

Charles Bouchard, OP, ed. *Incarnate Grace: Perspectives on the Ministry of Catholic Health Care*. Saint Louis: The Catholic Health Association of the United States, 2017. iv + 289 pp. \$25.00. Paperback. ISBN: 9780871251053.

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The comment, “I have learned that I am not a substitute” (231) by a layperson in Catholic ministry is a good summary of the themes in this book of sixteen informative and challenging essays examining the many transitions in Catholic health care. Thematic to all the essays are two key questions noted by Therese Lysaught: what does it mean to be a Catholic health care institution, and what does it mean to be part of the ministry of Catholic health care? The essays discuss the challenges of the transition from ownership and management by religious orders to that by laity, including the problems with mergers; the development of formation programs for these new managers and staff; updates in theological issues germane to Catholic health care; and an examination of institutional, canonical, and structural issues.

The book is organized in four sections: three essays discuss theology and health care; three examine the person and health care; four discuss the sacraments and liturgy in health care; and four examine the Church and health care. Also included are an introductory essay which overviews the others and a concluding essay that presents a model of how one health care system developed a formation program for its staff. The book is addressed primarily to those involved in the many aspects of health care, from administration to direct providers of health care and all the supporting staff of hospitals and health care systems. The essays move from the significant question of Catholic identity to providing Catholic ministry to those whom the institution serves, a critical question given the shift from primarily religious to lay ownership and management.

Although each essay is excellent, I want to highlight four essays in the book that I found particularly helpful. First is “Interpretation of Healing Narratives in the Bible” by Sean Martin. What is most valuable here is not only the thoughtful discussion of these narratives but also the Addendum that provides principles for interpreting the Bible. This may be unfamiliar ground for many, but Martin provides an outstanding overview of contemporary methods of interpreting and understanding biblical passages. Second is “God’s Presence in Our Suffering” by Robin Ryan, who lifts up several perspectives on suffering from the Jewish and Christian scriptures and enhances these with a thoughtful theological reflection on them. Ryan wisely notes that the Christian response to those who suffer is to pray for healing, recognizing that this may not result in a cure, but perhaps in spiritual healing and peace. Third, Darren Henson writes on “Eucharist as the Heart of Ministry.” He provides an excellent summary of Vatican II liturgical spirituality centered around the Eucharist, noting how its celebration can play an important part in formation programs. Henson notes that the Eucharist is “offered to change us into the image of Christ whose body and blood we take into our own” (177). The fourth essay is “Theology of Institutions” by Richard Gaillardetz, which is essential reading for everyone in the Church, especially the hierarchy. Gaillardetz discusses the sources of institu-

tional mistrust as well as other factors that intensified this distrust. This is paired with a substantive discussion of the Church as a sacrament, including the implications for the participation of non-Catholics in this institutional mission.

The physical book is well designed and illustrated with several plates from the St. John's Bible from Collegeville. However, I found the paper to be a bit too reflective as I read, and as I approached the end of the book the binding began to crack and pages came out. This in no way detracts from the excellent quality of the essays, but does compromise the book's utility to a certain degree. Nonetheless, this is a substantive contribution to the discussion of theological, ethical, and institutional issues surrounding contemporary health care ministry.