

the conferences of the day. Later, a few prayers were added which, following the spiritual exercises, attempted to express in words the dialogue of the soul with God. In the foreword 'it is hoped that these prayers may stimulate communal worship during retreats, but they may be found even more useful for all those who, according to our Lord (Matt. 6. 6) go into their inner room and shut the door upon themselves, and so pray to their Father in secret'. Most of us, I think, find praying a difficult thing to learn, and a difficult subject to discuss, and what makes this book in a special way both embarrassing and attractive, beyond its thoughtfulness and strong theological sense, is the way in which most of the prayers, especially Karl's, unfold by explicating this very bewilderment we feel before God in our attempts at prayer, and advancing by this means to an excoriating honesty and abandonment in faith before the Sacrament. It is easier to be silent and listen when you have reflexively confessed your own incapacity. This is evident in the second prayer, for instance, called 'Before God'—no spiritual anodyne, but the utterance of a profound and disciplined faith. This pattern is a traditional one in Christian prayer. One has only to think of the psalms; the cry of the hard-pressed for help, waiting for God, the renewal of grace. In fact, death and resurrection, the transcendent pattern for all prayer, as for all the Christian way.

This makes it important to take account of a book about the Resurrection, but it is no longer possible to read any book on this subject without making a comparison with Durrwell's great work, and the gaudy cover on Mgr Chevrot's book (208 pages) suggested that it would come off badly. The author is already well known for his liturgical books such as 'Our Mass' and this anonymous translation of *La Victoire de Pâques* is a different kind of book to 'The Resurrection'; a series of meditations, more obviously devotional, simpler, and firmly scriptural. Divided into two parts, the first is called 'Glory after the Cross' and reflects on the events following on the Resurrection; the second, 'The Liturgy of Paschaltide' makes use of the liturgical forms of the Easter celebrations. The Preface of Easter Sunday, along with the Epistles and Gospels from Easter Sunday to Pentecost are used, one text to each chapter, as the starting point of discussion. But is there anybody to whom this might be recommended in preference to Durrwell, even if they were likely to find the latter hard going by comparison? I suspect not, though this is really a very good and useful little book.

ALEXANDER NEWMAN, O.F.

JEANNE JUGAN, by Mgr Francis Trochu: published by Emmanuel Vitte and obtainable from The Little Sisters of the Poor, Portobello Road, London, N.I.

'Jeanne! Jeanne!' How often that cry must have echoed through the 'Big Basement' home for the aged sick and infirm run by Jeanne Jugan, foundress

of the Little Sisters of the Poor. At the age of 46 Soeur Marie of the Cross, as she was to be known, began her work by giving her own bed in an attic to a 'helpless old blind woman'.

Mgr Trochu has given us a rare historical document, vibrating with the genuine pulse of great founders. Gratitude is due also for the excellence of the translation—the explanatory footnotes and a number of interesting details to a work already well-documented.

Cardinal Brossais Saint-Marc, the French Academy and Charles Dickens joined the countless poor of France in extolling Jeanne. God's work is invariably stamped with his sign; the greater the work, the deeper the impress. She knew the value of humility and this gift and the opportunity to practise it were accorded her in full measure. Now her daughters are praying earnestly for her beatification. It is to be hoped that through this re-edition the name of Jeanne Jugan will become as well-known in this country as are the Little Sisters of the Poor themselves.

SR M. NINIAN, O.P.

THE FIRST URSULINE, by M. Riguet, S.J.; Burns and Oates, 15s.

This well-documented biography of a saint, whose life will interest many young readers on both sides of the Atlantic, is presented in an attractive and colourful style. The author gives an interesting build-up of life in and around Brescia at the bridging of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Perhaps St Angela is less well known than is one branch of her family, the Ursulines of the Roman Union, an off-shoot of the monastic Ursulines established by St Charles Borromeo. Her original sisterhood still flourishes in Italy in the person of some 16,000 Angelines, who keep to the Saint's original plan of a quasi-secular institute.

This book would have appealed to a far wider public had the author let the facts speak for themselves. Frequently the reader is gently persuaded into a way of thinking that places the story-teller in the sights rather than the saint. It is difficult to decide who the intended readers are. Those wanting or needing a wealth of commentary will be out of their depth with the Guelfs and Ghibelines and contrariwise the older readers may get impatient with digressions that hardly seem relevant, or even be mystified by the idea that what was once an ambition to become a saint shrinks to 'a fat envelope at the end of a week or a high sounding cheque each month'.

These reflections will not take away from the readableness of the book. The attractiveness of the saint herself, a saint for today, whose whole life spells *Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum* will be felt by many, perhaps for the first time, for others in a fuller measure.

SR M. NINIAN, O.P.