

## Reviews & Notices

**Klos, Jan. *Heart Speaks unto Heart On the Kinship of Spirit and Thought: John Henry Newman and Edith Stein*. Leiden: Brill, 2021. pp. 212. ISBN: 978-90-04-46622-7.**

We seldom see an author combining two giants of thought, John Henry Newman and Edith Stein, in a single work. Much more, it is a rare occurrence that someone would expound the spiritual relation between the two in a clear and expository way, without diminishing the message of the two holy thinkers.

Klos did a good job in approaching in comparing Newman and Stein. Both were converts; both sought and encountered the Truth; both underwent philosophical and spiritual journeys and found Christ at the end of the journey. On the other hand, both employed different methods to reality and various paths in the journey. Newman was seeped into the British philosophical tradition while Stein on Husserl's phenomenological method and later on, influenced by Aquinas and some scholastics. Newman, as a cleric, rose to the ranks of the Church's hierarchy and became a Cardinal while Stein, as a true contemplative, hid in the wellsprings of Carmel. Newman did not die a martyr's death while Stein shed her blood for the faith in Auschwitz. Both cannot possibly be put neatly into universal labels for they uphold truly personal and unique paths towards self-fulfillment. Newman started with the Anglican Church while Stein on the Jewish religion and eventually, as she said, she stopped praying. Only later on did the latter found her true faith in Roman Catholicism, thanks to the great Spanish Carmelite mystic and doctor of the church, St. Teresa of Avila, whose influence on Stein is unmistakable. Stein herself as a Catholic, while actively engaged in the educational apostolate, translated Newman's work *The Idea of a University*. At present, both are being studied as possible Doctors of the Church, Newman as a *Doctor of Conscience* while Stein, as *Doctor Crucis* and/or *Doctor Veritatis* and/or *Doctor Fidei et Rationis* and/or *Doctor Humanitatis*.

The strong thread that binds the two together is that both Newman and Stein firmly believe in the unique and incommunicable aspect of each human person. It is in here that the human being finds his/her very self and following it steadfastly amidst the vicissitudes of life implies conflicts and misunderstandings, even from close friends and

loved ones. Klos articulated this point very well throughout the book. But the paradox is that, it is in this path that both Newman and Stein came closer to people as *persons*. Klos sums it up neatly: “By reading John Henry Newman and Edith Stein, I have understood one thing of utmost importance: the way to save our individuality is to go inside ourselves rather than go outside in a variety of expressions. Individuality is not to shock but to remain in oneself. Such is the main lesson from both authors. After all, it is heart that speaks to heart, not mouth that speaks to mouth. Persons who live inside can communicate on a considerably more profound level.” (p. 204)

Klos leads the reader carefully into the density of Newman and Stein’s thinking. Terms and concepts are not easy to digest but Klos makes it a point to simplify them. In this sense, the book becomes a way to initiate readers not familiar with Newman and Stein. It is also a work for those who are struggling to see themselves as themselves, free from the coercion of external powerful forces that individuals confront everyday.

On the other hand, Klos is careful not to fall into the error of saying everything. Who can possibly condense in a book the totality of thought of Newman and Stein? The selective style of Klos and his ability to weave essential aspects of both thinkers understandable to the readers make him a writer worthy of being acknowledged.

A significant contribution of the work, besides being clear and introductory, is its challenge posed to the society at present whose high percentage of population seeks what is true and good and yet often succumbs many times to fake news, misinformation, and disinformation. The latter are gullible and easily swayed. Newman and Stein, as Klos portrayed them, rose beyond the tide and opposed strong currents of thoughts during their days to the point they became witnesses to a truth very unpopular to many. Klos highlights the interior life as the path which the two took. Their decisions made them very unpopular to many to the point that Stein has to give her life, the highest form of witnessing to the truth, in order to bring home the message that no matter how strong the majority is, there is a certain intensity of strength found in the interior life which is incapable of being crushed by the weight of the many.

Paradoxically, it is in combatting the voice of the majority that Newman and Stein found authenticity and fulfilment. By following the voice of the majority and those in fashion, people found themselves more confused and frustrated. On the other hand, Newman and Stein, in their differing styles and philosophies, point to an important principle in human existence which Klos captures lucidly: “Conformism is not the right solution, seeking one’s true self in the certitude of one’s person is the answer. In other words, the Socratic motto ‘Know Thyself’ held true throughout their lives...the improvement of the world begins with the improvement of oneself...The journey inside is not a solitary striving for originality, the pretentious and pantheistic aestheticism...but it is a quest to find God inside.” (p. 11, underline mine)

Klos’ work does not obviously appeal to an audience seeking adulation and popularity. We dare say this to warn the readers that a certain kind of maturity is needed to

appreciate the book. To say that the book is not for popular usage is not to diminish its value. On the contrary, the work has a density of message only for minds set and ready to seek and welcome the divine light. Readers who are ready to struggle within, enter into the process, and seek the truth in love within themselves can understand the message of Klos. Not all humans are ready to do this painful yet liberating process.

Both Newman and Stein were mentioned by St. John Paul II in his encyclical *Fides et Ratio* no. 74 whose 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary we celebrated last year. (The encyclical was released September 14, 1998, Feast of the Triumph of the Cross.) The pope gave Newman and Stein, among others, as “examples of a process of philosophical enquiry which was enriched by engaging the data of faith.” (no. 74) Klos’ work can be said as an extension of the pope’s text in the sense that he offered readers why John Paul is correct in saying so.

Chapter four of the Catechism for Filipino Catholics speaks of the dangers and problems of unbelief in the Philippine Church and society. In number 175, it listed rationalistic dogmatism, superstition, “bahala na fideism,” and self-centered/subjectivistic faith among others as obstacles to authentic faith in the Philippines. Filipino Catholics are given an opening in this book by engaging in the age-old problem of the relation between faith and reason. Newman and Stein are portrayed by Klos as living examples whose lives Filipinos can look up to in order to surmount, if not lessen, the impact of unbelief in the country, cognizant of the fact that “faith grows deeper and more authentic when it is wedded to thought and does not reject it.” (*Fides et Ratio*, 79)

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**Martens, Kurt, ed. *Justice and Mercy Have Met: Pope Francis and the Reform of the Marriage Nullity Process*. Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press. 2017. pp 380. ISBN: 978-0-8132-2967-6.**

*Justice and Mercy Have Met: Pope Francis and the Reform of the Marriage Nullity Process* edited by Kurt Martens is an anthology of the interpretations, initially published in “The Jurist” of the procedural laws on marriage nullity reformed by Pope Francis. The editor published this separate book, acknowledging that not everyone had access to “The Jurist,” the only academic journal published in the United States dedicated to canon law, and wanted to make these interpretations available to the most extensive possible readers.

The book is composed of eleven articles. The first article, “A First Approach to the Reform of the Process for the Declaration of Nullity of Marriage” by Frans Daneels, O. Praem., speaks of the intention behind the reform and some of its key points. The second article, “An Analysis of Pope Francis’ 2015 Reform of General Legislation Governing Causes of Nullity of Marriage” by William L. Daniel, speaks of the reform as though something carried out quickly and with relatively minimal consultation, but based on the principles of celerity of the process, of proximity between the judge and the parties, and of the protection of the indissolubility of marriage. The third article, “Reflections on the Role of the Diocesan