Contents

Acknowledgments........................................................................................................... ix

Introduction ....................................................................................................................... xi

I. Grounding Hope

1. Christian Hope: A Grace and a Choice...................................................................... 3
   Colleen M. Griffith

2. “A Future, Difficult, Yet Possible Good”: Defining Christian Hope....................... 16
   Dominic Doyle

   Thomas D. Stegman, SJ

4. The Church: Got Hope? .............................................................................................. 42
   Richard Lennan

II. Nurturing Hope

5. “We Had Hoped That He Was the One to Redeem Israel”: The Fragility of Hope in
   Christopher R. Matthews

6. Imagining Hope: Insights from Pastoral Care and Counseling ................................. 70
   Philip Browning Helsel

7. Is There Hope for Faith? ............................................................................................. 84
   Thomas H. Groome

8. Glimpses of Christian Hope along the Migrant Journey ........................................ 98
   Hosffman Ospino
Contents

III. Sustaining Hope

9. Hope and Salvation in the Shadow of Tragedy ......................115
   Nancy Pineda-Madrid

10. "Happy Are Those Who Fear the LORD": Hope, Desire, and
    Transformative Worship ...........................................128
    Christopher Frechette, SJ

11. Pignus Futurae Gloriae: Liturgy, Eschatology, and Hope .........142
    John F. Baldovin, SJ

12. Hope for a More Just Future: Wisdom from Catholic
    Social Teaching .....................................................155
    Thomas Massaro, SJ

13. Hope Springs: Shaping the Moral Life ................................168
    Andrea Vicini, SJ

IV. Living Hope

    Daniel J. Harrington, SJ

15. From Utopia to Eu-topia: Christian Hope in History ..........198
    O. Ernesto Valiente

16. Hope for Creation .....................................................211
    John R. Sachs, SJ

17. History and Hope: Retrieving Gaudium et Spes for the
    Church and the World .............................................224
    Francine Cardman

18. Epilogue .................................................................239

Select Bibliography ....................................................241

Contributors ..............................................................245

Scripture Index ..........................................................249

Subject and Author Index ...............................................255
Christian Hope:
A Grace and a Choice

Colleen M. Griffith

This essay explores hope as a grace and a choice, something to be received and responded to in freedom. The possibility of hope is an aspect of God's self-communication to be cherished. The choice of hope involves regular turning to the God of hope, keen attentiveness to the inbreaking of God's Spirit in specific contexts, and active response to the summons of God as it becomes apparent.

She is the lithe figure in the shadows of the Good Friday experiences of our lives, the one who speaks in low tones in the darkness, reiterating the promise of accompaniment. In the Holy Saturday spaces of life, where we anxiously rummage through the rubble of difficult aftermaths looking for signs of life, she points to the "more" in the immediately real, urging attentiveness to the inbreaking of God. Easter Sunday moments dawn, and she moves in the current of resurrection life, praising the One who has drawn near, inviting others into a joy that renews. In the paschal reality in which Christian discipleship unfolds, hope is a most welcome companion.

Never a mere emergency friend that shows up in crisis, hope is a quotidian comrade, and as such, a lasting resource upon which a vibrant Christian spirituality depends. In the process of coming to spiritual maturity as persons, we grow into wider and steadier familiarity with the figure of hope, as she is bodily incorporated and manifest in the world. This hope defies abstraction. It is spoken about most adequately in concrete, incarnate
"A Future, Difficult, Yet Possible Good": Defining Christian Hope

Dominic Doyle

This essay explores an expanded definition of Thomas Aquinas’ definition of hope as the desire for the future, difficult, yet possible good of eternal life through the coming of the kingdom. It explores the relationship of hope to its accompanying theological virtues of faith and charity, and contrasts it with the flanking vices of despair and presumption.

There is nothing timid about the hope that Christians bear in their hearts. It wishes for eternal union with God through the coming of a kingdom that will remove all suffering and injustice. As a result, hope not only sustains believers as they go through the bitter valley but also enables them to make it a place of springs (Ps 84).

The goal of this essay is to define Christian hope and thereby show how it enables us to share in God’s redemptive action that brings good out of evil. I will begin by defining hope in very basic terms and then explore how these general features receive specific content in the Christian tradition. After this introductory section, I will elaborate the meaning of hope by comparing it to the accompanying theological virtues of faith and charity, and then contrasting it with the opposing vices of presumption and despair. This exploration of the precise meaning of hope will bring out what it means for Christians to make their own Vaclav Havel’s striking words: “Hope is not the expectation that
"That You May Abound in Hope": St. Paul and Hope

Thomas D. Stegman, SJ

This essay sets forth Paul's teaching about hope by focusing on three letters: 1 Thessalonians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans. According to Paul, hope is grounded in the resurrection of Jesus and is confirmed by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Hope transforms grief in the face of death, empowers perseverance in the context of suffering, and works synergistically with faith and love.

Paul's magisterial Letter to the Romans contains his most systematic presentation of the gospel he proclaims. In the body of this letter, Paul first sets forth a sustained exposition of the revelation of God's righteousness through the death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah and the sending of the Holy Spirit (1:18—11:36). He then issues a series of exhortations that call the members of the house churches in Rome to live out the implications of the gospel, exhortations whose focus is the mutual welcoming, through Christ, of Jewish and Gentile believers into the family of faith (12:1—15:13). At the very conclusion of his lengthy teaching and impassioned encouragement, Paul offers a prayer: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in being faithful, in order that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (15:13).

The fact that Paul, at the climax of his argument and exhortation in Romans, refers to God as the source of hope and prays that the Roman Christians "abound in hope" is significant. These references sug-
The Church: Got Hope?

Richard Lennan

The church’s relationship to hope, especially to its communal dimension, derives from the fact that Christ and the Spirit, the sources of hope, are the foundations of the church. The church, however, can be an obstacle to hope, as the sexual abuse crisis has shown so tragically. This chapter explores how the implication of the church being “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic” might help us to live hopefully, even within our flawed church.

Hope, like all virtues, prompts us to engage life in positive ways. Indeed, the connotations of hope might be uniquely positive since, as numerous essays in this book illustrate, the impact of hope is most evident in situations where despair is an option. The generative dimension of hope becomes even more apparent when we consider that hope is a risk, that it commits us to a path whose contours we cannot know in advance.

What, then, enables us to choose hope, to surrender to what we cannot control, and to sustain the implications of being people of hope? Answered briefly, hope arises from trust that life is stronger than death. Hope, therefore, is inseparable from faith. Hope gives expression to our faith, even if that faith is inchoate and its object largely unarticulated. When we hope, we claim freedom from both the tyranny of fear and the obsession with self-protection that fear nurtures. Consequently, hope is a building block of love: hope frees us to give ourselves to others in love, even to put ourselves at risk for others. For Christians, faith, hope, and love have both their source and goal in the God whom we
"We Had Hoped That He Was the One to Redeem Israel": The Fragility of Hope in Luke-Acts

Christopher R. Matthews

While some Christian interpreters identify Luke-Acts as supersessionistic (that is, that the church replaces Israel as God's people), this essay contends that such a perception runs counter to key indications built into the narrative. It shows that Luke's view is that the hope for the redemption of Israel is an integral part of the hope for the redemption of all, and that this stance reflects the social reality of Luke's early Christian group.

The story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus on the first resurrection Sunday (Luke 24:13–35) is a pivotal scene in Luke's Gospel for a variety of reasons. Here, I will focus on the expectation of the redemption of Israel voiced by these characters in Luke 24:21, and the implications of this particular hope for the plot of Luke's Gospel and its sequel, the Acts of the Apostles. Speaking for his unidentified companion, Cleopas laments to the incognito Jesus: "we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel." The balance of the story aims to show that this expectation had in fact been fulfilled, though in a manner not
Imagining Hope: Insights from Pastoral Care and Counseling

Philip Browning Helsel

Persons struggling with long-term difficulties often feel despair about ever being able to change and thus lose hope. This chapter demonstrates how caregivers can foster hope by asking ‘miracle’ questions in pastoral care and counseling. Using the theological notion of the eschatological self, I show how the exploration of one’s future involves more than planning; it is an encounter with the future-self-held-by-God occurring in an atmosphere of imaginative discernment.

According to Mark’s Gospel, when a blind man approached Jesus, he promptly asked the man what he could do for him. Rather than assuming that the blind man wanted to have his sight restored, Jesus asked what he wanted. After the man replied that Jesus could restore his sight, Jesus attributed the healing to the man’s faith (10:51–52). Therefore, during his earthly ministry the incarnate Son of God asked persons to speak about what they hoped for and honored these hopes as expressions of implicit hope in the One who is the ultimate object of their faith and ours.

It is important to articulate our hopes. Often it can be easier to explain what seems wrong with us than to describe what brings us fulfillment. Part of this is cultural: we have lexicons of pathology that help us describe our ailments. Another aspect of this may be neurological.
Is There Hope for Faith?

Thomas H. Groome

At the end of his public ministry, Luke has Jesus wonder “will there be faith on earth?” upon his return (18:8). Faith, as always, is the foundation of hope, but in our postmodern and secularized era, the more pressing question may be “is there hope for faith?” This essay proposes the rationale why we can have such hope and a pedagogy that, by God’s grace, may ensure as much.

There is an obvious logic to Aquinas’ sequencing of the three great theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. As Dominic Doyle’s essay in this collection lays out so clearly, faith is presumed to come first as what we believe, encourages us to hope for the good we desire, and should result in love for, and in keeping with, our ultimate desire: God. In theory, we move from faith, to hope, to love, or, to quote Thomas’ summary: “Faith shows the goal, hope moves towards the goal, charity unites with the goal.” Logically at least, faith is the prior foundation, grounding hope and intending charity. By way of the relationship between the first two, Pope Benedict summarizes that “hope is the fruit of faith.”

Though all quite logical, their symbiotic relationship prompts me to propose that there are existential times and places in life when faith depends on hope as much as vice versa. This is obviously true when we push beyond the theological concept of faith to the life of faith, that is, to faith as lived by Christians. When it comes to “being” Christian, indeed we need to have faith for hope, but oftentimes our greatest need may be to have hope for faith. Perhaps Paul had this reversal in mind when he
Glimpses of Christian Hope along the Migrant Journey

 Hosffman Ospino

This chapter is a practical theological reflection on Christian hope in light of the experience of Latin American migrants on their journey to the United States. The essay explores the various moments of the migrant journey, namely, preparation, the journey itself, and arrival; it identifies theological themes emerging in each of these moments. Migration is treated here as a theological category that has the potential of revealing something new about hope and the overall Christian experience.

Millions of people every year make the difficult decision to leave their homeland to go somewhere else. Only a small number do so to study, undertake well-paying jobs, conduct business, or enjoy their wealth. The vast majority must leave to survive; most are poor. Countless people have to leave family, friends, and cultural roots behind, understanding that they may never reconnect with them. They cross borders, legally and illegally, into other countries, with the dream of finding better opportunities to fulfill their most basic needs and intimate hopes. There is no assurance that they will succeed in their quest. Many do; many do not. Despite this uncertainty, countless people embark on the journey and take their chances anyway. Lives are at stake, their own and those of the people they love. For many, there is no other option.

This practical theological reflection takes the experience of migration as its starting point. The term migrant is used here to name people who journey from one nation to another searching for better living
Hope and Salvation in the Shadow of Tragedy

Nancy Pineda-Madrid

How we engage tragedy matters; if we do not come to terms with it, we will severely limit our capacity to be people of hope. When our account of hope looms larger than our temptation to despair, only then can God’s gift of salvation break anew into our world. This essay examines the meaning of tragedy, and how our response to it offers an account of our hope that may reveal God’s saving presence active in our world.

The evils and barbarities of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries are overwhelmingly numerous and widely documented. The Holocaust, the ongoing wars on every continent, the Armenian and Darfur genocides, the ecological destruction of the planet, are only some of the many. We, U.S. citizens and other westerners, nonetheless remain out of tune with our times and resist any serious consideration of tragedy and evil. In the words of theologian Wendy Farley:

The sweetness of insanity is our truest consolation. Surely it is insanity that in the face of massive evil and imminent destruction, many Americans’ primary preoccupation is to be entertained—and not really entertained, merely distracted. The passionate need to escape—through drugs, alcohol, relentless work, or the banalities of the media—has become a national pathology.