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## ONE OR MANY ADAMS?

In an age of dialogue one notes with interest an ever intensifying and frequent exchange of ideas between the scientist and the theologian on the subject of polygenism and original sin. There are two elements involved in this dialogue: the nature of original sin in itself and the dimension of its originator. The latter involves a general scientific question regarding the origin of man from one pair (monogenism) or from many couples (polygenism). If this question were purely scientific, there would be no need for the many articles on this topic currently appearing in theological books and magazines.<sup>1</sup> The question has theological implications, and it is with these implications that complications set in.

### THE SIN OF NATURE

As the progenitor of the human race, we read in the Bible, Adam seriously offended God. Because Adam had the gift of integrity, as Karl Rahner would explain it,<sup>2</sup> Adam's offence was a complete commitment to evil. As a result of his sin, Adam lost the extraordinary gifts with which God had graced him. He lost them for himself and for all his descendants. As a personal sin, Adam's offence was personal to Adam: it was his own doing, his own act; but as a state of sin, as a condition involving the absence of sanctifying grace, it was handed down by generation to all the members of the human race, who consequently stood in need of redemption which Christ provided in his Paschal Mysteries. This is the traditional teaching of the Catholic Church as contained in the documents of the Council of Trent.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g. G. Weigel, S.J., 'Gleanings from the commentaries on "Humani Genesim"', *Theological Studies*, 12 (1951) 520-549.

<sup>2</sup> K. Rahner, 'Theological concept of concupiscence', *Theological Investigations*, I (Baltimore, 1961) 345-382.

<sup>3</sup> DS 1510-1516; TCC 220-226.

If all men are not descendants of Adam, if the human race has descended from many couples instead of one, then the whole structure of original sin and the consequent need of redemption would seem to be called into question. In his encyclical *Humani Generis*, issued in 1950, Pius XII declared that Catholics were free to accept the theories of evolution, but not those of polygenism, because 'it does not appear how such views can be reconciled with the doctrine of original sin'.<sup>4</sup>

Sixteen years later, in July 1966, Pope Paul VI addressed a group of theologians and scientists taking part in Rome in a symposium on original sin. While reminding theologians of the teaching of Trent on the subject of original sin, Pope Paul insisted on the need of presenting the truths of our faith in terms and concepts that can be understood by the men of today, and finally exhorted them to look for a more modern definition of original sin and for an explanation that would fit in better with modern science.<sup>5</sup>

#### POLYGENISTIC CONTEXT

It is therefore clear that the Pope's intention, if anything, was not to exclude polygenism once for all and to close all doors for further investigation. At the time of *Humani Generis* it was not yet clear how polygenism could be harmonized with the doctrine of original sin. If and when such a harmony should become manifest, then, it would seem, one would be free to accept polygenism. The latter, after all, will always remain a scientific question, and one would therefore in vain expect that the Church's magisterium should come out with a definite statement for or against it.

The problem, therefore, is: can we harmonize the Church's teaching on original sin with the theory of polygenism? In an article written three years ago, F. Ayala<sup>6</sup> has suggested that the Catholic theologian should steer away from another Galileo involvement, where theological opinion was retracted too soon. We do not believe, however, that there is anything approaching a Galileo impasse here. The situation seems rather to parallel the confrontation between theology and science in regard to the Genesis account of creation taken literally and the evolutionary origin of man. Both before and after the Biblical Commission statement

<sup>4</sup> DS 3897; TCC 205b.

<sup>5</sup> AAS, 58 (1966), p. 654.

<sup>6</sup> F. Ayala, O.P., 'Man in Evolution', *The Thomist* 31 (Jan. 1967).

of 1909,<sup>7</sup> to the effect that a Catholic had to accept as historical fact the biblical account of creation and could consequently neither accept nor teach evolution, Catholic exegetes found themselves temporarily deprived of the freedom necessary for working out a solution. The situation was reverted by Pius XII's encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, which came out in 1943, with its definite enunciation of the necessity for the study and interpretation of literary forms in the Bible.<sup>8</sup> The air was, therefore, cleared in regard to evolution.

But the same cannot yet be said about polygenism. There are still difficulties on the way of harmonizing the data of revelation with the theory of polygenism, but there is no doubt that theological opinion is veering more and more away from monogenism and, in our opinion, it is not too optimistic to say that a breakthrough on the problem is in sight. A brief review of some significant recent publications on the subject should substantiate our opinion.

#### NEW FORMULATIONS

The Dutch theologian A. Hulsbosch, O.S.A., has presented a neat summary of his research in a most readable book published in 1965.<sup>9</sup> After listing the specific elements of original sin included in the official teaching of the Church, he presents the reader with what he calls an 'attempt at a new formulation'. On the strength of metaphysical arguments, he tries to remove the existing tension by pointing out that, on the basis of fossil evidence – so incomplete in the past and so uncertain in the future – scientists could not possibly reach certainty on polygenism now or later. Scientists are, however, content with their evaluation of the question. Then the author asks what one could take as a rhetorical question: 'If polygenism is not a burning point for scientists, why should it be so for theologians?' While making specific reference to the fact that creation is still going on, he stresses the generally accepted data of man's antiquity and his biological descent from prehuman forms of life.

Against this background of billions of years, Hulsbosch maintains that 'the static image in the old way of presenting original sin gives us no real historical point of reference for theological appreciation, ...

<sup>7</sup> DS 3514; TCC 198.

<sup>8</sup> DS 3825-3831; TCC 126 a, b.

<sup>9</sup> A. Hulsbosch, O.S.A., *God in Creation and Evolution* (Sheed & Ward: New York, 1965).

and that we must therefore refer to the historically accessible work of salvation done by Christ and illuminated by the prophetic teaching of both testaments.<sup>10</sup> Thus, according to this author, one must take a wider view of original sin: sin has taken root in the human community, and it is mankind in its totality that must be considered the cause of the present state of affairs.<sup>11</sup>

#### COLLECTIVE SIN

Pierre Smulders, S.J.,<sup>12</sup> maintains that we must place the doctrine of original sin in the area of consciousness of personal and collective sin. Each sinner contributes to this sin, which grows down through the centuries, and ratifies it by his own personal sins. The real import of sin, claims Smulders, is missed if theologians focus on the extreme case of Adam's original sin, and also on the sin contracted by the new born infants with the consequent debate on the fate of unbaptized babies. The real essence of original sin in us, according to Smulders, consists in the deviation from our God-appointed destiny. Original sin keeps on growing through mankind, so that the environment of sinful mankind is a 'concrete form of original sin'. His whole inference is that Adam's sin went on snowballing, and that each human being has added his own small or great contribution to its weight. The deepest root of original sin, then, lies in man's general refusal 'to pass beyond self into Infinite Love. Man folds in upon himself and turns away from God'.<sup>13</sup> This line of reasoning on the nature of original sin skirts the whole question of polygenism, for it involves all men no matter who their progenitors were.

Maurice Flick, S.J., who took part in the symposium on original sin mentioned above, evidently interpreted the Pope's message as still leaving an open window for research on the harmonization of polygenism and original sin. He asks a significant question at the beginning of one of his recent articles:<sup>14</sup> 'Can we transfer the account of sin in the

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>12</sup> P. Smulders, S.J., *La Vision de Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris, 1964), summarized in *Theology Digest* 13 (1965) 172-176.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>14</sup> M. Flick, S.J., 'Adam's Fall: the Task of Reinterpretation', *Catholic World* (April 1967); cf. also M. Flick & Z. Alszeghy, 'Peccato Originale ed Evoluzione', *Civiltà Cattolica* 117 (1966) vol. 2, 440-447; by the same authors, 'Pec-

Garden of Eden from a rigidly fixed conception to an evolutionary conception of history?' His article tries to do just that. The evolutionary thrust; according to him, stresses direction into the future, not the past. The evil for which we need a redeemer is no longer a falling away from a perfection that existed in the past, but a gap separating us from the perfect end to which evolution has not yet attained.

With regard to polygenism, Flick proposes this interpretation: that in the evolutionary process different and various couples existed who had not reached the full development that would come with the ability of making a moral decision. The one who first attained full psychic maturity committed the first sin. The first 'human' had failed, and this failure slowed down the process of evolution. From then on, evolution would be carried on only in view of the Paschal Mystery through Christ's redemptive Incarnation. Another type of salvation was thus offered to all men based on the grace of Christ, as Adam's gifts were based on what theologians call the grace of God. Flick suggests that in this evolutionary view there is a unity of common ancestry, since men are never absolutely independent of each other. All men, at any rate, passing through various genetic phases, have at least come from a common primordial matter which God had created to be the substratum of hominization.

#### CORPORATE PERSONALITY

Flick maintains that the biblical concept of corporate personality can help in the understanding of an influence exerted on all men by one who was not their father in a physical sense. Mankind has a vocation to form the People of God. The first sinner is the only one who could at the moment of decision accept or reject the divine call. Even more easily can we understand that his response is in effect the response of the whole of mankind, for whom not only the physical person of the sinner, but all mankind as a corporate person determined its own situation before God. This author, therefore, thinks that the Garden account of sin can be formulated, worked out and expressed in evolutionary terminology, though he admits after this attempt that the doctrine of original sin still retains a 'sense of mystery'. And how could it be

cato Originale in prospettiva evoluzionistica', *Gregorianum* 47 (1966) 201-225; Z. Alszeghy, 'Development of the doctrinal formulation of the Church concerning the theory of evolution', *Concilium* 26 (1967), Paulist Press, N.Y., pp. 25-34.

otherwise, if it is an object of supernatural faith?

Similar ideas are again put forth by Patrick Fannon, S.M.M.,<sup>15</sup> who brings out as a salient idea in the treatment of original sin that the first Adam acted in a corporate capacity and as a representative of the whole emerging human race. Adam's sin, as the sin of one person, introduced a state of rebellion which spread and resulted in an environment of sin in the world. Original sin was then the accumulated sin of the world into which all men are born and by which all men are influenced.

One of the most readable articles this writer has come across was written by John J. O'Rourke a few years ago.<sup>16</sup> The author announces on the outset that he will discuss polygenetic theories within a Christian concept and recognizes that, for the most part, scientists accept an evolutionary process which they regard as monophylactic, but polygenetic. Since such a theory is generally accepted by scientists, he sees no reason why theologians should not review their position and see whether or not the data of revelation could possibly be understood just as well, or even better, in the new context.

#### THEOLOGICAL SPECULATION

This the author attempts to do from a metaphysical point of view and against an exegetical and theological background. He begins by presenting the difficulties for the scientist if monogenism were to be held by an assent of divine faith. Serious difficulties would arise from the fact that science deals with groups and multiples, and not with individuals and single instances; they would also arise from the scientifically inadmissible assumption that the upward sweep of evolution among the anthropoids would have terminated in one single individual, or at least in one single pair. For these and other similar difficulties O'Rourke has a metaphysical refutation.

There is then in O'Rourke's article a discussion of the theological aspect of the question and an analysis of *Humani Generis* with reference to polygenism. The author's conclusion is that 'the words of Pius XII are not to be understood as declaring absolutely that polygenism is irreconcilable with Catholic doctrine'.<sup>17</sup> In the exegetical

<sup>15</sup> P. Fannon, S.M.M., 'The changing face of theology', *Clergy Review* (May 1967).

<sup>16</sup> John J. O'Rourke, S.J., 'Some considerations about Polygenism', *Theological Studies* 26 (Sept. 1965), 407-416.

<sup>17</sup> *Art. cit.*, p. 411.

discussion he examines five New Testament texts which are frequently quoted as demanding monogenism. His findings are interesting. He claims, for instance, that Romans 5, 12-19 (*in quo omnes peccaverunt*) cannot be said to exclude every possible polygenistic interpretation of the origin of mankind. In discussing historic unity, he cites incidents in the Old Testament where 'common descent from a forefather did not provide common rights', or where 'membership in a community did not always depend on birth into that community'. He reaches a conclusion to the effect that the New Testament does not explicitly state how all mankind is connected with Adam.

Another author, J.P. Mackey<sup>18</sup> poses a central question: 'How far are experts to observe a respectful silence in view of an authoritative though non-infallible pronouncement of the Magisterium?' He goes on, then, to treat what he calls the 'escalation of theological opinion' away from monogenism. Exegetes, he claims, are generally in agreement that there is no 'proof' of monogenism in Scripture, and dogmatic theologians today are far from feeling handicapped by Trent in their presentation of original sin in a polygenetic context.

In a survey-article of this type, relating as it does to a theological problem of no mean importance, one is naturally curious to know what Karl Rahner thinks on the subject of polygenism. The truth of the matter is that, on this point, there has been a marked change in Rahner's theology. His first essays relating to the subject of original sin and evolution, published in 1954 in the German series of Theological Investigations, are definitely in favour of monogenism, which he then considered as implicitly contained in the Tridentine definitions.<sup>19</sup> In a more recent article, however, published in *Concilium* in 1967, Rahner not only favours polygenism and provides a number of theological explanations of original sin in that new context, but puts forth with no small insistence a suggestion that the Church's Magisterium should refrain from pronouncing itself, and still more from defining, any such scientific points as monogenism or polygenism.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> J.P. Mackey, 'Original sin and Polygenism', *The Irish Theological Quarterly* (April 1967) 99-114.

<sup>19</sup> K. Rahner, 'Theological Reflections on Monogenism', *Theological Investigations*, I (London, 1965), 229-296.

<sup>20</sup> K. Rahner, 'Evolution and Original Sin', *Concilium* 26 (1967, Paulist Press, N.Y.), 61-74.

## TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

This article would take us too far if we were to give even a minute idea of the many contributions that have recently appeared on the subject of polygenism in connection with the doctrine of original sin.<sup>21</sup> One recent publication, however, must be mentioned to conclude the long list: a book published by Christopher Mooney, S.J., on the teachings of Teilhard de Chardin.<sup>22</sup> In presenting an interesting analysis of Teilhard's confrontation with the idea of original sin, the author declares that monogenism had little influence, if any, on Teilhard's approach to the problem of sin. The eminent scientist and theologian was not concerned so much with reconciling scientific and theological opinions as with safeguarding the connection between Christ's work of redemption and man's role in the universe as the carrier of creation's upward movement.<sup>23</sup> Teilhard's treatment is always a large sweeping one, an ever deepening surge to the ultimate perfection of the Parousia; his basic desire is to rethink the data of revelation in the context of scientific data concerning cosmic and organic evolution.

It is commonly known that Teilhard de Chardin took a dim view of the general understanding of original sin that was current in his day, which was static, historical and personal, and therefore too limited and negative. 'We continue to think of original sin', he wrote, 'on the small scale, i.e. as an accident that took place towards the end of the Tertiary era in some small corner of the earth'.<sup>24</sup> Teilhard's attempt to universalize original sin, identifying it with physical imperfection in the world at the moment of creation and then with the presence of evil in the ensuing process of evolutionary change, may seem to be at variance with the teaching formulated on the subject by the Council of Trent. But, then, is it not here a question of distinguishing between the doctrine itself and the formulation of that doctrine?

## CONCLUSION

Truth is one, and between truths in different disciplines there can

<sup>21</sup> For further bibliography on the subject, see: M. Eminyan, S.J., 'L-evoluzzjoni u d-dnub originali', *Problemi ta' llum* 7 (1967) 293-297; 'New Thinking on Original Sin', *Herder Correspondence* 4 (1967) 135-141.

<sup>22</sup> Christopher Mooney, S.J., *Teilhard de Chardin and the Mystery of Christ* (London, Collins, 1966).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 137.



never be a real contradiction. In the writings briefly referred to in this paper there may seem to be an apparent clash between a scientific theory known by reason and a theological explanation of a revealed datum. By way of summary, our remarks can be lined up somewhat as follows:

1. Scientists today generally accept polygenism.
2. The latest official statements of the Magisterium declare that the traditional teaching on original sin does not yet harmonize with polygenism.
3. Theologians have understood such statements not only as not ir-reformable, but as leaving the whole subject open to theological research.
4. While refraining from any clear statement in favour or against polygenism, which is a purely scientific question, today's theologians, for the most part, present an explanation of original sin in a context of polygenism.
5. In such a situation, in the opinion of many theologians today, a tacit approval of the Magisterium can be said to exist, marking a definite development of doctrine on the official level.
6. Theologians today veer to the idea of a collective sin, or of a sinful situation, into which each man is born and which each man ratifies by his personal sins.
7. The principles relating to literary forms and historical context should be applied to any formulation of doctrine for the authentic understanding of its content, whether that formulation be a biblical or an ecclesiastical one.
8. The unity of mankind, which is essential to safeguard the universality of original sin and the consequent universal need of Christ's redemption, can be better explained and ensured if made to depend on the God-Man Christ rather than on Adam as an individual person.

M. EMINYAN, S.J.

## DOES 'LEGAL RELATIONSHIP' CONSTITUTE AN IMPEDIMENT TO MARRIAGE IN MALTA?

### 1. NOTION OF 'LEGAL RELATIONSHIP'.

By 'Legal Relationship' we are here understanding specifically that special relationship in law that arises between an adopter and the person adopted by him in any way which, according to the laws of the country, constitutes a true legal adoption. This special relationship lies in the fact that, once legal adoption has truly taken place to the full satisfaction of the law, in the eyes of the law in most respects and almost as a general rule the adopted child assumes the same relationship to the adopter (or adopting spouses) as any child born in lawful marriage bears to his parents.

### 2. 'LEGAL RELATIONSHIP' IN THE LAW OF MALTA REGARDING MARRIAGES.

The Civil Code of Malta, while regulating the rights and duties arising from validly contracted Marriage together with such other civil effects as filiation and parental authority does not say how Marriage is to be validly celebrated in Malta. It fails to make any provisions either about the formalities required in its celebration or about the essential requisites on the part of the spouses contracting Marriage that could affect its validity.

It is, however, the constant doctrine and practice of our Civil Courts to require that marriages celebrated in Malta between parties of whom at least one is a member of the Catholic Church be celebrated according to the form laid down by Canon Law and that such marriages be regulated also as regards 'essentials' by the Canon Law of the Catholic Church then applying. Among these 'essentials' one finds the juridical capability of both parties of contracting Marriage according to the law. This capability does not exist wherever a 'canonical impediment' to Marriage comes between the parties. This occurs when there is any circumstance which, according to Canon Law, affects the juridical capability of the parties to contract Marriage either by making it simply unlawful for them to contract it ('simply prohibitive impediments') or even by rendering them incapable of marrying validly ('diriment impediments').

Our Civil Code lays down no impediments to Marriage when dealing with marriage itself. Yet in view of what we have just said we must conclude that even in Civil Law marriages celebrated in Malta between parties of whom at least one is a member of the Catholic Church are unlawful if affected by a canonical impediment which is simply prohibitive, and altogether invalid if affected by such an impediment that is diriment. The whole question, therefore, seems to boil down to this: Does present-day Canon Law of the Catholic Church include 'legal relationship' among either the prohibitive or the diriment canonical impediments?

### 3. 'LEGAL RELATIONSHIP' IN CANON LAW REGARDING MARRIAGES.

This question brings us face to face with a somewhat embarrassing situation in Malta. As we have seen, civil society in Malta by custom refers us to Canon Law in all that regards the essentials and formalities of marriage of members of the Catholic Church in Malta. Canon Law, on the other hand, refers us back to Civil Law of each State when speaking of 'legal relationship' as an impediment to marriage. In fact, canon 1059 lays down that: 'In those regions where, according to Civil Law, legal relationship arising from adoption renders marriage unlawful, marriage is unlawful also according to Canon Law'. Canon 1080 similarly states: 'Persons who by Civil Law are held incapable of contracting marriage between themselves because of legal relationship arising from adoption, cannot validly contract marriage between themselves according to Canon Law'.

The existence or otherwise of a prohibitive or diriment impediment of legal relationship arising from adoption, therefore, is made to depend by Canon Law and for Canon Law on the particular State's decision to make marriages between its members affected by this relationship unlawful or even altogether invalid. While making no such provision when dealing with Marriage, our Civil Code might have something to say about the matter when speaking of the effects of Adoption.

### 4. EFFECTS OF LEGAL RELATIONSHIP ACCORDING TO MALTA'S ADOPTION LAW.

While nothing in the sections of our Civil Code dealing with adoption (sec. 131 to 153) prior to 1962 even remotely implied the existence of any legal obstacle to marriages between the adopter and the person adopted by him or her, some generic expressions of the Adoption Act, 1962, may easily lead to one assume that such marriages would in

Malta be not simply unlawful but even altogether invalid.

The key paragraph of the 1962 Adoption Act is that contained in section 138 (a) of our Civil Code<sup>1</sup> which states: 'Upon an adoption decree being made (a) the person in respect of whom the adoption decree is made shall be considered with regard to the rights and obligations of relatives in relation to each other, as the child of the adopter or adopters born to him, her or them in lawful wedlock and as the child of no other person or persons, relationship being traced through the adopter or adopters . . .'

These generic words of the Adoption Act, 1962 and of our Civil Code can be taken to mean that between the person or persons adopting and the adopted person there arises a diriment impediment to marriage depriving them of the capability of marrying between themselves. For if, once adoption has taken place according to the law, the adopted person acquires the same 'rights and obligations of relatives in relation to each other' as though he were the adopters' child born to them in lawful wedlock, it would seem that he would also contract any limitation of rights such as impediments to marriage under which relatives within certain degrees of kinship labour. Now in Canon Law, which is accepted by the juridical order of our State as applicable to all Catholics domiciled in Malta, there exists the diriment impediment of consanguinity to marriages between blood-relations within certain degrees of kinship: it would therefore follow that between the adopted and the adopter and the latter's relatives there arises also the *diriment* impediment of legal relationship.

This interpretation of section 138 of our Civil Code seems to be suggested by the generic wording of the law as well as by the fact that the Adoption Act of 1962 seems set on placing on a par to all intents and purposes the adopted child with the child born in lawful wedlock. One might also see a requirement of decency, to obviate as much as possible dangers of excessive and unlawful 'familiarity' between the adopter and the adopted, a requirement parallel to that existing between in-laws which is adduced to justify the impediment of affinity. Such a requirement to exclude the possibility of the creation of marital relations between the adopted and the adopter could be deemed to have

<sup>1</sup>In this article we shall be quoting the Civil Code as amended up to the 31st. December 1967 unless otherwise indicated.

been strong enough to induce our legislators to create the impediment of legal relationship between the adopter and adopted by depriving them by law of the capability of marrying between themselves, just as the legislators of some other countries such as the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and several Latin American countries have felt it necessary or convenient to do.

##### 5. ANOTHER INTERPRETATION.

It seems to me, however, that another interpretation can be given to these words of section 138 of our Civil Code, more restrictive of their meaning, in such a way that the possibility of marriage between adopter and adopted is not excluded. Besides, reasons can be brought in favour of the non-existence of an impediment to marriage based on the legal relationship arising out of adoption which seem to me *at least* as strong as the reasons that militate in favour of the existence of such an impediment in Malta.

This second, more restrictive, interpretation of the words of section 138 of our revised Civil Code would restrict the 'rights and obligations of relatives in relation to each other' to those referring to maintenance and education (physical, moral and spiritual) of children and to parental authority. In other words they would refer to 'mutual rights and duties of Ascendants, Descendants, Brothers and Sisters, and certain other Persons related to each other by Affinity' that are the subject-matter of sub-title II of Title I of the first book of our Civil Code (sections 14 to 41), as well as to those rights and duties which are governed by Title IV of the same book ('Parental Authority', sections 154 to 184). This interpretation would certainly not allow the expression of section 138 to be taken to mean the creation of a diriment impediment to marriage between adopter and adopted.

If this interpretation were to seem excessively and arbitrarily restrictive of the expressions of section 138, nevertheless careful study of their context would appear to vindicate its validity. For:

(i) the same subsection of section 138 goes on to speak of the appointment by Court of a woman who is the sole adopter of a minor as a tutrix of the adopted child in the same decree of adoption; and then goes on to exclude the adopting wife's liability to maintain, educate and assign dowry to the adopted child unless the adopting husband is unable to discharge these obligations in the case where the adopters are husband and wife. This seems to show that the legislators are here

concerned with guardianship, parental authority, maintenance and education. This impression appears further strengthened by the next two sections of our Civil Code. Section 139, in fact, deals with orders for payment of maintenance, while section 140 deals with property rights between adopter, adopted, and the relatives of the adopter.

(ii) Secondly, by comparing the 1967 amended edition of the Civil Code with the 1942 edition it becomes evident that section 138 of the *new edition* is meant to replace sections 139 to 142 of the older law. These sections of the Old Code speak of the 'duties of the adopter', of 'assignment of dowry to adoptive daughter', of the 'duties of the adoptive mother' and of the 'reciprocal liability for maintenance' respectively: all this in terms of rights and duties connected with the education and maintenance of the adopted child and the latter's duties later in life with respect to the maintenance of his adoptive parents.

(iii) Thirdly, subsection (b) of section 138 states that: 'the relatives of the person in respect of whom the adoption decree is made shall lose all rights and be freed from all obligations with respect to such person'; that is, to the adopted child. The law is evidently still referring to the same 'rights and obligations of relatives in relation to each other' of subsection (a) whose precise meaning is of such great interest to us for the purpose of this article. Now if we were to admit that this expression in subsection (a) includes also a reference to the existence of an impediment of legal relationship arising out of adoption to a marriage between adopter and adopted, based on the impediment of consanguinity existing between the child and his natural relatives, we cannot logically exclude the impediment of consanguinity from among the 'rights and obligations' that are legally dissolved between the adopted child and his natural relatives in subsection (b). This would lead us to conclude that, as far as it lies within its power, our Civil Law here meant to remove the matrimonial diriment impediment of consanguinity between the adopted child and his natural relatives something which our Civil Code evidently had no intention of doing. Conversely, it would seem that our legislators had no intention of creating a new impediment to marriage, that of legal relationship arising out of adoption, between adopters and adopted.

Independently of the context of section 138, there seems to be quite a few extrinsic reasons which also postulate and tend to confirm a more restrictive interpretation of the key words of section 138 ('the rights

and obligations of relatives in relation to each other') that would in no way demand the existence of a diriment impediment to marriage between an adopter and the adopted. One can summarize these reasons as follows:

(i) If the words of section 138 (a) are taken to include also the creation of a diriment impediment of legal relationship arising out of adoption, the adopted child would be incapable of contracting valid marriage not only with his or her adopters but with a whole series of persons related to the adopters by consanguinity.<sup>2</sup> For, being 'considered with regard to the rights and obligations of relatives in relation to each other, as the child of the adopter or adopters born to him, her or them in lawful wedlock and as the child of no other persons or person, relationship being traced through the adopter or adopters...', the adopted child would thus, even for reasons of marriage and of capability of contracting marriage, have to be considered as though he or she were the natural son or daughter of the adopters not only as regards his or her adopters but also as regards the relatives, by consanguinity, of the adopters. This would mean that the adopted child would be incapable of contracting marriage with all ascendants of the adopters and with all blood-relations of the adopters in the natural collateral line of consanguinity to the third canonical degree, calculating these degrees by considering the adopted child as though he or she were the natural child of the adopters.<sup>3</sup> This line of reasoning could even be carried a step further by postulating, logically, that such a diriment impediment would arise also between the adopted child and other adopted children within the degrees in which marriage is prohibited because of consanguinity. No legal order that I know of postulates the existence of an impediment to marriage of legal relationship arising out of legal adoption that goes so far since, if they admit such an impediment, they generally limit to invalidate or prohibit marriage merely between adopters and adopted.

(ii) Our legislators, in drawing up the Adoption Act of 1962 had not only our past legislation on adoption to which they could refer, but also the English Adoption Acts of 1950 and 1958, which explicitly and clearly laid down a diriment impediment (of legal relationship) to the

<sup>2</sup> That is, by natural generation from a close common ancestor.

<sup>3</sup> This would exclude all 'adopted' brothers/sisters; uncles/aunts; great-uncles/aunts; nephews/nieces; first and second cousins.

marriage of the adopter with his or her legally adopted child.<sup>4</sup> Had our legislators wanted to create a similar marriage impediment for Malta, they could easily have made special provision for it on the lines of these Acts.

(iii) The English Adoption of children Act of 1926, in section 5 which deals with the 'Effect of adoption order' subsection (1), contains expressions which closely resemble those of section 138 of our Civil Code, but which are clearly restricted to rights and duties connected with the 'custody, maintenance and education of the adopted child'.<sup>5</sup> None of these or any other similar expressions of the English Act, 1926, were taken to mean the creation of a diriment impediment to marriage between adopter and adopted in English law: so much so that when, in 1950, the new Adoption Act created this impediment between adopter and adopted even if the adoption order had been made under the Adoption of children Act, 1926, it nevertheless took pains to point out that marriages celebrated before the first day of January, 1950 would not be rendered null, presumably since the impediment started to exist only under the Adoption Act of 1950.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, even though, in Eng-

<sup>4</sup>Section 10, subsection (3) of the Adoption Act, 1950 lays down: 'For the purpose of the law relating to marriage, an adopter and the person whom he has been authorised to adopt under an adoption order are deemed to be within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity notwithstanding that by a subsequent order some other person is authorised to adopt the same infant.' And the Adoption Act, 1958, section 13, subsection (3), repeats: 'For the purpose of the law relating to marriage, an adopter and the person whom he has been authorised to adopt under an adoption order shall be deemed to be within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity; and the provisions of this subsection shall continue to have effect notwithstanding that some person other than the adopter is authorised by a subsequent order to adopt the same infant.'

<sup>5</sup>'Upon an adoption order being made, all rights, duties, obligations and liabilities of the parent or parents guardian or guardians of the adopted child, in relation to the future custody maintenance and education of the adopted child, including all rights to appoint a guardian or to consent or give notice of dissent to marriage shall be extinguished, and all such rights, duties, obligations and liabilities shall vest in and be exercisable by and enforceable against the adopter as though the adopted child was a child born to the adopter in lawful wedlock, and in respect of the same matters and in respect of the liability of a child to maintain its parents the adopted child shall stand to the adopter exclusively in the position of a child born to the adopter in lawful wedlock:..'

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Adoption Act, 1950, Fifth Schedule, 1: 'Subsection (3) of section ten of this Act shall apply in relation to an adoption made under the Adoption Act,



lish Law the impediment of consanguinity had existed for centuries, expressions similar to those of our present legislation about the effects of an Adoption Order that were contained in the English Adoption of Children Act, 1926, were never interpreted as creating an impediment to marriage, like that of consanguinity, but based on the legal relationship arising out of legal adoption.

## 6. CONCLUSION.

There are therefore, strong reasons in favour of interpreting the words 'The rights and obligations of relatives in relation to each other' of section 138 of our Civil Code in a way which does not induce the creation of a diriment impediment to marriage between the adopted on one hand and the adopters and their blood-relations on the other. Indeed, it seems to me that these reasons are at least as strong as those that militate in favour of the more extensive interpretation of those words that would see in them the introduction of a new diriment impediment to marriage, that of 'Legal Relationship' based on legal adoption.

As a minimum, therefore, I think that one has to admit that there is room for prudent doubt as to whether the Civil Law of Malta accepts the legal relationship arising out of legal adoption between the adopted on one hand and the adopter and the latter's relatives on the other as constituting an impediment to marriage. Given that the right to marry is a basic natural right of all human beings who are not debarred by divine or legitimate human law from contracting marriage, this clear fundamental right could not be limited by a doubtfully existent law: so much so, that canon 15 of the Code of Canon Law lays down that 'in case of doubt in law, laws are not binding even if they are invalidating or inhabilitating laws'. In fact, it is fair to assume that if our legislators really wanted to create such an impediment to marriage, they would have done so clearly and unequivocally as their British counterparts did in 1950.

All in All, therefore, given the doubtful meaning of section 138 of our Civil Code, and its complete lack of any other reference to the existence of any such impediment of 'Legal Relationship' to marriage, it

1926, ... as if it were an adoption order within the meaning of that subsection:

Provided that nothing in this paragraph shall invalidate a marriage solemnised before the first day of January nineteen hundred and fifty.'

would seem that none of the natural rights of adopters or their relatives to marry adopted persons have been curtailed by our Civil Law. Hence one cannot but conclude that at present in Malta the impediment of 'Legal Relationship' to marriage does not exist, whether as prohibitive or as diriment, even for Canon Law. It is another matter whether this impediment should be introduced by our Civil legislators: I prefer, however, to leave it up to them and to our sociologists and other competent persons of our community to make up their minds on this question.

ANNETTO DEPASQUALE

# EUPHEMISTIC AND NON-EUPHEMISTIC CONTENT OF REFERENCES TO DEATH IN EARLY CHRISTIAN INSCRIPTIONS

It is intended in this study to distinguish between those euphemisms which Christian inscriptions contain in common with pagan ones and those which are typically Christian. The former group comprises euphemistic expressions suggested by social convention and manners, and aimed especially at a less crude presentation of certain disagreeable notions, as well as certain euphemisms of a superstitious nature that were either mechanically adopted by the early Christians in imitation of their pagan contemporaries, or else were the relics of superstitious belief that lingered in their minds from their pagan days. The second group embraces euphemisms of a purely or predominantly Christian bent, in that they are the product of a Christian outlook or belief. As will be shown at the appropriate place, there is much more to these Christian euphemistic expressions than the mere desire to avoid using what could be regarded as undesirable terminology.

## A. *Non-Christian Euphemisms for Death*

One finds in Christian epitaphs several expressions for death, to die, etc., that present no specifically Christian connotation. So, for instance, *eo, oboeo, exeo, decedo, migro, defungor*, etc., with or without a complementary phrase like *de corpore*, which are so numerous in Christian funerary inscriptions. Sometimes, however, the nature of the added phrase imparts a Christian tone to the expression as a whole: IIT AD DEUM, D90, Romae; IVI IN ✠ PC., Silv. 3560; MIGRAVIT AD DOMINUM, D1054, and similarly 1552, 3454, etc.; PAVSAT ... IN CRISTO, 3301; IN SIGNO ✠ PAUSANTI, 1544; TRANSIERUNT AD VERAM ... VITA, 4827, apud Ambarros; etc. DEFUNCTO IN Xpo, ICR I, p.451, prope Mediolanium, a.523; D(e)F(unctus) ... IN DEO, D3285 E, Romae; OBIT IN Xpo, D3280 ff;  $\delta$ isc. (essit) IN PACE  $\delta$ NI, D3275 ff., etc.

*Defungor (vita)* exemplifies one of the methods frequently adopted for tabuistic reasons, namely, the elliptical method, which is one of the simplest ways of solving the difficulties created by linguistic taboo, in that it does not call for a positive effort to substitute a noa-word for

the taboo-word, but entails simply the omission of that part of an expression which, if included, would vitiate the expression as a whole from the affective viewpoint. One may recall the use of *punire = morte, capite punire* (perhaps since Pliny the younger).<sup>1</sup>

Ellipsis, however, is by no means the only way by which the problem of taboo can be resolved. Another, quite popular euphemistic device, euphemism 'per antiphrasin', is illustrated by a frequently recurring expression in pagan as well as Christian epitaphs: *dis manibus*, frequently abbreviated D.M. The element of merely mechanical adoption,<sup>2</sup> or else the mixture of pagan and Christian elements in Christian funerary epigraphy, is made evident by the introduction of Christian symbols in conjunction with the letters D.M.: D  $\text{P}$  M., D3889 C and 3889D;  $\lambda$ D.M. $\omega$ , 3913, prope Anagniam;  $\alpha$  $\text{P}$  $\omega$ D.M.S.  $\alpha$  $\text{P}$  $\omega$  3085C, Madaurae; et passim. Probably underlying this euphemistic expression was the belief that the terror-inspiring spirits of the dead could be propitiated by being called *manes*, 'good', just as the morning could be humoured into ushering in a favourable day by the same appellation.<sup>3</sup>

An even clearer case of euphemism 'per antiphrasin' is the use of words expressing life, health, etc. to convey the notion of death. Such are *salutaris* and *vitalis*.<sup>4</sup> The euphemistic force of the latter word seems to be fully exploited in a IV cent. inscription from N. Africa (D 2722A):  $\text{P}$  PUER INNOCENS, NOCENS NOMINE VITALIS VICISIT ANNIS SEX IN PACE ET IN REFRIGEU, in which the phrase *nomine Vitalis*, by reason of its close link with *nocens*, appears to be used as the specific reason for the fact that the boy of six, though *innocens* in other respects, was *nocens* only because of the name he bore, which in the popular mind was euphemistically associated with the notion of death. This expla-

<sup>1</sup> Löfstedt, *Late Latin*, p.186, including his quotations from the *Reichenau Glossary*.

<sup>2</sup> La notion des Manes s'étant obscurcie, Di Manes est devenu une sorte de cliché employé en parlant des morts, et même d'un seul individu. *Dis Manibus Coniugis* n'a guère d'autre sens que 'à la mémoire sacrée de mon épouse', Ernout — Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*, s.v. Manes.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. E. Benveniste, *Euphémismes anciens et modernes*, in *Die Sprache*, I, 120f., together with his reference to a Berber custom based on the same belief. Ernout — Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*, holds the same view and quotes Bücheler, C.E.1164, I, *Di Manes, manes sitis*. This is the more generally accepted explanation. Cf. Ernout — Meillet, *o.c.*, s.v.

<sup>4</sup> See Friedländer, *L. Petronii Cena Trimalchionis, mit deutscher Übersetzung und erklärenden Anmerkungen*, 1906<sup>2</sup>, Leipzig, pp.252, 354.

nation does not, of course, exclude the possibility of *Vitalis* in this epitaph being taken in its natural etymological sense. It would then follow that the boy caused offence by his name because he was dead in spite of the fact that his name conveyed the idea of anything but death. On the other hand, it is clear that the writer wanted to pack as much effect as he could within the space of a short epitaph, and it is consequently not far-fetched to assume that he was aware of, and meant his readers to go beyond, the all too obvious connotation of *vitalis*.

### B. Christian Expressions for Death

Before actually discussing the various terms used in Christian funerary inscriptions in connection with death, it is significant to recall that the direct nomenclature for death, *mors*, *morior*, received a new vitality with the introduction and spread of Christianity. A very plausible reason for this is put forward by Hey: '... möglich, dass erst christliche Weltanschauung und Litteratur dem ernsten Wort *mors* wieder zu seiner vollen Geltung verholfen haben.'<sup>5</sup> The Christians' concept of death helped them to view the inevitable drama of it in a new light. This fresh attitude to death is reflected in St. Paul's words in *I Cor.* 15:55: κατεπύθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νίκος. τοῦ σου, θάνατε, τῶνικόν νίκος; it inspired the notion of victory in death expressed in numerous Christian epitaphs: IN NOMINE Xpi VINCAS SEMPER!, D1626, Aostae, a.406; A DEO DATUR BICTORIA, 1628, prope Cirtam; MORTEM VICIT MERITIS ... CHRISTI POSSIDET IMPERIUM, 1043, a.475; MORTEM PERDEDIT, VITAM INVENIT, QUIA AUCTOREM VITE SOLUM DILEXIT, 1217, prope Vienne, circ. VI cent.; et passim.

This outlook on life and death and its implications for the Christian are even more forcibly borne out by a variety of epigraphical data that emphasise how different from that of the pagans was the Christian concept of death. Not only were the Christians careful to record, often in elaborate detail, the time of death – a practice only very rarely resorted to in pagan epitaphs –, but the day on which they departed from this life was graphically described by them as *dies natalis*: martyrs, and others, by their death, were born into a new life, the true life: AD VERAM REMEANS E CURPURE VITA, D4827.7; perhaps also 3425 [iam sedem ca] ELESTEM IN [iit] [vitaeg] ENUINAE. Eusebius refers to the day of death of a martyr as τοῦ μαρτυρίου αὐτοῦ ἡμέραν γενέθλιον, Migne,

<sup>5</sup> *All II*, 521. Cf. also *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, 6/1966, p.959.

P.G. 20, 357. Augustine too speaks of *natalis*<sup>6</sup> in its Christian sense and adds that its use became widespread even among non-Christians: 'Sic, inquam, hoc nomen frequentat ecclesia, ut etiam qui non sunt in illa, hoc dicant cum illa. Quis enim hodie, non dicam in hac nostra civitate, sed plane per Africam totam transmarinasque regiones, non christianus solum, sed paganus, aut judaeus, aut etiam haereticus poterit inveniri, qui non nobiscum dicat natalem martyris Cypriani? (310, 1, 2). The Christian use of *natalis* was in sharp contrast with the profane usage (natural birthday) which the Christians again started to adopt in the period following the Constantinian peace. The two senses in which the word could be used at this time by the Christians is alluded to by St. Augustine in his sermon on the proto-martyr St. Stephen (314.1): 'Natalem domini hesterna die celebravimus; servi hodie natalem celebramus: sed natalem Domini celebravimus quo nasci dignatus est; natalem servi celebramus, quo coronatus est.'

It is against the background of the joyful Christian attitude to death that the pregnant use of *praecedo* (= *morio*) in Christian epitaphs<sup>7</sup> must be considered. It expresses a sense of personal involvement on the part of the survivors, the hope inspired by the thought of following through death in the footsteps of their dear departed ones and joining them in afterlife. The condition of death is a transitional phase, a sleep to be followed by the great awakening. *Dormire, dormitio* emphasise this view in the many Christian inscriptions where they occur; cf., e.g., D 3197 ff. It is only very rarely that one finds *aeternus, aeternalis* qualifying the idea of sleep in Christian epitaphs, often, too, side by side with typically Christian elements.<sup>8</sup> The notion of

<sup>6</sup> The word seems to be used in an almost 'Christian' sense in Sen., *Ep.* 102, 26, 'Dies iste, quem tamquam extremum reformidas, aeterni natalis est.'

<sup>7</sup> Praecessit (nos) in pace, in pace dominica, in somno (somnum) pacis. Cf. also St. Cyprian, *De Mortalitate*: 'Fratres nostros non esse lugendos accersitione dominica ... cum sciamus non eos amitti, sed praemitti, recedentes praecedere,' etc. S. Aug., *Sermo 110 de diversis*: 'Omnes enim homines filios suos, ex hac via migrando, praecedere volunt, non sequi; illa autem optavit posterior mori. Non enim amittebat filios, sed praemittebat.'

<sup>8</sup> Cf. D2379 (ibid., IN PACE), Romae; CIL VI 9280 (ibid. TU, QUI LEGES ET NON HORABERIS, ERIT TIBI DEUS TESTIMONIO) Romae; 3196A (ibid. IN PACE); CIL XIII 128 add. p. 2. (ibid. COMES ANXIA LUCEM AETERNAM SPERANS HANC CUPIT ESSE BREVEM). The last-mentioned inscription in verse contains several literary reminiscences.

The inclusion of obvious Christian elements in many of the Christian in-

death as sleep was evidently suggested by biblical usage. In John 11:11, Jesus refers to the dead Lazarus in these words: Λάζαρος ὁ φίλος ἡμῶν κεκοίμηται. It is only when the disciples could not understand that he was referring to Lazarus' death that he said clearly: Λάζαρος ἀπέθανεν. Mat. 9.24 is, perhaps, even more significant. Speaking of the dead daughter of Jairus, Jesus says: οὐ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν τὸ κοράσιον ἀλλὰ καθεύδει. In this text there can be no question of the use of καθεύδει for euphemistic reasons. The straightforward expression for death, ἀπέθανεν, is not avoided. The implication is that our Lord wanted to inculcate what death should mean for the Christian: It is not a lasting phenomenon, but a transitory condition, leading from temporal to eternal life, just as one opens one's eyes after a night's sleep to the light of a new day.<sup>9</sup> It is this vision of death that suggested to the early Christians the word by which they normally referred to their burial-places, viz. κοιμητήριον, *coemeterium*, which received such wide acceptance in the Romance languages: It. *cemetero*, *cimitero*; Fr. *cimetière*; Sp. *cementerio*, *cimiterio*; Port. *cemiterio*. Examples of Christian inscriptions where this word occurs are: BENIT IN CIMITERO, D2119, Romae; also 1999A, 2149; 2000, Ostiae; 2163, Taracinae; PER SINGULA COEMETERIA, CIL XI 1700, Florentiae; Not. scav. 1922 p.250; CIL XII 5340 (κοιμητήριον), Narbone; cf. also D2731, Ostiae: ELPIDIUS COEMATE (= κοιμητάκι) ENTADE. As a result of frequent usage in the Christian era the need was felt to strengthen the verb by the addition of a prefix, cf. Huebner IHC 21, OBDORMIVIT IN PACE JESU, and Vulg. Act. 7, 60, Obdormivit in Domino (Gk. ἐκοιμήθη).

The Christian concept behind *depositio*, *depositus*, which occur so very often in Christian epitaphs in an absolute form, is revealed by those instances where fuller expressions are employed. These involve

scriptions that contain the pagan phrase *domus aeterna* (*aeternalis*), cf. e.g. D 3650 ff. *passim*, seems to be an argument in favour of the theory of mechanical adoption of pagan epigraphical terminology by the Christians. The pagan view of the tomb as a *domus aeterna* is strongly opposed in the New Testament and in the Fathers, cf. *Realexikon für Antike und Christentum* IV, Col.109-128. Cf. also II Cor. 5:1. See also Cumont, *Religions orientales* p.94 and note 113.

Cf. also the arguments adduced by H. Nordberg (*Sylloge Inscriptionum Christianarum Veterum Musei Vaticani*, II, p.228f.), some of which give the impression of being rather strained.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. I Cor. 15, especially v.20: Νυνὶ δὲ χριστὸς ἐγήγερται ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων.

the body of the deceased or its equivalent: DEPONEN(s) CORPUS, D3478.2; similarly 838; — OSSA, ICR I, 843 add p.584 (ibid. VIVENTEMQUE DEO CREDITE FLERE NEFAS); DEPOSITUM CORPUS TUMULO (ibid. PENETRANS REGNA BEATA ... MORTEM VICIT MERITIS), D104 3, Mediolanii; DEPONENS ... TERRIS MORTALIA MEMBRA, 3346 (interpolated?); CORPORA DEPOSITA, CIL V 1658, prope Aquileiam; DEPOSITAE SUNT RELIQUIAE, D2104, Sitifi, a.452; DEPOSITAM Xps QUAM TIBI REDDIT, CE 1436; DEPOSITIO CRUORIS ... MARTURUM, CIL VIII 6700, Africa; cf. 2 *Pet.* 1:14 'certus quod velox est depositio tabernaculi mei.'<sup>10</sup> In all these cases the term is used in its juridical sense of a provisional placing, temporary custody, cf. Ulp., *Dig.* 16,3,1.

In D1507, PETENTE perhaps = appetente (= — ti), i.e. appetenti (caelestia regna, etc.), cf. 1982.3 (Damasian inscr.), 2921.

D4723 presents an interesting case. The sentence where *petitio* = *mors* occurs reads as follows: QUAM ABSTULIT NEFANDA DIES ET ATRA PETITIO SUA FUNERE MERSIT IMMERTAM ANTE TEMPUS. The use of *atra* qualifying *petitio* (*Dei*) may be indicative of the degree to which the idea of death as an *adpetitio Dei* had taken root in the minds of the early Christians, to the extent that *petitio* in this sense could even be unreflectingly qualified by *atra*, where the epithet obviously qualifies *adpetitio* (*Dei*) only in the syntactical sense, whereas on the conceptual plane it can only be qualifying here the crude notion of death considered merely under its unpleasant aspects.

Death is sometimes referred to as the act of returning to God, of giving one's life back to Him: RECEPTUS AD DEUM, CIL VI 8498b; RECEPTA IN PACE ✠, D3255, Romae; ACCEPTA APUT DEUM, ICR I 678, ibid., a.432; DECESSIT ... DIGNA ACCEPTA A DOMINO IN PACE, D3334, ibid., IV cent.; A DEO ET SANCTIS ACCETA, 3335, ibid.; ἀκσεπτα ἰν χρο, Silv.68, ibid.

By way of conclusion to our consideration of the expressions most commonly used by the early Christians in connection with death, we may state that the attitude revealed in epitaphs is one of realism, mingled with, and indeed very often superseded by, sublimation of the concept of death. Death had its frightful aspects inasmuch as it was the punishment for sin. And so one may see genuine euphemisms in certain elliptical allusions to death in Christian funerary inscriptions. For instance, in an inscription at Ostia (CE 563), in another at

<sup>10</sup> Cf., perhaps, D2064.



Mainz (CE793), and in a third at Rome (Diehl, *Inscriptiones Latinae*, tab. 32,18, a.345), the subject *mors* of *rapuit*, *evenit* and *eripuit* respectively is omitted, and direct reference to death is otherwise sedulously guarded against (CASOS INIQUOS; OBIIT; HORA SUPPREMA). In another inscription from Carthage (*Comptes – rendus de L'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles – Lettres* 1916, p.163f.), DIRA (v.7) = *dira mors* (but *mors*, *moriens* also occur in the same inscription). Where *mors* is mentioned, it is often accompanied by epithets such as *saeva*, *vorax*, *dura*, etc., cf. D III p.369f. and p.556. But these harsh epithets are often to be found side by side with expressions of triumph over death and all the fear normally associated with it, cf. D III p.369f. This was the early Christian's position in the face of death attested in early funerary inscriptions.

One realises immediately that the substitutes for the crude expressions for death, to die, etc., found in Christian epitaphs are not mere euphemisms in the commonly accepted sense of the term. Euphemistic techniques are in reality negative processes whereby the disagreeableness of the unmitigated expression is avoided without any special preoccupation on the part of the speaker to include positive conceptual values in the indirect means of expression which he may employ; indeed, if the speaker or writer is not content with simply avoiding the unpleasant term but makes use of a noa-expression in its place, the idea suggested by the noa-expression often runs counter to the speaker's feelings or convictions in the matter (so, for instance, in the euphemism 'per antiphrasin'). This definition does not fit into the Christian use of certain terminology connected with death, the aim of which is to sublimate the notion of death and not to gloss over the disagreeable side of it, or, rather, such terminology is directed towards, and is the fruit of, the balanced Christian mentality regarding death, whereby the natural fearfulness of death is overshadowed by belief in the resurrection.<sup>11</sup> The pagan outlook, as shown in the euphemisms they used, was basically unrealistic and evasive; they confined themselves to an unwilling acceptance of a phenomenon with respect to the implications of which they adopted an attitude either of doubt or of utter rejection.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> In a 5th cent. inscription from Gaul (D3488): ACCIPE, QUI LACR(i)MIS PER-FUNDIS IUGETER ORA: MORS NIHIL EST, VITAM RESPICE PERPETUAM.

<sup>12</sup> 'Allein der Verzicht auf den Fortbestand des Leibes bleibt doch das Grundmerkmal der antiken Auffassung. Die Philosophie sucht damit zu versöhnen, und mag es in der Theorie bei manchen erreicht haben,' K.Prümm, *Der christliche*



The Christians' view, again as reflected in their methods of describing death, was a realistic one: they did not, like the Stoics, indulge in a kind of supercilious self-illusion and pretend that the normally forbidding elements of death were non-existent, but they placed these in their proper perspective and raised their minds to higher things, to the thought of the resurrection and the glory that was to follow.

NICHOLAS DEBONO MONTEBELLO

### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ALL, Archiv für lateinische Lexikographie und Grammatik, 1-15, Leipzig 1884-1908.
- CE, Bücheler. Carmina Epigraphica, Leipzig, 1895, 1897.
- CIL, Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, Berlin, 1863 ff.
- D, Diehl E., Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres, Vols. I-III, Berlin 1961<sup>2</sup>.
- ICR, De Rossi, Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae.
- IHC, Huebner, Inscriptiones Hispaniae Christianae.
- NOT. SCAVI, Notizie degli scavi di antichità, Rome, 1879 ff.
- SILV., Silvagni A.-Ferrua A., Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores, colligare coepit J.B. De Rossi, compleverunt et ediderunt A. Silvagni et A. Ferrua, nova series vol. III, in civitate Vaticana, 1956.

*Glaube und die altheidnische Welt*, p.325. The pagans' relentless and continuing opposition to the Christian belief in the resurrection of the body was a clear indication of the novelty of this doctrine and helped besides to strengthen the early Christians' faith with regard to it, cf. *ibid.* p.337. Cf. also Tert., *De resurr. carnis* 39: 'Nationes praeconium resurrectionis, inauditae retro novitate concussit.'

THE BIRTH PANGS OF THE FOURTH GENUS OF  
CHRISTIAN or LAYMEN IN SEARCH OF  
THE STATE OF PERFECTION

PART ONE

1. If a zoologist chose to discuss a particular species of monkey not in the context of his general exposition of the Simian group, but in the context of the human group, one would suspect that there was some doubt about its status, or some confusion in his mind, or, perhaps, both.

If the Second Vatican Council chose to discuss the so called 'Secular Institutes', which Pius XII had clearly stated were *lay* in character, *not* in the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, but in the Decree on the renewal of the Religious Life, similar suspicions naturally arise.

The history of how paragraph eleven came to be included in the Decree is itself a sign of the hesitations of the Conciliar Fathers about what to say or not to say on the subject. Eventually, they ended up by having next to nothing to add to what Pius XII had said in *Provida Mater*. Theologians were thus left to continue their discussions about the meaning and implications of Pius XII's declaration that members of the Secular Institutes *both* had the 'substance of the religious life' (essentially because they took the three vows to follow the evangelical counsels) *and* were still laymen (essentially because they were engaged in secular jobs by the very nature of the Institutes).

Four types of reaction to the Pope's declaration can be clearly distinguished among the variety of views expressed by theologians since it was made in 1947.

(A) F. WULF asserts that a theory of the Secular Institutes only emerged in justification of something *post factum* and 'is not free from contradictions'. The prime inconsistency, according to him lies in the evangelical counsels being still presented as implying the 'rejection of the world' (described, indeed, in sombre tones) and at the same time insisting that the members of the secular Institutes were to be apostles 'not merely in the world, but, as it were, by means of the world.' Wulf believes this concept of the Evangelical Counsels to be in need of

revision in its general application to the religious life; and the Secular Institutes are seen, in this perspective, as one attempt at renewing the form of the religious life in order to develop to full value its apostolic function. But, he concludes, 'quite obviously, these requirements have not been adequately thought out, neither theologically, nor spiritually' in the papal document. It, he thinks, 'makes no serious attempt to provide a genuine appropriate theology of the Secular Institutes.' (Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, ed. Vorgrimler, Burns & Oates, 1968, p. 356).

(B) K. RAHNER does not contest the concept of the Evangelical Counsels as implying the 'rejection of the world'; hence he concludes that they are incompatible with being a laymen in the real sense. The Papal Documents do not speak with theological correctness when they take the essence of secularity to lie in temporal commitment through having a job in the world. When marriage (for instance) is excluded by vow, so is, Rahner believes, any really full involvement in the world. This criticism (to be set out more fully later) implies a devaluation of the importance of the concept of the Secular Institutes which become only the home of a very rare type of religious vocation. (Mission and Grace, Vol. II, Sheed and Ward, 1964).

(C) Y. Congar holds that Rahner is correct in saying that members of the Secular Institutes cannot be, theologically speaking, laymen; but he does not agree with him that they are just a variant of no great importance on the traditional religious ideal. To him they are a *quartum genus christianorum* – i.e. a *fourth* type of Christian in addition to the three categories distinguished by Canon Law each with its own 'status' (i.e. set of rights and duties), viz:

- (a) The *laity*, who acquire their status in virtue of Baptism, defined as those who belong to neither of the other two categories.
- (b) The *clergy*, who acquire their status in virtue of Ordination, and some of whom can belong to the third category as well.
- (c) The *religious*, who acquire their status in virtue of a Consecration of their life to the search after perfection by taking the three vows to follow the evangelical counsels within an Order or Congregation approved for the purpose.

Hitherto, while the combination of status b and c was perfectly possible, the combination of *either* a and b *or* a and c appeared to be impossible. Only a contradiction in terms (as these were canonically

defined) could generate such hybrids. Evidently, the Pope was creating something outside these categories when he characterised the Secular Institutes as he did in *Provida Mater*.

(D) HANS URS VON BALHAZAR asserted roundly that the best theologians (meaning in particular Congar and Rahner) 'had not yet caught up with the theology' of *Provida Mater* to which he wholeheartedly subscribed. In general, members of Secular Institutes rebutted that Wulf and Rahner failed to recognise the originality of the Secular Institute concept, which was not an attempt at updating the religious ideal, but a new and different way (*in addition to* the older and perfectly valid concept) of living the Evangelical Counsels *by laymen*. Hence that Rahner recognises their true intention by discussing the Secular Institutes within the perspective of the apostolate of the laity, but is wrong about what constitutes the essence of a laymen.

Between these conflicting views, the Council did not decide. But its statements on the Church – World relationship and on the role of the laity and of the Religious Life in the Church, provide the lines along which a solution to the controversy has to be sought. For, as Rahner candidly confessed 'the question is more difficult than it may seem at first sight' and yet the importance of a solution is great, because it has implications not only for the Secular Institutes, but also for a correct concept of laity, religious and clergy. Indeed, it is not difficult to see that the divergence of views on this issue has its roots in the deeper question of the paradox of the Church's presence 'in the world, but not of it' and that it is by examining the different modalities of how to live 2. Does the juridical categorisation of Christians into three groups have a *theological* foundation?

- (i) There is no doubt that the distinction between the priest and the layman, in the Catholic understanding of the Scriptures, is one instituted by Christ and we need not be concerned with it here.
- (ii) But is the distinction between 'the religious' and 'the lay' state also equally essential in the structure of the Church?

The reason why it appears to be so is that both 'states' appear to be necessary in order that the Church may clearly reflect both sides of the paradox of 'being *in* in the world, but not of the world'. Two distinct but converging ways of life are to be found within the Church in order to bring home to humanity the progressive unfolding of the consequences of Christ's redemption of the fallen world.

These two ways have been characterised in terms respectively of 'renouncing the world' and 'living in the world'. What is meant by this? It is extremely important to be clear on the meanings given to these highly polyvalent terms, since confusion over them is the source of constant and most harmful misunderstanding.

A first distinction must be made between the sense of 'the world' as created by God and 'the world' meaning the 'evil world' as the term is sometimes used in Scripture. There is no doubt that the latter is to be renounced by all Christians. The question only arises with regard to the former: i.e. to this 'world' which is God's creation, fallen and redeemed.

(a) A heritage of sin is actually present in the organisation of this world, and one Christian reaction to it is to try to create a way of life as far removed as possible (for an absolutely total separation is not possible in this life) from its structures by constituting a sphere of existence as closely resembling the City of God as possible.

This way of life implies a *physical* separation, but it will carry a message to the world by its very existence: the 'pure' contemplatives provide a 'witness', or apostolate by demonstrating concretely, within certain limits, the possible realisation of the eschatological community even in this era of the history of salvation.

This apostolic witness is emphasized by the preaching of the word and other apostolic action in the 'mixed' ideal.

(b) Grace is also present in this world; hence another reaction would be to go on living within its existing structures and to accept a way of life which will be at a considerable distance from the eschatological idea; but to seek to contribute to the world's gradual transfiguration by grace through one's action from within its very own structures. This would be the ideal of the layman.

3. (a) It is, however, clear that the Christian cannot compromise his ideal to *any* extent to ensure his presence in the world to order to aid its transfiguration. The limit was set by the Commandments; the Christian cannot break these without losing his salvation.

On the other hand, the other aspects of the Christian ideal, which could be given up for the sake of presence in the world, came to be known as the Evangelical Counsels. To choose to follow these was to choose the 'eschatological option, or, in other words, to renounce 'this

world' in order to testify to the next by anticipating its way of life to the greatest possible degree.

When this option is taken as a decision for life by vows under a Rule approved by the Church, it was recognised as 'the State of Perfection' – i.e. a way of life which, if faithfully followed, was guaranteed by the Church to lead to Perfection. It was felt that this was a safer and surer road to salvation, although the result of a *special* call of God.

(b) But the view later became current that the Evangelical Counsels were really the universal ideal for all Christians, e.g. 'the sublime Evangelical Counsels which our divine Redeemer addressed to *all* in every age who desire Christian perfection (Acta Leonis XIII (1900 A.D.) vol. XX, p. 340). If this were so, as came to be commonly assumed, it seemed to follow that one would be forced to admit a class-distinction between Christians: an 'upper class' composed of the 'religious' and a 'lower class' composed of the 'seculars'.

(c) In modern times, a considerable sense of dissatisfaction came to be felt among moral theologians about this assumption. Its implication is that the entire laity could not be on the road to perfection; that they all were 'minimal' and could not be 'optimal' Christians.

The roots of the polemic about the Secular Institutes can, perhaps, be found in two different ways in which it was sought to get rid of this unwanted implication which resulted from the double identification of the evangelical counsels with (i) the universal ideal of Christian perfection and (ii) the eschatological option.

(A) The first way is to deny the identification of the evangelical counsels with the universal ideal of Christian perfection. It was that followed by the theologians who strove to build up a theology of the laity such as Congar and Rahner. They recognised their equal dignity from the point of view of the call to sanctify as was later ratified by the Second Vatican Council. They insisted that the tendency to perfection need not be identified with following the counsels (as had often been done).

It is an essential part of the New Law and not an option. In order to follow it, some requirements apply to all; these are the commandments. But then the Christian has to decide which of the two options sketched out above he is to take, and whichever he does, his way of life will both appear foolish to the non-believers and can lead to perfection. There is no rational criterion to tell him whether it is better to renounce

marriage and the 'world' or not; he has to rely on the 'counsel' of the Holy Spirit.

Why does it happen that in the case of the religious option, the Church authenticated certain Rules of life as guaranteeing perfection (if faithfully observed) but did not do anything similar for the layman? It could be argued that this follows clearly from the nature of the layman's vocation in a constantly changing world and widely different situations which make it impossible to establish any generally valid Rule; while for the religious vocation built on a picture of the City of God which is stable, general forms can evidently be formulated and have been. This, in no wise, establishes a class-distinction going against the equal call of all Christians to the perfection of love as the older way of putting it would appear to imply. It is the concept of the Rule, as a means of attaining perfection, rather than perfection itself, which conflicts with the concept of the layman.

(B) The second way in which the layman's possible access to Christian perfection could be demonstrated was that which led eventually to the recognition of the Secular Institutes as a 'State of Perfection'. Instead of questioning the identification of the Evangelical Counsels with the universal ideal of Christian perfection, what was questioned was the identification of the Evangelical Counsels with the 'Eschatological option'; and the assertion of the possibility of their being lived also by those who took the 'incarnationist' option (by engaging in temporal professions outside any physically separate communities) under a Rule of life approved by the Church.

This was the case put to Pope Pius XI by Father Agostino Gemelli in 1938 in a paper which became the basis of Pius XII's *Provida Mater*, and is supported by the reasoning behind Wulf's and von Balthazer's positions.

4. However, it is sufficiently clear that this recognition by Pius XII that members of the so-called Secular Institutes both (a) had 'the substance of the religious life' and (b) were still essentially 'laymen', not only appeared to tie knots in the neat lines of Canon Law, but appeared also to be theologically an attempt at having your cake and eating it. At any rate, it provided a heavy chunk of food for thought to the theologians and one not at all easy to digest.

(A) *Rabner* insisted that the members of Secular Institutes are really (i.e. from a theological point of view) religious. If the Pope calls them



lay people, this is for juridical not theological, reasons (to show they do not fall under the set of regulations established for religious in Canon Law) and following a popular use of the term by which what is meant is that they have a secular profession and do not necessarily live in a community. But by taking the three vows (i.e. renouncing marriage and the free disposal of their lives and property) they have disengaged themselves from the 'world' in a fundamental way. Their having a secular job and living outside a community are in comparison of secondary importance; these are a further extension of the traditional presence to the world through preaching and teaching first, and through other charitable and apostolic activities afterwards, which the best theologians (e.g. Aquinas, S.Th. II IIae q. 188) had always considered a beneficial adjunct to the contemplative activity which retained its primary role. 'The attitude of aversion from the world which is presupposed in evangelical virginity', according to Rahner, means that taking a secular job for a religious at heart will only be a tactical device in the service of the Church's hierarchical apostolate. It is not, therefore, to such people that we must look to carry out the task of the Christian penetration of the world: this rests squarely on the laity who have *not* decided by vow to follow the evangelical counsels. If the Pope does not speak 'theologically' when he calls members of the Secular Institutes lay people, he does precisely that when he says they have a 'profession which in substance is truly religious' although he is hardly consistent with himself when, in another document, he says that they only 'approach' the state of canonical perfection. The truth is, according to Rahner, they are religious disguised externally as lay people to carry out their apostolate more effectively, and more freely, and hence tend to flourish, in practice, where the other religious are shackled.

(B) *Von Balthazar, Lazzati*, and many others, especially members of Secular Institutes have not taken too kindly to Rahner's picture of themselves. They insist that members of Secular Institutes are really, and not only in Canon Law, laymen. The anomaly is not in the juridical treatment in relation to theological reality, but in the titles of the Conciliar Decree and of the Congregation of Religious, which, once they include the Secular Institutes should be renamed to show they deal with all those, religious or lay, who have adopted 'the state of perfection'. The Pope is right to follow the popular usage which regards as the

distinguishing mark of the layman his attachment to a secular profession, and not whether he has taken the vows of celibacy, poverty and obedience. For that is the essence of the layman's role in the Church: that he is involved in the task of redressing earthly realities from the state of corruption by sin and bringing them to their fulfilment in Christ according to God's plan. Rahner's belief that taking the vows implies that one's fundamental interest is not in one's job, but in the opportunities it provides for sharing in the Church's direct apostolate is totally rejected: for the member of the Secular Institute, doing his secular job as perfectly as possible is his primary apostolate. Just as the contemplative's vocation is to render witness to the redemptive possibilities of the Incarnation by carrying the realities of the present world to their maximum perfection possible here and now. That the member of the Secular Institute is involved, unlike the religious, essentially and not merely incidentally, in a secular profession and social life, makes him decisively a layman, despite the fact of his taking the three vows.

5. I think that the uncommitted reader who confronts these summaries (fair, I hope) of the two points of view can only conclude that both are overstressing one aspect of man.

The impression one gets from reading Rahner is of a quasi-Freudian picture of man: for him, it appears the sexual aspect (married or unmarried) is dominant enough to colour all other aspects of life. You are celibate (for it is celibacy, rather than poverty or obedience) which he stresses; hence you can hardly have the same attitude to your work as the married man.

On the other hand, the impression one gets from reading Lazzati is of a quasi-Marxist picture of man: for him, it appears the work-situation (essential or incidental) is dominant enough to colour all the other aspects of life. If you have a secular profession (for it is this, rather than living outside a community or without a habit, which he stresses), you can hardly have the same attitude to the vows as the 'religious':

- (i) The typical member of a Secular Institute does not sever his family relationships but continues to behave as a son, uncle, etc. within his family network, even if he renounces marriage;
- (ii) The obedience which he owes his superior allows him full autonomy in the execution of his secular task which he chooses himself according to his natural bent and interest and not in terms of

his Institution's needs and works – which, indeed, Secular Institutes should not have.

- (iii) By 'poverty', members of the Secular Institutes mean living at the level of one's social status in such a way that it is not an obstacle to the fulfilment of one's social role.

This line of argument might appear to lead in the dangerous direction of an evacuation of the content of the three vows. But, apart from this, it is just as implausible to argue that a celibate for religious reasons won't have a fundamental interest in his job as that the three vows allow you to be a participant in the earthly tasks on the same footing as those without. Both sides appear to overargue their case.

6. The commonsense reaction, I think, is that of Congar when he said that we have here 'a fourth genus of Christian'. Hence, the members of the Secular Institutes are right in stressing the novelty of their concept and its relationship to the needs of the times, rather than Rahner who discounts their importance, because he thinks their vocation, if viable, will still be extremely rare, and it can be fulfilled through a reform of the religious orders, since he thinks it lies totally on the side of the 'eschatological' option. But the members of the Secular Institutes insist their option is totally 'incarnationist'. The truth appears to be that it is an attempt at a synthesis between the two options involving important modifications of both. The real question now appears to be: is it possible that one need no longer be forced to choose between the two traditional options, but that a new way of life is possible which would appear to be closer than any to the true ideal of the missionary Christian? If this is the right formulation of the issue, then some fresh theological thinking is called for, which will take a much more *historical* approach to the whole question.

## PART TWO

The most summary perusal of the history of the development of the forms of religious life shows a clear enough tendency: each major new form successively created tends to incorporate more and more elements of the 'incarnationist option' into the basic 'eschatological option'. In other words, history shows an asymptotic movement towards the fusion of the two vocations.

Moreover, the main stages of this movement appear to be correlated to the basic transformations of the social, political and economic structures of the secular world. Each new form comes as a response to a major alteration in these structures.

The Conciliar Decree on the Renewal of the Religious Life authorizes us to classify the forms of the religious life in the following way, historically, although the Decree itself chooses a logical rather than a chronological mode of presentation.

(A) The purely 'contemplative' or eschatological vocation. This appeared in the early centuries when the world was still mostly entirely pagan. The values embodied in the structures of the world were such that the presentation of the Christian model of the end-product to be sought could only be done as far outside these structures as possible. The Fathers of the Desert could hardly express more than the negative aspect of their rejection.

The first Cenobitic communities, whose appearance is conditioned by the easing up or disappearance of the persecution of the Christian Church by the pagan State, bring out in their way of life the positive aspect: that salvation is not an individual flight away from the City, but the construction of the heavenly city on earth.

But this new society can only be created in miniature by a relatively few, relatively small groups on the margin of society. It is the pagan structures of society almost as a whole which are to be rejected and an almost wholly new society which must be demonstrated to be possible by the 'eschatological' groups. These can only 'seek God' outcast by or outside of secular structures and carry a message to the world merely by existing the way they do.

(B) With the advent of the Mendicant Orders, we have the so-called 'Mixed Life' ideal expressed in the phrase *contemplata aliis tradere*, i.e. while these communities remain basically contemplative, they add to the witness already provided by their existence, an explicit witness by their word, through preaching and teaching.

This new form of life is correlated to two social factors:

(a) the feudal structure of society then dominant and (b) the appearance of the academic and of the bourgeois. The first factor is correlated to the continued emphasis on the basis contemplative way of life, or eschatological aspect, the second factor to the element of direct apostolic action, or 'incarnationist' action introduced by the admission of a teaching function into their way of life (which thus

acquires a structural link with the secular world). It is a subsidiary or secondary element in the 'religious' way of life, but is judged by them to make theirs a more perfect way than that of the pure contemplation of the older established monks.

(a) The separation of the friars from the dominant feudal structures is expressed in the emergence of the three evangelical counsels as the mark of their eschatological option. A basic principle of feudalism – i.e. the determination of a fixed social role by the circumstances of birth – is in such flagrant contrast with the eschatological picture of the freedom and equality of the children of God in the Communion of Saints – that it necessitates the opting out of the secular structures of feudal society by those who take the eschatological option.

- (i) The feudal concept of property, by which a man has an unbreakable bond to a particular land, conflicts with the ideal of 'poverty', by which such ties are severed.
- (ii) The feudal concept of *allegiance*, by which a man is tied to his lord, conflicts with the ideal of 'obedience', by which the guidance of the Spirit is accepted, generally mediated through a spiritual counsellor, in the choice between the various paths of goodness available to man.
- (iii) The feudal concept of *marriage* conceived as necessary to be accepted with a person determined by criteria of 'convenience', conflicts with the ideal of Chastity, in both its celibate and married forms. (The reasons for the greater complexity of this contrast between this third vow and the eschatological ideal is significant and will call for further exploration later).

Medieval theology sought to ease the contrast on all three points for those who took the Incarnationist option. No man's title to property was absolute, but subordinate to the common good; no human sovereignty was absolute and no human law was valid which conflicted with God's; the dignity of woman as a person not a chattel, was in various ways noted, and perhaps worked towards. In short, the Commandments were the layman's bulwark and allowed the possibility of a Christian existence within the very structures of feudal society.

But in order to foreshadow in the present life as closely as possible the way of the future era, with all goods really shared in common, in full freedom to follow the guidance of the Spirit as discerned with the

help of a spiritual counsellor, in Christ, in whom 'there is neither male nor female' (Gal. 3, 28), then you had to opt out of the secular structures of the feudal world. The Evangelical Counsels take shape in Medieval times in their threefold form because precisely these were the three points which made the eschatological option unlivable in that society; in this sense (not because they were the positive, essential foundations of their way of life) they defined this vocation, i.e. inasmuch as they were the dividing factors from the incarnationist way of life of the laity.

(b) However, two 'structures' emerged in the medieval world which were not feudal (in the sense given to this term above)

- (i) the University, or world of learning. In this sphere, open to all comers, the 'religious' could engage himself without being forced to violate his chosen way of life;
- (ii) the bourgeois, or merchant-class. It is from this class that St. Francis arose and the friars ensured the Church's presence within it. Their separation from feudal society was a common feature of these two human groups, friars and merchants, in other ways so different.

Hence, two motivations can be discerned in the more directly apostolic role assumed by the friars relatively to the monks. Their presence in the University was not incompatible with their eschatological option, even if it meant abandoning the physical isolation of the monastery and establishing one's habitation in the city. Their presence among the bourgeois was accepted because these two lived outside the feudal structures and required religious help. That is, perhaps, why the friars, unlike the monks, came increasingly to be *priests*.

(C) The third major form of the religious life appears with the advent of the so-called 'active' communities founded explicitly for apostolic work. While it is stressed that this must have its roots in contemplation, prayer and union with God, the basic reason for the community is apostolic action: priestly, charitable, educational. The field of activity is extended well beyond the limits (preaching and teaching) envisaged by St. Thomas Aquinas for the 'mixed life' and many physical signs and means of constituting a separate community such as special habits and choral recitation of the office are removed. A new way of life is envisaged, (at least theoretically, for in practice it was difficult to get

approval without the retention of several features more clearly suited to the monastic than the apostolic vocation) in which contemplation and action are to be fused into an integrated life.

This new form appears after the breakdown of feudalism and accompanies the emergence of the typical political structures of the modern era which were later to develop into those of the capitalist states. The barriers of birth are by now considerably broken down and social mobility has vastly increased. The legal concept of property is such in a laissez-faire economy that an involvement in social work has become not only an apostolic necessity but a practical possibility on a far more important scale for those who had themselves chosen poverty. The general concept of political authority is such that it allows a measure of involvement in the life of the city proportionate to the degree of freedom allowed; the incompatibility of the dictated choices imposed upon citizens under certain political systems with the religious concept of obedience to the motion of the Spirit, somehow institutionally mediated to man, is often reduced. However, the current economic structures of individualistic capitalism are such that it is inconceivable that the ideal of the common pooling of goods implied by the vow of poverty be fulfilled within them. Likewise, political structures are still class-dominated, nationalistically and imperialistically oriented, so that they cannot but conflict in many cases with a vow to follow the dictates of the Spirit of universality. Most of all, the marriage and family situation is still such that, although not so restrictive as under the feudal system, involvement in it will still be incompatible with eschatological witness. The three vows remain the sign of a marked separation from the structures of the secular world, despite the shift of emphasis on apostolic action in this form of eschatological ideal.

(D) The twentieth-century has seen the birth of the Secular Institutes as well as of a new type of religious order such as the Little Brothers of Jesus of Pere de Foucauld who make the assumption of a secular job part of their vocation and, some of them, admit or encourage participation in political activity.

The political, social and economic conditions which have made this possible are the return to a concept of the role of the State as not being merely the negative so-called liberal one, but as having a positive role in the interests of the common good; the creation of an economic situation in which it is possible for an individual to conform to the norms of

religious poverty while engaging in temporal activity (largely the result of the separation of the property-owning from the managerial roles and a considerable breakdown of class-divisions.) The new context of the 20th century has made it more possible to be involved in the world while living out the eschatological ideal than ever before. The Welfare State creates an economic structure within which it is possible to live the counsel of poverty in the world; democracy make active citizenship compatible with the counsel of obedience. The Secular Institutes and the other new forms of religious life remove the restriction on the type of secular job it was possible to take in the world without renouncing to the eschatological option.

There remains, however, one great barrier to full participation in the world: the vow of celibacy. Rahner appears to be absolutely right in his insistence that this places one in a very different situation vis-a-vis the married and family man. Nor does the problem appear to be satisfactorily resolved by the device adopted by some Secular Institutes of abolishing community life. For the situation of being involved in a family relationship as uncle or aunt, son or daughter, etc., is not at all comparable to being a *pater familias* or *mater familias*. The oddity of a large community of celibates in a secular quarter may be eliminated by the arrangement of living in small, family-size communities as by the Little Brothers of Jesus and other institutions. But, again, this does not tackle the heart of the problem which is not that of eliminating a phenomenological, social oddity, but that of the male-female personal-relationship implications of the Christian eschatological ideal. It seems perfectly possible today that this ideal should be incarnated with the structures of the secular world itself – except for one obstacle: the eschatological ideal, as presented by the Gospel, clearly implies a non-married personal relationship system, while marriage, the foundation of the family organisation of society, appears to be implied in the concept of total secular involvement. The key-issue in the question posed at the beginning of this essay now appears to be the future of Love.

There is, thus, one major barrier which prevents us from saying that the member of the Secular Institute is totally a layman (in the theological sense of the word, i.e. one who has made the 'incarnationist' option); on the other hand, the importance of his involvement in the world through having a secular job is too great to allow us to assimilate him quite simply to the previous forms of the religious life (or



'eschatological' option). If the Secular Institutes were all to follow one of two alternatives which many have taken, *either* of adopting a community form of life which in fact, encloses them to a considerable extent within it by being structured on the traditional framework inherited from previous form of religious communities *or* of merely living separately as individuals peripherally attached to the normal family group, then there would be strong reason to agree with Rahner that they are still definitely on the 'religious' side of the fence. It is conceivable, however, that they may experiment in different forms of interpersonal relationship which would justify Congar's description of them and live up to be the infant-form of a new genus of Christian.

The changes taking place in family-structure and the concept of married life are such that it is not too fanciful to imagine the genesis of a different type of small religious community which will be able to take its place in the secular world without celibacy or marriage any longer constituting a great divide between them. To describe such a community would be, perhaps, to indulge in crystal gazing; and only experience can prove whether and to what extent the final root-destruction between the two-options can become insignificant in this world.

At present, in conclusion, it is only possible to draw attention to some straws in the wind which may or may not be indications of the direction in which the Spirit is blowing.

*Marc Oraison*, in his book *Le Celibat*, has stressed the distinction between 'sexuated' and 'sexual' relationships. In the future life, Scripture tells us that there will not be sexual relationships as we now know them; but that this does not imply that the colouring of the whole personality by the fact of being man or woman will be abolished any more than any other significant trait of our personality. Although no longer sexual, our love relationship will still be sexuated. If this is the 'model' which the eschatologist option seeks to realise on earth, it may be asked, will it not be better realised if there is such a pattern of sexuated, but not sexual (i.e. not orientated towards sexual intercourse) interrelationship within the community, rather than by the exclusion of one or the other sex from close friendship?

*Luise Rinser* has contrasted Cardinal Doepfner's exhortation in his 1967 Lenten Pastoral to his clergy 'to carry forward a relationship of friendship, and have a healthy encounter even with Woman, or rather precisely with her' with the traditional warnings (of which she hears

the echo in Paul VI's encyclical of the same year on Celibacy) against contact with woman. She goes on to argue that there is a particular modality of love which is by no means incompatible with celibacy and which far from going against the love of God can be a means towards its fulfilment, as can be proven even from the lives of certain saints, although this form of love cannot be serenely accepted except by mature men who have experienced not only love, but also the beauty of sacrifice. Rinser's views are partly corrected and partly corroborated by Fr. Gentili, S.J., in the Italian edition of Rinser's book in an essay as lengthy as Rinser's own.

There is also *Teilhard de Chardin's* opinion. Teilhard, as is known, forecasts for the future a new development of love as the unitive force of the entire universe which will consist precisely in our overcoming the present restrictions of our capacity to love (only wife, children, friends, and perhaps country) to universal proportions. But apart from this futuristic vision, it is well-known that Teilhard himself actually lived intense friendships (to which he attributed the source of his ideas) which he held to be fully compatible with his priestly celibacy. (Vide commentary on Teilhard's celebrated text *L'Eternel Feminin*, by Henri de Lubac).

GEMMA CACHIA

## BOOK REVIEWS

PETER FRANSEN S.J. *The New Life of Grace*. London-Dublin-Melbourne: Geoffrey Chapman, 1969. Pp. x + 369. 60s.

THIS is a new, thoroughly revised and considerably enlarged edition of the author's earlier book *Divine Grace and Man* (paperback, New York, 1965). Piet Fransen, who teaches Dogmatic Theology at Innsbruck, considers the normal classroom presentation of the theology of grace to be inadequate. He therefore writes especially for 'the many priests and religious men who finished their study of the treatise on grace with an impression of disillusionment and discouragement'. Nevertheless he hopes that his work 'will prove of some use to the lay people who dare tackle a technical book on grace' (p. 277). To make the theology of grace more meaningful especially to the layman, he reduces the treatment of classical controversies to a minimum, he approaches his subject from a personalist view-point, and he tries to relate grace to the concrete life of the Christian.

Fransen is above all interested in God's loving presence in the world. He considers this presence as the prime source and ultimate meaning of grace. Hence for him the theology of grace is primarily 'the theology of God's love for us and of the love which God's first love has caused in us' (p. 15). He conceives created grace dynamically as a gift which brings man 'an inner strength, a lifting urge, a yearning for God' (p. 22). But he shows grace to consist essentially in God drawing man into the intimacy of His Trinitarian Life. The doctrine of the divine indwelling thus becomes a constant refrain throughout the book. On one occasion Fransen describes 'the main theme of this book' thus: 'from the indwelling, through the indwelling, and toward the complete actualisation of the indwelling' (p. 166). One cannot but applaud the author's conception of his subject.

To illustrate his central theme, Fransen borrows elements from various sectors of theology; as a matter of fact, a brief glance at the table of contents makes the book seem almost a short dictionary of theology. Trinitarian doctrine, Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology and sacramental theology are harmoniously blended into one whole. While leaning heavily on Scripture and, to a lesser degree, on some of the Fathers, Fransen enriches his theology of grace with the experience of grace, analysing grace in the life of ordinary Christians and quoting extensively from the mystical writings of Ruysbroeck. He also writes a very interest-

ing chapter on the psychology of grace. In the author's view, grace is a personal relationship with the saving God, but has a social or ecclesial dimension, and imposes on the individual specific tasks in his concrete, historical situation in the modern world.

Fransen has gone a long way towards achieving his purpose of making the theology of grace more meaningful to his readers. He has written a long book whose bulk would have been reduced if a certain verbosity in style and many unnecessary repetitions had been avoided. But he has written a good book which is immensely rich and stimulating. Priests will find in it theology rewritten as spiritual reading. Seminarians, while appreciating the classified reading list which the author provides at the end of his book, will read it as an introduction to more technical works. Laymen will find in it useful instruction combined with inspiration and encouragement in their Christian life.

C. CASSAR S. TH.D.

KARL RAHNER S.J., *Theological Investigations*, Volume Six. London, Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd., 1969. Pp VIII + 417. 70s.

THIS is the sixth volume of *Theological Investigations* written by Karl Rahner; it is a collection of twenty-three essays which were almost all written during Vatican II. In these essays the author deals with some of the most important topics which engaged the attention of the Church and theologians during the Council. Consequently, to those who wish to form an idea of the complexity of some of the major issues debated by the Council Fathers, the present work is very helpful, if not indispensable, coming from the man who played a leading role as a theologian both before and during the Council.

The first part echoes much of what we find in the Constitution on 'The Church in the Modern World'. The first essay, a penetrating analysis of the situation of contemporary man, looks with optimism on the present opportunity that technological man hears the Christian message. As usual in Rahner's theological writings, this essay makes use of philosophical analysis in order to pinpoint more precisely the significance of the present historical moment for a deeper understanding of the Christian message and its fresh appeal to the man of today. Rahner's reflexion on the nature of dialogue within a pluralistic society –

the theme of the second essay – provides very useful principles for the proper exercise of dialogue outside and within the Church. In another essay, Rahner makes a comparative study of Marxist Utopia and the Christian future of man. In an age when there is talk even on dialogue between Marxism and Christianity, the present essay is certainly relevant.

The second part deals with questions of Fundamental Theology, like 'Philosophy and Theology', 'The Collective finding of Truth', 'Scripture and Tradition' and 'Reflexions on the Intellectual Formation of the Priest'. The importance of these essays for a more precise understanding of some of the most fundamental themes treated in the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation and in the Decree on Priestly Formation is evident enough. To me at least, the essay on the relationship between Philosophy and Theology seems to be most important not only because it carries the discussion a step further but also because it is the key to a deeper understanding of Rahner's theology which, like Paul Tillich's, is radically influenced by his earlier philosophical training. This essay sheds an enormous light on the author's theological method. Rahner's thesis is that philosophy 'is an inner moment of theology' (p. 72). He explains this thesis in the light of the distinction between nature and grace and the corollary distinction between thematic, official revelation and unthematic, unofficial revelation. Summing up his argument, he says that, since 'pure' nature does not exist in the present order of things, since 'the depth of the human abyss... is already the abyss which has been opened by God's grace and which stretches into the depths of God Himself' (p. 78), philosophy is already actuated to some extent by Christianity. It is 'pure' philosophy only in the sense that it does not take any of its material contents and norms from the official, thematized revelation. Tillich's method of correlation – theology answering questions raised by philosophy may be re-thought in the light of Rahner's thesis namely that philosophy draws on the anonymous, unthematic, implicit revelation which is accessible to all men in Christ and possibly avoid the objection usually raised against Tillich's method namely that revelation and theology are made dependent and consequently relative to philosophy.

The third part deals with certain aspects of theological anthropology like the concept of life, the unity of spirit and matter, freedom, guilt, responsibility and punishment, the unity of love of God and love of neighbour. To those who have read Rahner's 'Homonization' and the essay on concupiscence, the material found in the essays on the unity

of spirit and matter and that on the theology of freedom will certainly be familiar. The essay on the unity of love of God and love of neighbour, however, merits particular attention not only because it develops a theme which is not, as far as I know, developed elsewhere by Rahner but also because it is an honest attempt to face the problems connected with the specifically christian doctrine that love of neighbour is also love of God and to answer these problems in depth. Readers who are not acquainted with Rahner's transcendental philosophy are advised to read this essay with great patience, because here Rahner draws extensively on arguments and insights which he developed earlier in his philosophical writings.

The fourth part is a re-examination of those aspects of ecclesiology which have been ignored by traditional manuals of theology but which have come again to the surface of the Church's consciousness in the Council and have found their place in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. Holiness in the Church, the primacy and the juridical structure of the Church have been emphasized to such an extent in the past that equally important aspects of the Church, like the sinful Church, the episcopacy and its collegial nature and the presence of the Church outside its juridical boundaries were thrown into the background. These new aspects of the Church are explained in great detail by Rahner in the present volume.

The present edition contains a very good table of contents, giving a general picture of the material treated in the present volume, a list of sources and an index by subject and another by author. Though some may object to the fact that the essays in the present volume which have not been published before are only three, others with whom the present reviewer wishes to include himself recommend the present work as it makes available a number of very important articles which are otherwise very difficult to get. Besides, we should note that the essays have been re-examined 'to correct mistakes and stylistic and such like imperfections', and that the essays 'The Episcopal Office', 'The Sinful Church in the decrees of Vatican II' and 'Anonymous Christians' have been enlarged by the addition of longer preliminary remarks, supplements or other insertions' (cf. author's Preface).

GEORGE GRIMA B.D.

PIET FRANSEN S.J., *Intelligent Theology*, volume three. Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd., London, 1969. 21s.

THIS is the third volume in the series *Intelligent Theology* written and edited by Father Piet Fransen S.J. In the three volumes now published Fransen has touched some of the most hotly debated topics in theology today, as the Priesthood, Celibacy, Confirmation, Grace, Salvation outside the Church and Conscience; these subjects put the author in line with other European theologians who are making use of their Christian freedom in Theological research.

In his theological thought Fransen follows the principle of attack and rebuild. His theology is not simply a criticism (in the negative sense) of the past but also a return back to the Bible. One can see this principle recurring in all the Chapters of Fransen's Book.

In this volume's approach to the Theology of Grace, Fransen and Torrance contribute a personalist philosophy – echoing the thought of Martin Heidegger and Karl Rahner. Historically speaking, Torrance says, 'grace' in Catholic Theology came to be treated in a legalist and impersonalist sense. In agreement with his collaborator in this debate, Fransen does not consider grace as a thing, but as the 'holy presence' of the three persons of the Trinity in the Christian who at the same time 'feels drawn to it'. This view corresponds to what the Bible says on the inner life of the man who follows Christ.

Careful not to ignore what the Gospel teaches regarding the love of neighbour, Fransen does not fall in the trap of the contemporary atheistic humanism. In the Chapter on Christian Humanism the author says that Christianity should not be for us a personal sanctification that undermines the law of Charity. But following the footsteps of Christ, we should help all men through a sincere dedication.

Seen in the perspective of Grace and Charity, Freedom is the characteristic of the Christian. Fransen attacks the attitude of certain members of the Church who see the Church as 'the Party that cannot go wrong'. He upholds Christian maturity as endowed by an adult freedom. One aspect of christian maturity is the ability of the adult christian who knows the essential tenets of his religion and is able to distinguish them from their reformable expressions and wording.

In his study on Salvation outside the Church, Fransen makes a very important distinction between the 'votum implicitum Ecclesiae' – as the faith of the Church – and 'the votum implicitum Christi', whereby both the one who has never heard of the Church and the one who for

various reasons rejects the Church but believes in Christ, can be saved, for all man are objectively saved by the redemption of Jesus Christ.

Though each Chapter in Fransen's book is complete in itself, yet the author may have put the chapters in such an order that one theme follows from the other in a logical form.

FRANCIS BONNICI B.D.

T.B. WALKER, *New Theology for Plain Christians*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1970. Pp. 100. 25s.

J.B. WALKER, in a 100 page booklet, makes a wide area of theology available to the average christian reader, given from the viewpoint of a new left, 'Slant', theologian. Walker tries to integrate pure dogma to the daily christian life.

The book opens with an introduction unfolding the new left manifesto — the church must take an explicit stand on such issues as war, poverty, segregation; there is no distinction between the sacred and the profane, God is met in the community... These themes are taken up again later in the book, and in the first three chapters the reader is given a dogmatic theology lesson on such issues as God, christian anthropology, Christology and the Church. Yet the lesson is never too academic to be grasped by the average christian, even if the author brings to his aid such deep theologians as De Lubac, Schoonenberg, Rahner, Hulshbosh, and others. The emphasis is on brotherhood, community, love... christianity meaning a total commitment of the whole self in a context of an ordinary day to day living. Emphasis is laid on the theme of the church whose main task is to enable the world to grow in love by working with men of goodwill notwithstanding their ideology, to put an end to war, poverty and racialism. The word of God is a call for revolution which does not necessarily mean armed rebellion but renewal and change. Christ was the revolutionary leader who hit at the very root of society and religion. Early christianity was a revolutionary sect, condemning war and emperor worship thus undermining the security of the state; preaching equality between master and slave thus striking at the very headstone of the Greco-Roman economy. Constantine did more harm to christianity than Nero, integrating it with the establishment,



thus putting it on the side of the *satus quo* where it should be advocating change; lording herself over the poor where it should be serving them. The medieval view of an orderly and static universe had put a firm grip of christian thought. Eventually however christianity came to terms with an evolutionary world picture and a theology of evolution was born thanks to Newman and Chardin.

Quite abruptly the author turns to review the contemporary scene with a little bit of pessimism giving the impression that teachers, politicians, tradeunionists are all serving the *status quo*; the super powers whose aid is but another form of wise investment. Faced with this situation the individual can do very little, except try to bring a better world through love.

J.B.Walker's work can easily be called a call to all men of good will for the establishment of a better world, a world of fellowship and community love, a world where change is accepted and not simply tolerated. This is a work all plain christians ought to take up and read.

CHARLES CARABOTT B.D.

HAMISH SWANSTON, *Jesus Now-Studies in the Sacraments*, Voll. 1 & 2, Darton, Longman & Todd, London (1969). Vol. 1, 20s. Vol. II, 24s.

SOME months ago I was reading a book review by John Bligh in 'The Hythrop Journal' and I came across the following statement: 'Perhaps the day will come when theologians will bear theological witness in the form of TV plays'. (*Hyt. Jour.*, 8 (1967) p.815). On perusing Hamish Swanston's book and seeing it draw so widely on English literature, both prose and poetry, as well as making references to films and pop songs, I said to myself that J.Bligh's wish was already coming to fruition.

As Swanston so well remarks at the opening paragraphs of the first volume, the common reply today to the question: 'What are the Sacraments?' is 'Christ's life and work among us now'. The author attempts at a clarification of this answer. In fact, the work is far from being a systematic treatise in Sacramentology — and the author is humble enough to acknowledge it at the outset — though it treats on each of the

sacraments separately besides a longish general introduction. Rather, it is a popular presentation of the Church's traditional teaching on the Sacraments – popular enough at times to turn 'pop' and quote the Beatles – with the result that it provides good reading on this branch of Theology that does not usually read so pleasantly (perhaps at times it seems to be more a book on literary criticism than on sacramental theology).

However, certain parallels on the Sacraments drawn from literature, the cinema, or from everyday life tend to be very effective. But a really good feature of the book is that it draws so abundantly on the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament. Unfortunately, it does not draw so abundantly on the Fathers. Also, something a bit unusual in books on Theology, is a final section, in the form of a longish letter, contributed by a married couple, on the Sacrament of marriage.

The publication says the author plans a third volume on 'how we should celebrate the Sacraments in today's Church'. I think that if it follows in the steps of the first two volumes it will be welcome, provided one keeps in mind that this work is meant more as a chat on the Sacraments than as a theological exposition.

JOSEPH MIFSUD LIC.D.

*The Jerusalem Bible*, Standard Edition, London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966, Pp. xvi + 2045, £5. 10s.

THE publishers' decision to advertize again *The Jerusalem Bible* last spring was taken in time, since *The New English Bible* was to appear soon. It would certainly be a pity, if this work were to lose its original appeal as soon as a new translation of the Bible is published. *The Jerusalem Bible*, Standard edition, is already four years old, but it is not late to have a new look at it. After the publication of *The New English Bible*, it has become imperative to revise, if necessary, our judgement on *The Jerusalem Bible*.

The complete edition of *The Jerusalem Bible* costs three times as much as *The New English Bible*. This difference in price is justified. The attention of the makers of *The New English Bible* was solely con-

centrated on the production of a translation of the whole Bible in current English which keeps as close to the original as possible. The Jerusalem Bible remains valuable for the introductions it contains to each book of the Bible and for the copious notes and cross-references which make it a useful guide to an easy and precise understanding of the general meaning of each of the books and the particular meaning of almost each verse of the Bible. The introductions and notes are with minor variations and revisions a translation of those which appear in *La Bible de Jerusalem* and they, therefore, have the authority of the French Dominican experts behind them. One of the fundamental principles in the interpretation of the Bible is that the sacred authors are not concerned primarily, and sometimes not even secondarily, with the history of man and of Israel but with the religious significance of history. The introductions to the books of the Bible in The Jerusalem Bible are all based on this fundamental principle. As the religious aspect of history, however, cannot be adequately understood if it is not seen within the historical context in which it occurs and to which it inseparably belongs, the historical background cannot be ignored without at the same time renouncing to a clear understanding of the religious significance of the events narrated. The historical comments which The Jerusalem Bible makes are thus very relevant.

Very often the introductions give a short, but very useful, explanation of some of the more important problems about the content and authenticity of the books. The introduction to the Pentateuch, for instance, contains a summary and an evaluation of the most notable theories advanced in the past and today to explain the content, division and origin of the first five books of the Bible. Similar problems exist with regard to the books of the New Testament; they have become particularly acute today, after the extensive application of 'form history' by Protestant theologians. Fortunately, The Jerusalem Bible, Standard Edition, goes far enough towards solving such problems for the benefit of the average priest and layman. To take one example, the introduction to the Synoptic Gospels explains in a nutshell the Synoptic problem, the sources, the historical value and the problem of inerrancy. Besides this general introduction there are short introductions to Matthew, Mark and Luke which discuss their common and their distinctive features.

Worthy of note are the footnotes which bring to the notice of the read-

er most of the recent opinions of exegetes on nearly every verse of the Scriptures. Sometimes, however, certain crucial texts are not explained, as, for instance, the exceptive clause in Matthew 5:32. What does 'except for fornication' mean? Considerable literature has been written on this phrase in recent times especially in connection with the problem of divorce and, therefore, a comment on this debatable phrase would have been anything but expected. This may be an indication that the footnotes in The Jerusalem Bible, in spite of their relative abundance, need revision and expansion in certain instances in order to meet the requirements of the present day. Fortunately, such instances are few in number and may well wait a little longer for a new edition.

The marginal references are very useful, since they refer the reader to other similar passages (or to footnotes attached to them) and thus help him to deepen his knowledge of the text in question. To save the reader from unnecessary loss of time in comparing one text with another The Jerusalem Bible employs a number of symbols showing either that a literary link exists between two passages or that a particular text will be used or quoted in a later book or that a note or further references will be found relevant to a particular passage.

The index of Biblical themes is an economical way of finding how a particular theme developed in the Bible. The history of such fundamental themes like 'authority', 'freedom', 'hope', 'people of God', 'community' and 'deliverance' can be traced very easily by using this index which covers a range of about four hundred and fifty themes. The Jerusalem Bible has besides eight maps, some of them in colour, a chronological table, a note on the calendar and another on measurements and money.

The present reviewer can only make some passing and on the whole very haphazard remarks on the translation itself of the Bible. About the translation of the Old Testament I must say in the first place that the general impression one gets is that, although as a general rule the English text is based on the original Hebrew text, when difficulties arose, the translators had recourse to the French translation. The Preface itself tells us that the English text owes a great debt to the people who worked to produce *La Bible de Jerusalem*.

The most obvious difficulty in translating the Old Testament in current English is the frequent use of the Hebrew connective particle 'we' meaning 'and'. Unless considerable attention were made to avoid the

repetitive, sometimes monotonous, tone which the Hebrew construction often creates, the translation would sound strange to modern ears. The Jerusalem Bible eliminates this difficulty by reducing the number of connectives considerably and by translating according to the requirements of the English idiom.

There is another difficulty in translating Hebrew namely the generality of some of the words in that language. To translate such words satisfactorily in a modern language like English some guessing has to be made. A typical example is the word 'behemoth' in Job 40:15 which literally means 'beasts'. From the description given in Job 40:15 ff., it is evident that a particular beast is meant so that the translator has to find a name to identify the beast to which the description corresponds. The Jerusalem Bible leaves it 'behemoth' and explains in a footnote that the reference here is to the 'hippopotamus'. The description, however, appears to suit better the 'crocodile', as The New English Bible in fact more sensibly translates.

As for the translation of the Pslams, The Jerusalem Bible is sometimes inferior to The New English Bible. Take, for instance, Psalm 102 and compare the two translations. In The Jerusalem Bible verse 5 reads 'my bones stick through my skin', while in The New English Bible it reads 'my skin hangs on my bones'. The Jerusalem Bible translates verse 9 as 'ashes are the bread that I eat, what I drink I lace with tears' which is definitely inferior to the translation given by The New English Bible: 'I have eaten ashes for bread and mingled tears with my drink'.

In spite of such deficiencies, the translation of the Old Testament is very well done on the whole and it is unfair to open ones eyes to a number of defects and close them to the merits of the work as a whole. Unfortunately, we cannot here enter into the merits which the translation of the Old Testament in The Jerusalem Bible certainly has; we hope that the readers would find these for themselves.

With regard to the translation of the New Testament, the merits of the translation of the Synoptic Gospels are undoubtedly outstanding, since it brings out very well the common and the distinctive features of the style of the three Evangelists. This must have been very difficult to do when translating Mark who uses rough and often faulty Greek. The translation of St. John's Gospel is not, however, up to our expectations. We are taking into account the fact that the simplicity of John's style and its richness of symbolism are not easy to reproduce

into current English idiom, but there are surely cases which betray superficial attention on the part of the translators. I take an example from the Prologue, 1:10 which is translated as follows: 'He was in the world that had its being through Him and the world did not know Him'. In this context, the Greek conjunction 'kai' which is commonly translated by 'and' has a concessive meaning which could be conveyed better by such words as 'though' or 'yet'. To be fair with the people who translated St. John we should say that sometimes they have translated better than The New English Bible, as in 1:13 where the word 'power' is more suitable than 'right' (as NEB translates) for the Greek 'exousia'.

The Jerusalem Bible, Standard Edition, is not old enough to be discarded.

G.P.

KEVIN CONDON (ed.), *The Mercier New Testament – A Version of the New Testament in Modern English; Part I: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; Cork (The Mercier Press), 1970, pp. 384, incorporating 100 plates. 21s/-.*

PERHAPS not unlike The New English Bible (N.T., 1961; O.T., 1970) or The New Testament in Today's English Version (1966), this Catholic edition of the Gospels presents the New Testament in the down-to-earth colloquial language of the people. A fresh translation from the original Greek text, it is at once very simple and very readable.

One is struck by the terseness and aptness of the title at the head of each of the four Gospels – 'Matthew's Account,' for instance, in place of the hackneyed 'The Gospel according to Matthew.' The wording adopted for Mt 1:19 is: 'decided to divorce her,' rather than 'resolved to send her away.' For 'full of grace' (Lk 1:28), this Catholic edition reads: 'God's favoured one.' The passage Mk 16:9-20 is enclosed within square brackets.

The translator has set himself the task of showing up, we are told, 'the contrast between the ideal of the New Testament and the reality of the world around us' (prefatory note). This is admirably brought out in the illustrations accompanying the text. A wide range of subjects characterizes the 100 full-page plates, all of them envisaging the hu-

man situation and inspiring devotion to human interests. A phrase, printed in bold type, stands out in the Gospel text on the opposite page so as to serve as caption to the photograph facing that page. If, therefore, every one of those illustrations has been calculated to afford the modern reader much room for thought, the heading for each passage or division of the text itself happens no less to be a telling phrase, generally quoted from ancient or modern poetry. There is all this and much else to recommend a handy edition like this one.

The insertion of a map or two would have helped the reader to follow the Gospel story in its contemporary setting no less than in our own. But, then, even such details as cross references (or, as we know them, parallel passages) have been left out altogether, which shows that the editor has thought of them as falling outside the scope of a work meant for the man-in-the-street.

J. SCHEMBRI LIC.S.S.

WALTER M. ABBOTT, S.J., Rabbi ARTHUR GILBERT, ROLFE LANIER HUNT, & J. CARTER SWAIM (edd.), *The Bible Reader – An Interfaith Interpretation*, with notes from Catholic, Protestant and Jewish Traditions and references to Art, Literature, History and the Social Problems of Modern Man; London (Geoffrey Chapman Ltd) & New York (Bruce Books), 1969, pp. xxiv + 995. Price 25s.

COMMON Bibles are the order of the day. This edition, therefore, though originally planned a year ahead of Vatican II, follows now in the wake of the Constitution 'Dei Verbum.' This is only a Lectionary, however – and a very good one, for that matter. As such, it does not present the reader with a full-length Bible. And yet, all the books of the O.T. and the N.T. are represented: the O.T. deutero-canonical books form a group by themselves, safely relegated to pages 577-636 which immediately follow the Twelve Minor Prophets.

The preface to this handsome volume explains that 'if we know more about each other, we can hope to live together in harmony:' to be sure, 'we often hear more of our differences, but we should know also what we have in common.' This oecumenical principle has guided the editors – who hail from different denominations – in their selection of passages as well as in their introductions, essays, and notes. Catholic, Pro-

testant, and Jew are thus afforded a means of understanding each other better.

The notes, useful to readers on both sides of the Atlantic, enable us to understand our history and institutions, our literature and culture. This aim is never lost sight of. If anything (and this is a good point), the editors simply wish to whet the reader's appetite for more. 'We hope,' they write, 'that our selections will send you to the complete Bible in your preferred translation and to your chosen religious leaders for further information and insights.'

The Bible text here is not itself a new translation. The Revised Standard Version is sometimes followed; at other times the text adopted is that of the Confraternity Edition or that of the Jewish Publication Society. Six excursuses and an analytical index enhance the value of the present work.

J. SCHEMBRI LIC.S.S.

J. Duncan M. DERRET, *Law in the New Testament*, London 1970, Darton, Longman & Todd, xlvi, 503 pp. £7.0.0.

THE purpose of this work is not to study the nature of Christ's Law or the concept of Law in the New Testament, much as its title would at first suggest, but to speak 'about law in the texts of the New Testament. Law obtrudes these somewhat markedly, and it is interesting to know why, and to try to find the significance of the legal allusions with which the gospels and epistles are peppered. In particular, continues the writer, I want to interest lawyers in something theological, and to interest theologians in the everyday law of Jesus' world'.

Hence the writer brings to bear on his subject his own legal training, drawing on legal material from the whole oriental world, ancient and modern, to explain a good deal of allusions and references to laws and customs current in Jesus' days. Certainly it is highly rewarding to have these texts studied by a lawyer, not withstanding the natural inclination of legal experts to introduce legal jargon.

A typical study is that of the marriage-divorce clauses in the synoptic gospels, Mt. 19, 1-9; Mk. 10, 1-12; Luke 16, 18. The legal data are systematically surveyed, detailed examination follows and finally con-



clusions are drawn from them. The upshot of these particular texts is that Jesus is neither approving nor disapproving this permission of Moses, but positively approving the Jewish legal tradition of the time based on the principle that once a one-flesh relationship has been created by intercourse between a man and a woman, that relationship exists for ever; hence a husband has the right to divorce his adulterous wife, for she had established a new one-flesh relationship with another man; otherwise he would be committing a *na'af*, a sexual irregularity, if he has intercourse with her. He has to release her, but he has no right to marry another one.

This solution is rather subtle and complicated, but it gives one an idea how the writer goes about his self-set job of bringing the law to bear on the gospels text.

It is a work valuable for the legal material contained in it and the way such material is evaluated and brought to shed light on the gospel text. One would have preferred a simpler language, less technical and less parentheses, so that the theologian would profit more and more. It is refreshing to see biblical texts studied by professionals other than theologians or biblical scholars; indeed theologians should leave such preliminary studies to experts in the various fields. The turn of the theologian would follow namely to evaluate the results from the theological point of view.

C. SANT, S.S.D.

PIERRE BENOIT, *The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, tr. by Benet Weatherhead, London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1969. Pp. X + 342. 50/-.

THIS is an analytical enquiry into the Biblical accounts of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ for the non-specialist. It is the fruit of talks on the subject given on various occasions by the one of the foremost Biblical Scholars of today. It starts with the narrative of the Agony up to the Ascension of the Lord into the glory of the Father. Each episode in the life of the Lord during the last three days of his visible sojourn here on earth is examined and analysed at three levels: first the text is examined from the literary point of view bringing out the

differences and resemblances of the four gospel texts of Mt., Mk., Lk. and Jh.; then at the historical level, namely the evaluation of the historical value or historicity of the narratives, rendering possible for the reader to find out what is really historical and what is literary embellishment or artifice to emphasize a point; then finally the searching for the revealed truth conveyed by these events themselves.

To take one example how this technique works out: the narrative of the agony of Our Lord at Gethsemani. First the texts are examined. This textual examination leads one to the conclusion that Luke and John emphasized the human weakness of Jesus, and the help given him by the Father; this weakness in Luke is emphasized by the episode of the sweat of blood, — this text is emphatically declared to be authentic on literary and theological grounds. Mk. and Mt., embodying two independent traditions combined together: emphasized one the soteriological importance of the event on one hand; the other, the oldest one, the need for the Christian to unite with Christ in his sufferings. Thus the theological riches of the all too familiar texts are brought out and enlivened by practical applications through a method rigorously conducted and controlled.

Thus one realizes how the early Church and her preachers examined and learned from the various episodes of the life of Our Lord in the light of their own needs and experience; thus the modern exegete must not consider the biblical texts as so much archaic writings, but as lively must be applied enlivened and examined in the light of everyday contemporary experience. Only thus can the Christian message be formulated in comprehensible language for the contemporary man. This work is a model of its kind in this field.

PROFESSOR C. SANT S.S.D.

*The Theology of St. Paul* and *Theology and Spirituality* in the Theology Today Series, (Mercier Press) Cork. 1970. 7s.6d per volume.

THESE two books (numbers 16 and 18 respectively) in the Theology Today series should be of great help to those educated Catholics who want to go a bit deeper into theology and its contemporary presentation. After so much literature about the relationship between theology and

spirituality, one finds the presentation of the question in the second book very refreshing. Fr. Dalrymple succeeds in his efforts to show that spirituality follows from the Christian response which is our faith. He first presents the dogmatic facts of God's self-revelation in Christ and then the pattern of spirituality these create, not in the abstract, but in the concrete circumstances of everyday life. He shows how the personal development of a Christian grows from within himself, leading him to the need for prayer and contemplation which he unifies with his secular life. I thought the bibliography at the back was particularly interesting.

The other volume serves us as an inducement to the reading of the Epistles of St. Paul themselves while it gives us a very interesting and in-depth introduction to them. Dom Wansbrough, while taking the epistles in chronological order, manages to explain the main themes in Paul's thought. He shows how these Epistles, being written before any of the Gospels, expressed and conditioned the early Christians' views about certain problems, about death (in Thessalonians), divided communities (First Corinthians) caused by the diversity of members, the Jewish Law and Paul's stand making the new Christian religion no longer a sect within Judaism but independent in its own right (in Galatians and Romans), and then the Pauline vision of unity under Christ (in Colossians and Ephesians), while Philippians and Second Corinthians are considered as collected letters and the letters to Timothy and Titus are seen as Paul's last will and testament. With an appendix on Hebrews, this little volume, with its splendid synthesis of Paul's main ideas, is great value for money.

ANTHONY PORTELLI B.D.

*You and the Church.* By John Marshall M.D. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1970. Pp. 96. 9s.

VATICAN II expressed the hope, in its Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World of Today, that 'many laymen will receive an appropriate formation in the sacred sciences, and that some will develop and deepen these studies by their labours'. Dr. J. Marshall, whose name is not new in the field of the lay apostolate, particularly that of medico-moral writing and marriage counselling, has now extended his

efforts into the domain of the sacred sciences. In line with his conviction that 'knowledge of Theology is not to be confined to a group of professionals' (p.95) and that simple theology need not be bad theology' (p.94), he undertakes in this small but useful work the theologian's task of putting into focus current problems in the life of the Church.

No one would deny that the problems discussed here are the burning problems agitating the post-Conciliar Church. A list of the more important questions asked and answered in simple, straightforward language will, in my opinion, go a long way towards demonstrating the relevance of Dr. Marshall's study. He asks, among other things: What is the Church? What does the phrase 'People of God' mean? What does 'the priesthood of the faithful' mean? How and where did the Church learn what it believes and teaches? Infallibility? Has the Church through the mercy of God been preserved from error in its non-infallible as well in its infallible teaching? What is 'the crisis of authority' all about? What is to be done for the future of the Church?

As I see it, the only way to do justice to Dr. Marshall's answers to these questions is by reading them fully in his own words. They will not fail to enlighten both the reader who is in the Church but feels himself disturbed by its crisis and the reader who is outside the Church but feels himself interested in its vitality.

PROF. C. MUSCAT S.TH.D.

*Violent for Peace.* By Roger Schutz, Prior of Taizé. Translated by C.J. Moore. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1970. Pp. 144. 15s.

A new addition to the ever-growing volume of the so-called 'theology of violence'? Well, in a sense, yes: but with a difference. In this book, Roger Schutz takes a bold look at the world in which we are living. But he does so through the eyes of young people, both students and workers who lived in the turbulent days of the fateful month of May 1968 in France and elsewhere. The world which he sees – 'a world of segregation and starvation' – stands before him as a challenge to every christian who is fully conscious of the whole and real significance of the name that he bears, or, better still, of the reality that he is.

Is there a hope for the world of ours? It is the view of Schutz, shared by hundreds of young people who had gone together to Taizé, that the only hope lies in aggression: not, however, in the aggression of the rioter but in the 'aggression of the peacemaker' (the paradox that, in Schutz own words, sums up perhaps, the whole spirit of the Gospel).

The violent peacemaker is creative, not destructive. His aggression is 'a violent protest against the blindness of Christian conscience when it tolerates hatred and injustice.' In other words, the violent peacemaker is the Christian who lives the faith, who looks forward with the optimism born of hope and perseveres in intimacy with the life of the resurrected Christ, who commits himself with love and joy to create fellowship and brotherhood among men. Such is Roger Schutz' prophetic vision of the violence that is capable of bringing about peace through charity and unity.

A very stimulating book for the reader who is prepared to agree with the author that 'the Gospels are not for the faint-hearted'. This book should lead to serious reflection and to action.

PROF. C. MUSCAT S.TH.D.

SEBASTIAN MOORE & KEVIN MAGUIRE, *The Experience of Prayer*, London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1969, 130 pp., 16/-.

FRANKLY, for this reviewer, this book was a big disappointment: neither relevant nor meaningful, not only not helpful, but often unintelligible: 'Prayer is you surrendering to the unknown (p. 11)... Since the unknown is a most personal affair, my description of it is going to be personal to myself (p. 12)... Can you not see that the idea of prayer as consisting in talking to someone else (God) about something else (your problem) is absurd? Try not to get between yourself and God. (p. 13)... The people who are unbearable to us in their beauty are those who have felt the touch of the unknown, who have been brushed by this darkness, and have responded personally to this touch (p. 15)... The body of Christ, which we are, is our communication in the unknown, plunged into the fire of the eternal spirit (p. 16)...' One could go on indefinitely and one shudders to think what was made of it all by those unfortunate young ladies on whom it was first inflicted (p. 9). To be fair, to these

quotations from Dom Sebastian, one must add these from Dom Kevin: 'Prayer... is essentially a reflective awareness of the total situation of things seen in their truest proportions (p.64)... It is a way of being wrapped up... in an awareness of what is most important to me (p.65).

This book is made up of three parts: an introduction (8pp.) by Peter Harvey, ten pages by Dom Sebastian ('God is a New Language') Moore, followed by 25 pages of poems by the same, eleven pages on prayer by Kevin Maguire, plus 37 pages of his poems, capped by a 20-page essay entitled 'Unicom', also by Kevin Maguire, a sort of cross between the Apocalypse and C.S. Lewis's 'Perelandra'.

The authors are English Benedictines of Downside, trying to grapple with the problem of finding a unifying principle for their compartmentalized lives of prayer, work, recreation, and human relationships. Prayer in particular they found divorced from all the rest. It seems that Dom Sebastian, at least, was not given much help on how to pray, so it seems all the stranger for him to dismiss all that has been written on the subject with a 'how little guidance for prayer there is in what has been written so far' (p.9). This book does not seem to get us much farther.

The case for and against 'images' in prayer has been put before and better by Dom John Chapman and his Jesuit critics; it is strange that the poems, which are presented as an expression of prayer, and which are more or less beautiful, should be themselves so rich in imagery and imagination.

One cannot help comparing this book with Thomas Merton's for example, 'Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander', but that perhaps would not be fair: there is simply no comparison.

One can only express the hope that others may find in this book what reviewer regrets he cannot.

J.P.B.

*Matters of Life and Death*: edited by E.F. Shotter, published by Darton, Longman and Todd, London, 1970. Price 15s (75p.).

FEW things matter more to you and me than life and death. 'What is life?' 'When is death?' are questions that have been largely repeatedly

asked and discussed in scientific and medical circles as well as at various levels by non-professional people. New medical and surgical techniques capable of prolonging and preserving lives for which only a few years ago there could be no hope, such as resuscitation methods, artificial respirators, organ transplants, in addition to the claim of biologists to be able to manipulate at some future date the human genes (genetic engineering), have created at least as many problems as they claim to have solved. Many will surely recall the outcry raised in Britain when a heart-transplant assistant surgeon remarked on television that what the transplant surgeons needed at the present moment was a sufficient supply of 'living dead people'. The enigmatic remark and the reaction it caused reflects the serious preoccupation with such questions as: should therapeutic intervention be an unqualified rule in the practice of clinical medicine? Is there a moral obligation to maintain certain bodily functions artificially with machines when the brain has definitely ceased to be active? And when and how precisely can this point of no return be ascertained? The answers to questions like these concern not only medical people but also theologians, lawyers, legislators and, not least, the potential patient, that is you and me, who may sometime be desperately in need of a heart or kidney to survive, or who may be declared hopeless cases and classed as potential organ donors. One remark at this juncture how relevant has become the plea made by the American psychiatrist Dr. Frank Ayd (Jr.) some years ago that 'never has there been such a great need for moral and ethical guidance in medicine, because doctors are being taught by word and example that the most important part of medicine is science with less emphasis on the soul'. *Matters of Life and Death* has been published with the explicit aim of filling a gap in this area of medical ethics. It contains contributions by Professor Francis Camps, Dr. Cicely Saunders, Dr. J. Dominican, Dr. C. Murray Parkes, Professor R.Y. Calne, Surgeon W.J. Dempster and Professor of Theology G.R. Dunstan, with an introduction by the Rev. E.F. Shotter, director of the London Medical Group, under whose auspices the work is published. The contributors formulate or re-formulate the basic questions, propose tentative solutions, invite further discussion and debate; in a word provide or provoke food for valid thought. Many readers, including myself, will disagree with Dempster's plea for the legal sanction of 'planned euthanasia' of hopeless potential organ donors, based on his more danger-fraught appeal to read

just ethics to meet the current scientific necessities and sanction such adjustment by legislation through Parliament.

PROFESSOR C. MUSCAT S.TH.D.

*Teilhard Reassessed*, edited by Anthony Hanson, Darton, Longman & Todd, London 1970. 42s.

Is Teilhard de Chardin 'a man of tremendous vision welding the accumulated scientific knowledge of mankind in one harmonious whole in the light of Christianity', or 'a pseudo-scientific quack who muddled false mysticism with genuine science'?

TEILHARD REASSESSED tries to answer this question through a symposium of critical studies in the thought of Teilhard de Chardin attempting an evaluation of his place in contemporary Christian thinking.

The symposium consists of eight essays, six of which discuss those areas where Teilhard has undergone the fiercest criticism, while the remaining two try to tackle the difficult task of placing him in the context of modern Christian thinking.

Has the book succeeded in its aim? Does it give us an answer to the question whether Teilhard is a great prophet of our times or just 'a naive optimist' or worse still a pseudo-scientific quack?

It is not possible in a brief review to discuss the eight essays in the book: one can only point out the conclusions to which the symposium leads us.

Certainly Teilhard does not stand in serious and irreconcilable opposition to traditional Christian belief: he was a loyal member of the Society of Jesus, a priest with a deep devotion to the Eucharist, a believer who renewed daily his consecration to Our Lord.

He was a distinguished palaeontologist in his own right, but we cannot consider him as a scientist, in the sense that his speculations about the course and future of evolution are a contribution to science: many scientists in fact consider that in Teilhard scientific rigour is at certain vital points substituted by fragile speculation.

He is not a philosopher in the strict sense of the word as he has nothing to say about the technical side of philosophy, i.e. epistemol-



ogy, and yet he dedicated his whole life to providing an up to date natural theology for Christians.

His doctrine on the cosmic Christ deserves for him the title of a pioneer in theological speculations on a subject which is both difficult and mysterious; and yet on other aspects of theology he is very unsatisfactory. One may mention his ideas on the place of evil in a world of evolution: he never actually tackled the problem of evil systematically, but in his various writings he seems to contradict himself on this problem, sometimes stressing its great importance and at other times claiming it to be non-existent, sometimes maintaining that evil in some of its forms and hailing it as a friend.

His christology has been proved basically sound by many of his friends and admirers although there has been a ban on his theological and religious writings for he showed an 'openness' which was rather suspect in the time he lived and wrote. In fact in his christology we can find echoes of the christology of the greatest Protestant thinkers of today: Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Paul Tillich. Bonhoeffer develops a christology which speaks directly to man in his modern world faced by modern problems: his christology has a social, ecclesiastical and political meaning. Tillich's christology is philosophical in character and faces new and profound questions fearlessly. Teilhard presents us with a supremely religious christology. Bonhoeffer brings christology down to earth, Tillich shows us the unanswered questions and implications of Teilhard's vision, while Teilhard himself provides a corrective to the others by helping us to see and feel the glory of christology for ourselves.

Teilhard is therefore a prophet who shows us how to set Christian theology on a course which allows for both openness and fundamental Christian belief. He stood for a Christocentric theology, rooted in Catholic practice and yet he felt completely free to explore the wide areas of knowledge and belief with which the world confronts us today. He was ready to see Christ at work in other religions and he looked towards the future with optimism. He considered the Christian faith not as a fortress to be defended but a light shining on the world of the future.

JOSEPH LUPI D.D.

*The Dreamer not the Dream: Studies in the Bi-Polar Church*; Sebastian Moore and Kevin Maguire; DLT – London – 1970; 159 pp. 20sh.

THIS book, by two priests together in a Liverpool parish, tries to focus on the problem of the church's relevance in the modern world. Fr. Moore thinks it is essential to see that in today's psychological transformation man's awareness is no longer totally polarised round the things in the world around him but also round himself. Vatican II tried to animate with the new spirit that same body that had been ruled by obedience before, but this, in Fr. Moore's opinion, is wrong; we have to live with a bi-polar concept of the church, at one pole, that of the sign, is where what the church really is is most affirmed, but this reality is not there 'cash-ed'; at the other pole, that of the common life of the spirit, there may be little or no affirmation but much of the reality itself. This is the book's central theme and the author's preoccupation and they try in different individual ways to offer ideas and solutions to it. As a book which tries to put down in writing and to discuss the fluid situation in the aftermath of the Council, it may appear to some to have some particular value, but it would not interest Catholics in general. The fact that the new liturgy, for example, does not take into account the fact that the worshipping assembly is not the human community does not strictly interest the large number of the faithful who go to church with no such problems in mind; I would have preferred reading how, within the limits of the amount of experimentation allowed in the liturgy, something can be done about this, even if in an effort at having bi-polarised liturgical prayers. It is only after a lot of time and a certain amount of study that the average Catholic will arrive at the conclusion that the 'new' mass is stilted colloquialism. And besides, just to mention another point, there is nothing to prove that the majority of the faithful would like some new elements of mystery to take the place of that amount cleared away by the use of the vernacular; it would be enough to place emphasis on the one deep Mystery present in every liturgical celebration. Apart from all this, the book represents an effort by two priests to explain their thoughts about the period of transition the church is going through at the moment. This is a book to be read slowly by those who feel that knowing what others think about the present time of the church helps them to form ideas and to keep abreast of developments in contemporary thought about the concrete being of the church.

*The Christian Priesthood*, edited by N. LASH J. RHYMER, Darton, Longman & Todd; London 1970; pp 308; price 42s (£2-10).

'THE Christian Priesthood' is a collection of papers read at the Downside Symposium. The theme discussed is clearly indicated in the title of the work edited by Nicholas Lash and Joseph Rhymer. The study is divided in sections treating the theme from the biblical historical sociological liturgical and ecclesiological point of view, with an eye on the future role the ministry should take – which seems to be the 'terminus ad quem' of the whole book. The final call is for change, renewal, a daring search for new models, new ways of community worship. However the purpose of the book, as Nicholas Lash puts it, is 'not primarily to convey information (let alone to provide the answers), but to help other people see the problem.....' And of the problems arises because, as sociologist Robert Towler points out, the 'occupational position of the priest is not clearly evident in our society.' So the problem: what is the role of the priest? A solution to this problem must be found, before we can draw up lines for future developments in the ministry. The same is valid as far as Seminary training goes.

The problem of the priesthood is treated deeply, so deeply that it was found necessary to touch a 'whole range of questions concerning the meaning of revelation, the historicity of christian truth and the nature of theological discourse.'

The points raised in this book should give rise to rather deep thinking. The viewpoints of various Christian denominations are incorporated in this study. A short preface introduces each major essay which together with an index at the end, is of great use and indicates at first glance the high standard of the work.

C.C.