

Gordon W. Lathrop. *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003. 237 + xi pages. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8006-3590-6. \$25.00.

In characteristically clear and passionate prose, Gordon Lathrop, with this book, completes the trilogy begun by *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (1993) and furthered in *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology* (1999). Among the ample evidence for the consistency in thought running through – and thus unifying – the three volumes of this contemporary liturgical theology are the nearly fifty footnotes in this last book referring the reader back to the other two. A further statistical observation, that the number of references to the first book outpaces those to the second by roughly two to one, confirms the primary role the former plays in Lathrop's pastoral-liturgical arguments for the nature of worship and its function in the church and world. While the term juxtaposition rarely appears in the present work, this fundamental principle for Lathrop's liturgical theology is operative throughout, as he continuously places side by side dissonant or seemingly unrelated aspects of Christian faith and the wider experiences of human life in the world. Lathrop does this, he argues, because the church's liturgy does it and, in so doing, reveals that "paradoxes and ambiguities" (116, 117) are what characterize the content and practice of Christian faith. Only in this way do we let God be God.

In this book, however, the principal metaphor for this always broken, upending quality of the church's primary theology is that of a hole, a tear in the perfect, seamless fabric of any total system of thought (whether religious, social, economic, or political); a fissure in the smooth contours of every well-rounded (and, thus, idolatrously closed) worldview. Founded upon the tearing open of the heavens in Mark's account of Jesus' baptism, a hole through which the divine spirit breaks loose in the life of Jesus, this metaphorical image guides Lathrop at every turn in his liturgical cosmology. In this sense, cosmology for Lathrop means a cultural worldview, a people's ordering the world they inhabit into

meaning. The danger common to every particular cosmology is the tendency to think it is complete, self-sufficient, perfect, standing alone (as opposed to alongside some very different, and thus challenging, other). Such claims to totality inevitably lead to unjust oppression of those who either do not fit inside the perfect circle or, within the hierarchy of a given sphere, find themselves at the bottom rungs. For precisely this reason, the "hole in the heavens" revealed in the gospel is the world's salvation, for it insists that One alone is holy, the One who comes in the power of the Spirit to critique whatever or whomever claims exclusive authority: "the encounter with the triune God always creates a hole in any status quo" (81).

Lathrop is well aware, nonetheless, that a cultural or philosophical worldview is not the only contemporary sense of the word cosmology. In this postmodern age, cosmology most commonly refers to astrophysics and the attempt to scientifically account for the whole of the universe in all its parts. But increasingly, cosmology has a third, ecological referent, an awestruck acknowledgement of the sheer magnitude of the cosmos we inhabit and, thus, the effort to find a human orientation amidst this great "whole." Such ecological awareness bears with it a sense of our responsibility for the earth we inhabit, as well as for each other, who walk upon it. On this point the contribution of Christian liturgical tradition becomes relevant, if not salvific, for our time. Orchestrating such sources as Plato's *Timeaus*, the Gospel of Mark, and the Book of Exodus, Lathrop mounts an eloquent argument for how the hole in the heavens reorients the maps of our world, dislodging all dualisms of the sacred versus profane, instead revealing that the unapproachable divinity comes to us and, in that coming, declares all the ground holy, all an environment for walking in justice and love. Christian liturgical celebration of this saving Word is at once bold in its potential to coordinate the three types of cosmology we negotiate in our day and authentically humble (and humbling) in its repeated proclamation that none of our scientific, social, or religious systems are the final solution to our often lament-laden desire for the whole. The good news is that all is held and drawn forward by

the boundless mercy of God. Christian worship moves, in Lathropian juxtaposition, constantly between thanksgiving and lament, petition and praise, thereby creating a space for us to inhabit that is at once realistic and redeemed.

Ever influenced by the fundamental insights of Alexander Schmemmann, Lathrop locates the solid center which grounds the church's engagement with the postmodern array of cosmologies in the liturgical *ordo*, which he ecumenically delineates as the ecclesial assembly's actions of word, bath, meal, and prayer, as these take place in a rhythm of time and configuration of space. Part 2 of the book is comprised of chapters both theoretical, in his mounting an argument for a liturgical ethics, and practical, as he spells out numerous implications for concrete, pastoral practice of the *ordo*. In the third and final part of the book, Lathrop gives even clearer shape to what he is arguing for by addressing something of what he is against: the distortions of excessive hierarchism (the predominantly Roman Catholic failure) and "closed-circle" sectarianism (to which Protestantism so often succumbs).

By engaging the multifold cosmologies that have clearly fascinated his intellect and animated him, body and spirit, in recent years, Lathrop has produced a sort of reprise of his liturgical theology, a refreshing second-order restatement of the irreducible value in the first-order work of the church's worship as it opens out into our contemporary world(s). Perhaps the one aspect of the book that left me unsettled is the question of whether the center of the church's liturgical tradition is proving strong enough against the seemingly relentless waves of postmodern fragmentation and ecclesial distortions, but that is only to honor his work by seeking to chart a further course.

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Maxwell E. Johnson and L. Edward Phillips, eds. *Studia Liturgica Diversa: Essays in Honor of Paul F. Bradshaw*. Portland, OR: Pastoral, 2004. xix + 255 pages. ISBN 1-56929-047-4. \$34.95.

Paul Bradshaw, Anglican priest and professor at the (Roman Catholic) University of Notre Dame, has contributed immensely to liturgical thought and research to the enrichment of all the churches. This *Festschrift*, offered by friends, colleagues, and former students, gathers varied interesting and significant studies, which will be of chief interest to specialists in liturgy, although those concerned with historiography and interreligious relationships will also find here matter of importance to themselves. The work is well produced, with only a few typographical accidents: "Acti" for "Acta" (32, 37); "De" for "Diem" (or, better, "Dies"), in the running heads (32-42); "Polycrastes" (76, only once); and "Praescriptio" for "Praescriptione" (238).

After Ruth Meyers has interpreted Paul Bradshaw's astringent principles of historical analysis, the essays are grouped under the headings of "Initiation and Liturgical Year," "Eucharist," "Ordination," and "Liturgical Theology," but the themes (naturally) transcend this categorization. Thus, the relations of Jewish and Christian worship are treated at points throughout the collection. The Jewish matrix of early Christianity is illustrated by Walter Ray, who argues that the special (I will not say "sectarian") traditions of Jewish spirituality found in the Book of Jubilees, with their interpretation of Pentecost and Sinai, suggest an original context for baptism. Maxwell Johnson ponders a phrase of Tertullian that may be taken as commending Pentecost as a baptismal season; this links up with Ray – and, incidentally, opens up new vistas on 1 Peter and the *Didache*. Gabriele Winkler, analyzing the earliest features of Syrian and Ethiopic anaphoras, points to an inheritance of the Sanctus and the Benedictus from versions of Enoch. Rabbi Lawrence Hoffmann shows how the central term of Jewish euchology, *hoda'ah*, must not be oversimplified as meaning "thanksgiving"; its central sense is "acknowledgement" (sc., of God, in covenant), which will include, but is not confined to, thanksgiving. This detailed study corrects