

children are part of the covenant in a provisional and hopeful sense, but that only baptism provides membership in the fullest sense (as the NT indicates)?

Infant baptism is not the correct solution for the correct doctrine (at least in its Federal form) of original sin. Though infants are born under God's wrath, condemnation, and are guilty, God's prevenient grace reaches out toward them (John 12:32; Titus 2:11). The most appropriate ceremony for infants in the Church is that which has explicit biblical precedent (Matt 19:13–15; Mark 10:13–16; Luke 18:15–17): a dedication ceremony in which hands are placed upon them in blessing, prayers are offered, and (as all the contributors agree) the Church pledges to help the parents train them up in "the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph 6:4), by liturgy, education, and example.

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Levering, Matthew. *Engaging the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit: Love and Gift in the Trinity and the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016. v + 440 pp. Hardcover. USD 45.00.

Matthew Levering (PhD, Boston College) is the James N. and Mary D. Perry Jr. Chair of Theology at Mundelein Seminary at the Catholic University of Saint Mary of the Lake. He is the author or editor of over forty books on topics within dogmatic, sacramental, moral, historical, and biblical theology, and he is co-editor of two quarterly journals, *Nova et Vetera* and *International Journal of Systematic Theology*.

In this book, Levering argues that "the Holy Spirit should be praised and contemplated under the proper names 'Love' and 'Gift', with respect both to his intra-trinitarian identity and to his historical work in Jesus Christ and the church" (2). In Levering's view, these names ("Love" and "Gift") "instruct us about the distinct divine personality of the Spirit and shed light upon the biblical, liturgical and experiential testimonies to the Spirit's mission" (5). The main goal is, in the author's own words, "to show the value of the names 'Love' and 'Gift' for illuminating the Spirit in his eternal procession and temporal mission to Jesus Christ and the church" (15).

The book is composed of seven chapters, divided into two major sections. The first section (chs. 1–3) deals with the *person* of the Holy Spirit, focusing mainly on his eternal Trinitarian communion. In chapter 1, Levering presents Augustine's exegesis (1 John 4 and Rom 5:5 being the main texts), upon which the argument in favor of the names "Love" and "Gift" for the Holy Spirit is built.

Chapter 2 compares views that are somewhat different regarding the Spirit's procession and eternal generation: first, Greek patristics which show more "boldness" and, second, Orthodox theologians which show more

“caution.” The author seems to find resolution in Thomas Aquinas’s teaching. This pattern—presenting contrasting views and then providing an answer based on Aquinas—remains constant throughout most chapters of the book.

Chapter 3 zeroes in on the *filioque*, presenting disparate theological views and various nuances of this long-debated pneumatological clause and, once again, leaning on Aquinas’s theology for a *via media*. Levering writes: “It seems possible to conclude with Aquinas (and Augustine) that the Word, as the Word of the Father, ‘breathes forth Love.’ Put more boldly, the Spirit manifests the fecundity of the love of the Father and Son: the fruit of their exchange is inexhaustible communion” (168). In the author’s view, this theological notion provides the basis and justifies the proper names “Love” and “Gift” for the Holy Spirit.

The second section (chs. 4–7) deals with the *work* of the Holy Spirit and is built on the fundamental premise that the acceptance of Jesus’s inauguration of the messianic kingdom requires a corresponding rich theology of the outpouring of the Spirit. This way, Levering establishes a close link between the third and the second persons of the trinity, as well as a link to the church as the new eschatological reality of God’s kingdom. Levering suggests that the eschatological epoch initiated by Jesus demands that the outpouring (Gift) of the Spirit, and transformation into Christlikeness (Love) in the church, is a central goal of this era.

Chapter 4 focuses on the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus. Leaning on James D. G. Dunn and Aquinas, Levering proposes that Jesus accomplished his work on earth because of the specific missions of the Spirit in and for Him (Jesus). Levering writes that “in Aquinas, Jesus’s intimate knowledge of the Father, his miracle working, and his prophetic wisdom are bound together with his supreme charity through the invisible mission of the Holy Spirit, who is Love and Gift in person” (207).

Chapter 5 deals with the Spirit’s work for, and mission to, the church, outlining a number of ideas from various theologians, and then building heavily on Aquinas. According to the author, Jesus’s eschatological claims, such as his promised “baptism by fire” and the kingdom of God “here and now”, can be applied to the church today if we accept the inauguration of God’s Kingdom and the outpouring of the Spirit as a linked and consummated reality. The author pens: “Appreciating the full scope of Aquinas’s pneumatology should therefore illuminate the continuity of the church’s self-understanding as the eschatological kingdom inaugurated by Jesus” (215). Aquinas proposes two specific “visible” missions of the Spirit, to and through the church: the sacraments and teaching. The “invisible” missions of the Spirit produce sanctification in the believers. Through these, the Holy Spirit as “Love” and “Gift” empowers the church and transforms it into a community of charity.

Chapter 6 explores the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing about church unity: diversity ought to be celebrated but not at the expense of (visible) unity in truth and love. While not developed in full detail, Levering's view of unity is clearly Catholic, post Second Vatican Council ("Christ's church truly subsists in the Catholic Church" (306).

Chapter 7 deals with the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the holiness of the church. As one would expect after reading the previous chapters, Aquinas is the rock upon which Levering edifies his theological discourse. According to Aquinas, there are two sources for the holiness of the church: the blood of Jesus and the grace of the Holy Spirit. The church receives these through the sacraments. The Spirit as "Love" and "Gift" enables the church (despite the sinfulness of its members) to be holy.

A final note is worth mentioning in this brief summary. In the introduction, under the title "Pneumatological Paths Not Taken: Weinandy, Coakley, Hasker", Levering dedicates a substantial section to the survey and critical analysis of three significant contemporary works on the Holy Spirit. First, Thomas Weinandy's work in *Reconceiving the Trinity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), which argues for five main concepts: one, the Holy Spirit is involved in the Son's procession from the Father; two, the rejection of "sequentialism"; three, Jesus as "word"; four, speaking words requires breath; and five, the Spirit as itself "breath." The second work analyzed is that of Sarah Coakley, *God, Sexuality and the Self: An Essay on the Trinity* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Sarah Coakley defends, first, a postmodern/feminist Anglican perspective; second, the Spirit as "desire"; third, the Johannine/Lukan "linear" model; and fourth, the Pauline "incorporative" model. The last author is William Hasker. In *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2013), Hasker accepts social trinitarianism, which proposes that persons of the Trinity are full persons in the modern sense and are distinct centers of consciousness with distinct knowledge, will, and action. Levering disagrees with these three aforementioned authors, favoring the "linear" model against the "incorporative" model, opposing the conception of the persons of the trinity as distinct centers of consciousness and disagreeing with the notion of the Spirit's active role in begetting the Son.

There are several aspects of this book worth celebrating, including the theological caliber of the author, the wise and fair use of sources, as well as the appropriate balance between the scope and the depth of the subject covered. It is clear that Levering is a methodical theologian, one whose voice is worth hearing. As he presents various aspects of pneumatology, he converses masterfully with several renowned theologians from different epochs and from diverse theological backgrounds. His theological exposition is both robust and organized.

Regarding the use of sources, Levering proves to be well versed on the main theological positions on the subject; and he makes wise use of them, while representing them fairly, especially those that disagree with him. The author does not ignore the arguments from the “other side” but objectively exposes some of the more significant challenges posed by well-established theologians.

Moreover, the author presents a good balance between scope and depth, covering a variety of authors, views, and historical periods (from East and West) without compromising the depth of such a complex theological topic. On this last note, the author makes it clear on several occasions that human limitation is to be constantly acknowledged and evoked on issues such as the person of the Holy Spirit, his relationship to the other persons of the trinity, as well as his functions both *ad intra* and *ad extra*.

At the same time, there are some points in Levering’s book which unavoidably call for critique. Primarily, Levering’s insistence on using “Love” and “Gift” as proper names for the third person of the Trinity. The reader may not be convinced that this is as important or indispensable as the author implies. While it is hard to deny these aspects of “love” and “gift” as central to the work of the Holy Spirit, does this centrality really warrant a full embrace of Levering’s proposal?

Levering correctly and fairly cites other theologians’ critiques of his position, but most of his rebuttals remain lacking. Some of the critiques from other theologians include the ideas that, first, “Love” and “Gift” can define, and should be applied to, the three persons of the Trinity, not just the Holy Spirit (Hans Urs von Balthasar); second, used as proper names, these lead to “pneumatic abstraction” (Radner and Ferguson); third, if God in his word chose not to explicitly use “Love” and “Gift” as proper names for the Holy Spirit, why should we? We ought to be careful not to follow human imagination beyond what has been revealed (Louth and Bobrinskoy) (72); and fourth, we ought to be careful as we interpret analogous language in Scripture, especially when it comes to the mystery of God (Eastern Fathers).

Another point of critique is that the author bases his argument primarily on Augustine’s exegesis (mainly 1 John 4:7–13) and Aquinas’ theology/philosophy. Regarding the former, Levering writes that “Augustine’s arguments are most persuasive if one accepts, as I think we should, his assumptions about what Scripture is and does, above all his view that the Triune God will teach us about himself through Scripture, so that we might know and love the living God” (54). Clearly, one must accept the presuppositions of Augustine and Aquinas, in order to accept their exegetical, theological, and philosophical views. On his part, Aquinas bases his argument more on philosophy than theology. For example, as Levering points out, “Aquinas draws from Aristotle a definition of ‘gift’” (106), an idea that becomes a key link in his theological/philosophical chain. Also, both Aquinas and Augustine owe much of their

presupposed ideas about God to Greek philosophy, including the notion of divine simplicity that is key to some of the theological developments in the book (107), or the notion of an unmovable God (189). Hence, unless one is ready to fully embrace Augustine's and Aquinas's theological and philosophical presuppositions, it becomes hard to accept some of the arguments in this book.

Last, but not least, Levering writes in the conclusion that "in Scripture, the Holy Spirit is repeatedly associated with gift, as well as with love, the greatest gift. But the Spirit is also repeatedly associated with truth" (359). And further in his conclusion he pens: "I do not mean to deny that there are other ways of describing what the Spirit brings about in the people of God. In fact, a number of these ways are connected specifically with truth; for example, the Spirit inspires the prophets and inspires the Scriptures" (370). Why not then make the case for using "Truth" as a proper name for the Third Person of the Trinity? Is the Spirit more "Love" and "Gift" than He is "Truth"? Moreover, where does truth fit in when dealing with the important aspects of church holiness and church unity?

Drawing mainly from Augustine and Aquinas, Levering argues that naming the Holy Spirit "Love" and "Gift" is "biblically and theologically justified." (359) While showing great theological ability in his exposition, and proving to be an exemplary interlocutor with disagreeing theological positions, Levering's thesis and main arguments will probably fail to convince most non-Catholic readers. Many would most certainly be ready to join Levering in praising the third Person of the Trinity, as well as celebrating what he presently does in, for, and through the church, in bringing about unity and transformation. Many would probably also join in praising the Holy Spirit for leading humans to Jesus and his truth while empowering the church to proclaim the good news of the gospel of Jesus. However, all of this can probably be accomplished without embracing Levering's proposal to rename the third person of the trinity, "Love" and/or "Gift".

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Marandiuc, Natalia. *The Goodness of Home: Human and Divine Love and the Making of the Self*. AARAS. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. x + 214 pp. Hardcover. USD 99.00.

In *The Goodness of Home*, Natalia Marandiuc—currently Assistant Professor of Christian Theology at the Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University—presents an integrated approach to the "notions of home, love, and the self" (1). *The Goodness of Home* is the culmination of her Yale dissertation, advised by famed theologian Miroslav Volf. Marandiuc's own back-