

an enjoyable experience to simply pick an essay or two at random, and allow these to serve as fruit for contemplation. In addition to the sheer pleasure of reading Maurin's essays gathered in one volume, we benefit from Rice's scholarly work, as he demonstrates his understanding and his imaginative application of Maurin's ideas to point readers toward a fresh perspective on perennial problems.

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Birth of a Movement: Black Lives Matter and the Catholic Church. By Olga M. Segura. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2021. xix + 139 pages. \$20.00.

This fast-paced, passionate polemic responds to the racial justice protests of 2020, when the deaths of Black Americans at the hands of police, and inequitably from the Covid-19 pandemic, sent Americans of all racial identities into the streets to insist on the beauty and dignity of Black life in what Segura describes as an "antiracism rebellion" (xviii). Rooted in personal experience, theology and history, *Birth of a Movement* is timely, but has enduring relevance. It should become required reading for all Christians who care about our faith's potential for social change.

The author, Olga Segura, is a journalist whose reporting on the Black Lives Matter movement since 2014 inspired her to read deeply into political thought on racial capitalism, US white supremacy and abolitionist politics. The book draws on Segura's research into the work of scholars like Shannen Dee Williams, Angela Davis, and Kelly Brown Douglas; original interviews with organizers like #MeToo founder Tarana Burke and Black Lives Matter cofounder Alicia Garza; and reports on police murders of Black men, women, and children, which are no less heart-breaking for their factual presentation. The book advances multiple arguments: how leading racial justice activists of our day are rooted in their own faith commitments and should be treated as leading sources for Catholic social teaching; the institutional Church's complicity in slavery and ongoing racial exploitation; and the complete resonance of Catholic doctrine on justice and human dignity with the Black Lives Matter movement's calls for a more just way of American life.

Segura reflects on this material through her lens as a Black, Dominican immigrant to the US, who as an adult identifies "personally and professionally" with the Catholic faith of her upbringing, despite never having been baptized (56–57). Her more personal reflections on faith and racial injustice are an integral part of

the book. Segura's seamless blend of reporting, research, and memoir reminded me how acknowledgment of standpoint, long encouraged by marginalized scholars and resisted by some with dominant experiences, seems to be emerging as standard in communication for general audiences. *Birth of a Movement* is an excellent model of this transparent, humanizing practice of knowledge creation.

Segura calls for several transformative, wholly appropriate action items for the institutional Catholic Church, including a full accounting, apology, and reparations for Catholic involvement in slavery; centering the perspective of Black Catholics and racial justice organizers in responding to racism; and resistance to the prison-industrial complex, including policing: "Catholics must become abolitionists" (112). Although she calls for "shifting our church from one centered on the power and leadership of a mostly white, all-male clergy" (78) and acknowledges that accurate understanding of the Church's social justice tradition has led many white lay Catholics to support BLM (64), Segura surprisingly often seems to envision a top-down model of Church, with many of her action items envisioned as tasks for the body of bishops. On one hand, this is often an appropriate assigning of responsibility; the institutional Church benefitted from complicity with slavery and continues to benefit from accepting white dominance as standard in the US. On the other hand, particularly in a book so rich with the insights of grassroots organizers, it jars when Segura somewhat frequently poses a question about Catholic responsibility for action, and answers it with a call to use episcopal authority.

"Faith and Social Justice" is a common course theme at Catholic universities. *Birth of a Movement* is perfectly composed (and priced) to become a key text in such courses. With righteous frustration at the Church's persistent failure to live up to its own teachings of justice, equal dignity, and preferential care for the most vulnerable, Segura insists, "Black Lives Matter is not a movement pushing an extremist agenda that contradicts our faith; it is the secular version of Catholic social teaching" (65). With rigor and originality, her book makes this case beyond a doubt.

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The Church's Best-Kept Secret: A Primer on Catholic Social Teaching.
By Mark P. Shea. New York: New City Press, 2020. 160 pages. \$16.95.

In 1985, Orbis Books published *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret* by Edward DeBerri and James Hug, who dedicated their book "to the hard-working educators and front-line activists who embody the principles of Catholic social teaching [CST] each day." In that text, they explain the historical background of CST, its