

doctrinally, legally, and theologically, the volume insists on deeper engagement with the practices of interfaith already in place.

With evocative, deeply personal, and theoretically sophisticated proposals, this volume should be welcome reading for the many practitioners for whom the practice of interfaith ritual has preceded the theorizing and theologizing. It is a wonderful introduction to interfaith practice as it announces the study of interreligious ritual as a field of its own.

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*Missa Est! A Missional Liturgical Ecclesiology.* By Eugene Schlesinger. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2017. 300 pp. \$79.00 (cloth).

How do mission and liturgy relate? The missionary nature of the church has become axiomatic in recent decades, at least in academic missiology and ecclesiology. Yet much of the missional ecclesiology literature struggles to articulate a central place for liturgy. Most of the predominant voices in the “missional church” conversation have come from Protestant traditions (especially evangelicals) that tend to place little emphasis on formal liturgy. On the other hand, liturgical traditions (whether Anglican, Orthodox, or Roman Catholic) have not often developed how their sacramental and liturgical practices relate to the church’s participation in the triune God’s mission in the world.

Eugene Schlesinger’s *Missa Est!* attempts to address this dilemma. He offers a catholic “missional liturgical ecclesiology” that seeks to root the church’s missionary identity in the liturgy as the central enactment of God’s redemptive mission. The book, a revision of the author’s dissertation at Marquette University, engages a range of dialogue partners, from Roman Catholic encyclicals and conciliar documents to Hans Urs von Balthasar, Henri de Lubac, John Zizioulas, John Flett, and Nathan Kerr. It is a decidedly ecumenical approach, though the author’s catholic sensibilities are clear throughout.

For Schlesinger, the church exists “in departure” (Pope Francis’s phrase); mission is central to its character. However, the terms “mission” and “*missio Dei*” have become so elastic in Schlesinger’s view as to warrant clearer definition. He tries to resolve this by equating the *missio Dei* with the paschal mystery: Christ’s participation in human suffering and estrangement

in obedience to the Father, which is transformed in the resurrection in the power of the Spirit into eternal communion in which humanity can share. Liturgy becomes the lens through which God's trinitarian mission is comprehended and experienced. In order to develop this, Schlesinger draws heavily on Augustine's sacrificial understanding of the eucharist, which he relates to Paul's sacrificial view of the Christian life.

Schlesinger makes a fruitful contribution by using the paschal mystery as a trinitarian focus for God's mission. Yet this is where the book succumbs to a tendency it seeks to avoid: mission collapses back into the inner life of the church. David Bosch once described mission as having both centripetal and centrifugal dimensions. This book focuses almost entirely on the former to the expense of the latter. The paschal mystery is indeed a vital hermeneutic for God's redemptive mission, and Schlesinger is right to look to the liturgy in the gathered assembly as the central place where we participate in that mystery. Yet the discussion never ventures far beyond that assembly.

For instance, there is little discussion of the reign of God here (surely a central biblical lens for the *missio Dei*) and thus little imagination for how God is reconciling and renewing human culture and society more broadly beyond the church. Creation as a dimension of the triune God's mission also receives little treatment. The Spirit's work among those far from the church's worship (as in Peter's encounter with Cornelius in Acts 10) doesn't come into view. While Schlesinger suggests that liturgy leads to an ethic of sacrificial service to neighbors in the world, the world doesn't really show up much in this book. Neither do the voices and experiences of everyday Christians, who likely, I suspect, do not share Schlesinger's assumptions about what is taking place in the liturgy.

Instead, what we get is a beautiful theoretical vision that reframes liturgy within a trinitarian view of God's redemptive work but ultimately collapses back in upon itself. Schlesinger's project would have been enriched by developing a wider framework for the *missio Dei* that conceives of liturgy as a missional hermeneutic—an interpretive key to comprehending what God is up to in the broader world—rather than the sole focus for God's mission.

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