

Meredith B. McGuire, *Pentecostal Catholics*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982, 270 pp., \$29.95, ISBN 0-87722-235-5.

Reviewed by Robert L. Saucy, Talbot Theological Seminary and School of Theology

The Christian Pentecostal-charismatic movement has evoked a plethora of discussion over the last two decades. The primary focus has been theological with some significant linguistic and psychological studies. McGuire's *Pentecostal Catholics* presents a different perspective.

Using the classical sociological interpretive framework of the relationship of the individual to society, the author provides a sociological analysis of Catholic Pentecostal beliefs and practices, probing the participants' relationship to modern secularized society. The work is the culmination of extended field research in which the author was a participant-observer among a variety of structures within the Catholic Pentecostal movement.

After outlining the purpose, scope, and methodology of the study in an introductory chapter, McGuire sets forth the central beliefs, values and meanings of the movement in Chapter 2. Noteworthy is the high priority placed on "experiential religiosity" versus "assent to faith-propositions." Chapter 3 provides an analysis of the processes of conversion, commitment, and socialization into the group, with particular attention given to the social processes which elicit full commitment. Testimony or witnessing is seen as central to the individual's induction process.

The detailed analysis of ritual and the use of language in Chapters 4 and 5 provide good descriptions of the proceedings of a Catholic Pentecostal prayer group. The specific practices with regard to the gifts of tongues and prophecy are seen to have considerable functional import for the control and authority structure of the group. The beliefs and practices relating to illness, health, and healing are set forth with evidence from many first hand observations and interviews in Chapters 6 and 7. After noting that the broad use of these terms within the group and the place of sin in the etiology of illness are both distinct from the modern medical model, McGuire focuses on the social control manifest in healing and the wholistic concept of healing as a restoration of order.

Chapter 8 presents an analysis of the Catholic Pentecostal movement in terms of the sociological concepts of cult and sect. Both characteristics are seen as present in the movement. A concluding chapter looks at the relationship of Catholic Pentecostal and similar religious movements to the whole of contemporary society.

One of the strengths of McGuire's work is the analysis of the secularization of modern society. The loss of the influence of religion has resulted in the precariousness of the legitimation structures of society and the self. Movements such as Catholic Pentecostalism are seen to provide a certain legitimation for an order and meaning to the personal life. But because of their authoritarianism, somewhat irrational re-mystification, and a general lack of interest in broad societal concerns, they may not be sufficient to provide a new legitimation structure for relating the individual to society.