

It has its foundation in the Bible itself, both in the Old and in the New Testament. Its development by the Fathers was in the direct line of Apostolic tradition. This is one of those elements in tradition which has largely been lost to view: its recovery is like the discovery of a new world. There is matter for reflection and study here which may well transform our whole conception of liturgy and theology and take us back to the purest traditions of Christian life and thought.

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BRÉVIAIRE DES FIDÈLES. Par le R. P. A.-M. Henry, O.P. (Labergerie, 13 Rue de Touron, Paris; 2,550 francs.)

It might be said that one of the most pressing spiritual needs of our time is to make the resources of the Church's Liturgy available to those unequipped to deal with its incidental difficulties. There is the initial difficulty of the Latin language, closed to all but a small minority of the faithful. And even if that be surmounted, there remains the extraordinary complexity of liturgical practice and of that jungle of rubrical technicality which remains a forbidden land to the uninitiated. With the Missal, and even with the Ritual for the administration of the Sacraments, much has been recently achieved by translation and adaptation. But the Breviary remains outside the knowledge of practically all but those who are professionally obliged to its recitation. (And even some of them, especially religious Sisters with an imperfect understanding of Latin, must find it a difficult book to handle.)

The basic structure of the Divine Office is simple enough: the Sacred Scriptures, hymns and homilies, together with the commemoration of the saints, comprise a strong and recurring rhythm of prayer and praise which need by no means be confined to priests and religious. But Latin and the developed elaborations of a modern *Ordo* are in no sense essential to participation in the spirit of the Office. *Le Bréviaire des Fidèles* is designed to supply the needs of those (and they are surely very many) who wish to share in the prayer of the Church and who feel the need of its sober strength. As the Archbishop of Paris remarks, in his commendatory letter to Père Henry, the editor, the desire to participate in the Divine Office is a happy and appropriate sequel to the liturgical movement's work in urging the faithful to share more deeply in the eucharistic prayer of the Church. 'What better preparation could the faithful have for being present at Mass and participating in it?'

The Breviary, however, calls for a more radical adaptation than the Missal if its essential worth is to be freely available. Some adaptation is in any case more possible, since the intention behind such a book as *Le Bréviaire des Fidèles* is precisely to provide for those who are not bound to the canonical obligations of the Office (though the Archbishop

significantly indicates the suitability of such an adaptation for convents where the Office can be said in the vernacular). Here, then, are contained the essentials of the Breviary: the whole Psalter and the biblical Canticles, newly translated into a current but dignified prose; readings from the Sacred Scriptures for every day of the year; homilies from the Fathers on the Gospels of the time; brief biographies of the Saints throughout the year, followed by their collects (and sometimes by their proper hymns); and finally a common of saints, with hymns, antiphons and versicles. There is a useful 'Biblical and Liturgical Lexicon', giving sufficient explanation of such words as 'Seraphim', 'Alleluia' or 'holocaust', and an index of psalms and biblical passages makes reference easy. The innovations are in fact a return to the simplicity of the earlier office: the sequence of the scriptural readings is not interrupted by the proper of saints, and the readings themselves are coherently arranged and of an adequate length to mean more than reminders of the mere existence, for example, of the minor prophets.

There are four 'schemes' for using this Breviary, providing for the differing needs and opportunities of its users. The first 'scheme' supposes simply night prayers (three psalms, reading from Scripture, commemoration of the saint, canticle of our Lady, collect); the second, morning and night prayers (each having the same structure); the third, morning, mid-day, and night prayers (the mid-day prayer and adaptation of sext); and the fourth, seven 'hours' corresponding to the general pattern of the Divine Office itself. In this way the Breviary can be used by anyone, however limited his opportunities; and no doubt familiarity with the simpler forms will bring the desire to increase the extent of prayer. The various 'schemes' are clearly explained, and detached leaflets give a sufficient indication of how they work.

It will be realised that the appearance of this new Breviary is a liturgical event of great significance. Within one volume of 1,400 pages there is contained the essential wealth of the Breviary, arranged for the actual needs of people nowadays. And, by no means least important, the book is admirably printed in red and black, with a typographical ingenuity which compares with the best liturgical printing of our time. Père Henry has achieved a masterpiece of sane adaptation which should do an immense amount to deepen the spiritual resources of the faithful. It is to be hoped that an enterprising English publisher may have the courage to produce an English version of a book which would certainly meet a real need among English-speaking Catholics.

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

CHRIST AND TIME. By Oscar Cullmann. (S.C.M. Press; 18s.)

This is an English rendering of the second edition of Dr Cullmann's *Christus und die Zeit*. The S.C.M. Press has done a great service to