



Living With Other People: An Introduction to Christian Ethics Based on Bernard Lonergan (Saint Paul University Series in Ethics)

Kenneth R. Melchin

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In *Living with Other People* Kenneth Melchin goes beyond merely translating Lonergan. He provides readers with basic tools for moral self-understanding and deliberation by offering an entrance into moral living that is innovative and refreshing, given years of moral casuistry, moral manuals, rules, and precepts.

Melchin not only understands Lonergan accurately, but has inventively applied his work in a variety of ways. Thus, his role with regard to Lonergan studies goes well beyond exegeting Lonergan to "applying" Lonergan. Due to his astute grasp and creative use of Lonergan, this account of moral life is put into language that is "accessible" and uses examples to draw readers in.

Melchin begins with the ordinary person's experience and builds on that piece by piece, adding to the basic notion of moral "skills" the elements of social context, the problem of evil, the Christian response to it, and, therefore, the role of faith in moral decision making. Eventually he discusses "principles": justice, the common good, the preferential option for the poor, the dignity of persons. But this comes only after the dynamic structure of living - knowing, deciding, and acting - has been carefully outlined.

The chapters unfold in two parts. Part one (chapters one, two, and three) invites readers on a journey of self-discovery, where they will find guidelines and clues to help them through their journey. Part two (chapters four and five) investigates how Christian faith shapes people's involvement in the operations of moral knowing. The guiding concern of each chapter is self-knowledge. Throughout *Living with Other People*, Melchin contrasts Lonergan's approach with alternative ways of raising questions and wrestling with issues.

Living with Other People is written for educated lay people as well as academics (particularly those interested in Lonergan who feel overwhelmed by his large corpus). A short study guide is included to aid students. Drawing upon a range of primary and secondary texts from Lonergan studies, Melchin cites a number of those texts in the notes and bibliography to provide introductory-level readers access to further information on selected topics. Wherever possible he also cites dictionary articles written for the educated layperson.

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