

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I want to thank Christian Bauer for his support and guidance through the process of writing this book as a habilitation thesis in pastoral (or rather practical) theology.

I also want to thank Bernhard Spielberg, Michael Schüssler, and Rainer Bucher for their helpful comments in the review process of this thesis as well as Sarah Livick-Moses and Matthias Müller for the proofreading of the text. Many more people have helped me along the way: The project started with a stay at the *Boisy Center for Religion and American Public Life* in Boston and an interview with activists in New York, arranged by Bradford Hinze, when I was still working for Johanna Rahner at the *Ecumenical Institute* in Tübingen. The interviews in Germany and Austria were conducted in preparation for a lecture on Christian community life at the universities of Innsbruck and Eichstätt, where I have worked at the chair of Martin Kirschner. The final edit of this book now takes place at the University of Lucerne amongst many likeminded colleagues. Over the years it has been my privilege to work with so many excellent scholars who have been very generous both with their knowledge and their time. I also want to thank the team at *Transcript* publishers for their help with the publication of this book as well as the Swiss National Science Foundation for their generous funding of this publication.

Friends and family have been important for me in my formation as a person, especially my mother Theresia and my father Werner Henkel. Most importantly I want to thank my wife Caroline for her loving support along the way and my daughter Anna-Amalia for the joy she has brought to our lives. To both I dedicate this book.

Lucerne, September 2024, Christian Preidel

