

of supernatural grace. While noting that it took time for Aquinas to develop his view that marriage is the greatest friendship and the union of souls, Petri acknowledges that his thought is basically undeveloped. He is hampered, for example, by adopting Aristotle's view of woman as "misbegotten man," although Scripture and the Church Fathers temper this perspective.

Petri's book is to be highly recommended for providing insight into the Thomistic

base of John Paul II's theology of the body. It is clearly written and well organized and helps to explain why the Church continues to adhere to the truths expressed in *Humanae vitae*.

MARY SHIVANANDAN

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***Fifteen Steps Out of Darkness:  
The Way of the Cross for People on the Journey of Mental Illness***

**by Scott Rose, Fred Wenner, and Al Rose**

Orbis Books, 2016, paperback, \$18.00  
144 pages, ISBN 978-1-62698-182-9

Above the arched gate separating St. Gangolf's church from the town square, in Trier, Germany, are inscribed the words, *Trägt Christ in der Welt*—carry Christ into the world. It is the first thing Mass goers see on leaving the church, and since this happens shortly after Communion, it is natural to think of the eucharistic presence in each of us. In addition, communicants are called by those words to remember that the first Eucharist took place under the shadow of the cross, which each believer is called to carry.

*Fifteen Steps Out of Darkness* takes its structure from the Stations of the Cross and, within that scope, considers the many different kinds of mental illness that can be a daily burden to those who suffer from them and to their families as well. The chapters are brief (the book is only 121 pages), and each chapter focuses on a specific station of the cross—the fourteen traditional stations and the Resurrection.

Each of the book's authors is connected with Way Station, a nonprofit and nonsectarian community mental health organization that serves more than three thousand children and adults in Maryland. Although Way Station facilities are the loci of many of the book's events, the stories spill out into

the wider communities, where people sometimes say to those with mental illness, not in my backyard. Scott Rose is the CEO and general counsel at Way Station, where he has worked for over thirty years. Fred Wenner is a pastor in the United Church of Christ, who with his spouse has provided foster care to over fifty children, some of whom received mental health service through Way Station. Al Rose is a Roman Catholic permanent deacon, whose ministry has included work in prisons and at an inner city hospice. After Rose retired, he volunteered at a program affiliated with Way Station. Therese Borchard, who wrote the book's prologue, hosts an online community for individuals living with chronic depression and other mood-related disorders. Each of the book's chapters is headed by a photograph of sculptures by the artist Homer Yost, who was once a Way Station client. These images introduce the reader to Christ at Gethsemane and at each station of the cross.

Each chapter tells the story of one individual or family whose life has been affected by mental illness, addiction, neurological conditions, or developmental disabilities. While the authors do not use the term "social sin," many of the chapters are meditations on the

larger societal structures that disadvantage individuals with mental illness and make it difficult for them to obtain services and find places to live. The book also addresses the stigma—a word not far removed from “stigmata”—still faced by many diagnosed with mental illness. Although the stigma is tangible, the underlying condition is often invisible. Borchard speaks of her own childhood struggles with severe clinical depression and suicidal ideation, which she frequently hid from those around her: “If you had to fill out a form to qualify for valid reasons to hurt, you could definitely place a checkmark next to ‘starving to death’ or ‘victim of child abuse.’ Whatever was going on inside my head as a young girl, though, failed that qualification” (xvi).

Each chapter, each station of the cross, tells a vivid story. As a teenager, Cal was refused admission to his local Catholic high school because of emotional and intellectual disabilities, but his faith never wavered. Like many, Walter struggles with caring for

and loving someone with a mental illness. Allison’s schizophrenia includes a paranoia that often prevents her from seeking and accepting treatment.

I sometimes wondered who the target audience for this book should be—individuals with mental illness, mental health professionals, caregivers, or believers? As I continued reading, however, it became clear that these stories can benefit a reader from any of these groups. Perhaps not infrequently, one person belongs to all four. *Fifteen Steps Out of Darkness* is very accessible and deeply personal. Each chapter includes a more or less explicit reflection on the mystery of suffering, and the authors do not hold back their feelings or the sense of injustice that is roused in them through their work.

JAMES BEAUREGARD

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***Eclipse of Man:  
Extinction and the Meaning of Progress***

**by Charles T. Rubin**

Encounter Books, 2014, hardcover, \$23.99

233 pages, bibliographical references and index, ISBN 978-1-59403-736-8

Charles Rubin’s account of transhumanism offers an honest overview of the roots and development of this movement. A more extensive review would include more remote philosophers like Francis Bacon (1561–1626) and René Descartes (1596–1650), but Rubin focuses on proximate philosophers who more directly influenced transhumanism. Rubin begins by comparing transhumanism with the general Christian mindset. While they appear to have similar outlooks—namely, they acknowledge man’s physical and moral limits and want to enhance his potential—they do not share the same solutions. While Christianity is aware of the limits of man,

especially in his post-lapsarian state, it resorts to supernatural means and explanations as well as morally licit material means to address these problems. The merely material solution of transhumanism is too limited. Its central idea is that man must be fundamentally changed or transformed, forced to evolve through the manipulation of nature by the analytical sciences, if he is to survive. The beatitude of eternal life promised by Christianity does not enter transhumanism’s vision of immortality.

Rubin starts his deconstruction of transhumanism with the Frenchman Nicolas de Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet (1743–1794).