

**David Noel Power**  
**1932-2014**

David Noel Power was born in Ireland in 1932. He entered the missionary religious order of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1950 and was ordained a priest in 1956. In 1968, he obtained a doctorate in theology from the Pastoral Institute of Theology at the Pontifical University of St. Anselmo in Rome with a dissertation dealing with issues of priesthood based on liturgical history and texts. His doctor-father was Herman Schmidt, one of the most outstanding Catholic liturgists at the time.

David Power taught systematic, sacramental, and liturgical theology in various theologates in Ireland before going to Rome in 1961, where he taught at different Roman universities. In 1977 he joined the theology faculty of the Catholic University of America as professor of systematic theology later becoming the Shakespeare Caldwell Davel Distinguished Professor. He retired from Catholic University in 2001.

From 1969-1991, he served on the editorial board of the international journal *Concilium*, participated actively in their yearly meetings, and coedited twenty volumes in the area of liturgy and sacramental theology. *Concilium* was the renowned international journal dedicated to continuing and developing the renewal of Catholic theology after Vatican II. Here he was in dialogue with the most renowned theological voices at the Council itself and later with the most important theologians from all parts of the world.

In addition to his work with *Concilium*, he wrote articles in the most significant theological journals in this country and abroad. He published twelve volumes dealing especially with liturgical and sacramental theology. In 1992 on the occasion of his 60th birthday, two former students honored him with a festschrift.

His primary area of research and writing was liturgical and sacramental theology. His wide-ranging reading and interests brought a very commendable depth and breadth to his writing. Christological and theological concerns grounded his approach. The understanding of symbol borrowed from many contemporary anthropologists and scientists gave an added dimension to his approach. All his writings embraced a hermeneutical perspective that was appreciated by his readers. His broad reading in theories of culture and the experience of his many international travels also colored his approach. A concern from praxis and the preferential option for the poor comes through in almost all his writings.

David Power served for a time as chair of the department of theology at the Catholic University of America. In 1992, the North American Academy of Liturgy bestowed on him its Berekah Award, and in 1996, the Catholic Theological Society of America gave him the John Courtney Murray award for distinguished achievement in theological scholarship.

After he retired from Catholic University in 2001, he continued to publish and also teach throughout the world in various theologates often associated with his religious community of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. At 80, he contracted cancer and died on June 19, 2014.

Colleagues appreciated David for his scholarship and his generous participation in faculty life. He was always the gentleman, enjoyed serious discussions of a theological nature, and willingly participated in all the work of the faculty. By nature he was an introvert, quiet, reserved, and unassuming, but his colleagues always listened when he spoke. For me he was also a faithful friend. May he rest in peace.

Charles E. Curran, American Theological Society 2015