

Reviews

CANONIZATION. THEOLOGY, HISTORY, PROCESS edited by William H. Woestman OMI, *St Paul University, Ottawa, 2002, Pp. xvi + 384, US \$37.50 hbk.*

When working in Rome in the 1950s, Cardinal William Heard, the distinguished Scottish canonist, preferred to deal with marriage annulments in the morning and causes of canonization in the afternoon. He found the canonisation causes less depressing because even the failed candidates had at least tried to be good. Even more positively, Fr Woestman admits in the foreword of this publication that his own involvement in a number of causes of canonisation has always been a most rewarding and spiritual experience. It also brought home to him how very little there is in English to assist postulators and the officials for diocesan inquiries in such causes. Hence this book, which provides in English something comparable to the works by Fabijan Veraja and Romualdo Rodrigo.

Woestman, for many years professor of canon law at Ottawa (Canada), has published or edited a number of valuable books. His hallmark could well be described as thoroughness, mastery of the sources, and an emphasis on making accessible important but not always easy to find documentation. All these qualities are present in this volume on canonisation. The first part of the book presents and discusses the theology, history and canon law of canonisations, while the second part consists of documentation.

As well as Woestman himself, a number of recognised experts on the law and practice of canonisation contribute the various separate sections that form the first part of the volume. This is a somewhat mixed set of contributions, including the *praenotanda* from the Roman Martyrology and three documents from Pope John Paul II. Mgr R.J.Sarno, a long-serving official in the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, contributes a theological reflection, an account of the meaning of an heroically virtuous life, and then a lengthy explanation of the canonical procedure for canonisation at both the diocesan and Roman stages. We can note his cautious statement (p.9) that 'the majority of theologians' considers canonisation to be an act of the infallible magisterium of the Supreme Pontiff. Sarno's canonical commentary is full, reliable, combined with a helpful sense of historical development, and will surely become a standard guide even beyond the English-speaking world.

Given their relevance for doctrine and for practice, it is worth drawing attention to some aspects of the study of alleged miracles. Where miraculous healings are reported, after medical experts have given their

opinion, it is for the theological consultors to assess the direct and immediate connection of cause and effect between the intercessory petition of the servant of God and the inexplicable recovery. Sarno adds no comment at this point (p.132), but the editor inserts a footnote concerning the problem of to whom a miracle should be attributed when more than one person is appealed to. This topic needs further reflection, especially as the Congregation's regulations (Art.69) require a judgment 'on the singleness of the invocation'. This is not mentioned here. It would also have been helpful to discuss in the book the acceptability or otherwise of a 'moral' as opposed to a physical miracle.

The remainder of the first part of this book contains various items, chiefly: a brief history of canonisation by Fr Yvon Beaudoin; an account by Woestman of the codification of the norms for canonisation and post-Vatican II legislation; a contribution by Abp Edward Nowak, Secretary of the Congregation, on the new evangelisation with the saints; and two contributions from Fr James FitzPatrick, one being a very useful glossary of terms. The historical section by Beaudoin is over-sketchy, and does not refer to the standard books by Eric Kemp and André Vauchez. Indeed, the select bibliography as a whole needs improving.

The longer, second part of the volume contains in six Appendices the essential documentation on canonisation. All the texts are given in reliable English translation, sometimes with the Latin or Italian originals. There are key pontifical documents, examples of documents from causes, a summary of the offices and duties of the key persons in diocesan inquiries, the documents to be included in or attached to the acts, forms for the various procedural acts and, finally, various questionnaires. The fact that the current law on canonisation is virtually all to be found outside the 1983 Code of Canon Law adds to the significance of this documentation. It was different under the 1917 Code. There continue to be refinements and clarifications, as when the Congregation stated in 1999 that postulators or vice-postulators must not be present when witnesses are examined in diocesan inquiries, and that the questionnaires must not be shown to such witnesses before their depositions. The first ruling will have come as a surprise in some dioceses and even for some canonists.

This important collection of authoritative material is given added interest by the inclusion of a number of documents from actual causes. There is, for example, the biographical report on the life, virtues, reputation for sanctity and intercessory power of Mother Teresa of Calcutta (d.1997). This will of course interest many people, and her widespread fame helped justify dispensation from the norm that excludes opening a cause sooner than 5 years from death. Appendix II also contains the decree on the heroic virtues of Cornelia Connelly (d.1879), a less well-known but fascinating figure and one of the few modern causes of canonisation from Britain of someone not a martyr. Due to the 'special condition' of the Catholic Church in England, her cause could only start in 1959.

It is heartening to learn from Abp Nowak that during the pontificate of John Paul II, up to November 2001, his Congregation has worked on no less than 1735 beatifications and canonisations. In part, this achievement is due to the more rapid examination of causes made possible by the changes in canon law and procedure now so thoroughly presented in English.

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CHRISTIANITY AND THE RELIGIONS. FROM CONFRONTATION TO DIALOGUE by Jacques Dupuis SJ ,translated by Phillip Berryman [Italian original pub. 2001], *Orbis Books, Mayknoll/ DLT, London, 2002, PP. xii + 275, £20 pbk.*

Six years ago Fr. Jacques Dupuis's major book, *Towards a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (1997)—simultaneously published in Italian, French, and English - 'provoked' a three year investigation by the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith. Even without this publicity, the book's impact was already assured as Dupuis is a major figure in the debate on the theology of religions. The outcome of the CDF investigation led to the publication of a 'Notification' in 2001, signed by Dupuis. It did not require him to change the text but publicly indicated his 'assent' to eight doctrinal theses, which were allegedly obscured in the book. (The topics of the eight theses concern the sole and universal salvific mediation of Jesus Christ, the unicity and completeness of revelation of Jesus Christ, the universal salvific action of the Holy Spirit, the orientation of all human beings to the church, and the value and salvific function of religious traditions. In short, trinity and ecclesiology.) The CDF required the Notification be included in any reprints or new editions. I wrote a long review of the book and had found a number of issues slightly unclear, regarding Christology, but mainly ecclesiology. This would be expected with any good academic book. Reader's interested in the debate sparked off by Dupuis' book should consult a very long and detailed reply by Dupuis to his critics in the journal, 'Louvain Studies' (1999, pp. 211-63). This response (and personal correspondence) convinced me that most of my concerns were misplaced, apart from one. More of this below.

The present book here reviewed, is in part a revised, more popular version of the earlier book, as well as being quite different in containing new chapters and different angles on old materials. The basic argument of the book, for those not familiar with Dupuis, is as follows. He is dissatisfied with exclusivism (expressed as 'no salvation outside the church') and its opposite, pluralism (all religions are more or less equal paths to salvation). He is also critical of early forms of inclusivism (implicit faith, or natural religion), and wants to move to what he calls an 'inclusive pluralism'. This is a new development of Karl Rahner's approach, emphasising more the