

pagan civilizations and their consequent effect on the representation of the "evil one," the evolution of the portrayal of the devil in art is traced from the angelic devil of early Christianity to the modern abstractions such as Dali's "Temptation of Saint Anthony."

A galaxy of experts in their respective fields has made this book an outstanding one. It is spiritual in tone, scholarly in research, and with the exception of a few unduly technical articles, fascinating in presentation.

A.J.D.

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**St. Benedict Joseph Labre.** By Agnes De La Gorce. Translated by Rosemary Sheed. New York, Sheed & Ward, 1952. pp. 213. \$3.00.

In the eighteenth century Europe was swarming with beggars. They travelled in little bands, rude, ungrateful, sometimes mischievous to say the least. In those days the words of Christ, "the poor you always have with you" were well understood; though frequently understanding was tinged with bitterness in the minds of those who were badgered by these mendicant bands. They were "tramps . . . lazy good for nothings" who refused to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow and so lived off the rich and poor, city and country folk alike.

Yet often in these little bands, although he sometimes travelled alone, there was one who was different from the rest. He was among them but was not one of them. He was a beggar, but more than that—he was a beggar-pilgrim! To cover the length and breadth of Europe visiting shrines and begging for food along the way may seem a pointless, vagabond existence. But to Benedict Joseph Labre it was a singular vocation, yet as real as that of the priest, the lawyer, the farmer. God was asking him to leave a humble yet comfortable home, to forget marriage, any kind of worldly success, friendship, pleasure, peace; to dress raggedly, be eaten by vermin, constantly on the road, experiencing hunger. To many it seemed a lot of nonsense. Even in our own day it is hard to take.

But to be a saint is not to be ordinary, and Benedict Joseph Labre was not an ordinary man. His was a life of constant humiliation. "Poor, begging, lost to the world" is the author's description of him. His life story is vivid, moving, and compelling. It loses none of its vitality in Rosemary Sheed's capable translation from the original French edition.

J.F.

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**Christ in the Liturgy.** By Dom Illtyd Trethowan. New York, Sheed & Ward, 1952. pp. x, 150. \$2.50.

At some future date when Sheed & Ward decide to publish an

anthology on the Liturgy, they might select three beautiful chapters from this work: The Christmas Cycle; The Paschal Cycle; Pentecost. Except for a few other occasional passages the work is insipid.

Perhaps the author wished to avoid this criticism by acknowledging in his preface that "it is inevitably 'scrappy.'" He compiled the work from lectures, to satisfy Catholics who wish to extend their knowledge of the Liturgy beyond the brief notes found in missals and who do not feel prepared to cope with larger volumes. Why the avid beginner will be interested in the distinction of *natura naturata* and *Natura naturans* (page 7) is hard to grasp. In Chapter Two, liturgical infants learn that the dogmatic beauty of our centuries old Liturgy is enhanced if surrounded by the misty halo of the theological opinion of Scotus that the Incarnation would have taken place even if Adam had not sinned. In discussing the problem the author places himself in a curious self-contrariety. "I do not propose to set out the arguments of Scotus over against of St. Thomas nor do I even wish to recommend them" (p. 21). And yet on the next page, "I hope I am not being unfair to the Thomist case. It is difficult to give a fair treatment of a case which one does not accept" (p. 22). Certainly this emotional solution is futile, for Christ will never be made to live in His Liturgy if the Liturgy is not constantly grounded on dogmatic facts.

Chapter Three on the Sacrifice of the Mass is in a sad state of confusion. One of the favorite themes of the author, a Benedictine monk of Downside Abbey, is that theological disputes should be brought down to the people. So with one stroke of the pen he couples an explanation of the nature of Christian sacrifice with a statement of opinions that might be found in the *status quaestionis* of a formal scholastic disputation. Since it is not meant for the erudite, it is scarcely worth the effort to follow the labyrinthine way.

Chapters Four and Five are an interesting interlude. They give a brief historical summary of the development of the Synaxis, Offertory, and Canon. The term *Synaxis* is being popularized by the liturgical élite to designate the Mass of the Catechumens, in order to emphasize the continuity of this part of Christian worship with the services of the Jewish synagogue.

The Epilogue is entitled Christian Perfection and Intellectualism. Again the problem has to be solved (?) by recourse to theological controversy. Writing about the nature of the Beatific Vision, Dom Trethowan points out that while "St. Thomas is contradicted by Scotus . . . it is hard to believe that there can be any fundamental difference here, for Scotus, although his general line of thinking is decidedly different from St. Thomas', is surely talking about the same

thing. . . ." (p. 137). Could one pay either theologian a greater insult? Finally, we discover that to save the Liturgy and a correct intellectual life, the whole of Thomism must crumble. In explaining his stand, the author acknowledges that he must be brief, "but it may be a sufficient pointer to suggest the view that sensation itself—human sensation that is . . .—is intellectual. I can claim the support of other Catholic philosophers for rejecting the clear-cut distinction between intellection and sensation which you will find in the Thomist manuals . . . we have not two distinct powers of awareness, but only one" (p. 146). Since this philosophical liturgist prefers to argue from authority here, it should be sufficient to point out that the Twenty-four Thomistic theses, the official Catholic Philosophy proposed by Rome, definitely call for a *per se* distinction (cf. th. 17). It is at the heart of Thomism and all sound thought.

Since the distinction of intellect and sense is evident to the human intellect by its natural power, it seems apt to remind Dom Illtyd of St. Thomas' famous lines on the subject of the unity of the intellect: "Behold our refutation of the error. It is not based on documents of faith, but on the reasons and statements of the philosophers themselves. If then anyone there be who, boastfully taking pride in his supposed wisdom, wishes to challenge what we have written, let him not do it in some corner nor before children who are powerless to decide on such difficult matters. Let him reply openly, if he dare. He shall find me there confronting him, and not only my negligible self, but many another whose study is truth. We shall do battle with errors or bring him a cure to his ignorance" (De Unitate Intellectus, last paragraph).

It is hard to see how any beginner who wishes to know more about the Liturgy can be interested in this work as a sourcebook. To be sure, this book, with its beautiful title, was written for Catholics who are yet babes in regard to the Liturgy, but there seems to be poison in the meat the author is forcing on those who should be fed milk.

A.G.

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**God In Our Daily Life.** By Hilda C. Graef. Westminster, Md., Newman Press, 1951. pp. 225. \$3.25.

Our Holy Father, in his recent call to Rome and the world for a Mighty Reawakening, assigned three causes for the terrible sickness of the world today. He did not place the blame on a Hitler, a Mussolini, or a Stalin. The blame fell on us, his own children, the children of light, for our lethargy of spirit, weakness of will and coldness of heart.