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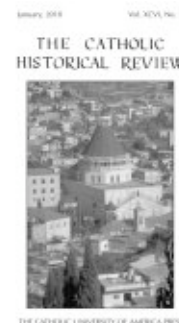
God Knows There's Need: Christian Responses to Poverty

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shepherds. From that point onward, the image had become famous as that of the miraculous injured Virgin. The Carmelite, in turn, showed the image to the duke and urged him to avenge the injury done to God and his mother. Likewise, the Viennese called on the Weeping Madonna of Pötsch to secure victory over the Turks in 1697. Schreiner convincingly shows how military violence tapped into, was coincident with, and borrowed from the behaviors of religious rituals.

Overall, the fact that these scholars (and others in the volume) combine historical and anthropological insights to analyze religious phenomena is attributable in large part to the inspiration they drew from Trexler's work.

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STEVEN G. REINHARDT

God Knows There's Need: Christian Responses to Poverty. By Susan R. Holman. (New York: Oxford University Press. 2009. Pp. x, 206. \$29.95. ISBN 978-0-195-38362-1.)

The poor, always with us, are rediscovered at times of major socio-economic shifts. In the last decades, a huge international body of literature has developed on the history, roots, and effects of poverty. Academics, however, feel safest when they focus on historical, sociological, political, and economic studies, but this does not occur in Susan R. Holman's study. Her interweaving of history with "cross-disciplinary and ecumenical bridges" of "sensing need, sharing the world, and embodying sacred kingdom" (p. 15) echoes the motivation of Gerhard Uhlhorn's magisterial study of the history of Christian charity "to awaken and to further the works of Christian love in wider circles" (*Die christliche Liebestätigkeit* [1895], p. 3).

Holman, a patristic scholar (*The Hungry Are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia* [New York, 2001]), combines historical and personal narratives to connect "early Christian responses to need, justice, relief, and poverty with modern responses to those issues in Christian tradition today" (p. 2). Her historical narrative includes St. Clement of Alexandria, the Cappadocians, and St. John Chrysostom as well as lesser known figures such as Euphemia of Amida and her daughter Maria, Jacob of Sarug, and Rabbula, among others. Her personal narrative is informed by her experience of working in a government-funded inner-city program. Physically and spiritually exhausted by daily confrontation with the overwhelming needs of low-income women and children, Holman chanced upon St. Gregory of Nyssa's sermon "On the Love of the Poor." She quit her job, enrolled in graduate studies, and pursued the question of how people in the early Church responded to the needs of the poor.

Holman's conviction that early church texts directed to social issues are valuable resources for us includes her warning that such texts require critical reading. Thus she provides a proficient discussion of the hermeneutics of his-

tory and languages with attention to differing views of social justice and gender relations. Her solid academic work enhanced by engaging personal narrative will be appreciated by both those in academe and those laboring in the vineyard of ecclesial- and government-sponsored social welfare programs. For the latter, this is also a book of pastoral care, for it reminds us that we are not the first concerned for the least among us. Holman also reminds us that our perception of the needs of others is influenced by our own needs including personal limits and the limits of resources. Examples from the early Church provide “permission to sometimes say no” (p. 152). Respecting limits “is necessary advice, especially for women drawn to Christian social action who are trained, as women often are, in utter self-negation” (p. 39). Her discussion of the Orthodox view of care for the needy as the liturgy after the liturgy, “liturgy *as* social gospel” (p. 163; emphasis in original), anchors her perspective. One of Holman’s strengths is avoiding the easy path of exhortation, “must-y” sermonizing, using instead her historical resources as means of proclamation, “embodying sacred kingdom” (chap. 8).

Her discussion of the transition from the early church to today is rather cursory. There is no mention of the modern blossoming of social welfare in Catholic caritative orders and Protestant diaconal movements, nor are we alerted to the dangers of medieval and modern ideologizing of the patristic insight into the reciprocity of the needs of rich and poor; a development that stretched from objectifying the poor as the means to gain heaven through alms, then as an object of philanthropy, and finally as a cheap labor pool. But readers always ask more of good books than their authors intended.

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Ancient

Ignatius of Antioch: A Martyr Bishop and the Origin of the Episcopacy. By Allen Brent. (New York: T&T Clark, Continuum. 2009. Pp. xii, 180. \$44.95 paperback. ISBN 978-0-567-22264-0.)

Aimed at the nonspecialist reader, this book reprises the main insights of a number of Allen Brent’s more technical monographs composed for the scholarly community, especially *The Imperial Cult and the Development of Church Order* (Boston, 1999) and *Ignatius and the Second Sophistic* (Tübingen, 2006). These volumes take up the genuine Ignatian correspondence as it relates to its imperial, political, and cultural contexts, and they set an exciting and innovative course that will redefine Ignatian studies for the foreseeable future. Brent offers an invigorating picture of a complex historical figure whose letters can often appear arcane and bewildering to a modern reader. It is a book many will find difficult to put down. With freshness and creativity Brent sketches a vivid historical narrative of St. Ignatius and his innovative role in the emergence of the threefold office of bishops, elders, and deacons as the chief form of early Christian leadership.