

Review of: "Catholicity in thirteen words"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The article is about 'Catholicity', but the author introduces it as a part of an introductory course on Christianity, and sets out to give a summary of the Christian faith. In practice, what the author appears to wish to provide is an account of the Catholic Church.

No. 1. Creation. This paragraph rightly takes account of, and distinguishes from, Big Bang Cosmology. To say that evil arises from the devil is not sufficient to account for what is in fact the mystery of evil. It is not correct to say (though Vatican II does, at least in various translations of *Malignus*) that the devil is a personal being.

No. 3. This introduces the term Covenant, but the paragraph is then devoted to Salvation History, which implies covenant, though the definition of covenant itself is not included.

No. 5. There is reference to sacraments having their origin in the Passover; they are unspecified but, clearly, the Eucharist at least is envisaged. A course on Christianity (as distinct from Catholicity) would need to take account of the fact that there is not agreement among all Christian communities on the number of sacraments, Protestant communities hold with less, some Orthodox communities with more, in comparison with the Catholic Church.

No. 7. The Church is described as 'a continuation of the salvific action of Jesus Christ', but this opens up the danger of divinising the Church. The description applies properly to the Paschal Mystery, which the Church does indeed celebrate in its Sacred Mysteries, but is distinct from it. To describe the Church as the 'body of Christ' omits the necessary clarification 'Mystical'.

No. 8. This is a welcome reference to the eschatological nature of the Church – often under-stressed or missing in accounts of ecclesiology.

The succeeding sections on grace, freedom, truth are very well written and logically connected.