

# BOOK REVIEWS

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LETTERS FROM VATICAN CITY. By Xavier Rynne. New York, Farrar, Straus & Co., 1963. pp. 289. \$3.95.

Xavier Rynne says his book, *Letters from Vatican City*, is "an essay in theological journalism." Why not take him at his word? His aim is journalistic, that is, to report news. His style is that of an essayist, that is, he plainly acknowledges a judgment of the facts presented. And of course, the context is theological, the Second Vatican Council.

The nine "letters" contained in the book are concerned first of all with the history of the Second Vatican Council, and secondly, with its actual meeting. The historical aspect is treated in order to provide a background against which the general reader might be able to understand this extraordinary event.

Much criticism has been leveled against the author's (or authors') approach. But any attempt to explain the evolution and present state of an organization with such complex parts as the Roman Curia, whose functions and relations are so many and varied, would be likely to meet with difficulties and opposition.

Secrecy regarding the Council's affairs is certainly a serious matter. The question of secrecy naturally arises when the subject under discussion is the Vatican, whose internal affairs are not usually a matter of public information. However, the accurate reporting that has been recognized in Italian Communist newspapers and the rather sensational reporting of some European newspapers, make one wonder from whom the secrets were to be withheld. Perhaps the question of secrecy would not have been raised had the *Letters* not been an American publication, distributed to the American public.

The obvious fact that Xavier Rynne had access to the immediate sources of information and used them with imagination and wit gives the

book a solid core. This demands, of course, that it be taken seriously and given due consideration. Nevertheless, the fact that the information is embellished with anecdote and rumor leaves the reader wondering at times which is fact and which is merely plausibility. Accuracy of details may have suffered from this procedure, but not the total view which the *Letters* present of the Council and its attendant circumstances.

The book is most informative. It presents the entire picture of the Council within a framework of historical facts and circumstances, contemporary political pressures and the needs of the present-day Church, as well as the relations and even conflicts among the more prominent personalities. This perhaps is one of its more signal contributions for an American understanding of the Church and her official proceedings. *Letters from Vatican City* has pulled back the "purple curtain," if even so briefly. That the Church has human components who discuss and argue among themselves, and that discovering truth is an arduous process, are not things to be hushed up but rather to be acknowledged and taken for the facts of life which they are.

The majority of the "letters" are concerned with debates on particular subjects, such as liturgy, unity and the Church. These debates necessarily involve the conflict of colorful personalities and all that this implies. Xavier Rynne has made the most out of their individual characteristics, foibles and virtues. Doubtless, this lends color and interest to what might otherwise have been a drab record.

Essay has been the deliberately chosen form of this communication. In this way, the author can deal with his subject from a personal standpoint and is permitted considerable freedom of both style and method. That the author should have indulged in gossip and wit, and that he has also made a number of small mistakes with regard to details, (for instance, calling Archbishop Silva of Concepción in Chile a bishop) does not essentially detract from the fundamental honesty and truth of the reporter. Communication includes making facts interesting—a difficult task when the facts are those of virtue and not vice.

Included in the book are the addresses of Pope John to the Council. These documents, while they cannot be seen as personal to the text, lend something of a spirit to the author's endeavors.

Xavier Rynne certainly has taken a stand for the liberal element of the Council. His usage of the terms "liberal" and "conservative" seems both practical and necessary, given his particular task. This has enabled

him to outline the broad movements within the Council. It has also made it necessary to sketch by anecdote or adjective the individual representatives of these particular elements. If the book be taken for what it was intended to be by the author, it seems that it fulfills its aim extremely well.

*Letters from Vatican City* has been extensively reviewed in many of the nation's foremost magazines and newspapers. *America* (June 29, 1963), for example, presented a pro-con article written by two bishops discussing the book. Bishop G. Emmett Carter, auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of London, Ontario, opposes the book and calls it "a monument of indiscretion," being disturbed by what he calls "the judicial attitude of the author(s)." Nevertheless, he states that the book "is an incredibly well-documented piece. Someone was certainly 'taking notes,' and with great skill and acumen." And he also adds that "it will be hard to deny that this book gives an uncannily accurate description of what happened at the Council."

Bishop Ernest J. Primeau of the Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire, states that the book "underscores the weakness of the official releases and consequently of the reporting of the American press . . . which manifested little of the foreign 'ingenuity' in their coverage of the first session of the Council."

*Critic* (June-July, 1963) devoted three pages to a discussion of the book by Rt. Rev. John Tracy Ellis. His judgment that the book will probably go through a second and third printing is no surprise. The careful and penetrating reviews of *Letters* which Msgr. Ellis has written is itself an indication of the inherent value of the book, and lessens the force of the accusations of sensationalism as being responsible for its popularity.

Msgr. Francis J. Lally, officially accredited to the Council as a representative of the press, also reviewed the book in the *Boston Pilot* (June 15, 1963). He judges that the book "has the advantage . . . of exposing, for the first time to most American readers, the intense convictions on both sides and the excesses of indiscretions to which this has led certain Church figures."

*Letters from Vatican City* is a unique endeavor and an eminently successful one in its attempt to present a comprehensive, and at the same time, factual and personally vivid account of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. To many this will be, as Msgr. Lally has said, "a vivid revelation."

—Christopher Lozier, O.P.

YOU SHALL BE WITNESSES. By Dennis J. Geaney, O.S.A. Notre Dame, Fides, 1963. pp. 151. \$3.50.

To speak of a spirituality of the layman still conveys to many minds a diluted form of that spirituality peculiarly reserved for religious. Such a spirituality thrives on profound periods of prayer and meditation coupled with a disdain for earthly goods and a disregard for even the necessities of life. This inadequate and erroneous form of lay spirituality established the basis for a mere trivial, irrelevant, and at best, tolerable share in the Church's apostolate, her witnessing of Christ to the world. But the Catholic layman rightfully refused this diluted religious spirituality. He did not seek a religious apostolate nor does he desire its form of spirituality. Rather the layman requires a spirituality proper to his state of life and position in the Church. It is specifically in being an employer, mechanic, father or mother that his sanctification is to be achieved, and thus he needs a spirituality intimately concerned with the everyday life of wages, cars, bills, and clothing.

Fr. Dennis Geaney presents to laymen a spirituality proper to their state in life and position in the Church, so that they might fulfill their true function in the apostolate, in being a witness of Christ in the world. He does not speak in vague terms but emphatically states as his title, *You Shall Be Witnesses*.

Since lay spirituality must be necessarily involved in the secularistic and materialistic world, there could be no greater model than God Incarnate. Christ was truly involved in Jewish civilization and culture. He attended its weddings, heard its popular music, recited its ancient prayers, walked its streets, met its problems, wept over its destiny, and in all aspects tried to make it holy. Such a comparable situation meets the layman today. He is a part of the world in which he lives, and has the task of making that world holy. As Fr. Geaney states, "Ghetto living in a pluralistic society is an anomaly. It is unfeasible and unrealistic. Whatever the dangers may be for Catholics who get into the mainstream of American life, there is no alternative to facing them. Our only choice is to identify ourselves with our surroundings in a way that is completely human and Catholic. We must embrace all that conforms and reject all that conflicts with Christ's gospel of love."

To assume this precarious responsibility presupposes the layman's awareness of his vocation and a conviction that he, by that vocation, must be a witness of Christ in the world. Once convinced, he no longer can be

content with a cozy Catholicism, but must be acutely attentive to the needs of his fellowman. Christ not only gave example, but he set as a norm of Catholic conduct the response to be given to the needy whoever or wherever they be. Thus the layman, if he be a true witness, must see in the city streets, the noisy slums, all the discordant sounds of human life, a need for his presence—the witness of Christ in the world.

To aid in the awareness of the brotherhood of men as members of the human race, and for those who participate in the Church, in the Mystical Body, which brotherhood forms the basis for the lay apostolate, Fr. Geaney presents the Mass and the Holy Eucharist. He deplores the emphasis placed on them as individualistic, "spiritual muscle builders." They are also communal, unifying, and familiar. As regard the Mass in particular he propounds greater participation in the liturgy as a means of focusing the social aspects.

The incarnational spirituality which is presented in *You Shall Be Witnesses* stresses the value of all persons and things. It means a definite involvement in the world and can only view flight from it as refuge from responsibility, an unwillingness to fulfill the vocation of the lay state. But how is this vocation to be met in the twentieth century? To aid in adapting the virtues to everyday life in our time, suggestions are offered by the author as to how the corporal works of mercy might be implanted, how work can be sanctified, how mortification can be practiced in relation to one's social status and goods he might possess. Their practicality and wisdom can be derived from an account offered of a mother who, convinced of her vocation to witness Christ in the world, mortified herself in this way. She served beer and punch in place of a well equipped bar she could have provided; cookies and coffee instead of smorkasbord during Christmas open house. Not one thing was wasted in her home. Even torn sheets were converted into drapery lining and other household objects.

Only education can produce such a layman whose caliber shall be that of a true witness of Christ in the world. To be effective the education must begin in the home and have for its goal freedom and responsibility under the guidance of obedience. This is the only form of education which will develop youth into mature, responsible laymen who will form the public opinion within the Church of which Pope Pius XII spoke. This education will have to form the Catholic conscience which is presently characterized by individual rather than social emphasis. Fr. Geaney describes the American Catholic conscience in these terms: "It is concerned with individual perfection apart from the social context of our human encounters. It is

concerned with self-improvement almost to the exclusion of the improvement of the social institutions which shape the lives and mores of our people. It is ostrichlike in its approach to the world. In our efforts to keep ourselves unspotted there is almost a contempt for the legitimate strivings of mankind. One would think that the social order was irrelevant to the Christian, as though it was something other than the interaction of people in their struggle towards genuine human goals."

It must be admitted that to be a witness by oneself is a difficult matter. Support of others is needed. This is why the author thinks it highly beneficial for laymen to join others of similar mind who can both encourage and lend a helping hand when needed. Aid should also be sought and provided by the confessor whose task it is not only to absolve from failures but also to lead the laity on to greater perfection and endeavors in their effort to witness Christ in the world.

These are but a few of the many ideas expressed in a dynamic and interesting manner by Fr. Geaney. He brings a freshness to lay spirituality which has long been lacking. One might find some objection to the use of the terms cloister and parish in reference to the lay apostolate since they tend to conjure up that diluted religious spirituality which this work is determined to replace. But the total effect is one of a vital, stimulating, approach to sanctity for which many a laymen has yearned.

—Joachim Haladus, O.P.

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THE WORKS OF BONAVENTURE. Volume II, *The Breviloquium*, translated by José de Vinck. Paterson, N.J., St. Anthony Guild Press, 1963. Distributor, Desclee Co. pp. 326. \$6.75.

This little gem of theology is one of St. Bonaventure's best known works. He undertook its writing on the urging of his confreres who felt the need of a compact *summa* of theology. Actually, the *Breviloquium* is a compendium of his *Commentaria in quatuor libros sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi*, a voluminous work comprising more than half of the Seraphic Doctor's *Opera Omnia*.

It exceeds our purpose here to offer a critique of Bonaventuran theology. Our efforts shall be directed to an evaluation of the translation, and an exposition of the contents of the *Breviloquium*.

In form, this compact *summa* can be considered a deductive treatise. Each chapter is begun with a premise establishing some aspect about God.

From this proposition conclusions are drawn by logical analysis. In style this work is unique. Although it belongs to the literature of medieval scholastic theology, the flavor of St. Bonaventure's mystical spirit can be detected throughout. He is forever pre-occupied with the love of God.

The *Breviloquium* is composed of a prologue and seven parts covering the whole realm of theology. In the prologue St. Bonaventure treats the Holy Scriptures as the ground-work for the sacred doctrine which follows. The first part opens with a preview of what is to come, showing the logical procession of subject matter in theology. Each subject proceeds from God as its first principle. Next, St. Bonaventure plunges into the truth about the One God and the Trinity. Here the translator has provided abundant notes to assist us in understanding the text. For those unfamiliar with St. Bonaventure's theology, such profound truth, when presented so compactly, needs some support.

From God, the Seraphic Doctor turns to that which proceeds from God, namely, creation, the world, angels, men. Angels and men however have sinned, which accounts for the next topic, original and actual sin. The remedy for sin became possible through the earthly mission of Christ. Here we have an exposition of the Incarnation and its purpose. The next two parts deal with what Christ made possible for us, grace and the sacraments. The ultimate part concerns the last things.

Random samples of this text compared with the Quaracchi Edition of the *Opera Omnia* from which this translation was made, seem to indicate that we have here the mind of St. Bonaventure faithfully presented in English. Doctor de Vinck has not been a slave to the Latin text. Certain departures are evident, but they do not effect a mis-representation. His choice of certain English words could be challenged, and in such cases, the Latin text is preferred.

The translator, in his own style, has maintained the spirit of St. Bonaventure. He writes clearly and simply. The text flows freely so as to provide mild transitions from one subject to the next. This book can be read like a novel rather than in the fashion of a theological text-book or reference work.

Some words of praise are in order for the format of this book, which is exceptionally fine. The print is large and easy to read. General footnotes are grouped at the end of the book. Scriptural references are placed in the outside margin of each page. Frequent explanations are presented conveniently at the bottom of the page. These also are easily legible. In addition, the volume is illustrated.



Besides being a good review for students of Bonaventuran theology, the *Breviloquium* will offer to those familiar with medieval scholastic theology a good insight into the thought of St. Bonaventure. The succinctness of presentation in this volume prevents its recommendation to beginners.

With Doctor de Vinck we can say: the *Breiloquium* is a systematic approach to the love of God.

—K.F.

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THIRTEEN FOR CHRIST. By Melville Harcourt. New York, Sheed & Ward, 1963. pp. 271. \$5.00.

The modern world, with its emphasis on progress in the scientific and materialistic spheres, focuses attention on the dedicated men and heroic figures who advance these fields of endeavor. Melville Harcourt presents thirteen such figures who have distinguished themselves in the field of Christendom. The members of this elite group which he has chosen have all made significant Christian contributions to the society in which they lived.

Four such dedicated Catholic figures are presented; Pope Pius XII, Msgr. Ronald Knox, Fr. John La Farge, S.J., and Miss Dorothy Day. Other members of the elite include Dr. Martin Luther King, Paul Tillich, T. S. Eliot, Billy Graham, Boris Pasternak, Albert Schweitzer, Trevor Huddleston, Tubby Clayton, and William Temple.

The essays concerning these eminent personages are written by authors of repute who, because of their scholarship or personal acquaintanceship, are most capable of presenting their topic with marked insight.

Certainly this work provides a valuable reference as well as an interesting view of some of the prominent figures who dedicate their lives to the service of God and mankind.

—J.H.

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NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY TODAY. By Rudolf Schnackenburg. Translated by David Askew. New York, Herder and Herder, 1963. pp. 133. \$2.95.

This book surveys, points out trends and evaluates modern biblical research in the Theology of the New Testament. An extensive bibliography is given with each subject treated. The author also indicates areas in which



scholarly work has been deficient or entirely lacking, and encourages further research.

The revitalized interest in Scripture studies that we are witnessing welcomes this new addition. It will be a helpful book to the biblical scholar, the serious student and the theologian.

—P.B.

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CONTEMPORARY CATHOLIC THOUGHT. Edited by Barrow Ulanov. New York, Sheed & Ward, 1963. pp. 310. \$6.00.

This book is a collection of essays which the editor views as representative of present-day Catholic thought. It serves to show something of the vitality and scope of Catholic writers. Selections are included from many of the best known authors in the Church today.

The editor's introduction sets the book on a rather contemporary, existentialist footing, yet the essays included are by no means limited to any one contemporary school of thought. Indeed, it seems that the selections well reflect the varied streams of thought living in the Church today. A glance through the table of contents alone is enough to show the variety and competence of the writers who were selected as representative.

Needless-to-say, this reviewer does not agree with each individual opinion expressed in the essays—but such a fact is to be expected, for the book contains so much variety. Most of the authors are French; but perhaps this too is to be expected, seeing the special vitality of contemporary French Catholic letters. The editor grouped his selections around the general ideas of faith, hope, and love, and this worked out well, for it gives some unity to the selections. But such a grouping also put limitations on the editor. Thus he did not include essays about specialized movements in the Church today, such as questions of ecumenism, the laity, etc. But nonetheless, the book does rather well represent the vitality of thought in the Church today.

—G.H.G.

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THE IMAGE OF GOD. By John E. Sullivan, O.P. Dubuque, The Priory Press, 1963. pp. 356.

*The Image of God* is a scholarly work which investigates the teaching of St. Augustine on the focal point of the Christian doctrine on man. "And God said: Let us make man to our image and likeness." Interpretations

of this phrase are found in the works of Christian thinkers from the earliest centuries to our own day. The most imposing interpretation is St. Augustine's, which was later precised and more fully developed by St. Thomas. These two great thinkers placed this concept at the center of their teaching on man and did not relegate to it the limited role it is given in much of modern theology,

In the first part of the work, a systematic presentation of the doctrine of St. Augustine is given. In the second part of the originality and influence (especially on St. Thomas) of St. Augustine is considered. The second part compares Augustine with others. First, his originality becomes manifest from a survey of patristic thought. Then, his enduring influence through St. Thomas is treated. Both the contribution of Augustine and the originality of the Angelic Doctor are brought to light. Lastly, a survey of the perdurance of this concept down to our own day is given.

The work is valuable in patristic thought for its clarity, sound interpretation of St. Augustine, complete references and extensive bibliography.

—P.B.

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A SOLDIER PRIEST TALKS TO YOUTH. By Msgr. Patrick J. Ryan. New York, Random House, 1963. pp. 205. \$3.95.

Here is a book that is written for and should be read by every Catholic teen-ager. In it Msgr. Ryan takes his young listeners aside and tells them the facts of life about the confusing problems they may be experiencing today. He deals not only with the more common problems—drinking, driving, sex and smoking—but also discusses with them the need for mental balance, acquiring the old-fashioned virtues, conformity or non-conformity.

In the nineteen interesting chapters of this book, Msgr. Ryan aims to stir the young men and women of today out of their lethargy. Moral laxity and physical weakness are the real sources of a nation's decay. And these two elements are prevelant in our American way of life. Something has got to be done soon. This book shows what can be done and how to do it.

From his life-time experience with soldiers, Msgr. Ryan knows how to give practical, realistic advice. Basing his long talk, as he calls it, on Our Lord's command, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and the Greek injunction, "Know thyself," General Ryan has done a difficult task well.

With wit, warmth and understanding, he has demonstrated that rare ability to inspire young people. He skillfully communicates concepts which are difficult for a teen-age mentality to grasp by expressing them in the form of sharply pointed stories that ring with the truth of real life.

—T.M.

WE NEUROTICS. By Bernard Basset, S.J. Fresno, Academy, 1962. pp. 135. \$3.75.

This is a disarming book. On the surface it seems to be a set of ten engaging essays on a variety of topics by an author who has a decided liking for character sketches which lean towards caricature. There is a little deaf nun who gives spiritual direction in Euston Station, Miss Copsley-Smith who prays in the bathtub, a most liturgical minded English Canon, a French Abbé who has taken part in the French resistance and a Thurber-like character named Mr. Ponsonby.

However, beneath this entertaining and amusing facade of human foibles and oddities there lies a penetrating, solid, and vital frame of spiritual doctrine. These essays are, in fact, treatises on such serious subjects as self-acceptance, self-honesty, jealousy, fear and our Father, God. Their purpose is to help one to dispose oneself for prayer.

Bernard Basset presumes that we all are somewhat neurotic. His choice of subjects is in accord with his presumption. But he also knows that we would all like to think we are no worse than the others, perhaps even a little above them. Thus his Everyman, Henry Dawes, is slightly above average.

The combination has the ring of truth to it and the impact of honesty openly spoken.

In order to appreciate the humor of *We Neurotics*, one must read it. In order to grasp the doctrine, one must think about it. It is the kind of book that should be a thirty-five cent paperback—easily obtainable by everyone.

—B.C.

MARTIN DE PORRES: SAINT OF THE NEW WORLD. By Ellen Tarry, New York, Farrar, Straus and Company, 1963. pp. 173. \$2.25.

To our many readers who teach children on the junior high school level, here is a book you ought not miss.

Ellen Tarry, a former teacher who has authored several other children's titles, gives us a thoroughly delightful biography of St. Martin de Porres. Her material has been culled from the best authorities. This book is brief but stirring. Page after page, as the life of St. Martin is revealed to us, there shines forth the glory of his virtues, exciting admiration and creating an eagerness to imitate the holiness of this mulatto Dominican Lay-Brother of Lima.

This is the happy story of a man in love with God and his fellowman, a man who loved blacks and whites, rich and poor, rulers and ruled—a saint for all mankind. In these pages Martin's charity, obedience, and humility, his devotion to prayer and the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, his total dependence on God stand out. As a boy Martin is shown to be bright, industrious and faithful to his duties; as a man, a great counselor, a wonder-worker, a prophet and a mystic, but always filled with a spirit of penance, never considering himself more than an instrument of God.

Not only is this volume recommended to children from nine to fifteen years of age, but to adults as well. At this very moment, the United States' racial tragedy can be corrected by those willing to follow the example of St. Martin de Porres.

—K.F.

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LUIS OF GRANADA. By R. L. Oechlin, O.P. Herder of St. Louis, 1962. pp. 142. \$4.20.

*Luis of Granada* is an analytic study of one of the greatest theologians and spiritual writers of the sixteenth century. In a time of revolutionary ideas, when Protestant teachings were spread through many diverse and subtle means and the so called "Illuminati" were very active, Luis of Granada radiated his profound and solid doctrine. In those troubled times, every writer was suspect of heresy, and Granada was no exception; but his principles and solid spirituality finally triumphed. With a simple and clear but brilliant style, he left to posterity one of the best developed spiritual doctrines of all times.

This man and his work, together with their circumstances, are critically examined in Father Oechslein's book. "To study him as the master of prayer is to see him as he was in his own time. This is the underlying theme of this book, but it is subordinated to the facts and it is the facts that have traced out the book's plan." The facts were difficult and they are not easily

understood. A work that proposes to investigate those factors and draw conclusions from them is destined to be controversial.

Father Oechslin has examined the author, his books, his time, and following the mentioned scheme has developed several conclusions. Granada's life, his teaching, his problems, the characteristics of his spirituality, are all subjected to analysis in this fine book. The reader may or may not agree with the conclusions, but the book has fulfilled its purpose. And from now on, the great Dominican Granada will be better known.

—B.P.

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### THE EUCHARISTIC LITURGIES OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES.

By Nikolaus Liesel. Collegeville, Liturgical Press, 1963. pp. 310. \$8.00.

In his first allocution on the day following his election, Pope Paul VI clearly indicated his intention of continuing the Ecumenical Council. The very character of the Ecumenical Council, of course, demands a new emphasis on the unity of the Church. Yet it is necessary for all Catholics to realize that there is in the Church a tremendous variety which gives life to her unity. One striking instance of this variety is the use of different liturgical rites by Catholics of east and west. Western Catholics, generally speaking, are unaware of the existence of rites other than the Latin Rite, while the few cognizant westerners often think the other rites belong only to the separated Orthodox.

To help alleviate the lack of information concerning the rites of Eastern Catholics in union with Rome, the Liturgical Press presents for the English speaking Catholic *The Eucharistic Liturgies of the Eastern Churches* by Nikolaus Liesel. This volume portrays the twelve liturgies of the Eastern Churches according to their hierarchical development. How beautifully this task is accomplished through the use of maps, pictures, commentary, texts and outlines is justly impressive. Father Liesel has spared nothing in attempting to achieve the intimate sequence of each of the various liturgies.

In all there are 802 photographs (Signor Tibor Makula, photographer) with approximately 250,000 words of text and commentary in 310 pages, all skillfully coordinated by Brother Placid, O.S.B. Father Liesel's original texts were translated by Father David Heiman. With all this excellent work one may only regret the lack of color photographs; this extra touch would undoubtedly have made the cost of the book prohibitive.

A careful study of Father Liesel's simple, yet magnificent achievement, must necessarily stimulate all Catholics to a greater love of the entire liturgical life of the Church, and beyond to a fresh understanding of our separated brethren of the east. Consequently this book is recommended as a reference work in every library. It is essential for the priest in contact with easterners, Catholic or Orthodox, while it is a noteworthy aid for any layman genuinely interested in the ecumenical question.

—T.M.

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THE NUN IN THE WORLD. By Leon Cardinal Suenens. Westminster, Newman, 1962. pp. 175. Cloth \$2.95. Paper \$1.95.

The Newman Press certainly knew what they were doing when they published this book in both cloth binding and paperback. It should not be long before every apostolic sister in the country has heard about it, talked about it and read it. A review would be all but useless for these sisters; but for the sake of the rest of us who might not know what we were missing and who don't have friends in the convent to tell us, perhaps a few comments would be worthwhile. The book is about the world of 1963 and about wise adaptations nuns should consider making in order to keep up with it and work in it more effectively. Cardinal Suenens knows the modern world well and offers the modern apostolic sister a brilliant appraisal of various opportunities and challenges it offers her. As often as not, however, his remarkable insights illuminate the lives of men religious as well, and those of apostles living in the world, too. That is why the book will be read with interest by the veiled and the unveiled alike.

—P.C.

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THE LORD'S DAY. By Louis J. Putz, C.S.C., Notre Dame, Indiana, Fides, 1963. pp. 234. \$3.95.

Fr. Putz is extremely well known for his particular type of work in the vineyard of Christ; he is the "apostle" of the specialized movements of Catholic Action. In his efforts to provide efficacious means whereby today's Catholic layman might participate more fully in the Church's divine mission, Fr. Putz has provided here a series of homilies based on the liturgy for each Sunday of the year. Used largely for his own meditation, these homilies became so much in demand by Fr. Putz's students, that they were at last gathered together in book-form.

The homilies are distributed under the proper divisions of the liturgical year, beginning with the Christmas season, followed by Easter time and concluding with the post-Pentecostal season. Each text was composed with an eye towards providing a more penetrating insight into the mystery of the day. The constant theme which runs through all the homilies is that of practical application of the principal events in our Lord's life to the needs of the apostolic layman. As such, the seventy homilies contained in this little volume will go far in leading the laity to a greater appreciation of how they can continue the work of Christ in the world while storing up an abundance of fruitful thought for their own enlightenment and sanctification. Sisters, priests and brothers will also find this book helpful in providing much food for thought.

—J.M.

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**TWO TO GET READY.** By Henry V. Sattler, C.S.S.R. Notre Dame, Indiana, Fides, 1963. pp. 171. \$3.50.

Marriage is a vocation for people. For any treatment of marriage preparation there are two prerequisites; a knowledge of the vocation and a knowledge of people. The first can be acquired from books, but a knowledge of people cannot be found between bound covers. And it is in this area that the value of books on marriage are gauged.

A decent book on marriage supposes a knowledge of people. A good book calls for even more—an understanding of people. A fine book is even more demanding. It calls for profound insights and devotion. To achieve this the author must really love the people he is writing for and really know them. Fr. Sattler is such an author and his book is a testimony to his dedication to and understanding of marriage and the people preparing for it. Read, for example, chapter three where he speaks of the differences between men and women.

His book is a treatment of Catholic marriage, with the emphasis on Catholic. His approach can be summed up in words taken from the penultimate chapter of his work. This citation characterizes his whole presentation. "Remember that true advice is not telling someone what to do, but giving someone good reasons for making up his own mind." Only a competent and confident man could stick to that advice himself when treating of such subjects as qualifications for marriage, the difference between men and women, courtship, the honeymoon, children, and the managing of money. Because of this approach the book has a tone of Catholic wisdom rather than a code of do's and do not's.

—J.P.



UNDERSTANDING THE LORD'S PRAYER. By H. Van den Bussche. Translated by Charles Schaldenbrand. New York, Sheed & Ward, 1963. pp. 144. \$3.00.

"A prayer recited by children—but is the Our Father prayed by adults?" This question briefly and adequately expresses the purpose of Fr. Van den Bussche's book. Prayer is an elevation of the mind and heart to God. It presupposes some knowledge of the Deity prayed to and some understanding of the formula used. True, one can raise his spirit to God while reciting the Our Father, but one does not pray the Lord's Prayer unless he understands it.

*Understanding the Lord's Prayer* is a phrase by phrase explanation of the unique prayer given to the Apostles by Christ Himself. In this short book the modern Biblical scholarship of the author, combined with his knowledge of Greek and Aramaic, form a firm foundation on which he constructs a logical and yet inspirational interpretation of the Lord's Prayer. Its significance to the Apostles and to the early Christians and its meaning for contemporary Christendom are established. The author's analysis is not detailed and he does not expound his own pious reflections or those of others. The interpretation he assigns to the Our Father is formulated only in light of exegetical, literary, and historical evidence consonant with revealed truth.

After reading and studying this book every one of its readers should be able to pray the Lord's Prayer more fervently and fruitfully.

—M.M.

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THE MISSION OF MARY. By Sister Mary Annice, C.S.C. Bruce, Milwaukee, 1963. pp. 131. \$3.25.

The reader should not look here for an exhaustive and dogmatic exposition of Mary's role in the work of the Redemption. This is not the author's intention. Sister Annice intends to show us or rather to remind us of Mary's contribution in God's plan of salvation. She does this in a simple yet meaningful way. The author is giving us the reasons why we should love Mary and be prompt to seek her assistance in times of turmoil. It seems that we need her more now than ever. Her frequent apparitions are manifest indications of her love for her children.

Undoubtedly there has been no human creature so close to Christ as Our Lady. But she remained herself the humble servant of the Lord. Such being Mary's prerogative, it is little wonder that her sons find refuge

in her. "Refuge of sinners," we call her in her litany. She had a mission to fulfill and she did not fail to accomplish it faithfully. It is up to us to make good use of her privileged position. She is the Mother of God.

The author uses several of Our Lady's titles and then shows how they apply to her. In fact each chapter begins with one of them. These different titles, such as Mother of Sorrows and the Cause of Our Joy, are not mere external descriptions of Mary. They express a reality which she truly possesses. They stand for that which Mary in fact is; they give us an insight into her life.

If anyone feels he is not giving Mary the place she rightfully deserves, this book may well help him to do so.

—R.R.

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ZEN CATHOLICISM. By Dom Aelred Graham. New York, Harcourt, Brace, & World, Inc., 1963. pp. 228. \$4.95.

Zen arose in the east but is now setting in the west. The numerous publications on this subject in the last few years bear witness to its popularity. One therefore wonders about its content. There must be some very attractive ideas which account for its appeal to so many.

Briefly it can be said that Zen concerns itself with the difficulties of daily existence. Whereas western thought exhibits a considerable concern for the nature of the universe, Zen is pre-occupied with the problem of making human existence bearable and even, if possible, blissful. It is absorbed with discovering the meaning of life, the place of suffering, struggles, ills. Zen seeks the ultimate viewpoint. It offers enlightened serenity together with, or rather on account of, deep psychological and spiritual insights.

But this does not explain the title of the work "Zen Catholicism." How can a Catholic accept oriental insights into the meaning of life and suffering, when he already has the insights supplied by Jesus Christ? Are they not mutually exclusive?

The suggestion put forth, and defended very aptly, by Fr. Graham is that an understanding of the basic insights of the oriental wise men can be a considerable help in arriving at a better understanding of the time-tested but not always experience-tested Catholic doctrine. The author proposes the wisdom of the east as a help to enable us to realize what we already know.

All readers who are familiar with the work of Fr. Graham need not

be sold on his capabilities. For new readers, this work, which also includes chapters on Yoga, Monasticism, and St. Thomas Aquinas, will serve as a fine introduction.

—J.P.

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A SOCIAL MANUAL FOR SEMINARIANS. By Fathers Leo Gainor, O.P., and Thomas Casey. Bruce, Milwaukee, 1963. pp. 162. \$3.50.

Here at long last is a standard, authoritative social guide-book for both religious and diocesan seminarians. Covering most of the normal situations the seminarian will encounter during his years of formation, it is intended to give an established pattern of life as practiced today. It is aimed at encouraging the acquisition of proper traits and habits during seminary years, so that by the time of ordination, the young cleric will be sufficiently prepared to enter the apostolate as a cultured, gentlemanly priest, fully equipped with the social amenities of life.

We are all aware that rules of courtesy are learned primarily in the home; but when a young man is away from home he tends to form certain careless habits that offend social proprieties. He needs to be reminded of the rules that govern social life, and this manual will admirably fulfill that purpose. Novice masters, seminary rectors and prefects of discipline have been struggling for years to impart these social conventions to seminarians by lectures, conferences, and example. Unfortunately they have never had a standard guide to follow. At long last this difficulty has been alleviated.

Written in an easy, flowing and intimate style, this work describes how the seminarian should walk and talk, kneel and pray, eat and play. It covers all the accepted codes of social behavior. It tells him how to introduce people, how to answer his correspondence, how to conduct himself in sports, how to give proper example in dress, deportment, classroom conduct and parlor etiquette. In short this book applies in a concrete way what is basic to a future priest's life—the rules of Christ-like charity.

—T.M.

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THE JOHANNINE COUNCIL: Witness to Unity. By Bernard Haring, C.Ss.R. New York, Herder and Herder, 1963. pp. 155. \$3.50.

Long before he was selected to serve the ecumenical council as a *peritus*, Father Haring was becoming an international figure in the Church

as his epoch making *The Law of Christ* was translated into more and more languages. Those, familiar with his efforts to rejuvenate contemporary moral theology, will look twice when they see his name on the cover of a book about the council. Those not so fortunate now have the opportunity to become acquainted with one of the leading figures on the Catholic scene today, and to get a view of the council as it is seen through the eyes of a profound theologian and firsthand observer.

Rather than speculate on details and specific results, which are rather sparse at the moment anyway, Father Haring draws our attention to the spirit of the times. This is the spirit of Pope John (and of Saints John the Evangelist and John the Baptist as well), which is moving the men of our time to "make straight the ways of the Lord," especially by giving witness to the unity which His message of love should inspire in His followers.

The book begins with a meditation on the spirit of unity which is part and parcel of the Church founded by Christ, a gathering in charity and communion. Then the author shows how Pope John, the Council, and the Church have been aware of this and how the various issues being discussed today are all inspired by this concern. After going on to explore what this mystery of unity entails for the Church today and in the future, the book ends with the magna charta of Vatican II—Pope John's opening address to the council.

There will no doubt be many books written about the ecumenical council, but it will be hard to match this one for its grasp of the intangible and the transcendent. In many ways it brings to mind St. John's unique approach to the gospel.

—P.C.

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A THEOLOGY OF WISDOM. By Kieran Conley, O.S.B. Dubuque, Priory Press, 1963. pp. 171. \$3.00.

In this slim volume, Father Conley offers a complete and systematic study of the Thomistic teaching about the intellectual virtue of wisdom examined under the formal light of theology. After an historical consideration of the Aristotelian, scriptural, and Augustinian notions of wisdom, he investigates St. Thomas' conception as it is realized in turn on three different levels: the wisdom of metaphysics, the wisdom of theology, and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. He then undertakes an analysis of each; the reasons why each is constituted a wisdom, the common notes and

unique features, the primary and secondary acts, the special problems and relative value. A concluding summary chapter outlines a synthesis of a Thomistic theology of wisdom.

*A Theology of Wisdom* is heavy going and needs to be studied rather than skimmed. It is aimed at the theologian rather than the general reader and might offer difficulty to one not already fairly well acquainted with St. Thomas.

That understood, we are happy to assert that this book is a precious pearl, a gold mine, the kind that brings separated ideas already possessed together and unifies them, generating a true sapiential perspective. It is the kind of book that one reads many, many times, each time winning more light. This solid piece of scholarship and gem of reflective thinking is definitely necessary reading for any serious philosopher or theologian.

—R.U.S.

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## BRIEF NOTICES

The exercise of pure reason based upon real experience results in what is generally known as philosophy. Each man has his own philosophy. For some it is a deliberate thing, for others it is the fruit of an unconscious process. But the fact is that every man does, in some way, look for the answers to profound questions—what is the purpose of life?; who am I?; where did it all come from?—and then bases his life upon the answers he comes up with.

In the course of history certain systems of philosophy have developed by reason of particular men and circumstances. One of these systems goes by the name of Christian Philosophy. In *The Origins of Christian Philosophy*, by Claude Tresmontant (New York, Hawthorn, vol. 11, Twentieth Century Encyclopedia, 1963, \$3.50) the relations and distinctions between historical theology and metaphysics within the Christian context are treated. A special consideration is given to the position which holds that myth is a source of Christian philosophy.

Renford Bambrough has put out a new edition of selections from *The Philosophy of Aristotle* (New York, Mentor, paperback, 1963, \$.95). These are new translations of sections from the *Metaphysics*, *Logic*, *Physics*, *Psychology*, *Ethics*, *Politics* and *Poetics*. The selections are intended to present Aristotle's discussion of problems which face men today.

The *Plato Dictionary* which has been edited by Morris Stockhammer (New York, Philosophical, 1963, \$7.50) presents the views and definitions

of Plato in clear, readable English. Each text is followed by a specific reference to its place in the Dialogues.

The devil is a horror our age finds convenient to forget about. However, explaining away the effects of diabolic possession is another matter. Dr. Jean Lhermitte, a neurologist, has written a study of *True and False Possession* (New York, Hawthorn, vol. 43, Twentieth Century Encyclopedia, 1963, \$3.50) which deals with possible psychological, physiological and neurological explanations as well as reports of spurious and authentic cases.

Solange Hertz has written *Searcher of Majesty* (Newman, 1963, \$4.75) for women who enjoy seeing life, and spiritual life at that, from a strictly womanly point of view. In thirteen chapters she puts ideas together as if she were arranging flowers in a vase; the result reminds one of a huge Williamsburg bouquet—a flower from every garden and field within walking distance massed together in a distinctively feminine arrangement.

For those who are interested in *Catholic Action in Practice* Martin Quigley, Jr., and Monsignor Edward M. Connors (Random, 1963, \$4.95) have co-authored a handbook for laity and clergy. It considers their respective positions and places a strong emphasis on the Christian Family Movement. There is a good informative and critical list of Catholic Action groups appended.

The practical wisdom of men who know the intricate moral problems arising from race discrimination by reason of their own experience is vigorously stated in eleven original essays under the title of *Challenge to Religion* (Chicago, Regnery, paperback, 1963, \$1.65).

And the Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism has published *World Poverty and the Christian* by Arthur McCormack (Hawthorn, vol. 132, 1963, \$3.50). This is a discussion of two world problems: poverty and the population explosion, backed up by facts and figures. The conclusions focus on the responsibility which falls upon the individual Christian with regard to these problems.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

- Sisters' Retreats.* By Thomas Dubay, S.M. Newman, 1963. pp. 226. \$4.50.
- Religion and the American People.* By John L. Thomas, S.J. Newman, 1963. pp. 307. \$4.50.
- Prosper of Aquitaine: Defense of St. Augustine.* Translated by P. De Letter, S.J. Newman, 1963. pp. 248. \$3.75.
- Directorium Sponsae.* A Rosary Book for Nuns, Vol. 3. By Leopold Bertsche, S.O. Cist. Newman, 1963. pp. 156. \$2.75.
- The Communion of Saints.* By Emilien Lamirande, O.M.I. Hawthorn, 1963. pp. 154. \$3.50.
- The Fishers of Men.* By Michele Saponaro. Hawthorn, 1963. pp. 282. \$5.00.
- The Soul of Jesus, Contemplated in Union with Mary.* By E. Neubert, S.M. Bruce, 1963. pp. 202. \$3.95.
- Matter and Spirit.* By R. C. Zaehner. Harper & Row, 1963. pp. 210. \$4.50.
- The World of Monsieur Vincent.* By Mary Purcell. Schribners, 1963. pp. 237. \$4.50.
- Karl Barth Evangelical Theology: An Introduction.* Translated by Grover Foley. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963. pp. 206. \$4.00.
- God of a Hundred Names.* A collection of Prayers of All Faiths. By Barbara Greene and Victor Gollancz. Doubleday, 1963. pp. 297. \$3.95.
- The Mercy of God in His Works.* By Michael Sopocko, S.T.D. Marian Apostolate, 1962. pp. 232.
- Quest for Holiness.* By Vincenzo Ceresi, M.S.C. Alba, 1963. pp. 288. \$3.95.
- Karl Barth on God. The Knowledge of the Divine Existence.* By Sebastian A. Matczak. Alba, 1962. pp. 358. \$5.75.
- The Metaphysics of William James and John Dewey.* By Thomas R. Martland, Jr., Philosophical, 1963. pp. 210. \$4.75.
- The Blessed Virgin Mary.* By Gregory Alastruey. Herder, 1963. pp. 341, Vol. I, \$6.00.
- Spirituality of the Old Testament.* By Paul-Marie of the Cross, O.C.D. Herder, 1963. pp. 347, Vol. 3, \$4.95.
- The Historian and Character.* By David Knowles, Cambridge, 1963. pp. 387. \$8.50.