

philosophical influence on Thomas's philosophy, forcing it beyond itself and into a part of theology. Thomas's views of instrumental causality are philosophically argued for as a philosophical extension of Aristotle's work, and are not a case of "turning philosophy into theology". And the fact that virtue as the philosophers conceive it is not "strictly speaking" virtue as theologians conceive it, does not deprive philosophy of its own independent status. Jordan is here assuming what he has to prove. Eleonore Stump's essay on "Biblical commentary and philosophy" has useful things to say about the biblical commentaries themselves, and about Thomas's ways of reading the bible, but does not I think contribute much to the understanding of his philosophy,

There are printing errors in the book. Eventually, I began to note down some of them: p89.17 has "lead" for "led", p198.-3 has "good", p207.19 "intenal", p211.6 "constituent", p211.-14 has "not look" for "not to look", p242.-13 h3s "subordinated".

TIMOTHY MCDERMOTT

**LIVING A CHRISTIAN LIFE** by Germain Grisez. *Franciscan Press, Chicago, 1993. Pp xxiii + 950.*

Of the greatest books since Vatican II NOT reviewed by this journal, Grisez's *Christian Moral Principles* (1983) is surely among the most glaring examples. Legend tells that the prospective reader was simply overwhelmed by it. A decade later, it is still overwhelming, an astonishing treatment of the foundations of moral theology: freedom, community and character; conscience and moral knowledge; basic human goods and modes of responsibility; moral problems and norms; sin and redemption; Christian love and human fulfillment; the place of prayer, the sacraments, hope, and the Church in a rich, specifically Christian, moral life. It is the flagship of the renewal of natural law theory in moral theology and presents a still unanswered critique of other methodologies, in particular those opposed by *Splendor Veritatis*, the recent encyclical so obviously influenced by the thought of Grisez and his school.

*Christian Moral Principles* was the first of four projected volumes, together called *The Way of the Lord Jesus*. Having presented the foundations of moral theology, Grisez is now treating specific moral responsibilities: those common to all or most people (vol. 2.), those specific to certain groups (vol. 3 — though rumour has it that this volume will be rather different), and those specific to clergy and religious (vol. 4). The second volume is just as monumental as the first: another thousand pages, similarly encyclopaedic and destined to be equally definitive. It treats in turn: the theological virtues; sin and repentance; moral judgement and problem solving; justice and social responsibility; communication relationships; bioethics; sexuality; work and property; and political morality. And there are improvements in the present volume over the previous one: no schmaltzy cover; footnotes rather than endnotes; no wads of text in tiny print like an insurance contract; outlines at the

beginning of sections; the whole production remarkably inexpensive.

That said, there is much still to be done to popularize the ideas presented here. Grisez needs a journalist assistant (or translator) like Russell Shaw who helped make *Beyond the new Morality* (1974, 1980, 1988) so accessible. This the two of them did with volume one some years later in *Fulfillment in Christ* (1991). In the meantime reading through volume two will require as much stamina as did volume one; most will be inclined to skim through and focus on particular questions that interest them. Fortunately the sections are sufficiently self-contained to allow it to be mined as a "resource book". But for those with the time and energy, an attempt to digest the whole of the two volumes will be immensely rewarding.

If Grisez's work is the flagship of the new natural theories, it is also a principal battle cruiser for the contemporary reassertion of a Catholic moral magisterium. While Grisez and his team are impressive philosophers who engage in dialogue with those of all faiths and none, orthodox Catholicism inspires the whole corpus. Thus the work is replete with references to Scripture (especially the New Testament), the Councils of the Church (especially Vatican II), magisterial documents (especially those of John Paul II), and the works of the fathers and the scholastics (especially Aquinas).

Critics of the Grisez school argue that its adherents come to moral theorizing with the *a priori* conclusions of the magisterium and a polemical intent; that the whole elaborate method has been created to serve those ends, and this can be at a cost in terms of genuine dialogue with supposed opponents. There is some truth in this. Underlying Grisez's work there is a Vatican II optimism about the fully human, fully Christian life, its attractions and possibilities; but there is also a sense of crisis. Grisez is engaging in a battle not just with external critics of Catholic teaching, but with those within the seminaries and other Catholic teaching institutions who for the past two decades have openly opposed parts of the tradition and the magisterium in moral matters.

Arguably all moral theorizing involves a dialectic between fundamental theory and practical conclusions, and in this Grisez is no more guilty of a *priorism* than anyone else: indeed there is rather more reason to think that some of the so-called "proportionalists" (Grisez's *bête noir*) began with their (pro-contraception) conclusions and built a method to suit—one which has since taken them in directions that would have shocked them in 1968. Nor is Grisez predictably 'conservative' or 'right-wing' (the French revolutionary labels do not work in morals) or an uncritical follower of Roman opinion). The present volume is at odds at least with the accent of some Vatican views: Grisez opposes all intentional killing (even of the non-innocent), capital punishment, the use of lethal force to defend property, all lying and other deceptions in communication, but allows contraception where there is a risk of rape, and abortion in certain cases to save the mother's life. Nonetheless those at home with "the Catholic thing" will in general be very comfortable with

this book and those genuinely interested in why others are so at home may find the book very enlightening.

Not all aspects of Grisez's methodology please the traditionalists. Those who found his doctrine of intention (elaborated in volume 1) troubling, will be more appalled by some of its applications in volume 2. It is what leads him, for instance, to argue that one might sometimes use lethal force in self-defence or to terminate a pregnancy, without intending the victim's death; death is only an unintended, if expected, side-effect. Not that Grisez thinks this is the end of the matter; abortion, even when not intentional killing, is usually wrong. But this does allow, for instance, a craniotomy or curette of an ectopic pregnancy to save the life of the mother — rather than requiring, as traditionalists often have, the complete removal of womb or tube and child, or even the loss of both mother and child. Here, Grisez argues, the agent's proposal "can be simply to alter the child's physical dimensions and remove him or her, because, as a physical object, this body cannot remain where it is without ending in both the baby's and the mother's deaths". The child's death is an unintended if foreseen side-effect of a choice which involves the morally neutral act of altering the child's "dimensions" (!), the good end of saving the mother's life, and no injustice to the child who has no right to be preferred and would probably die anyway. Not surprisingly, Grisez is not altogether comfortable with this conclusion, even though it is a logical working out of his school's analysis of human action and a conclusion he has proposed for two decades now. So he urges people to follow the magisterium rather than himself, should his analysis lead in practice to some judgment in conflict with Church teaching.

Any book attempting to 'cover the field' of moral matters today will have to treat a far broader range of questions than did St. Thomas, St Alphonsus, or even the pre-conciliar manualists. Grisez accepts the challenge; and so in addition to the traditional diet of moral problems we find treatments of everything from social class, gender and authority, to tobacco smoking, cocaine-sniffing and boxing; from tax-minimization, safety in the workplace, and secret-keeping regarding AIDS, to the rights of indigenous peoples, the new reproductive technologies, and the mass media. There is a critique of liberal individualism, capitalism, and various contemporary ideologies. There is a thorough-going treatment of the theology of marriage—a fruit of the Church's first generation of married, parenting moralists, and a new turn in the argumentation of the Grisez school (they now regard marriage as an eighth 'basic human good'). A whole range of traditional and more recently controversial issues are persuasively treated.

There are some respects in which volume 2 might be thought to fall short of expectations: in many places it is much less overtly scriptural and patristic than promised; where such sources are cited one might have hoped for more evidence on the historical and linguistic context of the citations; and some issues (e.g. the ordination of women) are treated rather summarily. This may reflect two harsh realities: an author who

though extraordinarily prolific has only one life-time to write in; and readers who will find a thousand pages quite enough and have only one life-time to read in. Like its predecessor, this volume will undoubtedly meet with much criticism from various quarters. But in the opinion of this reviewer at least, the two volumes represent the first successful systematic response to the call of Vatican II for a renewed moral theology, one which "searches for solutions to human problems with the light of revelation", beginning with Scripture and tradition, speculating with St. Thomas as teacher, relating morality to the rest of theology, liturgy and Christian life, and elaborating it "under the light of faith and the guidance of the Church's teaching authority". Trite but true: anyone seriously interested in moral theology must read this book.

ANTHONY FISHER OP

**FROM EXISTENCE TO GOD, by Barry Miller, 1988, Routledge.  
pp. x + 206.**

Barry Miller offers here a quite freshly conceived presentation of a cosmological argument for God's existence. His particular argument depends upon general logical conceptions stemming from Frege and upon a series of separate logically quite intricate moves, each worth looking at, not all of equal value or plausibility. Because of this, the book is liable to be rather difficult for the general reader, but this does not detract from its interest. For, even if some of the key moves fail as he states them, it suggests the possibility of adapted arguments of similar strategy.

Let me first state Miller's argument informally.

Miller starts from a consideration of an arbitrary 'concrete individual', Fido, and from the view that Fido's existence is ontologically complex. He thinks, in effect, that somehow Fido's existing is an act of Fido — in his phrase, Fido 'completes' his existence — but that this constitutes a problem since Fido has to already exist in order to do anything. Therefore, Fido and his existence have to be co-constituted in a peculiar way, co-constituted in such a way that Fido's existing is an act of Fido — i.e. in the relation 'Fido completing his existence'. Therefore, there must be something which does this co-constituting, in brief a cause at once of Fido and of his existence, Fido in the act of 'completing' his existence.

The idea of Fido's existing as an act of Fido may seem odd. Yet Maritain would speak of Fido as 'exercising' existence, and it is natural to think of Fido's existing or living as some kind of 'state of affairs', 'reality', 'act' or 'actuality', rather than just some fact stated in a true proposition — all this without going into technicalities, e.g., as to whether 'exists' is a predicate or 'existence' a property, or as to different uses of the word 'exists'. I have myself argued (in my *The Reality of Time and the Existence of God*) that Fido's existing is not a mere fact but an 'actuality' distinct from Fido because it is Fido's existence not Fido which has real contingency, is caused or by chance, so that unless Fido has intrinsically necessary existence the distinction between Fido and his existence must