

Book Reviews

INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: THE OFFICIAL TEACHING OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH (1963-1995). Commissioned by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. Edited by Francesco **Gioia**. Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1997. Pp. xxxiii + 694.

A characteristic of the contemporary world is the reality of religious pluralism, therefore, interfaith relations have become an important area of missionary involvement for the churches. Within the Catholic Church dialogue initiatives have emerged on various levels; they have been inspired by the Second Vatican Council and encouraged by recent popes, local bishops, committed Christians, believers and citizens. This growth-evolution of interreligious dialogue has resulted in a veritable library of literature.

The "encyclopedic" volume under consideration brings together all the dialogue documents which constitute "the official teaching of the Catholic Church," covering over three decades (1963-1995). It is a comprehensive collection edited by Francesco Gioia, who has served with the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue — PCID (an office of the Roman Curia established by Pope Paul VI in 1964 for the purpose of promoting Catholic involvement in interreligious relations). An earlier Italian edition covered the years 1963-1993; a French edition is now in preparation.

The book is organized into seven thematic chapters, with some brief introductory matters and an appendix of International Theological Commission Statements; two fine indexes (one geographical and the other analytical) conclude the volume. The seven chapters present material from: (1) Vatican Council II [7 entries]; (2) Solemn Magisterium — encyclicals and apostolic exhortations [19 entries]; (3-5) Magisterium of Paul VI, John Paul I, and John Paul II [89, 2, and 199 entries

respectively); (6) Roman Curial Documents [12 items]; (7) Legislative Documents [3 items]. More than half of the material is drawn from the papal addresses of John Paul II. Selection was rigorously limited to interreligious texts (excluding ecumenical documents and those covering relations with the Jewish people). And yet, over 300 entries are presented — an indication of the Church's commitment to the missionary apostolate of interreligious dialogue.

The book has many fine features: an attractive and comprehensive presentation, two extensive indexes, clearly readable print and a durable binding. Yet, it is uncertain whether the volume truly attains its stated goal: to provide "the opportunity of easy access" (xxvii) to Church documents for a wide audience (Christians and members of other faiths). For the uninitiated reader who may not be familiar with the documents, where is the entry point of "easy access" to this mountain of undifferentiated material? Some kind of introductory overview appears to have been essential; perhaps readers should have been directed to the two synthesis documents of the PCID: "Dialogue and Mission" (566-79) and "Dialogue and Proclamation" (608-42).

A helpful marginal numbering system is employed for this volume, but unfortunately one is left without the original/official paragraph numbers of the documents; researchers will find this an irritant. The overall outline/structure of the book can be confusing and footnote references are unclear. Sometimes the footnotes refer to paragraph numbers of the original document; other times the footnote is to a note within the original text. The reader is never informed if the quoted text is only a selection or a complete document or if the numbers in the indexes are the marginal or page numbers.

Some key subjects (e.g. fundamentalism, violence/non-violence) found in the literature do not appear in the analytical index. Great extra-Christian leaders and writers (e.g. M. Gandhi, R. Tagore) should also have been indexed to parallel the long list of distinguished Christian missionaries. It came as a surprise to this reviewer that there was not a section (even an appendix) that included significant selections drawn from the beautiful messages that the PCID President annually sends to Muslims for the feast of Id al-Fitr, celebrating the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting and to Buddhists on the occasion of Vesakha, the anniversary of Buddha.

Undoubtedly, this is an important book; it is truly a milestone on the dialogue highway. Rigorous editing would have improved it by eliminating several of the deficiencies already noted; some very few dates are incorrect and names and places misspelled. Yet, on balance, because this volume gathers together into one place the teaching of

the Catholic Church on interfaith dialogue over a three-decade period, it is a marvelous research compendium. Therefore, it is a most welcomed and indispensable addition to all mission and theological libraries.

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THE MYSTERY HIDDEN FOR AGES IN GOD. By Paul M. **Quay**, S.J. American University Studies VII/161. New York: Peter Lang, 1995. Pp. xvi + 468.

In this work, the last of his life, Fr. Paul Quay set out to pull together his vision of the Christian heritage which he feels has been the capital which the West has been spending, and so diminishing, over these many years. As such it is an encyclopedic volume, far-ranging in its coverage of the topics that often are treated in fundamental theology: revelation, the Church, Christian life, original sin, and Trinitarian life. The topic on Christian life is a good place to place this work, as Fr. Quay at the time of his death a few years ago was hailed in the press of the United States as largely responsible for the theological underpinning of the Right to Life Movement there. In this sense, one could well call the present essay a 20th century American Jesuit's vision of the meaning of Catholic life.

But there is a deeper sense. Fr. Quay has written out his personal theological syntheses under the rubric of "recapitulation." This is where his title comes from and the work he presents is a theory of how all Christian life takes its meaning from the call for all those born through Baptism into Christian life to follow the path first taken by Christ. As he 'recapitulated' the Covenant experience of mankind with YHWH, undoing, as it were, the failure of Adam through His own fidelity to His Father, so too are all followers of Christ to 'recapitulate' the Covenant experience in their own lives. As can be seen, this treatise could also, therefore, be described as an 'apologia' for the study of the Old Testament in contemporary catechesis and religious instruction.

Fr. Quay is not unknown to local scene. Some years ago the Cardinal Bea Institute at the Loyola House of Studies produced a local printing of an earlier work of Fr. Quay: *The Christian Meaning of Human Sexuality*. This earlier work has proven useful in the ongoing critical work of fundamental catechesis in the Philippine Church, and I feel the present work will also make its influence felt in the same area.