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## María Del Socorro Castañeda-Liles. Our Lady of Everyday Life: La Virgen de Guadalupe and the Catholic Imagination of Mexican Women in America

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María Del Socorro Castañeda-Liles. *Our Lady of Everyday Life: La Virgen de Guadalupe and the Catholic Imagination of Mexican Women in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. 282 pp. \$35.95 Paper. ISBN: 9780190280406.

*Our Lady of Everyday Life*, Castañeda-Liles's first monograph, is clearly and compellingly written for an academic audience. With passion and care, the author introduces her colleagues and students to an understudied, often misunderstood intergenerational community of Latina women who share a common devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. The text is interdisciplinary, rooted in Castañeda-Liles's home discipline of sociology and engaging carefully with dialogue partners within that discipline as well as with psychology, religion, and pastoral ministry. Castañeda-Liles's approach is intersectional, using the lenses of race, class, gender, and generation. She sets out to show how three generations of Latinas (*Las Damas*, *Las Madres*, and *Las Mujeres*) make choices about their bodies and their sexuality and how those choices shape lived religion.

To do so, Castañeda-Liles builds on sociologist Andrew Greeley's notion of the Catholic imagination, which aims to capture what he describes as the enchanted world in which Catholics live. Castañeda-Liles understands that Greeley's dismissal of Indigenous interpretations of *la Virgen de Guadalupe* as superstitious prevents the Catholic imagination from appreciating fully the lived religion of the Latina women on whom she focuses her study. Fundamental to the "patterns of meaning making that emerged from [these women's] lived experiences" and that shape the Mexican Catholic imagination is the devotional triangle between mother, daughter, and *la Virgen*. Castañeda-Liles distinguishes between horizontal relationships among humans and vertical relationships between humans and sacred beings. The devotional triangle equips her readers with a tool to understand how horizontal relationships between mother and daughter can

be strengthened by their vertical relationships with *la Virgen*, especially through popular Catholic practices like the construction of home altars. She acknowledges, too, how relationships with *la Virgen* can resemble mother-daughter relationships in their simultaneously “life-giving” and “stifling” nature. The devotional triangle roots the women’s vertical relationships with *la Virgen* and shapes the Mexican Catholic imagination, expressed through popular Catholic practices characterized by *flor y canto* (“flower and song”), *lo cotidiano* (“daily living”), and *familismo* (“familism”). Castañeda-Liles explains that *flor y canto*, a Nahuatl notion pointing to the poetic quality of both horizontal and vertical communications and relationships, manifested in metaphors about *la Virgen*, is expressed through traditions that are simultaneously familial, cultural, and religious, and is described by the three generational cohorts of women in the Spanish language.

The devotional triangle has not only aided the women in the study in forging their vertical relationships with *la Virgen* but has also affected their horizontal relationships with their mothers within the context of *lo cotidiano* or everyday life. The sense of family they experience with *la Virgen* through the devotional triangle resonates with the sense of connectedness they experience in their relationships with their earthly mothers. Castañeda-Liles explains that the “(fe)minism” she observes at work in the choices *Las Damas*, *Las Madres*, and *Las Mujeres* make about their bodies and sexuality are a kind of underground feminism as described by Chicana/o studies scholar Aída Hurtado, a feminism that functions (even if it is not named as such) in an understudied community. The (fe)minism Castañeda-Liles sees as guiding the choices the Latinas in her study make is one that is deeply rooted in their *fe*—their faith. The horizontal agency of *Las Damas*, *Las Madres*, and *Las Mujeres* is born of their vertical faith in a deeply Catholic relationship with Guadalupe.

In the chapters that introduce the Latina women in these three generational cohorts, Castañeda-Liles relays the stories of the gifts and challenges of their daily lives, notably domestic violence. As a result of her relationship with *la Virgen*, one of *Las Damas*, Rosario, shot her husband to keep herself and her family safe, and Candelaria, one of *Las Madres*, lifted her husband and threw him to the ground, in a similar effort. Castañeda-Liles explains that Rosario and Candelaria understand well that domestic violence has no place in a right and just relationship, whether spousal or familial, and that their participation in the devotional triangle is fundamental to that recognition. Such examples parallel the lack of conflict many of the women in Castañeda-Liles' study see between church teaching on marriage and birth control and the practical choices necessary to raising a healthy family, especially in the socioeconomic contexts in which the women live.

A significant strength of this monograph is its section on pastoral implications, which encourages pastoral ministers working with Latine parishioners not only to understand such perceived absences of conflict, but also to appreciate how *la Virgen* urges action on the part of Latina women, not passivity, on both the micro- and the macro-levels. Castañeda-Liles acknowledges *la Virgen*'s commitment to "justice for the most vulnerable," especially immigrants, a well-documented notion in other efforts across disciplines like sociology, religious studies, and theology. Even so, she advises pastoral ministers to look for the ways in which *la Virgen* encourages Latina women to take action. Just as *la Virgen* called Juan Diego to seek an audience with the bishop despite his protests *la Virgen* encourages action on the part of *Las Damas*, *Las Madres*, and *Las Mujeres*, to address injustice within the private sphere of the home as well. Another significant strength is Castañeda-Liles's suggestion that social science research done from a Chicana/Latina feminist perspective would be enriched by careful consideration of

the role of religion in analyses using race, class, gender, and sexuality as lenses: such consideration would more carefully inform understandings of women's agency. A weakness of this exploratory study, which Castañeda-Liles acknowledges, lies in its scope, which is limited to heterosexual women. A doctoral student interested in how the choices of queer Latina Catholic women about their bodies and sexuality affect lived religion would do well to build on the foundation Castañeda-Liles offers here. Nevertheless, Castañeda-Liles paints a clear picture of how *Las Damas*, *Las Madres*, and *Las Mujeres* experience the sacred in everyday life.

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