

BOOK REVIEW

Love and Responsibility. Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II). Transl. by Grzegorz Ignatiuk. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2013. 366 pp. \$24.95. ISBN 978-0-8198-4558-2.

Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II) as a young priest worked with college students and young couples. In his pastoral work he was confronted with many difficult questions pertaining to relationships, human love and marriage. While talking to many of his young friends and couples, he realized how complex and at times difficult the world of human love was. He also discovered that young people sincerely sought the deeper meaning of love and were not easily satisfied with the answers the modern world offered. Fr. Wojtyła decided to help them to find some reasonable answers by means of Christian faith and philosophy. Thus, Wojtyła's book *Love and Responsibility* is an attempt to provide a comprehensive understanding of human love and marriage, showing both the beauty and the pitfalls of human love. In it the author also reflects upon the Gospel and the teaching of the Catholic Church that highly values human love and lifts marriage to the rank of a sacrament.

The book, originally written in Polish, was published for the first time in 1960 and seemed to be revolutionary at the time, considering the rather strict and extremely careful approach of the Church's magisterium to the matters of sexuality and marriage. *Love and Responsibility* is a thorough analysis of human love which combines theology, philosophy, psychology and ethics. According to Wojtyła human love has many layers, and it has to be seen in its wholeness. He also comes to the conclusion that it cannot be fully understood apart from the divine revelation, since it is created by God and given as one of the greatest gift to humanity. What stands out in this work is the notion of the dignity of the human person. As a matter of fact, it is the first book of Wojtyła that explicitly uses the phrase of the personalist norm which can be summarized in his words: "the person is a kind of good...which may not be treated as an object of use, and in this sense, as a means to an end" (25).

The book that was just published in the U.S. is the second translation into English, this time by a translator bilingual and adept in both Polish and English, Grzegorz Ignatiuk. Considering the heaviness of the matter, the task of translating Wojtyła's books is not an easy task. The book is very complicated even in its original language and without some philosophical and theological training it can be easily misunderstood. The first English edition (1981) was translated by H. T. Willetts, who was not a native Polish speaker and therefore could not grasp some of the intricacies of the Polish language as well as the

word-play by Wojtyła. Grzegorz Ignatiuk, being a native of Poland, is better positioned than Willetts to help an English reader understand some of Wojtyła's concepts and those Polish words that tend to lose their original meaning and depth in translation. Ignatiuk makes the added effort to explain difficult concepts and words in the footnotes at the end of the book. Although it is not easy to follow the text by referring back and forth to the notes, it certainly does help to better understand Wojtyła's ideas.

Grzegorz Ignatiuk is also very consistent with the choice of terminology, as opposed to previous translation that used various English words for the same Polish word. There are, however, some key words in this edition that could be translated differently. For example, the Polish word "*przeżywać*" is translated as "to experience," but literally it means "to live out." Still Ignatiuk at times is not wholly consistent in his translation—e.g. he translates two Polish words that have the same root into two different words in English: one is a noun "*opanowanie*" translated as "*self-mastery*", the other is an adjective "*opanowany*" translated as "*self-possessed*" (178). Although both English terms are related to each other, each one of them has a slightly different connotation, whereas in Polish both words refer to exactly the same subject.

Overall the new translation of *Love and Responsibility* seems to be clear and readable. It is also faithful to the original Polish version, choosing a more literal method over a stylistic one. The major concepts of Wojtyła's treatise have not been lost in the translation but are well conveyed and clarified by additional comments of the translator. This translation is certainly the one that English-speaking readers should rely upon while exploring the works of Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II).

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