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ROZA, Devin: *Fulfilled in Christ. The Sacraments: A Guide to Symbols and Types in the Bible and Tradition*, Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2015. 386 s. ISBN 978-1-941447-31-4.

It is not often that a student at the Pontifical Biblical Institute publishes a book while working to complete the rigorous requirements of the licentiate program. This represents a singular accomplishment that is not to be overlooked. And it is not just any book that Fr. Roza (henceforth “R.”) has produced. He has assembled a wide-ranging collection of biblical, patristic, liturgical, and doctrinal texts that are pertinent for the study of each of the seven sacraments. These texts are carefully documented and systematically arranged in a way that will surely help the reader to profit from the fruits of the author’s industrious research. Also of great interest is the author’s own “Introduction” (pp. 11-31), which sets out briefly the main issue that has generated the project, the basic approach that is adopted, and a well-reasoned justification for the decisions that were taken in defining the scope and disposition of the collected sources.

The project, R. tells us, is motivated by the pastoral need for a more effective catechesis that is able to present clearly what God offers us in the sacraments. What is required to address this need, R. contends, is a “mystagogical catechesis”, in which the sacraments are viewed as sacred events within the unfolding history of God’s saving plan, a plan initiated and carried forward throughout the sacred history of Israel, and then realized fully and definitively in his Son, Jesus Christ. For many centuries, this type of catechesis employed a typological understanding of the Scriptures, a method of interpretation widely practiced by the apostolic authors of the NT and then further developed by the Fathers of the Church in the centuries that followed. In more recent times, however, the use of typology in biblical study has been called into question, especially by those who insist on the need to respect the literal sense of the passage, that is, the specific meaning that the original authors intended to convey to the readers within a given historical context. How to respond to modern criticisms of the theory and practice of typology is a major concern of the book as a whole.

To be sure, the importance of the literal sense of the Scriptures has been affirmed and vigorously defended throughout the Church’s history. In turn, there has emerged in modern times a broad recognition of the importance of historical criticism as a valid method for coming to a better understanding of what the biblical authors intended to convey. At the same time, however, there are also many who affirm the legitimacy of seeking to discover and understand a further, explicitly theological meaning of the Scriptures. The goal of this type of research is to exposit what God intends to convey in the Scriptures about His grand project of

salvation, brought to realization in the historical events recorded in the Scriptures. Within this approach, it is presupposed that these recorded events are understood more completely when they are read and interpreted, retrospectively, in the light of Christian faith. This task of reading the Scriptures in the light of Christian faith was first taken up by the apostolic authors of the New Testament, and their conclusions are viewed by many as not only authoritative but also normative. While recognizing that later Christian readers are not able to reach the same level of certainty, it is considered legitimate and even necessary to adopt the manner of reading the Scriptures practiced by the first apostolic authors. And for this task the concept of typology and the application of typological interpretation are nothing less than essential.

The pastoral need, therefore, is clearly perceived, and the tools for addressing this need are ready at hand. But how are we to proceed? R. formulates the question that has prompted him to taken on this project in the following way: "How can one discern prefigurations of the fulfillment of God's plan in Christ in a way that is not only useful for one's personal relationship with God, but that can also be confidently shared with others as trustworthy and authentic?" (pp. 24-25). This is a good question, and for many an important question, even while the answer is not easily found. But no one will deny that R.'s manner of responding to this question is well considered, eminently reasonable, and assiduously executed.

Fr. Roza's response is inspired and guided by what is stated in the "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation" (*Dei Verbum*), which was promulgated by the Second Vatican Council on November 18, 1965. The task of interpreting the Scriptures in accordance with the Spirit who inspired them is addressed in section 12 of *Dei Verbum*, in which three criteria, or principles, are proposed: (1) To be especially attentive to the content and unity of the whole Scripture; (2) To read the Scripture within the living tradition of the whole Church; (3) To be attentive to the analogy of faith. For reasons stated very clearly in the "Introduction" (pp. 25-26), R. has chosen to give special importance to the second principle, and so he intends to place in our hands a tool, a resource, designed to help us read the Scriptures within the living tradition of the Church. And like every good tool, the book is designed for a specific task: to help us discern what the living tradition of the Church understands and presents as true prefigurations of the sacraments in the books of Scripture. It is not by chance that the word "discernment" figures prominently in R.'s description of the task which this book is intended to serve. It is no easy thing to read the Scriptures within the living tradition of the Church. It is, after all, a *living* tradition, and it has been living for a very long time. There is a fundamental coherence in this ever-living and ever-evolving tradition of the Church, but it is not always self-evident. It requires study,

and prayerful reflection, and discernment. And this is true also with regard to biblical prefigurations of the sacraments.

In this vast collection of liturgical, doctrinal, and patristic texts that speak of the sacraments, R. has not concealed from us the need for discernment. In these various documents, including pertinent excerpts from the Catholic Church's official Catechism (*Catechism of the Catholic Church. Second Edition* [Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994]), there is a remarkable diversity in the language that is used to describe the spiritual sense intended by the divine authors of the Scriptures: type and antitype, shadow and reality, symbol, sign, and prefiguration. This diversity is not simply stylistic variation. To these diverse terms correspond the diverse ways in which biblical prefiguration has been understood and named within the many centuries of the Church's long-living tradition. While choosing to preserve these diverse terms and concepts in its systematic instruction, the Catechism also appears to accord a privileged status to the language of typology. At various places, typology is named as the essential method for coming to a fuller understanding of the spiritual sense of the Scriptures (see, e.g., §§ 128-130; 1093-1095). Curiously however, as R. points out, the Catechism never offers an explicit definition of typology. This is noticeable and potentially significant, for precise definitions of important terms are otherwise not lacking in this document. By way of explanation, R. remarks: "This may reflect the fact that there is currently a debate among theologians regarding the definition of typology" (p. 22, n. 21). This statement is true in what it affirms. But it is important to recall that the debate regarding typology is not a modern phenomenon. Indeed, this debate is long-standing, and perhaps even coincides with the Church's long-living tradition. To the contours of this ancient and long-standing debate the vast array of documents, carefully assembled by R. in this book, gives ample witness.

From these various documents, stretching over many centuries, one can see that ecclesiastical writers and pastoral leaders have consistently promoted the task of discerning in the Scriptures the deeper spiritual sense intended by the divine author, but without ever imposing an overly precise understanding of typology. This fact is meaningful. In attending carefully to the practice, rather than to the theory, of a theological interpretation of the Scriptures, the guardians of the Church's tradition have stood in continuity with the authors of the NT. The practice of interpreting Christologically the spoken prophecies and the recorded events of the OT is attested in every book of the NT. But the theory and methods standing behind this practice are left undefined. Likewise, the connections discovered by the inspired authors are presented and named in surprisingly different ways. The language of "type" and "antitype", borrowed from Hellenistic philosophy, appears but rarely in the NT (Rom 5,14; 1 Cor 10,1-14; 1 Peter 3,20-21). How widely the

language and theory of typology was known to the apostolic authors is difficult to say. What we do know is that their practice of reading the Scriptures Christologically reflects the shared conviction that all that was said and done in the course of Israel's sacred history points forward and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

How typology is to be understood and practiced is the topic of an ancient and long-standing debate. But R. is right to point out that this debate continues, at times intemperately, in our own time. A section of the book's "Introduction" is dedicated to this issue (pp. 23-24), and many readers will be in agreement with R.'s analysis of the situation. There is, however, one comment in this section that leaves the present reviewer perplexed. Within a general discussion of the various methods used in studying the Scriptures, R. comments: "Methods like the historical critical method have much to say about the meaning of the text, but they have little or nothing to say about the meaning of God's plan. At most they can say what a certain author thought about God's plan, and not what the realities themselves signify. But typology concerns the meaning of the realities signified by the text, a meaning present in God's plan" (p. 24). This comment needs to be nuanced, for it implies a problematic discontinuity between the literal sense and the spiritual sense, that is, between the meaning intended by the inspired authors of the OT (and studied with historical criticism), and the further, deeper meaning discerned in the light of Christian faith through typology. Such a radical discontinuity, in fact, is excluded by the understanding of typology presented elsewhere in the book's "Introduction" (see, e.g., pp. 16-23), often with the support of statements cited from the Catechism and other magisterial documents. It is elsewhere affirmed, and rightly, that the literal sense is the basis of the spiritual sense, and that the literal sense (studied exegetically) and the spiritual sense (discerned typologically) are mutually illuminating. It is clear that the traditional understanding of typology, even while left imprecise, presupposes a dynamic continuity between the earlier meaning intended by the authors of the OT and the fuller meaning explicated by the apostolic authors of the NT, and their successors. Within this continuous and progressive revelation, the authors of the OT books conveyed a true and intrinsically valid understanding of the early events in sacred history, even while that understanding remained incomplete. In turn, the authors of the NT, by virtue of their uniquely retrospective vantage point, were able to make more explicit and more evident the prophetic character of the earlier historical events, a prophetic character that was already perceived, albeit inchoately, by the inspired authors of the OT.

In affirming the dynamic continuity between the Old and New Testaments, Christian readers profess a conviction of faith that is in no way contradicted by

a purely rational scrutiny of the biblical text. To the contrary, this conviction of faith actually finds support in the conclusions reached by modern historical criticism. Historical criticism is only a tool, a method, and its use (or misuse) depends on the presuppositions of those who use it. This method of analysis can be very useful for discovering not only the literal sense but also the spiritual sense of the Scriptures, insofar as the historical critic is attentive to the whole canon, and especially to the many interconnections that come into view when single passages are read within the larger context of the entire canon. These interconnections have been examined by many historical critics, now more than ever, and the conclusions they draw are very significant for the issue at hand (see, e.g., G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Uses of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids, MI – Nottingham: Baker Academic – Apollos, 2007]). This type of contextual study is able to uncover evidence for how the OT authors, and especially those responsible for its final canonical form, often present key historical events as divine interventions that were prophetic (or typological) in nature, that is, historical events that formed a pattern, an ordered sequence, which pointed forward to some future intervention by God, a future intervention that would be decisive and complete. By way of illustration a few examples will suffice.

In the OT, the descriptions of redemptive events that occurred within the sacred history of Israel often exhibit similarities and interconnections that are meaningful. In some cases, the peculiar features of an earlier event reappear in the historical accounts of later events. For example, prominent features of the Creation account in Genesis 1–2 reappear in the story of the Flood and the Regeneration that followed, and many of these same features of Gen 1–2 also reappear in the historical accounts of Israel’s Exodus from Egypt and of her “rebirth” or “regeneration” in the Promised Land. In this way, the first Creation serves as a “type” or “prefiguration” of God’s later interventions at the time of the Flood and the Exodus. Likewise, prominent features of the account of Israel’s Exodus from Egypt reappear in later references to the historical return of Israel from its exile in Babylon. This establishes a connection between the first Exodus (a type) and the Return from Exile as the second Exodus (the antitype). These literary, or intertextual, correspondences go beyond mere analogy. It is legitimate to discern in these purposeful repetitions (or *relectures*) a disclosure of what the OT authors understood and intended to convey: each historical event has meaning within God’s overarching salvific plan, insofar as earlier events serve as prophetic foreshadowings or prefigurations of later redemptive interventions within the one divine plan. In other words, such intertextual connections, perceived and studied with the help of historical criticism, demonstrate that the typological meaning of historical events was already perceived and conveyed, at least indirectly, by the

authors of the OT. This evidence confirms the dynamic continuity between the two Testaments. Moreover, it shows that the apostolic authors of the NT were not doing something entirely new when they offered typological interpretations of historical events recorded in the OT. It was not a question of imposing an extrinsic meaning on the text. Rather, the NT authors labored to discover and further develop, in light of their faith in Christ as God's final intervention in human history, a typological understanding of earlier events and realities that was already indicated, albeit indirectly, in the ancient texts of Scripture.

In their study of the Scriptures, the authors of the NT were led, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to assured conclusions about the meaning of those ancient prophecies and historical narratives that pointed forward to their definitive fulfillment in Christ and in His Church. Theirs was a task of discernment, a task which can be affirmed and proposed anew as normative for Christians of every age. Those who choose to follow the example of the first apostles face an important and daunting task. But this task of further discernment can be done, confidently and profitably. It can be done, if the study of the Bible is attentive to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture, as well as to the inner coherence of the revealed truths of Christian faith. It can be done, if the Scriptures are read, as R. recommends, within the living tradition of the Church. To help readers interested in this further task of theological discernment, there are many helpful tools and suitable methods, including the methods of historical and literary criticism. And now, thanks to the industry and discerning analysis of Fr. Roza, there is a new tool, a new resource, which will be of great help in the important task of discerning what God reveals about the sacraments in the inspired words of Scripture.

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