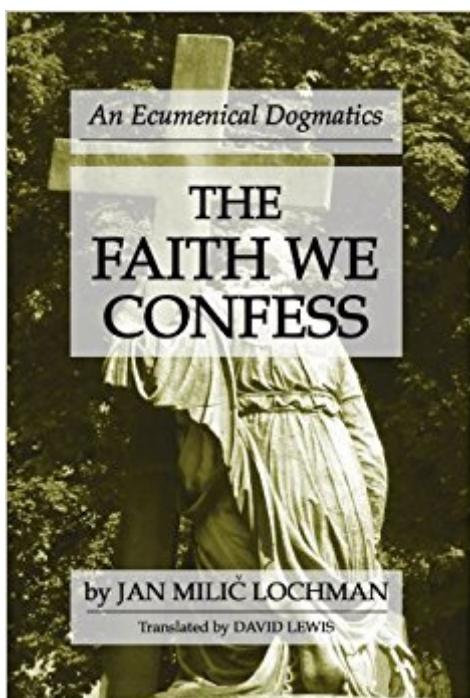


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The Faith We Confess: An Ecumenical Dogmatics



Synopsis

Lochman offers a contemporary and ecumenical statement of what Christians believe, based on the Apostles' Creed. This study will inform and challenge both clergy and laity - Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox - as few have done since the majestic Credo of Karl Barth. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, German (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Lochman is Emeritus Professor of Theology at the University of Basle, Switzerland.

It hardly seems possible that I'm the first person to have taken the time to review this fine book for . In the decades of ecumenical advance since the book first appeared, surely there has been and continues to be substantial usage. The translation by David Lewis can't be an impediment; it is quite readable."Often our closest connection with history is a book or an archaeological dig, but in Jan Milic Lochman we found one of Jan Hus' living heirs. Born in the Czech Republic to Protestant parents who named him after Hus' reforming predecessor [see below], Dr. Lochman has preached in Bethlehem Chapel and lectured at Charles University. He would even call himself a Hussite, except that the term fails to encompass the whole Czech reform tradition stretching before and after Hus." This quote begins a "conversation" with the late Lochman

(1922-2004) in the magazine of the Christian History Institute (issue 68). (John Milic, c. 1305-1374, is generally considered to be the founder of religious reform in Bohemia.) Rector of the University of Basel among other distinguished academic posts, Lochman brought his unique theological orientation to ecumenism through many of its formative decades in the twentieth century. His Reform background did not prevent him from fairly and dispassionately considering a variety of theological points of view. In the book under review, he shows himself conversant with Catholics such as Kasper, Kung, and Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI), but also Radhakrishnan, Marcuse, Berdyaev, and Dorothy Sayers. In his chapter entitled "Suffered Under Pontius Pilate, he eschews parochialism and warns that "by neglecting a theme [Christ's suffering through his entire life] that plays so central a role in Eastern Orthodoxy, we would be painting ourselves into an isolated Protestant corner." (p. 124) In a brief review it is difficult to do justice to the author's masterful nineteen-chapter, clause-by-clause, explication of the Apostles' Creed. I will, then, limit myself to the following couple of (hopefully) illustrative comments: Lochman does not shy away from the "quicksand" questions. For instance, in the ninth chapter, "Conceived by the Holy Spirit, Born of the Virgin Mary," he starts the chapter by acknowledging: "This clause is one of the most disputed statements. ... The dispute is a real one, involving sharp differences of opinion." (p. 101) While navigating the intricacies without whitewash, he calls the first section of the chapter "Taking the Tension Out of an Old Dispute" and concludes the fourteen-page chapter on a positive note by saying: "An ecumenical dialogue on this article, while difficult, is not impossible." A very interesting section starts off the chapter entitled "The Father Almighty" (chapter 5). "The Unobvious God" begins with the sentence: "... The unaxiomatic, unobvious character of the theme of God in contemporary culture is not merely a handicap for theology but at the same time an opportunity." He then fleshes this out: "The fact that the idea of God has ceased to be axiomatic and self-evident gives theology the opportunity to understand more precisely and more 'originally' (more radically!) the brief affirmation of the Apostles' Creed: 'I believe in God.' The One to whom this statement refers is not some 'self-evident God' who can be taken for granted as already there, generally accessible and intelligible." (p. 45) If everyone was able to approach ecumenical interaction in as sensible and receptive way as Lochman, Christianity would seem less like a cat fight outside the world's window in the middle of the night.

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