A Gentleman and a Scholar—and an Editor Par Excellence

That the editorship of the *Harvard Theological Review* should take two individuals to succeed Prof. Bovon will come as no surprise to those who know him. A scholar's scholar, he has published a large number of learned and acclaimed studies. These studies include his four-volume commentary on the Gospel according to Luke, which has now appeared in four languages with a fifth to follow, and his groundbreaking studies on the apocryphal literature of early Christianity. He has written an important reconstruction of the last days of Jesus and how the early church interpreted them, as well as probing explorations of exegetical method. His works include three volumes, published for a more popular audience, and nearly two hundred articles and chapters that have appeared in scholarly books. Prof. Bovon does not limit his oeuvre to commenting with masterful erudition on published works. His work has taken him to the libraries of the monasteries on Mount Sinai and Mount Athos and to the Bodleian Library in Oxford in search of key documents from the early history of Christianity.

François Bovon kept up this pace of research and publishing while teaching a full load at Harvard Divinity School. As the Frothingham Professor of the History of Religion, he mentored students through their academic labors whether at the master's or the doctoral level. His students appreciate him not only for his erudition and his high standards—since he evoked the best from them even as he demands the best of himself—but also for his kind and gentle manner and the respect with which he treated them. Whatever their degree of preparation and whatever their natural gifts, he lent them a ready ear and provided firm but quiet encouragement. He leaves faculty and students alike impressed with the depth and seriousness of his Christian faith and with his openness to the challenges and enrichment that modern scholarship offers. He studies his faith and lives it too.

All this research and teaching coincided with Professor Bovon's editorship of this journal during the last ten years. He regarded the journal as an organ of scholarship and as a vehicle for teaching. He gave his respect and attention to the doctoral students, who helped to process the articles. He maintained his central

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commitment to the level of scholarship represented in the submissions that he accepted in accord with the high standard set in the first century of the journal and with its prominent role in international scholarship. Professor Bovon's commitment to a fair and thorough process impelled him to the not-always-pleasant task of reading every rejected submission, lest an injustice occur. His commitment to the meticulous publication of each article as free of error as possible impelled him to the thankless task of proofreading each article himself, even though several others on the staff had already done so.

In the year 2000, Professor Bovon assumed the editorship of the *Harvard Theological Review*, which had a long and distinguished history of excellence in a range of theological and religious fields and in particular in its philological studies of early Christian literature. A brilliant scholar of the same area of study himself, he maintained the worldwide reputation of the *Review* in that field while broadening the range and the appeal of the journal. He succeeded in this endeavor as well, and our periodical has grown all the stronger as a result.

Professor Bovon's standards have been high indeed, but *Harvard Theological Review* has a history of high standards and a community of scholars that supports them. That history and that community are all the richer for the labors of our beloved colleague François Bovon.

Kevin J. Madigan
Jon D. Levenson

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