

Kathleen Duffy, S.S.J.

Teilhard's Mysticism: Seeing the Inner Face of Evolution. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2014. Pp. xiv + 140. Pb, \$18.

Teilhard's Mysticism is a timely contribution to the burgeoning area of religion and science. Its author has the unusual position of writing authoritatively as both a physicist and as a scholar of the French paleontologist and visionary Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J. Duffy is professor of physics at Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, where she demonstrates the interdisciplinary expertise she puts forward in *Teilhard's Mysticism* by teaching in the sciences, humanities, and courses that integrate both fields.

Duffy's argument is that Teilhard's mysticism is unusual because it does not advocate flight to another spiritual world, but instead embraces the material world. Teilhard's particular form of embrace is that of the hard sciences. As such, Teilhard's approach to science and spirituality is a model for healing an unnecessary, and even harmful, divide between theology, the humanities, and the sciences. Duffy presents this in four ways: 1) by briefly presenting Teilhard's historical and spiritual biography; 2) by applying Teilhard's insights to some exciting contemporary science; 3) by inserting examples from the arts and social sciences; 4) and by referring to Teilhard's vision of the Divine in the evolutionary process.

Duffy gracefully draws the reader into Teilhard's vision of, and response to, God and the world, while at the same time testing this vision against the scientific developments of the sixty years since Teilhard's death. Previous books on Teilhard present how he creatively integrated the scientific discoveries of his time into a unique theology. Duffy moves Teilhard studies forward by engaging Teilhard with today's far more complex understanding of the cosmos.

The lucid presentation of contemporary cosmology is one of the strengths of the book. For instance, many readers will have at least heard of strings and dark matter, but Duffy makes these fascinating discoveries accessible for those perhaps unlikely to read a book on astrophysics. Duffy's purpose for integrating these is not to impress the reader with her expertise, but to invite the reader to see the world through Teilhard's eyes.

When Teilhard wrote at the beginning of the twentieth century, the theory of evolution was relatively new, just as theories of strings and dark matter are now. Scientists were struggling to understand evolution, and theologians removed themselves from its implications. In order to get a feeling for the excitement and possibility of the new discoveries of Teilhard's day, Duffy draws upon the bewildering theories of contemporary science. She challenges readers to coax these discoveries into their spiritual vision of the world. By so doing, Duffy gives the reader a taste of Teilhard's wonder.

Yet, to reduce Teilhard's mysticism to only the science of a religious person would overlook another aspect of Teilhard's integral approach. Duffy also observes an awareness of the arts in Teilhard's mysticism. For example, she explores Teilhard's affinity for music because it "speaks more directly to the soul" (28). Indeed, one cannot see the world as Teilhard did without an appreciation for beauty and art. What other than an affection for the beautiful could explain why Teilhard bothered to write so poetically, even in what he considered a scientific work: *The Human Phenomenon* (translated by Sara Appleton-Weber, Brighton; Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2003)?

Although other books provide insight into Teilhard's science and theology, none show a clear connection to art. Duffy masterfully integrates all three into a composite spirituality original to Teilhard.

As insightful as this is, however, Duffy's book does not intend to be exhaustive. For example, it does not explore the clearly Ignatian spirituality underlying Teilhard's mysticism, even though the book does refer to it. Saint Ignatius, too, wants Christians to embrace the phenomenal world and to "see Christ in all things." In fact, Ignatian spirituality—the spirituality that formed Teilhard—is outright sensuous. When praying on a Gospel narrative, for instance, Ignatius teaches that one should vividly imagine the scene by using all of the senses: feel the heat, taste the dryness, hear the animals, see the sun and shadows, smell the humanity. Ignatian spirituality receives the world in love. Learning to pray in such a way certainly would influence a Jesuit's approach to science. Duffy is aware of this prayerful sensuousness but perhaps wants to avoid suggesting that one needs to be a Jesuit to be a mystic in the spirit of Teilhard.

In addition, the structure of the book relies on moving with Teilhard through circles of spiritual and intellectual development: presence, consistence, energy, spirit, and person. Although Duffy does point out that these circles should be thought of as a spiral—each successive circle includes the one preceding it—using this structure suggests a linear movement in Teilhard's mysticism as if he began with the circle of presence in his early life and ended up with the circle of person at the end of his life. However, Teilhard's mystical theology is in place by the end of World War I. In other words, Teilhard had an experience not uncommon to mystics: God revealed Godself to him at an early stage of his life; thereafter, he struggled to allow the experience to penetrate his being. Duffy knows this initial spark of his mystical life was followed by its further development, but the newcomer to Teilhard may miss this point.

People read about saints and mystics, and the writings they leave behind, because they want to see as the mystic sees, to love as the mystic loves. People want to apprehend Truth and to love freely. Many biographies inspire, but they often do

not draw the reader into the mystic's vision. *Teilhard's Mysticism* is different. Perhaps because of her own mystical insight, Duffy has the unusual gift of drawing the reader into the very eyes of Teilhard. The book is a gem for any scholar, classroom, or church group wanting to clarify their vision of God-in-the-world.

Bede Benjamin Bidlack

Saint Anselm College

bbidlack@anselm.edu

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