

instruction. The depth of loyalty that all M.R.A. workers feel towards the movement and their very discipline makes it hard to take action under this kind of discouragement. In fact many converts to the Church have separated from M.R.A. because of the way their friends in M.R.A. acted. In few cases has M.R.A. stood beside potential converts to help them through the difficulties they had to meet. Even when there has been no direct discouragement there has been a definite attitude of the whole thing being beside the point and unimportant.

The fact that several have left M.R.A., after years, for the Church and also that several Catholics who were associated for years with M.R.A. have also left, because of the discouragements that were constantly being put in the way of those turning to the Church, has no doubt been an influential factor in M.R.A.'s agreement to the terms suggested by Bishop Charrière (appendix 1, p. 20), and of an increasing desire for conciliation. Some of us would like to see a ninth point to the agreement, that those interested in the Church should in no way be discouraged and should be allowed to take instruction from the priest of their choice.

There is no doubt in my mind that these conditions really put into effect would go far to make Catholic co-operation possible and in a way that would be of real value to all concerned.

MARY RENNELL

PURITAN DEVOTION. ITS PLACE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN PIETY. By Gordon S. Wakefield. (Epworth Press; 21s.)

Mr Wakefield has done well to reveal to us so eirenicly how much genuine warmth and devotion characterized Puritan spirituality. A Catholic reading this volume will be surprised at the nearness of much of this devotion to Catholic spiritual literature. Mr Wakefield is himself of course a Methodist, and it is well known that Methodists, like the Puritans, and unlike some Protestant traditions, have always valued highly the ascetical life and the struggle for holiness. Realizing their nearness to medieval asceticism, the Puritans were often somewhat apologetic about their advocacy of mental prayer, examination of conscience, and various forms of discipline, protesting that they did not do it for the sake of gaining merit. At other times they openly recognized their indebtedness to, or agreement with, Catholic writers or forms of spirituality. Among the many Catholic writers whom they appreciated St Bernard of Clairvaux is outstanding. But Mr Wakefield is occasionally able to find a sympathetic parallel with St Francis of Sales. The book has made the most of such resemblances, since it is consciously written 'as a modest effort toward ecumenical understanding'.

In some respects, it appears to the reviewer that the Puritan analysis of the stages of the spiritual life is really nearer to the Catholic point of view than Mr Wakefield realizes. No Catholic would object, for instance, to the division of the spiritual life into justification, sanctification and glorification. On the contrary, this would be considered normal. Nor would any Catholic think that sanctification was not entirely dependent on God's grace. Mr Wakefield seems to think that a Catholic might hesitate to regard justification as a union with Christ. It is true that the Catholic would regard justification as the beginning of the union with Christ, where the Puritan regards it as the end. The Catholic would say that such union grows as, under the influence of God's action, the soul grows in sanctity; and that the union with Christ is not complete until one reaches the state of glory. Since the Puritan admits these stages, one wonders whether the fundamental distinction between the two positions is not one of terms.

Another important aspect of Puritan devotion, which it shares with Catholicism, is an intense devotion to our Lord's sacred humanity and passion. In this respect surely the Puritans are inheritors of the English medieval tradition. Mr Wakefield even finds a parallel in the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

It is gratifying to find a healthy Thomist attitude to the question of *agape* and *eros*. Mr Wakefield finds none of the stark opposition between divine love and human love that characterizes Nygren's work. 'It is surely *eros*', he writes, 'of which *agape* takes hold, and God himself is the true satisfaction of our desires, as well as our Saviour from sin.'

What distinguishes Catholic spirituality most from Puritanism is our sacramental life. I would like to say as a constructive contribution to understanding, and in no spirit of controversy, that Mr Wakefield and the Puritans he quotes have clearly no conception of what the sacraments, and especially the Eucharist, mean to a Catholic. Take the following passage. Mr Wakefield points out that among the Puritans, 'there is no danger of a cult of the sacred elements, because all the power and efficacy of the rite comes from him who reigns above and whose final triumph it foreshadows'. These words express a common judgment on the Catholic doctrine. No Catholic would normally speak of the Body and Blood of Christ as the 'sacred elements', at least not in connection with the word 'cult' or 'worship'. What we worship in the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ, present in their natural state in heaven, sacramentally present on the altar. The 'sacred species' merely focus our worship on that sacramental presence. I know that Mr Wakefield thinks what he quaintly calls the 'real absence' of Christ from the earth until the second coming to be inconsistent with his 'real presence' on the altar. But that should not

blind him to the fact that we worship Christ in the Eucharist, and we also believe that it is the Christ who reigns in heaven whose final triumph it foreshadows, and who gives the present rite its power and efficacy.

Might I also suggest that there is a corresponding inability to understand the Catholic doctrine of the grace given by the sacraments? This is not a sort of magic fluid, but a sharing of the Christ-life so that 'I live now not I, but Christ liveth in me'. I cannot be certain from Mr Wakefield's book whether any such new life or new creation is admitted by himself and the Puritans. Some passages suggest the contrary. He seems to say that our oneness with Christ is no more than a common possession of human flesh, together with a right to the glory Christ has won for us.

This book fills a gap in the history of Protestant spirituality. It seems, moreover, to show that the principles of Puritan spirituality, apart from their Calvinist views on the Sacraments and the Church, are sufficiently Catholic to be easily harmonizable with our own.

H. F. DAVIS

WHAT IS LITURGICAL PREACHING? By Reginald H. Fuller. *Studies in Ministry and Worship*. (S.C.M. Press, Ltd.; 6s)

The re-discovery of the riches of the liturgy in our own time has brought with it a re-discovery of the importance of the word in Christian worship, and so of the sermon. The sermon, with the pulpit, has wandered a long way from home and in the process has lost much of its value. 'When the sermon is divorced from its proper context in the liturgical action it . . . becomes intellectualism, moralism or emotionalism.' That is true and the same disease is to be found among us as among members of the Church of England for whom Dr Fuller writes.

Rejecting various kinds of sermon—and his descriptions of them are both true and witty (the gospel of the deaf-dumb man being used to boost support for deaf and dumb societies)—he answers his own question thus: 'The purpose of the sermon is to extract from the scripture readings the essential core and content of the gospel, to penetrate behind the day's pericope to the proclamation of the central act of God in Christ which it contains, in order that the central act of God can be made the material for recital in the prayer of thanksgiving.' With this statement the author has penetrated to the very heart of liturgical preaching and it is in fact the principle upon which his whole book is based. He proves to be his own best expositor, as he shows by his sample sermon-plans (worked out according to the lectionary of