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What do you do with an annoying fly while you are trying to read Scripture? Clarence Heller (*Everyday Sacred: Meditations and Paintings to Inspire Reflection and Prayer*, Marjoejess Imprints, \$17.95) finally gets the message, closes the Bible, and begins to pay attention to the fly. But he doesn't stop there; he goes on to paint a picture of his "amazing visitor" and to marvel at its "ease of flight, awareness of surroundings, and reaction time." This aptly named collection of poetic meditations and beautifully reproduced artwork gives fresh insights drawn from experiences in prayer, spiritual guidance, and peer supervision but also from working in a garden, awakening in the morning, or shopping for groceries. Readers will recognize the rendition of Ignatius of Loyola's "Suscipe" in Heller's "Every Little Bit" and will delight in turns of phrase such as his observation that we make friends but "we can also make strangers." An appendix suggests ways to share the delight by savoring the book in a group.

Patricia Schnapp RSM's *Alleluias and Amens* (Patricia Schnapp, \$10.00) uses Scripture selections from, and poetic reflections on, Gospel readings for Ordinary Time. Entries may be three or four lines or may cover a page. Unobtrusive alliteration strengthens the images, such as

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in a description of Jesus' healing of the bent woman: "Jesus touched her/healing her into her height again." The accompanying line drawings by Maura Barga can be abstract, whimsical, touching, humorous, thought-provoking. Although the poetry stands on its own, some readers will appreciate the reflection questions for each week.

Mark Pierson (*The Art of Curating Worship: Reshaping the Role of Worship Leader*, Augsburg Fortress, sparkhouse press, \$16.99) once thought that a painting of the crucifixion should portray three men nailed to crosses, but he came to see that "the more interpreted and translated a work was, the better it would connect with people who had never considered the Christian faith" (p. 9). While he believes that art can harbor an encounter with God, he does not see the arts as a mere tool. Artists, he insists, need to engage with God through their gifts, and we need their "insights and challenges that unsettle, and question in ways that nothing else can" (p. 222). Pierson sees himself as a "curator" of worship events, integrating, pruning, arranging transitions. To avoid "fluff," he focuses on why a church community comes together: "to sustain people in . . . following . . . Jesus Christ" and "to introduce others to that journey" (p. 21). In worship, it is the Spirit who transforms; the curator provides space for that to happen. Exemplifying an ecumenical approach, this writer from the Baptist tradition encourages openness to worship elements from other traditions. The description of the author's worship events struck this reader as fostering individual, more than communal, encounter with God. That is not to deny the book's value, especially if one is open to using its creative suggestions for retreats, for Advent and Lenten services, or for conference prayer events. And, take heart. For all his commitment to excellence in worship, the author does not believe excellence should be raised to sainthood. There is room for messiness in his approach to learning to curate worship.

Shane Claiborne, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, and Enuma Okoro have gathered a staggering amount of material in *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* (Zondervan, \$24.99). The introductory essay gives an excellent overview of the value of liturgical/common prayer and its relationship to private prayer. The rest of the book is best perused—prayed—a little at a time, over several years to absorb things such as prayers for special occasions (adoption, the workplace, someone killed in the neighborhood); commemorations for each day of the year (Basil of Caesarea, Gandhi, Hagar, Harriet Tubman, President Bush's signing of the civil rights law for those with disabilities); discussion of prayer beads, prayer bowls, and whole body prayer; and

quotes from Mennonites, Ignatius of Antioch, and G.K. Chesterton. September 11 commemorates terrorist attacks on the U.S. but also the 1973 CIA overthrow of the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende. A prayer for that day comes from a fourth-century bishop, Theophilus of Antioch: "Say to those that hate and curse you, 'You are our brothers.'" Each month ends with ideas for "Becoming the Answer to Our Prayers," such as taking a break from noise or visiting those who have no visitors. Every reader will object to the omission of some or other person or event. For this reviewer it is the fact that November 9 is designated as a memorial to the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall—with no mention of 1938's shattering attack on German Jews (Kristallnacht). The authors acknowledge their limits, invite readers to continue the development by adding their own fingerprints, and provide a website to facilitate that process. The book will be a valuable resource for groups who pray together and will open avenues for private prayer.

T.P. O'Mahony (*Why the Catholic Church Needs Vatican III*, The Columba Press, \$22.95) is concerned with the sex abuse scandal in the Catholic Church, but this Irish newspaper religious affairs correspondent sees the scandal as symptomatic of deeper problems that stem from Vatican I's creation of an imperial church. But mere organizational change, he says, would be like "moving the furniture around the deck of the Titanic" (p. 18). What is needed is a new council; and to bring about a Vatican III, Catholics have to take ownership of their faith as reflected in the words of Father Feral MacDonagh: "we will not let this ever happen again. Never, ever again. We will not be deceived again, we will not be lied to, for we are the people of God and we deserve better than this . . . we *are* the church" (p. 25). Especially interesting in O'Mahony's discussion of councils are the different views of canon law and history: while canon law specifies that a council must be convened, led, and confirmed by the pope (can. 338), the first seven councils—all recognized as legitimate—were convened, led, and approved by the emperor. O'Mahony articulates well the hope of many who are disheartened by efforts to backtrack on the vision of Vatican II, but he cites some appeals that seem to miss the mark. Would changing the rule on contraception really "bring millions of Catholics back into full communion with the church," as E. Stourton claims (p. 13)? Or would elimination of the celibacy requirement for priests prevent clerical sex abuse (Father Tony Flannery's view)? Other appeals from O'Mahony will puzzle some readers, such as for a council that would "abrogate the *Code of Canon Law*" to show that the church

is a community, not a juridical entity. But he seems much on target in seeing the need for the decentralization and inculturation that could be effected if a Vatican III would “awaken the ‘sleeping princess’ of collegiality” (p. 112).

Those who call for church reform will do well to consider Yves Congar’s *True and False Reform in the Church* (Trans. Paul Philibert, Liturgical Press: Michael Glazier, \$39.95). While O’Mahony asks whether supreme authority is in the council or in the pope, Congar supports both papal governance for the sake of church unity and the role of local churches in making the faith available to new times, places, and cultures. Congar’s concern for unity guides his exploration of how the church must reform and the conditions under which it can do so without schism. Nuanced and thorough in combing the tradition, he quotes Thomas More, who asks if “we need to keep a respectful silence even in the face of abuse” (p. 33), but he also observes that human frailty can so badly taint criticism that it spoils any truth in the critique: “condemning an error should not cast a shadow over what is valuable in its insights” (p. 210). The caution would apply both to the church that condemns and to the critic of the church. And if a reformer does not remain in communion with the whole body of the church, a legitimate insight, developing on its own, becomes overly simplified. Congar balances his appreciation for a stable hierarchy with a citation from St. Cyprian: “The Lord never said: ‘I am the custom,’ but ‘I am the truth.’ ” Congar broadens the notion of evil (usually equated with sin) in the church by noting that in early and medieval use, *peccatum* could also indicate delays and narrowness. The church of the martyrs, he says, has always also been “rich in sinners and renegades” and, slightly more startling, “the presence of sinners in the church is not . . . accidental, [but] represents something structural” (p. 98). Even while recognizing the negative effects of delay, Congar calls for patience, for reform takes place in the context of God’s activity in time and history. Because God’s work is developmental and tied up with human freedom, “only what’s done in cooperation with the nature of time itself can conquer time” (p. 267). Nevertheless, if history “condemns impatient reformers,” it “also teaches...about the responsibility incurred by the overly patient and sluggish attitude of some authorities at times of great catastrophe” (p. 284).

A note on word use in these last two books: The title of O’Mahony’s opening chapter, “Papal Fallibility,” may be misleading. The author is talking not about a loss of infallibility, but about the loss of credibility in regard to the papacy because of inept, shameful

handling of the clerical sex abuse scandal. Congar uses a similar word (“God alone is infallible”) in a way that will puzzle some English ears. In a post-publication communication, the translator explains that the French term can suggest the lack of failure or fault. Congar is indicating that God is “the source of being and master of its evolution [and] is the only one who would never lack the resources to make things happen just as they should.”

—Rosemary Jermann