

The New Testament and Related Topics

Donald Senior, CP

Margaret Aymer, Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, and David A. Sanchez, eds.,
The New Testament Fortress Commentary on the Bible. Minneapolis: Fortress
Press (www.fortresspress.com), 2014. Pages, xxiii + 771. Cloth, \$50.00.

This is the New Testament volume in the just-published two-volume Fortress Commentary on the Bible. The volume has a strong contemporary ring. As the editors note, the overall focus of the commentary is threefold: (1) a study of the biblical text in its ancient religious and social context; (2) attention to some of the key patterns of how the biblical text has been interpreted over the course of Christian history; and (3) reflection on the contributions and challenges of the biblical text, as well as its perceived negativity, in our contemporary context. This format is addressed in a series of opening general essays and in the commentaries on individual New Testament books that follow. The volume is interdenominational, wanting to respect religious sensitivities but also addressing academic and cultural interests; a diverse group of scholars provide the content of the volume. The opening essays are directed more to contemporary interests; they deal with such topics as Christian anti-Semitism and its impact on biblical interpretation, political and social issues, questions of sexuality and gender, and the dangers of an unbridled apocalyptic interpretation of the Scriptures (the mass suicides of Jonestown, Waco, and Heaven's Gate are cited as examples). The commentaries themselves are more conventional, but the contemporary issues are referred to in considering the meaning of these texts today. This is a substantial work and will be more useful to those who favor a "religious studies" approach to biblical interpretation than to those looking for the theological meaning of the biblical texts for communities of faith.

Stephen J. Binz, *Scripture. God's Handbook for Evangelizing Catholics.*
Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor (www.osv.com), 2014. Pages, 189.
Paper, \$13.95.

Stephen Binz has produced a large number of study aids to help lay Catholics become more familiar with Scripture; most of these publications have been reviewed here in this *Bible Today* feature. His latest work is not so much a study of a particular biblical book as it is a case for using the Scriptures as an essential component of what is referred to as the "New Evangelization." This is a program