

# Book Reviews

**Susan Durber and Fernando Enns (eds).** *Walking Together: Theological Reflections on the Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.* Geneva: WCC Publications, 2018. 173 + xiv pp.

“We intend to move together.” With these words, the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC), meeting in Busan, South Korea, in 2013, invited Christians and people of goodwill everywhere to join in a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. Since then, many people have been “moving together,” sometimes in a very literal sense, as with the churches that have undertaken “climate pilgrimages” to express their commitment to creation. Others have been learning to live out their unity anew in their common concern for people who have been pushed to the margins of society.

This book, initiated by the WCC’s theological study group for the pilgrimage, has been edited by Fernando Enns, a Mennonite theologian and professor of peace theology in Hamburg and Amsterdam, and Susan Durber, a pastor of the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom and moderator of the WCC’s Faith and Order Commission. Thirteen authors from different continents and confessions not only describe the theological concept behind the metaphor of the pilgrimage (part 1), but also illustrate through their own practical experiences or from a specific context how the “pilgrimage” can stimulate ecumenical togetherness (part 2).

As well as the stimulating contributions, the book also includes the most important texts about the pilgrimage published by the WCC, offering a thought-provoking overview.

In the beginning, many people had difficulties with the metaphor of pilgrimage, especially in a Protestant context, where the word “pilgrimage”

has often had a negative connotation. Even in Roman Catholic or Orthodox contexts, pilgrimages have had a different connotation than that intended by the WCC’s call. The contributions do not hide this fact; on the contrary, they are intended as a way to give life to and better use the metaphor. The current acting general secretary of the WCC, the Romanian Orthodox theologian Ioan Sauca, puts this in a nutshell in his contribution to the book: the first WCC assembly in Amsterdam underlined the need to “stay together,” but now the invitation is to “move together” (19–20). From the static to the dynamic, from the stability of the status quo to movement that looks forward, the pilgrimage is also understood as a journey in the history of salvation (23–26). It is interesting to note the many references to the pilgrimage in the contributions from the authors’ own confessional traditions. Sauca, for example, already sees the ideas of “movement” and “journeying together” in the Orthodox liturgy (24–25). Theologically, this is described by the fact that God is a dynamic and not a static presence: practically, by the fact that the faithful stand and do not sit during the liturgy. However, the pilgrimage not only symbolizes the movement of the churches but is also meant to concretely change their lives and actions according to God’s will. The pilgrimage is a “journey of hope, hope for real change,” as the Roman Catholic theologian William Henn makes clear in his contribution (37). Henn also outlines that the leitmotif of the pilgrimage builds on many activities and studies of the WCC.

The pilgrimage becomes particularly practical and concrete in the second part of the contributions. When Jessie Ben Fubara-Manuel from the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria describes how she set out with her family every year before Christmas on a pilgrimage to her homeland and how this “pilgrimage” strengthened their unity

and fellowship, the leitmotif becomes particularly vivid. Ben Fubara-Manuel, who is involved in the advocacy work of the WCC, uses the example of working together with people with disabilities to show that pilgrimages help to leave no one behind. They convey “the humility to see our incompleteness without the other and to appreciate our inter-relatedness in a mysterious unity made possible in Jesus Christ” (104).

The search for and endurance of pain, as described by Fernando Enns in his contribution (46–48), or the attentiveness to the suffering of people on the margins of society, as described by the Baptist Wati Longchar from India, are not only an expression of a horizontal perspective of the church, but also a testimony to God’s healing action, for God himself became a person on the margins of society (130–31).

The strength of the volume is that the various perspectives help the reader to discover the motif of the pilgrimage for their own context. They illustrate the “transformative spirituality” of pilgrims (43) who cross borders and not only seek out people at the margins, but also continue on their journey together with them. Thus the contributions are not a mere stringing together of reports on experiences or theological concepts; rather, they show, as if through a prism, the diversity that is hidden behind the one concept of the pilgrimage.

This book is a useful starting point for those preparing for the next WCC assembly in 2022, in Karlsruhe, Germany. This gathering will harvest the fruits of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace and seek to make them fruitful for the work of the coming years. This publication is a good guide for the journey.

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**Saint Irenaeus Joint Orthodox–Catholic Working Group.** *Serving Communion: Rethinking the Relationship between Primacy and Synodality.* Los Angeles: Marymount Institute Press, 2019. 114 pp.

This document is the fruit of the work of 26 experts from the academic and ecclesial spheres belonging to the Orthodox and Catholic traditions who are members of the Saint Irenaeus Joint Orthodox–Catholic Working Group. This body, which has met regularly once a year between 2004 and 2019, is not an official commission but a group of experts that has proposed this document to accompany the official dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. The study contains a preface written by the co-presidents of the Saint Irenaeus Group, Bishop Dr Gerhard Feige of Magdeburg (Germany) and Metropolitan Dr Serafim Joantă of Germany, Central and Northern Europe, with an introduction to the activity of this group by Johannes Oeldemann of the Johann-Adam-Möhler-Institut, which initiated the discussions.

The main objective of this study is to advance a common understanding of the relationship between primacy and synodality by examining how authority in the church is exercised, individually (the primate) and collegially (the synod). The study also offers a common description of the divergences that occurred over the centuries.

Deepening the theological scholarship on ecclesiology, this document provides an extensive theological analysis divided into three sections: hermeneutics, history, and systematic theology. The working methodology is clearly expressed in the introduction: there are 16 common statements followed respectively by explanations.

The first section, comprising six common statements, highlights the importance of hermeneutics in ecumenical dialogue when dealing with theological language, dogmas, canons, the history of