizons. Augustine, who had experience as an organiser of charity for Rome's poor and as a confidante and advisor to the Pope, possessed precisely the skills needed to deliver such a mission, while at the same time being practised in the monastic ways needed to preserve the unity of the missionaries.

Mackintosh reveals, in a masterful unfolding of fascinating characters and historical contexts, precisely what happens to Augustine's band of missionaries after it leaves its Roman cloisters to venture across the turbulent landscape of rival Franks, eventually to reach Ethelbert's pagan stronghold in the distant North. At every stage of this perilous journey, Augustine manages to sustain that critical balance between attainment and community – for example, when he secures support and resources for his companions through diplomatic meetings with Queen Brunhild and her princes, when he diverts the travellers to Tours to recruit interpreters for addressing the Anglo-Saxons (and to learn more about the heritage of his patroness Bertha), and when he engineers a risky but vital meeting in Paris with Brunhild's deadly rival, Clothar II. Augustine carefully intersperses these political intrigues with monastic and episcopal visits sufficient to sustain the group's spiritual cohesiveness and earn the prayers of well-wishers.

On arrival in England, Augustine continues to strike the necessary balance – for example when he enlarges Bertha's Church of St Martin's so it can serve as both the mission's spiritual headquarters and a venue fit for a king's baptism, and when he converts the aristocracy by accompanying the king on his frequent royal rounds while trusting the other missionaries to preach to the peasantry across villages, farms and hamlets. So successful was Augustine's tactical leadership of his mission, and so quickly was the English conversion accomplished, that within a year Augustine petitioned Rome to send a second wave of resources and reinforcements to Kent.

Alas, no organisation is invincible, and there is a natural limit to all human enterprise. For organisations will inevitably overextend themselves, only to be thwarted by stronger and more wilful rivals with their own visionary attainments and loyal communities. Thus, when a few years later King Ethelbert accompanies Augustine to Wales in a joint effort to convert the Saxons – but then fails to win their support – both the Kentish king and his pioneering Archbishop suffer the mortal consequences.

But there is another, less prosaic dimension to the tale of Augustine's mission and leadership. Mackintosh tempers his gripping secular plot with the part played by Christian faith itself. As a spiritual leader, not only as a leader of men, Augustine bound his mission and his organisation together through faith. As Augustine well knew, faith underlies leadership – by giving both meaning to attainment and values to the community. For Augustine, effective leadership was the means, but faith was the end. Indeed, regardless of the ups and downs of Christian leadership in the intervening centuries, it is Augustine's faith that has most shaped this nation's history, and it is faith, more than mission, that has most endured.

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