

indicate this and that familiar trend — the fantastic spread of discoveries, the revolution in the kitchen, satellites and such like. Talking more generally they describe the attitudes which have formed this world; they discuss technology, socialization and more general articulate themes like Communism. Their conclusion is that this is a world that 'stands on its own feet'; and that seems to be a fair enough judgment: it characterizes this age in activities like philosophy, literature and political thinking. It underlines the fact that it is odd nowadays to talk of a 'created' world; the only creativity that makes sense is the human sort. Short of a bloody revolution, there doesn't seem much that the estranged and disaffected can do about this, for we are all involved in it in the things we do and the language we use. There is not, as some old-fashioned apologists seemed to suggest, some other world we could live in, some other language we could use for proving a higher dependency. Even if it were possible or desirable, we haven't got the equipment for creating the sort of society we would like to preach to.

Just to make this sort of general observation about present society is enough to show the very critical state that our missionary activities are in. The authors make no bones about our failures, and the situation, they show, is rapidly deteriorating. They recommend a completely new attitude to missions, working right through the old framework, from the enclosed Catholic parishes at home to the general policy in the foreign missions. They describe some new trends — experiments in Africa, the example of Charles de Foucauld, and there is a very moving and informative chapter on the Worker Priests. Surely that movement was the closest the Church has come to the starting point of this whole problem. It is the one attempt on a large scale to realize the crisis activity of preaching the gospel to a world that is standing on its own feet. It is significant that our greatest achievement so far has been a failure, and that this failure must be our starting point.

CHARLES BOXER, O.P.

THE MANUAL OF CATHOLIC PRAYER; Burns and Oates, 30s.

This manual contains the ordinary of the mass, the ritual of the sacraments and a comprehensive collection of prayers. There is some excellent material for prayer based on scriptures. Much use is made of the psalms; this is valuable for this fruitful source of private prayer has been neglected by the laity. The section on penance contains a selection of penitential prayers drawn from both Old and New Testaments, which are much more effective as prayer than some also to be found in this compilation which make the dry-eyed and probably only venial sinner say 'thy servant, who am overwhelmed by the storms of this world and in tears plead guilty to all manner of transgressions.' Considerable use has also been made in this manual of the early liturgies of both East and West. The liturgical and scriptural prayers included are much more suitable for prayer today than most of the vocal prayers made up by holy people, which tend to be flowery and emotional. The average Anglo-Saxon is not at home

with the baroque style; perhaps this is why Newman's prayers form an exception amongst those made up in the last few centuries. They are more effective, for his style is restrained and direct. One would not necessarily want to pray every word but the passages included form a useful basis for meditation.

Although there is a short section on meditation all the emphasis in this Manual is on set prayers. It is doubtful, however, whether many people find other people's prayers useful, however saintly the composer, apart from those taken from scripture and liturgy.

The introductions to each of the sections are good and point out the most important elements of the liturgy and Christian life. It is emphasized, for instance, that Advent is not just about the nativity but also about the coming of grace in our hearts and about the second coming. The introduction, however, to the mass reflects the individualistic emphasis of this compilation. The congregation are treated as individuals with no relationship one to the other and there is no idea of the mass as a corporate offering of the sacrifice. It is envisaged that some people will spend mass not participating in the worship of the community but in meditation or saying their own prayers, using the vocal prayers in this book as a starting off point. Although there is a reference to the desirability of taking an active part in the mass it is significant that the people's responses are not marked in special type, although this is common in modern missals. In the section of penance there is a welcome orientation of the examination of conscience on a positive basis, according to how far one has lived up to the virtues. One must, however, doubt the wisdom of advocating for general use the practice of including in confession sins already confessed and forgiven.

This book is based upon a Dutch prayer book and is intended to complement the Latin-English Missal from the same publishers. Prayers have been newly translated by the Editor, rendering them in the style of this missal, but all the scriptural passages are from the Knox version. Some passages read a little strangely. For instance, the response to the well-known prayer to the Holy Ghost, incorporating psalm 104 (103).30 reads 'thou wilt repeople the face of the earth' which has not the same meaning as 'renew'. One refers to an increase of number and the other to the turning of man to God. The use of 'repeople' presumably arises from the anxiety of the publishers to use on all occasions the Knox version which is to be regretted as so often something of the meaning of the original is lost in the effort to simplify.

Despite a good introduction on the 'sanctification of the home' the section 'Prayers for the family' is quite unusable in family life. The prayers are useless because their flowery language makes them even less suitable for children than for adults, quite apart from their length.

This manual does provide a rich anthology of prayer and everyone will find in it some prayers that would help them, but the sheer number is rather overwhelming. Perhaps a publication of this sort should be issued in loose-leaf form so that people can make their own current personal selection.

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