ought to be "broad enough to accommodate the range of reasonable viewpoints" (419). Unfortunately, instead of explaining what she means by reasonable, Majumder rejects a number of viewpoints that she finds unreasonable, claiming simply that they are inadequately justified (420). Paul Lauritzen, however, is more restrictive. He sees medicine as a profession with a specific goal: the treatment of disease. When doctors deviate from this goal in order to fulfill their patients' desires in exchange for a fee, they commercialize suffering and turn its alleviation into a commodity. The most immediate problem with this deviation is that is trivializes suffering. More importantly, however, doctors who treat suffering itself and not the diseases that cause it end up begetting more suffering. For example, by seeking to alleviate the suffering of infertile spouses, many doctors have induced multiple-gestation pregnancies, which have a host of negative consequences for mothers and children alike.

Suffering and Bioethics is a helpful collection for anyone looking for a broad overview of the various positions that have been taken on the nature of suffering and its bioethical implications. This book also offers its readers a chance to investigate how suffering and its related problems are approached by thinkers from different backgrounds. As an interdisciplinary work, *Suffering and Bioethics* serves as a good starting point for further scholarship. The variety of perspectives shows that thinkers from different disciplines are far from united in their understanding of what suffering is and what ought to be done about it. This discord need not be discouraging, but rather should be seen as an indication of what work still needs to be done to achieve a unified understanding of suffering.

Matthew Dugandzic

Matthew Dugandzic is a PhD candidate in moral theology at the Catholic University of America, where he also teaches bioethics.

The Gospel of Happiness: Rediscover Your Faith through Spiritual Practices and Positive Psychology

by Christoper Kaczor

Image, 2015, hardcover, $18
205 pages, bibliography and index, ISBN 978-0-8041-4100-0

Although intellectuals have spurned religious faith for centuries, the common flight from confessional religion is fairly recent, corresponding roughly to the onset of the digital and information revolutions after World War II. This is also the period of the ideological secularization of higher education, including, sadly, much of Catholic education. Had Catholic universities not chosen to metamorphose into clones of their secular counterparts, a genuine dialogue between Christian faith and philosophy and the modern social sciences might be a lot further along than it is. Maintaining the principles proper to each discipline, Catholic scholars on both sides could have asked what anthropological and ethical truths can assist in the proper articulation and application of the respective bodies of knowledge.

The Need for an Integrated Psychology

I am convinced that if Catholic universities had maintained intellectual cultures consistent with the faith they profess, the psychological sciences in particular would have translated many of the true and waxing insights of the modern discipline, especially as generated by the cognitivist-empirical turn of the late twentieth century, into theoretical paradigms and clinical modalities more consistent with Christian truth. This did not happen. So here we are in the second decade of the twenty-first century still struggling to understand what an integrated psychology looks like.

Psychologists have been at the forefront of this struggle. Both researchers and practitioners have been involved in the work of integration: Conrad Baars and Anna Terruwe tried to integrate the philosophical psychology of Thomas Aquinas into psychodynamic theory. More recently, others have made significant contributions to what we might call a Catholic psychology, including Robert Kugelmann of the University of Dallas; Joseph Nicolosi of the Thomas Aquinas Psychological Clinic in California; Paul Vitz, professor emeritus of New York University; the faculty members of Divine Mercy University; and Kathryn Benes, the founder of the Regina Coeli Clinic in Denver, to mention only a few.

But philosophers and theologians have been less active, which makes this integrative text by Christopher Kaczor, professor of philosophy at Loyola Marymount University, all the more timely. Kaczor is a moral philosopher and, to my knowledge, has no formal training in psychology. Yet he has undertaken a popular work at the intersection of Christian practice and positive psychology to illustrate how developments in the latter can underwrite many of the Gospel's practical recommendations for Christian living and significantly enrich the lives of believers and nonbelievers.

Positive Psychology

For those unfamiliar with the relatively new field of positive psychology, it marks a turning point in modern psychology, which has traditionally focused on negative phenomena—mental dysfunction and illness. Martin Seligman and Christopher Peterson, the movement's founders, believed that emphasizing disorder could bring people only so far. Psychology should also help individuals achieve an engaged, meaningful, and happy life. Thus they proposed what they called positive psychology, which focuses on the study of health and well-being through an emphasis on adaptive habits and positive thinking. Noting the similarity between this and the Christian emphasis on virtue and trust in God, Kaczor draws on both sources while writing this short book on happiness. His aim is to *inform the practices* of his readers and help them achieve greater fulfillment by drawing on seminal Christian insights about living a good life as elaborated and empirically supported by positive psychology. The result is a highly readable text that is faithful to the Gospel and full of helpful practical advice. *The Gospel of Happiness* is, in the best sense, a Christian self-help book.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Kaczor's approach tracks the logic of the therapeutic modality known as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Like CBT, he recommends the inculcation of practices and skills that target problem solving, especially overcoming chronic negativity in our thought patterns. The book is solution-focused, looking beyond dousing psychological fires in order to instill long-term skill sets that enable people to live with greater contentment. And like CBT, it gets very practical. For example, to correct our "negativity bias," that is, the penchant we have to be overcritical of ourselves and others, Kaczor recommends the "three blessing" exercise: at the end of each day we reflect on its blessings and goods before writing them down in a sentence or two along with a statement of why each happened (101–106). The book also recommends writing a 250-word letter of gratitude to someone who has been especially good to us, as well as keeping a gratitude journal with different gratitude-centered foci for each day of the week (107–109).

Commonsense Advice and Lively Prose

The book's practical guidance is organized around six ways of achieving happiness each of which comprises a different chapter: faith, hope, and love; prayer; gratitude; forgiveness; virtue; and willpower. Its advice is soundly Christian, easy to read, down-to-earth, and supported by empirical evidence. The book's prose is lively and even at times humorous. Its insights are rich enough to benefit mature adults and simple enough to serve the needs of teenagers. The book will be a source of enrichment to Christians as well as open-minded non-Christians.

The book makes generous use of mnemonic devices as memory aids. For example, it describes the five elements of happiness

using Seligman's acronym PERMA: *p*ositive emotion; *e*ngagement, losing oneself in enjoyable tasks; healthy *r*elationships; *m*eaning, believing in and serving something bigger than oneself; and *a*chievement, setting, striving for, and accomplishing goals (21). Kaczor summarizes the stages in the journey from bitterness to forgiveness using Everett Worthington's REACH: *r*ecall the hurt; *e*mpathize with the wrongdoer; offer an *a*ltruistic gift of forgiveness; *c*ommit oneself to forgive; and *h*old on to forgiveness (126). *The Gospel of Happiness* also explain how injured people can take responsibility for their own emotional responses using Fred Luskin's HEAL: *h*ope, *e*ducate, *a*ffirm, and *l*ong-term commitment (120).

To keep readers engaged, Kaczor repeats both serious and humorous maxims—"The punishment for sin is sin" (Augustine); "memento mori" (Stoics); "the way to love anything is to realize that it might be lost" (Chesterton); "The only way to get rid of temptation is to yield to it. … I can resist anything but temptation" (Oscar Wilde); "I'm not afraid of death; I just don't want to be there when it happens" (Woody Allen). He also recounts numerous anecdotes from personal and family experience.

Kaczor's approach is balanced and realistic. For example, he begins his discussion of forgiveness by dispelling some common misconceptions. Forgiveness *does not* mean forgetting another's wrongdoing, pretending nothing happened, or forgoing justice; but it can be done even if reconciliation with the culprit is not possible. On the other hand, it *does* require a deliberate decision to forgo revenge and to treat the wrongdoer humanely. Kaczor calls this decisional forgiveness, which should not be equated with emotional forgiveness, where we no longer feel anger or bitterness toward the culprit. He also debunks certain assumptions about stress relief, saying research has found that compensatory behaviors such as smoking, drinking, eating, playing video games, surfing the Internet, or watching TV are completely ineffective; they distract from stress but do not relieve it. Relief comes from exercise, prayer, reading, and spending time with one's family. Or again, treating the subject of virtue, he says we need to understand a bad habit before we can break it. Consequently, he advises using the acronym CRR (*c*ue, *r*outine, *r*eward): learn what triggers a bad habit, what rituals carry it out, and what the payoff is. Then formulate a plan to replace the destructive action with healthy activity, establishing the new habit through repetition. Do not forget, he reminds the reader, actions get easier with repetition.

Finally, his approach is, before anything, soundly Christian. To slightly change a common theological maxim, he shows how his advice is no more than a handmaid to Christian wisdom. For example, when addressing weakness of will, Kaczor argues that "the most important remedy … is the grace of God" (148), before explaining the remedies that contemporary science has discovered to help people overcome their weaknesses.

Constructive, not Critical

Kaczor offers only a constructive account of positive psychology, conscientiously avoiding any serious critical engagement. He notes that its proponents are not without their errors, but says these arise at the precise points where they depart from empirical findings and begin to engage in philosophical or theological speculation. This last criticism, however, is ambiguous, because positive psychology's central theoretical construct—human virtue—is inextricably philosophical. The founders of positive psychology were not Christian. Although they draw liberally on Christian sources to formulate their account of virtue, they draw on them selectively and unfortunately occlude at least one truth that is present in any sound account of virtue. I end this review with a brief consideration of what I consider the field's most significant deficiency: the attempt to define the moral virtues in value-free terms.

In the classical account, moral virtues are habits of mind and will that confer on those who possess them both the ability to do good and the right and the consistent exercise of that ability; they not only make one's actions good, but one's very self: "Virtue

is that *which makes its possessor good, and his work good likewise*" (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I-II.56.3). If, on the other hand, some disposition of character is ordered toward wrongdoing, it is not a virtue but a vice, a defect of character. It is not conducive to overall flourishing and happiness, but to mental and physical decay, as well as moral and spiritual atrophy.

Positive psychology's account of moral virtue attempts the impossible task of defining its subject matter without referencing the concepts of good and evil. For example, Seligman and Peterson, in their seminal work *Character Strengths and Virtues*, identify six core virtues around which they categorize twenty-four measurable character strengths representative of a flourishing life. But they define the virtues and strengths in value-free terms. For example, prudence, they say, is the developed skill to devise plans, formulate efficacious means for their realization, maintain the resolve to see the plans through to the end, and avoid the kind of rashness that arises from preoccupation with short-term payoff at the expense of long-term gain. Prudence, by their account, is future directedness. The obvious problem with this definition of prudence is that it characterizes Osama bin Laden as accurately as Mother Theresa. So prudence must be more than the habit of resolute future directedness—it must direct a person toward a future in which good is done and pursued and evil avoided. Therefore, inasmuch as empirical research claims to identify and measure those human habits that contribute to true happiness, it is not, in fact, identifying the presence and activity of positive psychology's self-defined, value-free traits, but the realization of true virtue. So either positive psychology does not measure qualities conducive of true happiness, or it relies on a value-rich account of virtue while setting forth merely a truncated account.

It would be a valuable scholarly project to integrate Seligman and Peterson's account of virtue with the moral insights derived from the classical account. It seems to me that relatively little would have to be omitted from the modern interpretation. The problem is not so much what they say about the virtues as what they do not say. This is where the nourishment of Catholic faith and philosophy may play an important role in strengthening and, in some respects, correcting the field of positive psychology.

E. Christian Brugger

E. Christian Brugger, DPhil, is professor and dean of the School of Philosophy and Theology, University of Notre Dame Australia, Sydney.

Living the Truth in Love: Pastoral Approaches to Same-Sex Attraction

edited by Janet E. Smith and Father Paul Check

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This volume has received high praise from Archbishop Allen Vigneron, Cardinals Donald Wuerl and Seán O'Malley, George Weigel, Helen Alvaré, and Robert P. George. In the foreword, Vigneron describes the book as both a response to the 2014 Synod of Bishops on the Family and as a practicum for situating same-sex attraction in the family structure (8). Janet Smith is a well-respected theologian of ethics and Rev. Paul Check a revered pastor and the executive director of Courage International, an apostolate that organizes support groups and other resources for people with same-sex attraction (SSA). In the preface, the editors explain how the contributors present "good pastoral approaches to those who experience same-sex attraction." They point out that the "different