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context of sacrificial love that it may be extended to those who cannot contribute to one's own fulfilment. The family is not so much a place to apply negotiating skills as it is for learning those sacrificial virtues and practices which gives love its greatest breadth and depth. It is telling that the authors have nothing to say about how a family is enabled to love one of its members with whom no mutuality can possibly be established or restored. There are tragic circumstances when the *only* method of expressing marital or familial love is through self-sacrifice.

Moreover, contrary to the authors' contention that self-regard promotes mutuality, it would appear again that the reverse is true. Despite frequent references to mutuality and equal regard, their family remains a collection of individuals or parallel relationships rather than an association in its own right. There are few, if any, images of the family as a community greater than the sum of its parts. The good of the family is a composite of the individual goods comprising it so that mutuality is justified because it promotes the well-being of those individuals sharing various familial relationships. This is exhibited in basing a familial covenant primarily upon empathy in which family members come to value the 'ultimate worth' of these personal stories. But this means they have nothing to say about how the narrative identities of two spouses may become the single story of their marriage, or how personal stories of parents and children may become the narrative identity of their family, or how this familial narrative may become enfolded into God's story of a redeemed creation.

If the family can be little more than the composite of its individual members, however, then the only avenue open to the authors for uplifting marriage and the family within the public arena is to claim that in their absence children tend to suffer. The book adopts this narrow approach by distilling Christian principles to a plea for better child-rearing, but in doing so it does not so much discover a common ground as create an empty space, begging to be filled by a richer and deeper mode of theological discourse.

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Christian Social Witness and Teaching, by Rodger Charles, SJ. 2 vols. Leominster: Gracewing, 1998. 472 + 497 pp. pb. £20 each vol. ISBN 0-85244-460-5/461-3.

Essentially this work is a synopsis of modern official Roman Catholic social thought with an introductory volume offering a reading of Scripture and history to show how modern teaching 'represents its maturing' (Vol. 1, xiv). 436 pages are devoted to the

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last century of teaching, while the entire period from biblical times to the late nineteenth century is condensed into 373. In forty pages at the beginning Charles surveys the political, economic and social teaching of the Old and New Testaments, sometimes with little more than a highlighting of scriptural texts and themes to which later teaching has appealed (most notably justice and love). Inevitably this has tendentious results. There is an anachronistic retrojection of later political concepts into Scripture (e.g. 'individual property rights' [19] and 'the State') and poor handling of contentious subjects. Charles assumes that 'Christ's mission was religious, his kingdom spiritual' (28) and concludes that 'he had rejected politics' (36). So the 'Render' saying shows that Jesus 'respects Caesar and accepts his rights, but he balances this by saying that God has his rights also', and therefore 'foretold the tensions that would remain in the Church's relations with the State' (34). More specifically, though 'Christ's refusal to use violence had political implications' (37) and 'the strong recommendation to pacifism present in Christ's own example . . . remains a distinctive mark of the Gospel', he concludes, without explanation, that 'where circumstances require it a Christian may choose the other way; it is not an imperative binding on all' (38). Despite the constraints of space, a page is devoted to the immaculate conception of Mary and her status as Queen of Martyrs and Evangelists. Part One of Volume 1 concludes with two chapters on the early Church's social witness and teaching. The Church's success was rooted in her moral virtues (especially practical acts of charity) and her skill in organising social care as the imperial system disintegrated. Signalling a recurring theme, Charles argues that the early Church's greatest contribution to the Western political tradition was the challenge to the state's power arising from her belief in freedom (72–73).

Parts Two and Three split the remaining history into two eras: Western Christendom (604–1500) and 'the marginalisation of the Church in the modern world (1500–1878)'. The general thesis is clear: although Christendom had its failures, these need to be judged within a full historical context (e.g. the Crusades and the Inquisition [153–154]; slavery [223–226]), and it deserves much more credit than it often receives. Indeed, he believes that 'man needs a true vision to guide the social order if it is to serve his needs properly, and it can be argued that that of Christendom was as good as any offered to him before or since' (158). The rejection of the Church's teaching is a major cause of many of the modern world's evils. Yet it is more difficult to ascertain the rationale behind much of the specific content. There are comparatively detailed accounts of particular issues such as the historical events surrounding American independence (276–280) and the politics and economics of the industrial revolution (299–317) but, by contrast, an astonishing failure to deal even briefly with the social witness and teaching of the Reformers

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and Protestant Churches. (Luther is mentioned only in passing, and it is asserted that 'the main thrust of Lutheran political theory . . . was to encourage and legitimize absolutist monarchies' [245].) The limited treatment or total omission of key thinkers and events such as Giles of Rome, John of Paris, Wycliffe, John of Salisbury and the Franciscan debates on property and poverty is equally perplexing.

The historical volume is intended to contextualise the subsequent summary and analysis of modern teaching, but it is hardly a success. Specific connections between the two volumes, however, are often difficult to see. It would be difficult to find reasons for preferring Volume 1 to other possible sources as a general introductory text for those who know little history; yet if a detailed study of a particular period, thinker or theme is sought, the discussions are too brief (e.g. a single paragraph on Augustine's view of 'the State' [81]), often fail to quote or reference the key primary texts (e.g. *Defensor Pacis*) and rarely interact with detailed secondary literature (e.g. Viner's study of the history of Christian economic thought, which is never cited).

Fortunately, Volume 2's stated aim — 'providing an exhaustive and balanced treatment [of the Catholic tradition] . . . and providing a coherent analysis which the reader could see was tied to the texts . . .' (Vol. 1, xv) — is more manageable and more successfully accomplished. Charles knows the modern social teaching as well as anyone, and as a convinced adherent offers a careful, sympathetic and thorough treatment of some thirty-four major documents. The volume presents a chronological account beginning with Leo XIII (whose *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 is the fountainhead of later documents) and ending with Pope John Paul II's *Centesimus Annus* issued in 1991. Sadly this means there is no account of important recent texts such as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992) and *Veritatis Splendor* (1993). Most chapters follow a common pattern, opening with illuminating background material on the individual pope, key aspects of his pontificate and the wider historical context. At their heart is Charles' detailed summary of the major texts (often paragraph by paragraph) concluding with an analysis of that pope's social teaching, organising the material under the three headings: ethics and civil society, ethics and political society, ethics and economic society. Together with the similarly divided final chapter, these conclusions are the most informative and valuable parts of the book, providing an accessible and accurate treatment of this important Christian ethical tradition.

Taken as a whole, the volume shows the significance of Leo XIII's decision to address the 'spirit of revolutionary change' and the condition of the working classes in a papal encyclical. His rejection of socialism as he understood it, his willingness to question aspects of capitalism and the framework he offered of a 'true remedy' based on Christian teaching set the pattern for later Catholic thought and,

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through the Christian Democratic parties, helped shape Western Europe. His successors did not, however, immediately build on this teaching, and it was not until Pius XI issued *Quadragesimo Anno* in 1931 that a similar statement was issued addressing 'the great changes since Leo XIII's time'. This was the period of fascism, Nazism, communism, and world economic recession; and Charles struggles to offer a sympathetic interpretation of how the Vatican, national Churches and Catholic lay people responded to these challenges and to defend the Church's response to Jewish persecution. During and after the war Pius XII's social teaching came primarily through channels other than encyclicals, but these (which demonstrate a much more sympathetic response developing to democratic forms of government) are also discussed by Charles. It was John XXIII who, in his short pontificate, marked a decisive revitalisation and development of the tradition, with *Mater et Magistra* on the seventieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, addressing issues of the welfare state, agriculture and international economic injustice; the calling of the Second Vatican Council; and (in 1963) *Pacem in Terris*, which maintained an international interest but concentrated more on political issues, highlighting human rights and addressing questions of the arms race. The treatment of the post-Council period continues with accounts of Paul VI's three main encyclicals (*Populorum Progressio*, 1967; *Octogesima Adveniens*, 1971; *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975) and those of the current pope, which both are more broadly theological (*Redemptor Hominis*; *Dives in Misericordia*) and contain his teaching on work (*Laborem Excerens*, 1981), development (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 1987) and on the centenary of *Rerum Novarum* (*Centesimus Annus*, 1991).

Three problems with Charles' account stand out. First, perhaps because of his high view of their authority ('they are binding in conscience' [13]), his account of texts is totally descriptive rather than evaluative. There are few acknowledgements of important changes and developments over time, and those looking for a hint of what was distinctive and special in each pope's contribution will find little help. Questions of a critical nature are never asked; so, despite the bloody history of the twentieth century, Charles can evince no surprise that 'the modern social teaching has not dealt with the matter [of the justified war]' (407).

Secondly, although Charles is concerned only with official teaching (Maritain is only mentioned once in the whole book), from 1968 onwards the work of liberation theologians increasingly dominates his account. He treats in some detail both the meetings of CELAM, the Latin American Bishops (238–244, 257–259, 264–282, 367–389) and the documents of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (303–330). From the opening sentences of the book his lack of sympathy for much liberation theology is clear, and this becomes even more explicit in his attack on Gutiérrez (249, e.g. 'dangerously

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near to worshipping the proletariat in their struggle, rather than the God who made all things'). His reading of much of this material is not only very pro-establishment but also highly contentious, not least his attempt to reclaim the Medellin conference for the mainstream tradition (his summary manages to avoid any reference to liberation) and to attack appeals to it by later liberation theologians.

Thirdly, his account of the teaching's historical contexts often reflects personal bias and has some surprising omissions: Soviet communism is 'real socialism', the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima is ignored, nuclear weapons first mentioned as in the hands of the USSR (129). The EEC/EC is not discussed.

Both volumes are easy to use as reference works, since they contain analytical contents and indexes, but there are a relatively large number of typographical errors and, though most are insignificant, a few are not: e.g. p. 331 states that *Sollicitudo* commemorates the tenth rather than twentieth anniversary of *Populorum*. Perhaps more of a problem, both translation and paragraph numbering differ from those more generally accessible in English. As one of the work's main uses will be to enable readers to find where the encyclicals discuss certain issues and direct them to the primary documents, this may sometimes prove frustrating.

Despite these drawbacks, the second volume — especially its careful summaries of individual texts and its faithful accounts of the teaching of individual popes and the tradition as a whole — is a useful contribution to raising a wider awareness of the insights of the Catholic Church's modern social teaching.

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Community, Liberalism and Christian Ethics, by David Fergusson.
Cambridge University Press, 1998. 219 pp. Hb. £35. ISBN
0-521-49678-0.

The first five of the seven chapters of this book are excellent. The landscape Fergusson is crossing, that of the last two decades of debate about liberalism and community, is immense, and one in which clear landmarks can suddenly be recognised to be mirages. Fergusson is really exceptionally judicious in his selection of material, his exposition and his brief assessment of the small number of writers he considers. These are Barth, Lindbeck and John Paul II briefly in one chapter; MacDowell and other contributors to philosophical debate about moral realism in another; and Hauerwas and MacIntyre, each at greater length. In the last two chapters of this very concise book, Fergusson becomes too concise. He proceeds