

5-1-1997

A season of saints: sermons for festivals and commemorations after Pentecost

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Recommended Citation

Mueller, David G. (1997) "A season of saints: sermons for festivals and commemorations after Pentecost," *Consensus*: Vol. 23 : Iss. 1 , Article 15.

Available at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol23/iss1/15>

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text. "I endeavor to describe what actually happened back then or the symbolic/fictive world of Israel, thus enabling students to experience for themselves the religious meaning of that report at various stages of the canon" (p. 137). In doing so he discovers that God always does the unexpected, even the contradictory, that which is "beyond human calculation"—as in the astonishing assertion that God "repents" of wreaking intended vengeance (cf. especially, "God and the Unexpected" on Joel 2:1-2, 12-17a). God refuses to be enslaved by the human drive toward tidiness—in theology as in everything else.

The exquisite attention to the text is an integral part of Crenshaw's defiant yet humble **NEVERTHELESS** of faith. In a fine study of Habakkuk ("When God's Silence is Better than Speech") he comes to the gripping "Even if..." passage: "Even if the fig tree fails to bloom and no fruit appears...the produce of the olive fails...small animals are cut off...and cattle are missing...yet I will exult in Yahweh, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation." Crenshaw comments, "The prophet who has just had his religious convictions shattered by reality speaks the unspeakable, utters the great 'nevertheless' of faith. I may have no food in the pantry and no prospects of any, yet I will still praise the Lord—nay, more than that, I will truly experience joy in the God who defies human understanding" (p. 82).

It is the "nevertheless" that, I believe, the church as a whole needs to learn to utter in an age when God is an option. Crenshaw can be a model of such a stance, and a model too for the quiet, persistent, and personal nature of such an apologetic.

Eduard R. Riegert
Waterloo, Ontario

A Season of Saints: Sermons for Festivals and Commemorations After Pentecost

John P. Rossing
Lima, Ohio: C.S.S. Publishing Co., Inc., 1992
105 pp.

During a time in the church when narrative theology and the use of story-based sermons is growing, this book of sermons is an important contribution to the resources of the church. It is especially so for the season after Pentecost, when, as the author correctly points out, most congregations assume declining participation and attendance over the summer, and miss out on the celebrative nature of this season of 'green' growth in the liturgical calendar as well as creation.

John P. Rossing is a graduate of Saint Olaf College and Luther Seminary. He is a doctoral candidate at Emory University.

The book is a series of 15 sermons based on the lives of Christian saints commemorated in the calendar of Lesser Festivals and Commemorations in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. The sermons have been used in the context of worship at All Saints' Lutheran Church in Lilburn, Georgia where Rossing is a part-time staff member.

I found each of the sermons to be excellent devotional reading as Rossing superbly combines the saints' lives with those of our own. Preachers will find inspiration for their own sermon preparation. Laypersons will find that indeed we can celebrate our own lives as saints by the grace of God. In fact Rossing encourages creativity in compiling our own list of saints to commemorate and celebrate.

I would recommend this book for both clergy and laity; a book that includes a sermon on the commemoration of Mary, Mother of our Lord, palatable to a Lutheran heritage, is indeed worth having.

David G. Mueller
Bentley, Alberta

Homeward Bound

Harold L. Warlick

Lima, Ohio: C.S.S. Publishing Company, 1991

181 pp.

Harold Warlick is identified as "...minister to the college and chairman of the department of religion and philosophy, High Point College, High Point, North Carolina." The Library of Congress Catalogue data tells us that he is Baptist. The book is subtitled "Messages about Life after Death". But the data describes them as "sermons about life after death". It is not altogether clear, then, what the content and function of this book are. The messages/sermons have titles, but no biblical texts are prefixed, and they vary in length from very short (four pages) to very long (fourteen pages). Thus, they may be anything from brief college chapel addresses to privately composed personal meditations.

The book appears to be thematic, connected throughout by the theme of life after death, as the subtitle promises. In his Introduction, Warlick affirms that "We are all on a homeward bound journey" (p.7). Loss of spiritual home and inheritance, he says, is our great tragedy. He also confides that this is a book of middle age; hence the importance of the "vision of home". The first meditation/sermon is indicative: "The Child Points the Way". In the ensuing pages he often juxtaposes the child of Bethlehem with the journey home and the promise of eternal life.

Warlick is a very good writer. His homiletic style (we will assume that these are sermons) is generally to begin with a contemporary situation,