

of his marriage to Harley, Hauerwas writes, “I was exhausted. Adam was gone [a student at Haverford College]. When Anne declared that she intended to leave me, she did not seem to be crazy. I finally told her to do what she had to do” (p. 200). Hauerwas is thus to be commended for reminding all of us that the formative details in our lives are both joyful and painful in nature. Together, such details converge to form our calling in life.

In addition to the influential roles that both friendship and pain played in Hauerwas’ life, we are also confronted with the reality that the fame that has found Hauerwas (regardless of what he might think of it) has come in part through hard work. This commitment to hard work for Hauerwas is one that reaches all the way back to his father. Laying brick is hard work. However, we must remember that Hauerwas’ father practiced his craft under the punishing sun in Dallas, Texas. Hauerwas acknowledges, “I loved working for my father. I loved the bond hard work established between workers” (p. 29). Hauerwas writes theology much like he learned to lay brick. He arrives at the office early and takes just as much joy in putting in a full day of effort as he does in the well-crafted fruits of his labor. For him, the product and the process are much more closely linked than most individuals think. This well-habituated inclination is perhaps what kept Hauerwas going through the trying moments that came with the conclusion of his marriage to Anne Harley. Discussing these details, Hauerwas writes: “The marriage was finally over. I was not sure what that meant, but I would do what I had always done. I would put one foot in front of the other and keep going. I got up the next morning and did what I always did. I went to work” (p. 200).

Despite the self-awareness Hauerwas offers in this immeasurably valuable memoir, moments do surface where I wonder if a small form of charity escapes him. Those moments, although few and far between, seem to surface in relation to administrators with whom Hauerwas worked. For example, Hauerwas claimed Dennis Campbell, the Dean of Duke University Divinity School during much of Hauerwas’ tenure, “was ambitious, but it was not clear that his talent befitted his ambition. He wanted to be dean, but it did not seem he wanted to be dean for any reason but to be dean” (p. 174). Like anyone who serves in such a role, Campbell was likely to make decisions that reflected compromise rather than conviction. Some administrative decisions are wrong. However, others prove to be the best possible outcomes forged in conflicted sets of circumstances. One can only speculate how Hauerwas would respond in such circumstances, given that some necessary decisions simply cannot reflect the full measure of our ideals.

In the end *Hannah’s Child* is necessary reading for anyone concerned with the Church, the academy, and the relationship they share in the work of theology. We would all do well to follow in Hauerwas’ footsteps by showing “how we live together in marriage, how and why we have children, how we learn to be friends, and how we care for the mentally disabled are the ways a people must live if we are to be an alternative to war” (p. 274). Although some may persist in their view that such convictions are negative, *Hannah’s Child* reminds us all that our first calling is to be the Church regardless of what the world may think. This memoir is an admirable window into the life of a theologian who will leave his imprint for generations to come.

TODD C. REAM

THE SHAPE OF PARTICIPATION: A THEOLOGY OF CHURCH PRACTICES by L. Roger Owens (*Cascade Books, Eugene, Oregon, 2010*) Pp. x + 197, £14.21

Roger Owens’ efforts to describe what constitutes the church as God’s life in the world is an ambitious project. His conviction that ‘the church’s participation

in God is none other than Christ's practicing himself as the embodied practices of the church' (p. 183) requires a lot of unpacking: space is at a premium in this slim volume. He clarifies and develops this point by sticking closely to the questions that have led this discussion to arise: what makes the church different from any other voluntary association? How do the practices of the church relate to what God is doing in the world? The challenge that Owens has set himself is to answer these questions in ways that avoid the reductionism he sees in many contemporary ecclesiologies, which he believes to be commonly essentialist and thus taking insufficient account of our embodied, creaturely nature. In particular, he aims to demonstrate how Christ is meaningfully in this material world.

The modern ecclesiologies under inspection take one of two forms: overly abstract formal doctrines, that pay little attention to living communities and risk portraying the church as a rather static presence of God, or overly interiorized pietisms that sequester the centre of faith into a private personal realm where the importance of public communal action and embodied living is unclear at best. Neither of these takes creatureliness seriously enough for Owens. He is concerned to readdress this deficiency by calling the emphasis back to the Chalcedonian orthodoxy that is the church's touchstone for understanding human and divine inter-relation. This being the case, the church must be both human and divine in a way analogous to, though not identical with, Christ's hypostatic union: it must acknowledge its proper humanity as it acknowledges the humanity of Christ and it must acknowledge its divine nature as it acknowledges the divinity of Christ.

Owens' chief argument against essentialist ecclesiologies is that they cannot give an account of the material and shape of the church. Bodies have particular and visible shapes and the body of Christ must therefore have a particular shape in this world. For Owens church practices, specifically the Eucharist and preaching, are God sharing his life, communicating with humanity. These practices constitute the church because God communicates through them in a form humanity can understand. In his discussion of the Eucharist, Owens employs McCabe's account of the sacrament as a new language that brings an end to exclusion. Sharing in the body and blood gives new tools of communication. These tools are the divine life given in a form humans can accept. Because God is not limited like us, this new divine language opens up space for all and overcomes human predispositions for exclusivity. Christ's body is present and unites all to him.

In preaching, what is proclaimed is not a transmitting of something that is absent. Rather it is the same Word made flesh present in words heard and enacted. Owens argues for preaching as a central church practice on the grounds that it is not an independent trade of the pastor but an activity of the whole church. The preaching of the pastor is not the beginning of proclamation because the church, which already exists, calls for this preaching. All members preach, but the pastor's preaching is a specialised division of this. That Owens felt the need to argue for preaching as legitimately a central practice demonstrates sensitivity to the status it holds in various traditions. Given Owens' commitment to arguing for the material, visible, and concrete nature of the church it would have been beneficial to explore some specific examples of where these material, visible, and concrete communities disagree in practice. The discussions of Eucharist and preaching would have been fertile soil for this.

That being said, the breadth of engagement with a diverse range of interlocutors is a striking feature of this book. There are so many that the book cannot do justice to them all whilst maintaining the shape of its argument. In particular Schleiermacher suffers a somewhat summary treatment, which occludes many of the interesting questions that led him to make the moves he did. More recent interlocutors, Gustafson and Milbank particularly, receive fairer treatment. The

attention paid to ancient writers however is very refreshing, particularly in a book on ecclesiology, which represents a challenge to the myopia of modern ecclesiologies.

Furthermore the book clings tenaciously to its roots in living worshiping congregation and community. Evidence from Owens' own church, where he is co-pastor, and from the specific history of his Methodist tradition, informs and elucidates what participation in the life of God looks like with regard to the concrete practices of the church. This rooting in a real community will make this book revitalising for ministers and priests. Those with an interest in ecumenism will find less here than may be expected from a book on ecclesiology but may find other sources within that will broaden their horizons.

On the whole this is a constructive, instructive and well-developed piece of theology. The thought worlds that have dominated this area of theology have been successfully brought into question and the subject has been reconnected with roots in the ancient church and Chalcedonian thinking that is the benchmark of all Christian speech and practice. There is more work to do in this area, more than this text could attempt, particularly attention to the relationship between the church's participation in God and the rest of creation, but the debate has moved on considerably from where it was. Other theologians would do well to investigate the fields of enquiry opened up by this book because they impact on all areas of theology, given that it is concerned fundamentally with how God is in the world.

A.D.R. HAYES

LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF FAITH edited by John Sullivan (*Matthew James Publishing, 2010*) £14.95

"To live is to change," writes John Henry Newman, "and to be perfect is to have changed often." This may appear to be a challenging declaration but, in proposing that faith is to be regarded as a dynamic, evolving, and vigorous virtue that is open to change, it would be consistent with the sentiments of this book. In subscribing to the view that faith is a journey, the reader will, I think, come to appreciate how, as one seeks a greater understanding of God, faith will thrive, not on inflexible adherence to rules, but on one's openness to change.

This is a welcome book that should appeal to a wide readership. It includes a variety of perspectives from both Roman Catholic and Church of England contributors. Thus, whilst the title of the book refers to 'faith', its primary interest is in the Christian faith. It brings together, in both an eclectic and an ecumenical way, a broad collection of views that will be of interest to families, parishes and schools. Ostensibly, its scope would appear to be too diverse to satisfy the professional scholar, yet, paradoxically, in its range, it offers a stimulating exegesis of the place and nature of faith development.

Implicit in such a wide-ranging book, are contradictions and conflicts, but these serve to provide a comprehensive and inclusive picture of the language of faith in a variety of contexts. Within the Catholic tradition, of course, there are inevitable tensions at the interface between the teaching church – as represented by the office of the *magisterium* – and the learning church. Significantly, learning is a key recurring theme that runs through the book.

Throughout, Sullivan, in conjunction with the other contributors, provides a discriminating exploration of concepts such as evangelisation, catechesis, and religious education. With a refined discernment, he elegantly elaborates upon their similarities and differences. He skilfully and convincingly argues that, whilst