

***Encyclopedia of Catholic Social Thought, Social Science, and Social Policy*, vol. 3: Supplement, edited by Michael L. Coulter, Richard S. Myers, and Joseph A. Varacalli. Lanham, Md.: The Scarecrow Press, 2012. 413 pages.**

Five years after the publication of the two-volume *Encyclopedia of Catholic Social Thought, Social Science, and Social Policy*, a supplemental third volume now has been published. As the only such encyclopedia (to my knowledge) currently available in English, these volumes make a unique and very helpful scholarly resource. The editors produced the volumes with the aim of applying “a Catholic sensibility and critique to a wide variety of aspects of social existence, from intellectual and scholarly disciplines, to culture and institutional structures, to the strategies and possibilities of government intervention in the lives of the citizenry” (xi). On the whole, the volumes succeed in their given task. The first two volumes, which include 848 signed entries, were published in 2007. Before his passing, Fr. Richard John Neuhaus wrote that this encyclopedia “simply must be in every Catholic library—parish, high school, college, and university.” In 2012, a supplemental volume with 202 additional signed entries was published. The same standard of quality and approach evident in the first volumes is maintained in the supplemental volume. Libraries that hold the original two-volume set should add the supplement to their collection; those lacking this resource should add all three volumes.

In his Gifford Lectures, Alasdair MacIntyre famously distinguished between three rival moral traditions. He called the outlook of modernity “encyclopedia,” contrasting it with Nietzschean post-modernism (which he called “genealogy”) and the perennial philosophy associated with Catholicism (which he called simply “tradition”). In calling the outlook of modernity “encyclopedia,” he had in mind the worldview of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, especially the landmark ninth edition, published in twenty-five volumes from 1875–1889. Those volumes presumed that all educated persons in principle could achieve a disengaged objective framework that captured what was then known about everything. The work of scholarship, so conceived, involves advancing the modern ideals of progress, science, equality, and freedom while aiming to achieve a new enlightened view of the entire world. The outlook of encyclopedias such as *Britannica*, it was hoped, would replace older canons like the Bible. Considered in that manner, “encyclopedia” stands for the modern belief in progressive rationality freed from the strictures of traditional religion.

It should go without saying that the outlook presumed in the articles of the *Encyclopedia of Catholic Social Thought, Social Science, and Social Policy* shares little or nothing in common with that of the modern “encyclopedists” or the editors of the ninth edition of the *Britannica*. In contrast, the editors of this encyclopedia have provided a resource that presents Catholic social thought with accuracy and respect while reflecting the views of those who understand themselves to be shaped by and participants in the Church’s social teaching. When Alasdair MacIntyre was asked by an interviewer if he was a Catholic in the “traditional and orthodox sense,” he responded, “There is no other sense” (Tracey Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* [London: Routledge, 2003], quoting from *Kinesis* 23 [Summer 1996]: 47). Those who appreciate MacIntyre’s somewhat sarcastic answer should welcome the approach that guided the editors of these volumes. The editors envisioned that this encyclopedia would appeal to scholars and to the well-educated layperson, whether Catholic or not. The volumes are aimed at those wanting a “clear and accurate introduction to Catholic social thought and a Catholic informed social science and social policy” (x).

The signed entries come from scholars who will be recognized by readers of this journal. Most entries also include a succinct bibliography. As the title suggests, three areas are covered: social encyclicals and other Church statements on social issues; Catholic-informed social scientific perspectives; and social-policy analyses shaped by a Catholic worldview.

Why was a supplemental volume added just five years after the original effort? “First, Catholic social thought is a continuing reflection on the dignity of the human person and on the nature of the good society, and so there will continue to be a need for new volumes of the *Encyclopedia* to take account of recent historical developments.” For example, Pope Benedict XVI issued several important social encyclicals soon after the publication of the original volumes, and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a statement on the ethical implications of current issues in biomedical research (*Dignitatis Personae*). Entries on these and other recent developments are included. The supplement also fills in gaps in the original volumes. In addition, several important non-Catholic thinkers from a Catholic perspective, such as John Stuart Mill and Leo Tolstoy, are treated. The supplemental volume also includes entries that were not treated as fully in the earlier volumes, such as multiculturalism, infanticide, and ectopic pregnancies.

While the volumes can be purchased as an e-book, I hope the editors will consider whether there is a way to make these volumes more widely available in electronic form, especially through research libraries. Because these volumes are a treasure trove of information, it might be desirable to

be able to access them in multiple ways. Obviously, the volumes are designed for use as reference books. However, encyclopedias can be read in several ways. When I was a grammar school child, I took delight in reading entry after entry in our family's encyclopedia. I found myself experiencing that same love of learning as I worked through many of the entries in the recently published supplement to the *Encyclopedia of Catholic Social Thought, Social Science, and Social Policy*. That's one way to read an encyclopedia, but electronic searches open up other possibilities. Were there a way to access these volumes electronically through one's research library, the search capabilities of that medium might fruitfully extend the way both scholars and students could benefit from these important volumes.

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Bill Donohue, *Why Catholicism Matters: How Catholic Virtues Can Reshape Society in the 21st Century*. New York: Image, 2012. 293 pages.

Bill Donohue is the well-known president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, a former sociology professor, and recipient of both the Society of Catholic Social Scientists' Pope Pius XI and Blessed Frederic Ozanam Awards. His latest book is an important contribution for those of us who believe that the Church must be at the center of any serious effort to renew American and Western life in our times.

Donohue's unique analysis holds that the Church's teaching about the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance—which, of course, were originally discussed by the great classical philosophers but given a fuller, deeper meaning by Christianity—is the basis for addressing and beginning to solve the crucial issues confronting contemporary society.

In the book's Introduction, he quickly summarizes the major areas in society that the Church has profoundly shaped or influenced over the centuries: learning, art, architecture, music, economics, science and technology. He perhaps does this to draw in the reader who is skeptical about the Church's ability to influence culture—either because of suspicion about the Church or ignorance of her contributions—to get him to follow his ensuing argument. The reason the Church has had such influence is because of what he calls a “psychic revolution” that it helped bring about: It gave a preeminent stress to reason and to the pursuit of truth. In other words, the Church