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***Religious Life for Our World: Creating Communities of Hope.* By Maria Cimperman, RSCJ. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2020. Pp. xxi + 225. \$28.**

Religious communities have a storied history in their response to God’s call and specific realities and cries of the people in the world and the Church. Today, religious women and men are being asked once again to be mystics and prophets in the new frontiers of gospel calls (19) to “wake up the world,” as reminded by Pope Francis. But what are we to do? How are we to create communities of hope that function as a transformative witness of the inbreaking of the Reign of God in the world? (xvii). Cimperman attempts to answer these questions in the book. Through the lenses of call, charism, and vows, C. examines

the different dimensions of consecrated life and addresses the different ways religious congregations can create communities of hope, locally and globally, as a response to the cries of the people and the earth.

Creating communities of hope for the twenty-first century requires being attuned to the Spirit's calls for "interior conversion, internal transformation, and external revitalization." C. addresses these calls in two parts. Part One focuses on 1) the current realities in the world, the church, and of consecrated life, 2) the call and gifts of the Spirit to respond to God and the cries around us, personally and communally, and 3) a life of prayer in relationship with God to follow the Risen Christ in missionary discipleship and mystical-prophetic life. In Part Two, C. examines the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience, which are lived out daily in prayer, community, and ministry. Call, charism, vows, prayer, community, ministry—all are interconnected. Each chapter ends with questions for reflection and discussion to help readers enter a process of conversion, transformation, and revitalization.

C. provides a compelling, engaging, balanced, and well-written book, with many things to appreciate. First, international religious communities at the provincial or regional level are rapidly evolving and steadily becoming multicultural as they welcome members and candidates from cultures and nationalities previously known as "mission territories" in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Because of this, discussions on interculturality have become more and more urgent. To remain relevant in an intercultural Church and world, religious congregations need to actively discern ways to engage community members into intentional intercultural living under the Spirit's direction. Multiculturality is God's gift to us. Commitment to intercultural living is the acknowledgment and acceptance of this gift. But how we address the challenges and complexities of interculturality is an ongoing endeavor that requires continuous openness to listening to and dialoguing with other cultures and peoples. Second, creating communities of hope demands entering places of margins and peripheries—where the mystical life and the prophetic life converge—to witness "God's preferences and loves" (117) and "attend to the wounded heart of humanity" (128). The margins and the peripheries are sometimes within, as C. rightly notes. She writes, "Sometimes it is when we respond to those outside our local communities that we realize that the wounds outside are also present inside" (107). Those on the margins and the peripheries in the community are those who have personally experienced some of the cries highlighted in the book: wars, migration, famine, poverty, and hunger for meaning and belonging. Moreover, they are not necessarily those from other cultures but those whose peculiarities, as well as political and theological

ideologies, put them at odds with others. Third, the brief discussion on the importance of friendship inside and outside of one's religious community in chapter 6 ("Living Community: Doors and Destinations") is much needed. Friendship is necessary for living as a religious. Personal friendship that is not exclusive or genital should be viewed as a gift from God. When friendship is exclusive, it poses a threat to the spirit and integrity of the call, the charism, and the vows of consecrated life.

The book is a valuable resource for those committed to delving deeply into the radical call of the Gospel life, seeking the energy of authentic renewal and revitalization, and responding prophetically to the signs of the times. It will challenge seasoned and newly professed alike to heed God's call for "open-heartedness" for the birthing of new possibilities and new communities of hope. This book, mainly the chapters on the vows and community living, should be required reading for those in initial formation. The questions for reflection and discussion will generate fruitful conversations at the dinner table and community meetings. Highly recommended.

Vien V. Nguyen, SCJ  
Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology  
Hales Corners, WI 53130