



Humble Confidence: Spiritual and Pastoral Guidance from Karl Rahner (Michael Glazier Books)

By James Bacik

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The influential German Jesuit theologian, Karl Rahner (1904–84), famously claimed that the more scientific theology is the more spiritually and pastorally relevant it will be. This book attempts to demonstrate the truth of this claim by drawing together resources scattered throughout Rahner's voluminous writings in order to make his wisdom more available for people seeking a deeper spirituality and a more effective pastoral ministry. The book also provides summaries of Rahner's main ideas on anthropology, God, Christ, and the Church, with an emphasis on their practical significance. Finally, it serves as a response to those critics who claim that Rahner is passé by emphasizing the power of his theology to illumine contemporary issues with the light of the Gospel.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book is the result of the love for a great theologian and the skill of a great teacher. James Bacik demonstrates beautifully how rich the thought of Karl Rahner is for spirituality and pastoral practice and how an authentic spirituality and ministry has roots in the best of theology. Written in a deceptively simple style, *Humble Confidence* provides nourishment and inspiration for beginning students of theology, for seasoned pastors, and for veteran scholars alike."

Stephen B. Bevans, SVD, Louis J. Luzbetak, SVD, Professor of Mission and Culture, Catholic Theological Union

"Elegantly simple and profoundly pastoral, this is a beautiful, soul-satisfying book. Bacik has a lucid grasp of Rahner's theology. He loves it because Rahner's insights have enabled his own pastoral ministry in a later American context. Plentiful examples of Bacik's creative "Reflections" show how this interweaving happens in practice. An interesting, spiritually rich, and enlightening read."

Elizabeth A. Johnson, CSJ, Fordham University

"Karl Rahner was arguably the most important Catholic theologian of the twentieth century, yet his work is notoriously difficult to grasp, given his reliance on dense European philosophy and an arcane vocabulary. In James Bacik we have a master interpreter of Rahner's theology and an extraordinary pastoral theologian. Drawing on a lifetime of study, Bacik cuts through the jargon and difficult philosophical categories to provide us with a compelling account of Rahner's creative theological vision, one that is easily accessible to the nonspecialist. Bacik is not content, however, simply to synthesize Rahner's thought; he also makes a compelling case for why Rahner still has much to offer the modern believer today."

Richard R. Gaillardetz, Joseph Professor of Catholic Systematic Theology, Boston College

"In his teaching, preaching, and writing James Bacik has explained Christ's revelation and grace to many. This book is a personal system arranged around central topics moving from the spiritual life to the church facing new challenges. Here, ideas and words, reflecting the author's ministry to parish and university, emerge from pastoral creativity and personal experience. The reader finds faith and church drawn into the future."

Thomas F. O'Meara, OP, University of Notre Dame

"It is a must-read for those seeking lucid, nuanced, jargon-free, synthetic overview of Rahner's philosophical, theological, and spiritual writings."

Harvey D Egan, SJ, *Theological Studies*

"Bacik summarizes the spiritual and pastoral insights reflected in Rahner's voluminous works and show how these insights remain of enduring value. His book is recommended for all academic and parish libraries."

Rafael Ubico, *Catholic Library World*

"The author's comprehensive familiarity with the Rahnerian corpus in tandem with reflections drawn from extensive pastoral experience ensure that this book is an indispensable addition to any theological library. Both academic theologians and pastors will find much to delight them in this broad reflection on Karl Rahner's writings."

Cathal Doherty, SJ, *Worship*

About the Author

James Bacik has served as a priest for the Diocese of Toledo for over fifty years. He earned a doctorate in theology from the University of Oxford in England and has published numerous articles and nine books, including *Apologetics and the Eclipse of Mystery: Mystagogy According to Karl Rahner*. His busy lecture schedule has taken him to Latin America, China, Japan, Russia and Australia. He is currently a visiting professor at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

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