One might describe this book as dreamy, in at least two senses. First, Augustine’s prose verges on poetry so that at many points the book simply *sings*. Second, as the title suggests, the work is enormously ambitious. Augustine’s transformative vision, vigorously stated in intensely concentrated form, takes in the widest possible scope: the “cosmopolitan future of the world,” a future that ultimately rests in the once-for-all inclusion of the whole of creation in the joys of the Triune life.

This audacity is born of and borne along by a full-bodied pneumatology. Augustine insists that the Spirit, the lordly “giver of dreams and visions” is always everywhere at work inspiring the Church to see the world and its *telos* otherwise; that is, in the transfiguring light of Christ. In her own words, “The *creator* Spirit inspires ... The *transformer* Spirit induces change ... The *liberator* Spirit sets us free to be and to become” all that Christ is and makes possible.

Augustine’s pneumatology is delicately entwined with an equally robust ecclesiology. Contrary to typical Pentecostal habits, she works from the assumption that the Spirit’s prophetic ministry functions through the Church as Christ’s body—not exclusively through individual charismatics within the community and not always on the margins of the Church’s institutional reach. Consider some of the descriptions of the Church offered in the book: “the image of the Trinity”; the “living extension” of Christ’s character and mission; the “incarnation of Christ in the community of faith”; the “living gospel”; the “sacred space where history is faced with its own future.” As she sees it, whatever God does is done for the sake of all created reality, and although it happens first to the Church, it always happens *for* the world, the outsider, the other. Hence, the event of Pentecost is the “birthing, anointing, and empowering of the Body of Christ” for the work of offering the world an embodied, alter-native vision of human being.

Hospitality, on Augustine’s account, names the Church’s very reason for being. Not just hospitality in any ordinary sense, of course; but *God-like* openness to the stranger and enemy, the endlessly risky, kenotically unconditional hospitality that alone makes authentic transformation of the social order possible. Precisely because the Church shares in the fullness of the cosmic Christ, she is called to be a “sanctuary for the other.” Christ through the Spirit has freed the Church to function as “a truly public welcoming community on the threshold between cultural, linguistic, economic, ethnic, and racial divides.” Until the
End, the Church lives in perpetual diaspora drawn together for witness as a community of “aliens, strangers, and pilgrims from every tongue and nation.” So constituted, the ecclesia lives as “both guest and host of the Kingdom” already come in part but not yet present in its fullness.

Until that End, Augustine insists, it is above all the Eucharist and glossolalia that function as the signs par excellence of the Church’s nature and call. For, in both the Sacrament and the gift of “tongues,” the ecclesia—and through her, the world—foretastes the “ultimate destiny of heaven and earth as being called together into one holy koinonia.” At the Table, God’s economy comes to bear on the people of God so that, through the Spirit’s transforming power, God’s people might become what Christ himself is. Glossolalia, sacramentally uniting the material and spiritual dimensions of existence, manifests the future at-one-ment of life together in the Kingdom. Augustine frames this call to radical hospitality as the personal and communal invitation to and participation in theosis. Salvation is nothing less than conformity to the “likeness of God,” a likeness that is essentially “the fullness of a communion and a community with God.” If Pentecostals are sometimes susceptible to the sickness of individualistic thinking and praxis, this book serves as an antidote. Drawing on a wide range of sources, including Orthodox iconography and postmodern philosophy, she insists at every turn that “sanctification is always social.” Strikingly, she is equally insistent that sanctification is also always ascetic. Desires must be disciplined. Habits must be formed. One of the dominant concepts in the book is that of “fasting from oneself.”

In Chapter 3—perhaps the boldest section of this remarkably bold book—she uses this notion to critique both socialism and “free-market” capitalism, arguing that the Church is called to embody a “communal economics” that is genuinely other than all the systems of this world. Christians are purposed to embody before the world the fact that being human is belonging to a household, a home, and not a market. The liturgy does this work of ascetical formation best of all. But not only the liturgy: the world itself is “a gift with a pedagogical function.” Gift is the nature of being; so, as people learn to give and to receive other’s gifts, humans are themselves baptized into the divine nature that makes their being possible.

In the final analysis, I have only one major criticism: this book is simply too concise. At times, the arguments are packed perhaps just a bit too tightly; at others, certain critical ideas are too-baldly stated, and apparently crucial assumptions left more or less unexplored. The upshot of it is, a very few readers may be hostile to the work, but even friendly readers like me are sure to be left with loads of questions. Of course, that it provokes reactions like these is a sign of how wonderfully rich the work is. Indeed, it is best received as the gift

PNEUMA 36 (2014) 109–177