LED BY THE SPIRIT:
FESTSCHRIFT IN HONOR OF HERBERT SCHNEIDER, SJ,
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 65TH BIRTHDAY
Edited by Markus E. Locker
Manila: Loyola School of Theology
2002, xiii, 193 pp., cloth
Reviewed by Victoria B. Parco

This book, a festschrift, is a compendium of fourteen articles preceded by a foreword, preface and acknowledgements; it includes a short biography of Herbert Schneider, S.J., to whom it is dedicated and whom editor Markus E. Locker describes as someone “who has brought the Holy Spirit to teach, to form and sustain Christian life so well” (v). Of the fourteen articles, seven are authored by priest-theologians and the other seven by lay-theologians. The topics developed by the articles correspond very fittingly to the work and accomplishment of Father Schneider, “a charismatic leader, moved by the Spirit” (vi).

A Pauline text speaks of the different gifts of the same Spirit, the different ministries of the same Lord, the different works of the same God who accomplishes all of them in everyone (1 Cor 12:4-5). In the light of this text, the festschrift addresses a fundamental question: How does the Holy Spirit lead different baptized persons to express their unique charisms and to realize their unique mission in the building of the Church? The articles provide some significant responses to this question.

The powerful presence of the Indwelling Spirit in the life of the baptized is well exemplified by the way the Holy Spirit led Father Schneider through different stages and events of his life, especially in making him “an effective instrument of Christian community building” and in allowing him “to lay the foundations for the development of leaders of various charismatic communities” (xii). Moving where the Spirit blows, Father Schneider spearheaded the Catholic charismatic renewal in the Philippines which has, through the years, assumed universal proportions. The story of the movement is narrated by primary witnesses, Victorino and Agnes Gutierrez (16-29).
The presence of the Indwelling Spirit, however, is not always a matter of blazing tongues of fire. Often, it is simply a presence mediated through "the local history, social situation, cultural expression and beliefs," of a community all of which can shape persons "to become prophetic voices in the wilderness and messengers of the good news" (31). It is in spirituality, a distinct area of the Spirit's action, where the presence of the Holy Spirit is most evident. Clemens Sedmak writes that spirituality demonstrates how the Holy Spirit takes the first step, since spiritual life is not an individual construction, but submission to the Spirit (cf. 38).

The Spirit calls, forms and sends leaders on a mission. Georg Fischer studies Moses, a political leader distinguished in the way he stands for justice for the benefit of less empowered persons. Such ceaseless striving for justice is based on a solid foundation, out of a prior gift of grace since leaders "do not act out of their own power of initiative" but are, in fact, "moved by God and by the Spirit of God. Only out of this prior gift of grace can they truly fulfill their task" (47). While true in the case of Moses, it is equally so with unlikely leaders like the left-handed Ehud in the Book of Judges (69-82). Through the power of the Spirit, the handicapped hero confronts the oppressor Eglon, kills him and delivers his people. This fundamental conviction concerning the primacy of the Spirit grounds Father Schneider's vision and ministry of leadership as he promotes "a colorful pluralism of vocations" and "a healthy pluralism of ministries" (30).

The promised Spirit leads the baptized more and more towards the fullness of the truth. The task of biblical research and interpretation is related to such discovery and proclamation of the truth. Thus, eleven articles in the festschrift have to do with biblical theology or with scriptural interpretation, beginning with Father Schneider's own analysis of the theology of revelation in the Fourth Gospel (1-15). Moreover, these articles on Scripture represent different methods of reading scripture, like the historical-critical, the social-scientific, the narrative-literary methods including the use of Scripture as a source for prayer and a basis for religious vows. The festschrift is
also valuable considering that the writers represented in it are well-known and highly respected exeges: Herman Hendrickx, Philip Calderon, Victor Salanga, Herbert Schneider, Georg Fischer, and Martin Hasitschka. The other contributors are young, knowledgeable and promising students of Scripture.

The various articles show how Scripture elucidates different realities: the meaning of leadership through the biblical portraits of Moses and Ehud; prayer and worship in Psalm 139 and in the hymnic texts in the Revelation to John; the social implications of Qoheleth and the Gospel of Luke relative to wealth and poverty; the analysis of B'rit and of the twin parables of the pearl and the treasure as biblical grounding for Christian commitment.

How absolutely necessary it is to listen to, interiorize and live according to the Word of God is evident in the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Markus Locker develops this theme through his exposition of the double significance of Mary's fiat. "Faced with the immensity of Gabriel's proposition, it is Mary's faith alone that allows her to accept the will of God" (171). By pronouncing her fiat, she allows the Spirit, Power from on High, to overshadow her and the Word becomes flesh. This is "a prelude to the whole history of [hu]mankind as it takes place in the light of revelation. Mary paradigmatically demonstrates her pure faith. This faith is much more than an agreement with a certain doctrine or the affirmation of an absolute divine reality, but above all, the recognition and personal testimony, that here and now, and forever, God is the prime actor" (173).

Indeed, Mary is led by the Spirit who is the prime actor in the great history of salvation as well as in the individual history of salvation of each man and woman. Ma. Christina Astorga asserts the transcendent reality of the Indwelling Spirit in the heart of the Church when she writes as a moral theologian: "An integral Christian morality develops all the dimensions of the human moral reality. Indeed, it can be said that in Christian morality, 'there is not just something of the scientist at work, there is also the artist, the believer, and the mystic'" (188).
All baptized Christians, each with a unique charism and calling, must be led by the Spirit, as Jesus, Mary, and Father Schneider experienced in their personal lives. Communities and movements too are called to do the same. In producing and publishing this festschrift, which in essence is a simple, solid and attractively-presented theology of the Holy Spirit, the editor and the writers desire that its readers may be more truly led by the Spirit, the Paraclete of Jesus Christ and the “soul” of the Church.

A JOYFUL SOUL: MESSAGES FROM A SAINT FOR OUR TIMES, POPE JOHN XXIII
Edited by Jerome M. Vereb, C.P.
Kansas City, MO: Andrews McMeel Publishing
Reviewed by James H. Kroeger

Pope John XXIII has become over the years a beloved figure worldwide. He served the Church as its 259th pontiff from 1958 to 1963, and is popularly known as “Good Pope John.” He is also remembered for the convocation of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) with its aggiornamento agenda, renewal of the Church. Beginning his pontificate at age seventy-seven, Angelo Roncalli brought a whole new pastoral and personal style to the papacy. During the Jubilee year, John XXIII was beatified (3 September 2000). This book of inspirational quotations from John’s most moving writings commemorates that joyous occasion which publicly recognized the virtues of Blessed John XXIII.

Father Jerome M. Vereb, who lives in Rome at the Passionist Community of Saints John and Paul (where John XXIII made his retreat for priestly ordination in 1904) has culled a variety of quotations from John XXIII’s “encyclicals, his family letters, his journal, his devotional homilies, and his retreat resolutions” (xvi). The selec-