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## Teachers of the Faith: Speeches and Lectures by Catholic Bishops, edited by Thomas Horwood

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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*Fordham University*

### TEACHERS OF THE FAITH: SPEECHES AND LECTURES BY CATHOLIC BISHOPS

THOMAS HORWOOD, ED., NBG BOOKS LIMITED, 2002.

*Reviewed by Oliver V. Brennan*

This book is a selection of texts from those that have appeared in *Briefings* (the official documentation service of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales) over the last 26 years. Written by individual bishops, the subjects addressed range from ecumenism and interfaith dialogue to international justice and peace, from education and ethics to spirituality.

Bishop James Sangu's contribution, "Justice in the African Context," dates back to 1975 when he was Bishop of Mbeya in Tanzania. Although some of the issues he refers to, such as apartheid, are no longer principal concerns, his hard-hitting, passionate address highlights key issues relating to the developed world's attitude toward aid and development in the southern hemisphere. There can be no peaceful order in the world unless justice exists for everyone. Bishop Sangu's voice must be heard now as much as in 1975.

Bishop Alan Clarke's Cardinal Heenan Memorial Lecture of November 1978 may also seem somewhat dated. Yet, most of the ecumenical issues he deals with in "Ecumenism – The Growing Point of Unity" are still relevant today.

Cardinal Cahal B. Daly is a well-known writer and international speaker. Two of his addresses are included in this publication. The first was a powerful address given in 1979 at a conference organized by the Bishops' Conference, CAFOD. Daly's arguments for a political solution to a political problem are fascinating in light of the Good Friday Agreement 20 years later. His insightful mind always assured he was ahead of his time.

The Cardinal's second contribution is the text of a lecture delivered at the Linacre Center's Twentieth Anniversary Conference in July 1997. This time he focuses on the contemporary moral crisis.

In March 1985, Cardinal Willebrands, then President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, spoke at the Oxford University Union on the alleged anti-Semitism of Christianity. He addressed the subject from the perspective of Christian interpretations of the New Testament, culminating in the challenging vision of Vatican II.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger's Fisher Lecture at Cambridge University in January 1988 makes a strong case for the necessity of "the reason of morality and the reason of faith" at a time of increasing materialism.

The anecdotal address by Archbishop Warlock to the Catholic Education Conference in April 1995, recounts the circumstances behind the momentous Education Act of 1944 in Great Britain. It is a timely reminder of the struggle that the Church had to undergo in order to establish the national provision for Catholic schools that can so easily be taken for granted today. He points out that the principle of paying to safeguard Catholic ethos (much more expensive in the U.S. than in Great Britain or Ireland) has been both a financial burden and a political lever.

Cardinal Thomas Winning's Gonzaga Lecture at St. Aloysius' College, Glasgow in April 2001, just 2 months before he died, sets out a wide-ranging agenda for the Church at the beginning of the 21st century. He covers various issues, including inculturation and evangelization, holiness and community, and the centrality of the Eucharist.

When Cardinal Basil Hume, OSB, died in 1999, he was acknowledged as one of the best-loved Church leaders of his generation. A little more than a year before his death, Cardinal Hume delivered the de Lubac Lecture on "Jesus Christ Today" in Salford, England. In it he reflected on his own personal spiritual journey. Speaking at the dawn of a new century and millennium, Cardinal Hume urges a reawakening of the spiritual instinct that is within everyone. One cannot but be personally moved by reading and reflecting on this chapter in *Teachers of the Faith*.

I highly recommend this collection of important lectures. Readers will find that the issues still resonate strongly today as they represent some of the crucial concerns and challenges facing the Church at the beginning of the 21st century.

*Fr. Oliver V. Brennan, is an associate professor at Maynooth College, and editorial assistant at Veritas Press.*