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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Jerzy SOJKA: *Czytanie Reformatora
Marcin Luter i jego pisma*
(Reading the Reformer:
Martin Luther and His Writings)
Wisła: Wydawnictwo Luteranin, 2017, 250 pp.
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The year 2017, in which the 500th anniversary of the Reformation is celebrated, entitles theologians, historians, ecumenists, and even politicians to probe into the literary legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther. His oeuvre consists of more than 750 writings, 2,500 sermons, 12 volumes of letters, 6 volumes of “table speeches” and 12 volumes which are evidence of his work on the translation of the Holy Scripture into German. If you seek to better understand the Reformation, it is necessary to acquaint yourself with Martin Luther and his ideas. An invaluable help in this respect might be the newly published book — *Reading the Reformer. Martin Luther and His Writings* — dedicated to the output and life of the Reformer from Wittenberg. The book consists of two parts which are preceded by an introduction, and after the second part there is the bibliography which encompasses Martin Luther’s writings and the list of abbreviations.

The first part of the book discusses the Reformer’s academic debates on theological subjects. Among others, they deal with such issues as: the abilities of man and his will without [the action of] grace, forgiving the sins, vows, or the justification through faith (see Romans 3:28). The last debate concerns the defense of the fundamental truth of the Reformation theology, which says that the man is saved [justified] only owing to God’s benevolence, and not by his own efforts. Luther stressed that salvation is a gift of faith which changes the man and makes him able to perform good deeds.

Apart from *Luther's Small Catechism* and *Luther's Large Catechism*, an important place among the writings of the Father of the Reformation have the *Smalcald Articles* written in 1536. The second part of the book deals with the analysis of the *Smalcald Articles*, which are a kind of Luther's credo and theological testament. The author discusses in a very detailed way all the articles, starting from the first one concerning the Son of God and our salvation, and finishing with the analysis of the following subjects: how man is justified before God and on good deeds, as well as monastic vows and human traditions. In the article placed in-between the initial and the final one, the Reformer from Wittenberg focused on the following subjects: the Mass, collegiate churches and orders and convents, the papacy, the sin, the order, the penance, the Gospel, the baptism, the sacrament of the altar, the power of the keys, the confession, the excommunication, the ordain, the vocation, the marriage of priests and the Church. The *Smalcald Articles* are the third and last achievement in Luther's writings.

The entirety of the book *Reading the Reformer. Martin Luther and His Writings* is supplemented with the bibliography of the Wittenberger's texts and other texts used by the author concerning the discussed problem. Following the bibliography, there is a list of all the Reformer's writings translated into Polish.

In the times of ecumenical dialogue, which requires from both discussing parties a lot of humility and love, the presented articles by Luther are a very important question. Another important issue is the article "On the Mass." It is in this article where Luther says: "we are and we remain eternally divided and opposed the one to the other." According to the Reformer, this article is the "foundation stone of the teaching of the Church."

In my opinion the book *Reading the Reformer. Martin Luther and His Writings* will be appreciated by the Protestant community, as well as by Roman Catholics, who will get a good chance to familiarize themselves with the teaching of Luther. Since the book presents, in the person of Rev. Martin Luther, a marvelous picture of the "experienced faith."

It is my honour to recommend the work of Dr. Jerzy Sojka, the academic teacher of the Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw. His book *Reading the Reformer. Martin Luther and His Writings* should not only be a useful and informative source for the future generations about the "versatile individual" Luther was, but also a collection of knowledge invaluable in theological, ecumenical, and historical research performed by scholars and other persons interested in the subject in question.

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