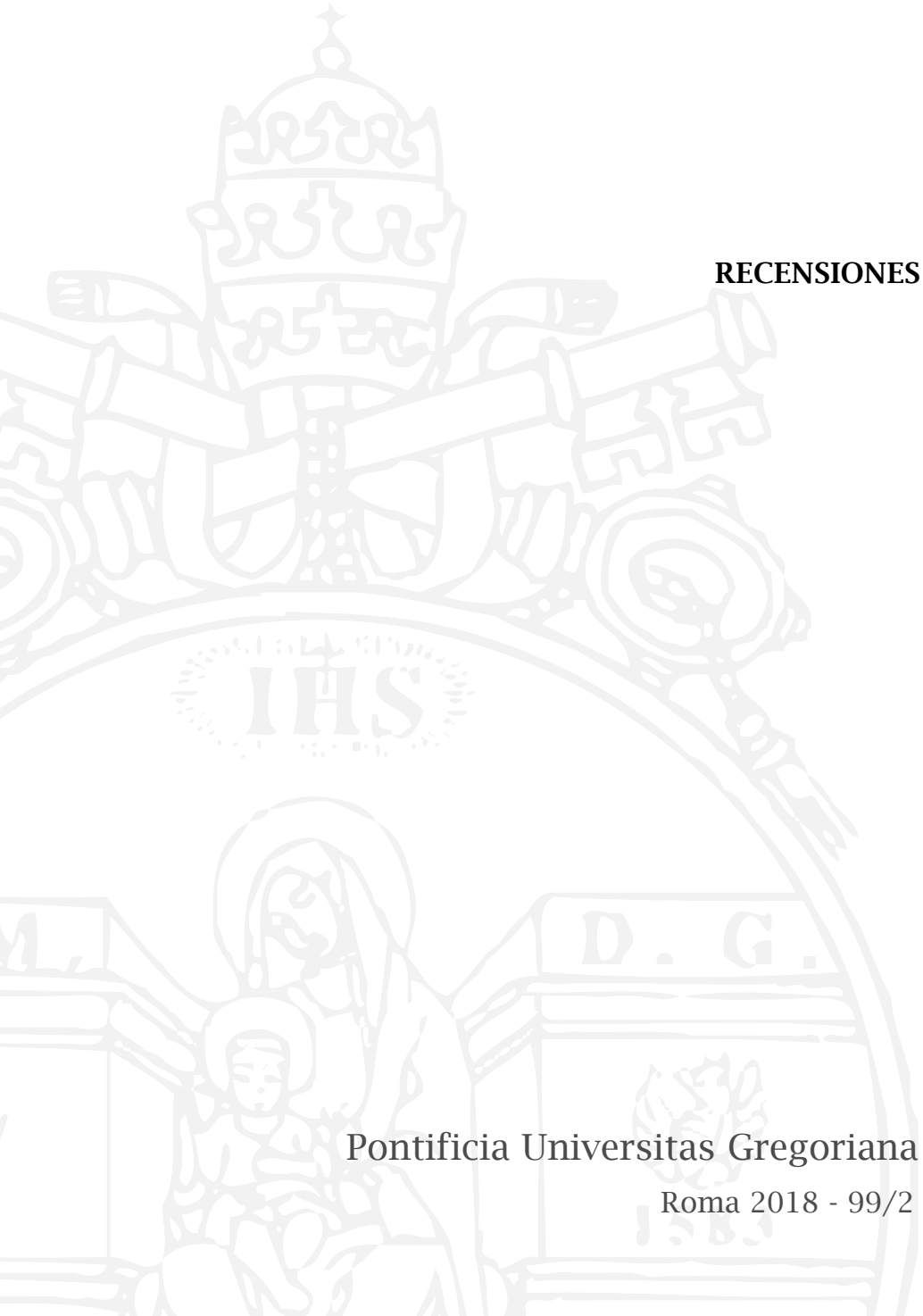


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DIANICH, SEVERINO, *Magistero in movimento. Il caso papa Francesco*, Teologia viva, EDB, Bologna 2016; pp. 108. € 11,50. ISBN 978-88-10-40994-7.

The catalyst for this short volume is the innovative teaching of Pope Francis, which has delighted some but also troubled others. Jorge Maria Bergoglio was elected to the papacy in a period when the millennial-old ethos of the Christian tradition had progressively been abandoned by many people and overturned in much civil legislation. The response of official Catholic teaching had largely been to seek to reinstate traditional Christian values in society, but this usually led only to a hardening of the contrast between contemporary thinking and the magisterium. Pope Francis has taken a different approach, stressing that the essential mission of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel. The beauty of the Good News has in itself the power, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, to attract.

Two particular aspects of the magisterium of Pope Francis exemplify this. First of all, his teaching has often taken the form of the homily, spoken within the context of the liturgy, addressed to the hearts of his listeners. This form of speaking is much more personally engaging than that of official documents, the precise wording of which, usually worked out with the help of experts, aims to declare some particular aspect of orthodox faith. Secondly, Pope Francis has emphasized the importance of synodality or the participation and contribution of all the faithful, endowed with the gift of the *sensus fidei*, in the discernment of how the faith needs to come to expression and to be lived today.

In Chapter One, Dianich argues that evangelization is the true *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*. This joy of the central message of the Gospel (*evangelii gaudium*) can and will touch the hearts of people today, even those who find themselves indifferent or even antagonistic to recent magisterial teachings. The first chapter goes on to contrast a classical theological approach to Christian teaching with a pluriform theological outlook. Dianich calls on the thought of Bernard Lonergan to argue that a more pluralist approach is needed if the Gospel is to be proclaimed effectively to people within the present post-modern ambience and within their various cultures throughout the world. The basic motive for this shift is to be found in the requirements of evangelization. Com-

municating the faith involves the experience of coming to belief, which is only possible as an interpersonal relationship, an encounter with Christ. The reality of the situation of those being addressed is the key, not simply a repetition of abstract doctrines.

A second chapter concerns the diverse modes of exercise and interpretation of the magisterium and begins by calling on the authority of Thomas Aquinas to show that faith is more than the acceptance of a series of truths but a vital response to God's revelation that involves the heart. As a consequence there is a certain complexity to the mission of evangelization. This complexity derives from the fact that revelation is entrusted, first of all, to the Church as a whole; the whole people of God, graced with the gift of the *sensus fidei*, is the primary subject of handing on the faith. Evangelization will necessarily be characterized by the extensive variability required to speak to the hearts of people in many cultural contexts and historical settings. Dianich acknowledges that the primarily pastoral task of fostering growth in faith also at times called for doctrinal decisions capable of ensuring fidelity to the original Christian message. Over the course of time, however, the magisterium came to be limited more and more to this second function. Recent popes have gradually begun to adopt a more pastoral magisterium, though Pope Francis is strikingly innovative in this regard, especially in the predominance of his use of the homily. According to Dianich, just as the liturgy is the source and summit of the entire life of the Church, the homily can be considered as the privileged instrument of the magisterium. Moreover, using the instruments provided by the social media, the magisterium of Pope Francis has been able to extend his pastoral message to a global audience.

The final chapter of the book explores the need for and exercise of synodality in light of the two great themes proposed by Vatican II and subsequent magisterial teaching, that is, that the whole people of God is the fundamental subject of the mission of the Church and that the very core of the Church's life is evangelization. Dianich offers a section on the theological presuppositions of synodality, urging that Christ changed the nature of priesthood in such a way that evangelization is at its heart and that, through baptism, the whole people of God becomes a priestly people, called to participate in the work of evangelization. This participation finds its source of power in the charismatic structure of the Church, with faith being the fundamental charism, the sacraments all providing the grace to live out the various charisms bestowed on believers. In particular, Dianich calls for deeper theological elaboration of the sacrament of matrimony. Not only those believers serving the internal needs of the Church but also those engaged in «secular» activities (education, politics, social welfare, and so forth) should be recognized as having been blessed with charisms. The participation of all the baptized, according to their experience and competence, requires the establishment of means and criteria to ensure that the magisterium of the bishops is enriched to fulfill its task in a truly competent way.

This is quite a timely and thought-provoking book, rich in insights from a theologian who has devoted a lifetime of teaching and publication to the field of ecclesiology. Regarding the theme of the very personal style of the magisterium of Pope Francis, Dianich marshals convincing arguments that one should distinguish a magisterium of doctrinal definition from a pastoral magisterium aimed at nourishing ordinary believers and reaching out in evangelization to those who do not yet know Christ. What is

not so well developed in this book is how these two are related. The present book clearly affirms the necessity of a form of magisterium which preserves orthodox doctrine, but it does not develop how that form relates to the more pastoral magisterium needed for evangelization. Dianich also provides a solid foundation for the synodality of the Church in his discussion of charisms. He supports Pope Francis' insistence that the Church must be a Church which listens, at all levels, meaning that all have something to say and that all, including bishops and the pope, have need to listen. Dianich concludes the book with the hope that suitable instruments of synodality can be developed, with the help of theologians, canonists, and experts in various pertinent human sciences (104-105).

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