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Review: 'Sacraments and Sacramentality'

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may even be contemptuous of them. Further he recognizes that in much of the world Christianity confronts a vigorous new "secular religion" called Marxist-Leninism. These features of the book make it extremely appropriate for seminary use in courses or units of study on ecclesiology, polity, and church in society.

The weaknesses of the volume have to do with the scope of the study. Reference is made to the "third stream" of church history: namely, the "free church" traditions. But there is little sustained discussion of these traditions, which are in fact more influential in American history and in many of the "third world" countries than classical Catholic and Reformation doctrines of the continental heritage. Further, some quasi-Marxist motifs seem to have a decidedly different resonance outside the north-Atlantic community than it does in western Europe and North America. "Solidarity with the poor" is rapidly becoming an article of faith for the authentic church. And, finally, Pannenberg only hints at what ecumenical discussions with other world religions might entail, yet these are having quiet repercussions in intra-Christian dialogue around the world. Until these motifs are more fully comprehended, Pannenberg's call for ecclesiological consolidation must surely be evaluated as a positive, but probably premature, contribution.

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MAX L. STACKHOUSE

Sacraments & Sacramentality. By Bernard Cooke. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third, 1983. 251 pages. \$7.95 (paper).

The mid-sixties saw the appearance of Bernard Cooke's significant college text, *Christian Sacraments and Christian Personality*. In the mid-seventies Cooke published his monumental work, *Ministry to Word and Sacraments*. Fortunately, we have not had to wait long in the eighties for his latest contribution to the ongoing development of sacramental theology.

The book's title *Sacraments & Sacramentality* suggests the basic theological approach that the author has taken. The entire life and activity of the Christian community is sacramental. In each of the areas of Christians' sacramental activity, sacramental liturgies play a special role. The effectiveness of these liturgies both depends upon the wider sacramentality of Christians' lives, and in turn is essential to that sacramentality being realized. This basic premise shapes the entire book.

The first six chapters establish the connection between human experience and sacraments. Cooke probes what it means to be human and to be transformed as a human person. He then shows how the meaning that we give to life is shaped by our "hermeneutic of experience," that is, "a set of principles, insights and critical judgments that equips us to interpret our experience in a more accurate and more profound way" (p. 31). Jesus instituted the sacraments not by initiating certain religious rituals, but by giving to the entirety of human experience a new significance, because he lived, died and rose into new life under the impact of God's intimate presence.

The next fourteen chapters of the book treat of each of the seven sacraments in turn. There are two unique characteristics of these chapters that sets them apart from the ordinary book on sacraments.

First, Cooke begins not with baptism but with Christian marriage. "Perhaps the most basic sacrament of God's saving presence to human life is the sacrament of human love and friendship" (p. 81). Among the various types of human friendship and personal love, the relation between husband and wife has always been recognized as a paradigm of human relationship and love.

Second, in treating each sacrament Cooke describes with copious concrete examples the human experience to which the sacrament is related. To cite just one example, his description of the diverse individual and systemic ills that plague the human condition dramatically underscore the place that the sacraments of healing have in the life of a Christian.

For years to come, this book will be an indispensable source for college professors and adult religious educators engaged in the task of helping people understand the place of sacraments in their Christian lives. *Sacraments & Sacramentality* is non-technical enough to be accessible to undergraduates and the wider audience of adult Christians. It is profound enough to challenge the thinking of academicians and graduate students. For the latter, a comparative study of this book with Bernard Cooke's earlier work, *Christian Sacraments and Christian Personality* could prove to be an exciting way of tracing the development of the author's sacramental theology over the past two decades. The findings would serve as a barometer for understanding the Church's own theological journey in this area as we move toward the twenty-first century.

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WILLIAM P. ROBERTS

Marriage: Sacrament of Hope and Challenge. By William P. Roberts. Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1983. 136 pages. \$4.75 (paper).

The spirituality of marriage is the theme of this book. That statement can be deceptive. For this slender volume is more practical than poetic. Although ethical issues are omitted holiness in marriage is sketched with precision and clarity. There are no psychological theories nor jargon, yet there is an abundance of wise insight into personal development of communications skills and affection.

Professor Roberts of the University of Dayton weaves scriptural texts and themes into a very hopeful presentation of marriage. The reader is challenged to reflect, and will probably want to add case histories to illustrate the very compact text. In one sentence the marital union is identified as a process never completed (p. 8). In single sentences the husband/wife union is said to preclude both one person dominating the other, and the merging of two personalities into a composite (9). Perceptive readers will add confirming examples to flesh out these terse observations. In fidelity, we read that the "third party" can be TV, job, or children (21). In advising hesitancy in assigning blame for marriage failures the author appropriately notes that "Human responsibility is not synonymous with human culpability" (23). The vocation to parenting and to ministry is so deftly sketched that there is little shock when the question is posed concerning parents baptizing their own children (81). A whole theology and psychology of economics is found in the pregnant statement: "... in a marriage money is often a key to power" (128).