

## Book Review

### Brang Mai Lazing

**Dive, Brian. *Accountability and Leadership in the Catholic Church: What Needs to be Improved.*** Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020. xii + 220 pp. ISBN(10): 1-5275-4272-6.

As an internationally recognized manager, Brian Dive brings fifty years of experience in the field of organizational structure design and leadership development into his assessment of "*Accountability and Leadership in the Catholic Church,*" and his determination of "*What Needs to be Improved.*" Although he is not a theologian by profession, Dive is a practicing Catholic, and he draws from a range of theological sources from theologians and Church documents. Dive was personally motivated to write this book through his friendship with a Catholic priest, Gerald Arbuckle S.M, who has similarly written within this genre a work entitled, *Abuse and Cover-Up: Refounding the Catholic Church in Trauma* (2019).

At the background of Dive's book is that the demand for greater accountability has become a crucial issue in the Catholic Church, mostly due to the abuse crisis. While the Church has been trying to tackle this situation, for example, by issuing *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* (2019), organizational changes to enhance accountability have not been addressed. In this context, seeing the Church as an organization, Dive proposes reforming these organizational structures within the hierarchy of the Church. The two elements essential to the reform Dive proposes are: i) enhance the accountability of Church leaders and (ii) develop their leadership skill.

The approach of Dive is a simple one: to see the Church as an organization in comparison to other secular organizations, to evaluate her organizational structures, and to amend them accordingly. In this regard, while upholding the spiritual and theological dimensions of the Church (i.e. the inward aspect), according to which the Church cannot simply be reduced to a mere physical organization, Dive argues that, because the Church has a social dimension (i.e. the outward aspect) like other secular organizations, reforming organizational structures within the Church could improve accountability and leadership. In simple

terms, Dive's key argument is that, even though the Church consists of both divine and human elements, the human strategies employed in secular institutions can be applied in the Catholic Church to improve Church management.

In his "Introduction," Dive maintains that the structure of the Church can evolve over time. To prove this argument, the scholar draws upon a variety of theological sources from the Biblical narrative in the *Acts of the Apostles* to the writings of John Henry Newman, Joseph Ratzinger, Avery Dulles, and the Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. The account of *Acts* shows, notably, that the government of the Church developed organically, from the first foundation by Christ on the twelve apostles with Peter as the head, to the establishment of geographical dioceses throughout the known world. Just as further developments came throughout the ages in response to the growth and demands of the Church, there may still be room for improvement, even while preserving the fundamental structure.

In chapter one, Dive explains how healthy secular organizations are built on good principles and how far these principles are present in the structure of the Church. These principles (such as establishing clear roles for leaders, evaluating the performance of leaders, distinguishing accountable roles and support roles, and prescribing the qualifications of leaders for promotion) are lacking in the Church because there is no clear centralized management system to lay down these principles as no clear procedure is established in order to identify a leader's accountability. To remedy this situation, Dive proposes two principles: i) the principle of subsidiarity, through which a clear line of authority sharing (a kind of check-and-balance method or accountability method) between senior leaders and junior ones can be established, and ii) the principle of pastoral care, through which support, training, guidance, etc. can be offered to leaders for their leadership skill.

In the following chapters (two, three, and four), from these two aspects of accountability (the principle of subsidiarity) and of leadership development (the principle of pastoral care and support), Dive examines important Church roles such as priests, bishops, and cardinals. Dive identifies the accountability gaps between priests and bishops, and between bishops and the pope, and suggests improving the support roles for developing leadership skills for priests and

bishops. To fulfill these two requirements, Dive proposes: i) creating a new role of 'Pastoral Cardinals' (together with auditing functions to check them), who, unlike the present role of Cardinals, would have a direct authority over bishops, and between bishops and the Pope so that an accountability project can be conducted and (2) reforming the curia, the role of which is to serve as a support function for priests and bishops. Regarding the relation between laypeople and Church leaders, Dive presents a balanced way: While the laity should express their opinion for the good of the Church, they should equally give due obedience to their pastors. Dive devotes his final chapter (chapter 5) to the topic of reforming the curia. Citing the authority of Pope Francis, John Henry Newman, and Avery Dulles, Dive points out that the Church should be in "a constant self-renewal" leaving human traditions, except those received from the Apostles, so that the Church could become "an energized church."

In conclusion, Dive shows he is aware that reforming organizational structures is not sufficient when he acknowledges that the 'right spirit' in implementing these structures is also needed. In addition, the scholar astutely recognizes that just as 'spiritual faults' cannot simply be corrected by 'organizational means' alone, neither can 'organizational faults' be corrected by 'spiritual means' alone. Thus, Dive argues for the introduction of secular strategies into the organizational structures of the Catholic Church without denying the necessity and harmony between the divine and human elements of the Church.

The strength of this book is that, because Dive is neither a Church leader nor a theologian but a manager who mostly engages in secular organizations, Dive's reader is given to observe this expert managerial outsider's perspective of the organizational structures of the Church. At the same time, Dive speaks from the position of a faithful member of the Church who wishes to better the functional operations for the good of the whole Church. The work helps to see what are either flaws, or perceived gaps in Church management, and to open a discussion of the possible resolution to these gaps. As a whole, the work makes a useful contribution to identifying problems and suggesting a way forward. Dive's work would profit from a deeper discussion of the objections to his reform proposals.