Volume 3, Issue 2 (Nov 2026)
ISSN 3049-9704

Journal of Religion and Public Life

OCRPL
Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Volume 3, Issue 2 of the Journal of Religion and Public Life

Canon Dr Chris Sugden [1]

A number of themes unite the articles in this issue, all by our faculty and doctoral graduates and the book reviews.

Two articles focus on the work of two European missionaries in India, Christian Schwarz in the eighteenth century, and Amy Carmichael in the early twentieth century. Their involvement in Indian public life and concern for the most vulnerable in society should be required reading for those who would seek to denigrate missionary workers as puppets of the oppressors. Another misconception about mission history is addressed in an article on the role of mothers in the Missio Dei, which asserts that 'the accusation launched by some that Christianity suppressed women must confront the overwhelming data of what actually happened. There is much evidence of the *missio Dei* related to mothers' empowerment within Christianity, although this empowerment within motherhood is many times hidden from the academic side of mission history as it is taken for granted.'

A study on theological education in Africa argues for training that combines intellectual formation with spiritual maturity and community engagement, thus echoing the pattern exhibited by Schwarz and Carmichael.

The four books reviewed address key questions facing Christian engagement in public life. What is the nature of justice; how should we argue for an objective moral order so as to combat secular individualist subjectivism; how are the two often conflicting histories of Israelis and Palestinians over their disputed lands to be understood so as to move towards a reconciliation; and how are Christians to understand religious freedom in India with its secular constitution but increasingly governed by religious nationalism?

The editorial team hopes that this issue will provide both historical and contemporary resources for readers who are concerned to relate Christian faith to the whole of life.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.70600/jrpl.v3i2.003

[1] Canon Dr Chris Sugden is head of the Ph.D. programme at OCRPL, member of the OCRPL Academic Council, and a member of the JRPL Editorial Board.