



# Church, Charism and Power: Liberation Theology and the Institutional Church

*Leonardo Boff*

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Since this book has brought Fr Boff into confrontation with the Roman Catholic authorities it is important to let him describe it himself. 'We are living in privileged times. There is an upsurge of life in the church that is revitalizing the entire body from head to toes. The church has been placed on the road to renewal, which will surely result in a new manifestation of the church as institution. There are powerful and living forces, particularly at the grassroots, that are not sufficiently recognized by the traditional channels of the church's present organization. The grassroots are asking for a new structure, a new ecclesial division of labour and of religious power, for this a new vision of the church is necessary. This vision has not yet been developed systematically in a way that responds to the demands of our global reality, but is necessary given what is happening in Latin America and elsewhere in the world. The present book does not pretend to fill this need. It does, however, take on certain challenges, raise criticisms, make suggestions for a new model of the church, and reflect on them in a radical way. This book will most certainly be understood by them precisely in as much as they have overcome the triumphalist mentality. Others will judge this work as superfluous and even inopportune. This will not trouble me in the least. What readily comes to mind is the thought of St Augustine, echoed by the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. And many before us, leading this life, trod tortuous paths which we were obliged to follow, with the weariness and suffering imposed on the sons of Adam.'

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