

several different ways' (p. 52); 'not yet to be found' (p. 108); 'Thomas Merton' instead of 'Brianchaninov'; 'who would ever watch' (p. 157).

*The Dawn of the Mystical Age* may be read with great benefit, reflected upon and returned to as one advances on the inner journey. It can be seen as an invitation to link one's own ideas, hopes and fears concerning the future with those of leading intellectual-spiritual writers of our time. As this review was developing, it also became clear that this is a book which can and should be discussed by groups. The need for a positive outlook towards the future and openness about questions of spirituality are growing in contemporary society, as men and women become more and more dissatisfied with all things shallow, superficial and lacking in ultimate meaning.

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BERRIGAN, Daniel, *Ezekiel: Vision in the Dust* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), pp. 137. ISBN 1-3707-5135-8 (paperback). \$16.00.

Another round of air strikes against Iraq, a president impeached—these are the headlines that dominate the news during Advent 1998, tempting us to grow cynical or despairing during the weeks of holy waiting. But there is another kind of news, forever renewed and renewing: 'Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail ... Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.' (Ezek. 47.12). The vision of mercy is hard won, and its messenger is Ezekiel, the prophet Daniel Berrigan believes to be 'the one most abused by Yahweh' (p. xii).

Contemplative, visionary, poetic Ezekiel. Restless, wall-digging, law-breaking Ezekiel, disobedient to all but the voice of God. No wonder we believe Daniel Berrigan when he claims, 'Ezekiel, I know him' (p. 7). For those who have followed Fr Berrigan's tracks through decades of protest, imprisonment, poetry readings and eccentric priesthood, the claim is neither surprising nor audacious. The time is ripe for an Ezekiel, willing to lie powerless in the dust and detritus of our projects of corporate and personal power, open to hear words of divine judgment and compassion, wise and foolish enough to utter them.

In *Ezekiel: Vision in the Dust*, Daniel Berrigan brings the Old Testament prophet into our late century with all the authority of his own radical grief, hope and imagination. Chapter by biblical chapter, Berrigan's *Ezekiel* renders the prophet's 'passionate, bellowing, eccentric' (p. 7) prose and poetry into words for our day. The book more than hints at the parallels between the idolatries and abominations of Israel and our own. 'Vietnam, Somalia, Bosnia, Iraq' (p. 23)—these places are both evidence and symbol of what Berrigan grieves for and rages against. He spares no institution, least of all the Church, from the list of those complicit in the horrors of injustice, hunger, racism and war-making. Wheel by visionary wheel, Berrigan solicits the help of the ancient prophet to expose 'a certain version of the world fatly reinforced by five pounds of *New York Times*' (p. 24) for what it is. Having wandered incalculably far from the truth, we survive, he laments, in a world where exile has become the norm.

Berrigan's *Ezekiel* will disappoint those looking for theology or explication. His newest book asks instead to be read, like its biblical counterpart, as a sputtering series of sentences, uttered as received, not in tidy, well-developed paragraphs, but in passionate expressions of grief and hope. The jagged immediacy of

Berrigan's prose-and-poem meditations abbreviate, if not eliminate, the distance between Israel's history and our own. They are midrash for the millennium, every bit as urgent as the original Scripture. Only occasionally is that urgency weakened by diction or syntax that seems unnecessarily archaic, and then one is reminded of poet Denise Levertov's description of Berrigan as a 'shy, old-style' Jesuit.<sup>7</sup> In any case, the strange warp and weft of graphic street language and King James rhythms deliver a message designed both in and beyond time.

Also important to this book's design is the art by Tom Lewis-Borbely. The unsparingly raw portrait of the open-mouthed prophet on the book's cover is only one of the many visual images aptly juxtaposed with Berrigan's text. Lewis-Borbely rightly claims in the introduction that his photo-etchings are 'really much more than illustrations of Dan Berrigan's manuscript'; rather, they are invitations to 'go deeper' into its bold re-imagining of Scripture (p. ix). And we are willing to do so, knowing that neither his technique nor expression is academic. A fellow member of the Plowshare community, Lewis-Borbely has also been imprisoned for his acts of civil disobedience. While jailed and handcuffed in New York City for protest against military spending, he sketched the faces of his cell-mates on scraps of paper with a match, 'using dirty mayonnaise mixed with floor grease for "paint"' (p. viii). The medium is, in terrible fact, the message. Many of those images are included in the Ezekiel series, which combine and re-combine in their own visual syntax what the artist sees as the book's essential themes: 'vision, suffering, politics, and healing' (p. ix). This collaboration will remind some readers of that between photographer Walker Evans and writer James Agee in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*,<sup>8</sup> a book where a terrible beauty is born, to use Lewis-Borbely's words, 'in the realm of the commonplace' (p. viii).

The good news renewed in Berrigan's *Ezekiel* is that the world is re-created, even saved, through the divine imagination, and we are made in God's image. Our greatest power, therefore, is the power of living 'as though'. No faithful re-reading of the biblical Ezekiel would fail to acknowledge the primacy of the imagination in the movement from despair to hope, from judgment to mercy, from death camp to new Jerusalem. 'I grant visions in the dust', Daniel Berrigan hears God say to Ezekiel (p. 16). And bone by bone, we stand again, our dust in-spined through the compassion of a God who will not give up. Berrigan's *Ezekiel* assures us of the presence of a God who still sees us 'as though' we were peace-loving, co-creators, full of justice and mercy, 'a fiction surpassing the awful fact, overvaulting it, ignoring it, despising it' (8). By the end of Berrigan's book, Ezekiel has become 'architect of the future', holding the visionary blueprint of a new temple. 'A real God enters the imaginary structure', and fills it with glory (133). 'Dare we imagine' this God, this temple? asks Berrigan (135). Dare we not?

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7. Ross Labrie, 'Introduction', in Daniel Berrigan, *And the Risen Bread: Selected Poems, 1957-97* (ed. John Dear; New York: Fordham University Press, 1998), p. ix.

8. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941.