

those less familiar, like Tito Colliander and Margery Perham.

The diversity is ecclesiastical as well as historical, with texts representing both Catholic and Protestant as well as Eastern and Western traditions of spirituality. Yet, for this reader at least, the anthology has a compelling if elusive coherence. What comes through so much is a persistent sense of awe and adoration as man glimpses the Divine and touches the hem of Christ's garment or feels the breath of the Spirit. Each piece is a star in an expansive galaxy of Christian devotion.

The pieces are arranged around the seasons of the ancient Church calendar, beginning in September with creation, following through the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ, and ending in August with the final glory of the age to come. Each month has a chapter of its own, within which the material is grouped around one or more dominant themes and some selected saints. Wisely, in view of the depth and beauty of most of the pieces, no attempt has been made to provide separate readings for each day. There is room for unhurried reflection as one journeys along. Indeed this anthology just cannot be hurried through. Regrettably, a reviewer has to move far too quickly; for here are pieces before which, as was once said of Henry Moore's sculptures, one "sits and ponders". They are alive with what John Keble in one place calls "primitive zeal", a zeal which forever seeks to respond to the Spirit through the unfolding tapestry of life's seasons, and through the "cords and concepts which your glory hide".

This is no anthology of spiritual cosmetics; but it has great riches for those who will make time to get to know these fathers and teachers as friends. It will surely, too, fulfill the editors' hope to open the reader's eyes to "unfamiliar treasures in Christian traditions other than their own".

HUGH SEARLE

THE LAY-CENTRED CHURCH by Leonard Doohan, *Winston Press, Minnesota. Limp, Pp. xiii and 174, £6.95.*

PEOPLE OF GOD by Anton Houtepen. *SCM Press, Limp, pp. xiii and 210, £7.95*
THE FAMILY OF THE CHURCH by Cormac Murphy O'Connor, *Darton, Longman and Todd, Limp, pp. ix and 214, £3.95.*

Professor Doohan shouts rather. But, then, he has to make himself heard by clerics like the cardinal from Pittsburgh who set up pastoral councils which were designedly impotent, and the bishop in Arlington who barred the laity's claim to have a part in their pastor's funeral, and the occumenists of Rome who sit contentedly with the clerics who dominate Orthodoxy. And all this at a time when 'burnout in full-time lay ministers' is common.

Professor Doohan offers an 'overview' of several misunderstandings of the laity's character since Vatican II; he discerns some zigzag progress from notions of 'ecclesial presence to the world', which even in Père Longan's formulation, failed to acknowledge that 'the laity *are* the Church', through activist notions of 'world transformation', which failed to accept the mystery of suffering and led to some 'psychological opting out of the structural Church', to the appreciation of the laity as 'Integrally Church'. What we now require, therefore, is not 'a theology *of* the laity' but 'a theology *for* the laity'. Well, that is what some of us now require. There are backsliders in this world of progress. 'For still others a general lack of education and a lack of understanding of the need for change has led to a sense of insecurity that has entrenched them in pre-Vatican II outward forms of Church life'. But the true lay person can distinguish 'between a teaching and its outward form' and appreciate that 'we must believe the teaching, but we can discard the form'. A number of complex and quite contemporary questions about literary content and structure have been speedily settled here. These things having been let pass, there is yet some impertinence in the suggestion, however backed by a quotation from Professor Schillebeeckx, that devotion to 'a world of past memory'

is a hindrance to the purposes of the present Church. Professor Doohan should have paused longer to consider why it was that the humane and intelligent reformer, Pope Paul VI, 'gradually became a hesitant compromiser'.

Armed, like some eighteenth-century rebel, with 'perhaps the best listing of rights in recent months', Professor Doohan is determined that the Church, a 'multi-national corporation' in a 'frontier situation', should put its trust not in 'pre-Council church-going Catholics' but in 'persons born or educated during or since the Council'; this makes sense, after all, 'in future decades only the second group will be alive'. So much for the communion of saints as an image of the Church. But then, 'some 81 percent of canonized saints are clerical and religious', because 'lay persons have no effective way of lobbying' and 'no say in how their financial contributions are used'. We need a specifically lay model of ecclesial life in order to be a Church with a future. We need, says Professor Doohan, the model of family life. That hesitant compromiser is with him in this. He took the family to be an *ecclesiola*. And the Bishop of Arundel and Brighton is with him, too.

Bishop Murphy O'Connor is more sensitive than Professor Doohan to the varieties of human experience. He recognizes the need to begin his account of 'the family of the Church' with a clear statement of the sort of family he has in mind: 'We used to have family prayers every evening, and nothing was ever allowed to interrupt that'; there, 'in my family', he learnt 'the meaning and value of prayer, of worship, of forgiveness, of love', so even now 'the connection of family and Church is a very real one'. It is a connection the bishop recognizes in 'a nice custom' of those Orthodox clergy that Professor Doohan deploras, 'whereby at the end of the day, after night prayers, the monks one by one kneel before the Abbot who kisses each one on the head, a lovely sign of authority, but also of approval, of acceptance, of forgiveness, and of love'. A reader can appreciate from these attractive personal reflections that Church which figured for the bishop in the family. Prayer, forgiveness, and love are most evidently its defining characteristics.

But families differ. They are not all of a kind with that enabled by Dr. and Mrs. Murphy O'Connor. There must be a large number of christians in any generation who, on reading Professor Doohan's opinion that 'the image of the Church as family is ascetically and spiritually very challenging', would recognize the ascetic challenge in terms of 'if you can put up with family life you can put up with anything'. Professor Doohan puts such experience into proper perspective. 'We are not concerned here with the problems that face family. While these are important, it is also important to look at the vision, the hope that is ours'. That hope, however, has often been expressed in a disregardance of the claims of the family. Melchizedek is famous for having lost both parents. And he is the pattern of the priest. Mary, at the Annunciation, did not pause to consult Joseph. And she is blessed among women. Thomas withstood a clan of relations. And he is the patron of theologians. the ambiguities of family life have led others to hope for a more generous experience in the *koinonia* of the 'basic christian community', the camaraderie of the platoon, the fellowship of the college.

Professor Doohan is very suspicious of the basic christian community. It can be 'religiously and psychologically unhealthy' because the discovery of love in action there may derogate from 'the centrality of the parish' in a christian's life. The parish is for him, 'the natural and most effective community within the life of the Church'. Bishop Murphy O'Connor perceives the helpfulness of parochial structures for a great many christians, but it is characteristic in him to break free of his own language. He affirms that 'we are a family', and immediately enlarges the scope of *family*: 'by this I mean we must strive to form local Christian communities of all kinds'. We must beware of over-emphasizing the parish, 'for Christian communities can spring up that have only tenuous links with the parish'. *Matthew* 18.20 is a lively text for him.

The bishop cannot do so much with the platoon and its attendant discipline. He cites Tennyson's great protest poem to put the Church at a distance from the military

model. The laity are not to be thought on after the pattern of a light-brigade which has been taught 'not to reason why'. Ambiguities begin to press home here also. 'Christ', he says, 'used no military vocabulary'. But Christ did speak of two swords being enough, of its not being peace that he brought, and of the centurion, who went unquestioningly where he was ordered to go, as the unexampled pattern of faith. Cromwell hoped to actualize a vision of the Church in the varieties of recruit to his New Model Army. The bishop himself slips on the very next page into talk of the Church 'marching through time'.

Professor Doohan, teaching now at 'one of the largest centers of spirituality studies in the United States and Canada', and Bishop Murphy O'Connor, sometime Rector of the English College in Rome, are both quite comfortable with an image of the Church as educator. It is an image which they think is easily assimilated into the cluster of the *family*. The Professor seconds the Council's sentence: 'The family is a kind of school of deeper humanity'. The bishop risks acknowledging that 'parents themselves share in the teaching authority of the Church'. But the school is, again, an ambiguous model. A teacher may offer, perhaps from out that 'world of past memory', criteria by which the pupil should judge the values proposed at the domestic supper-table. If the Church is, indeed, 'an on-going school', as Professor Houtepen puts it, there is nothing necessarily conformist about *ecclesia docens* and its ministry.

Professor Houtepen sees how the fifteenth-century disputes about pope and council lead to the formulations of an 1870 decree *de Ecclesia*, and he appreciates 'a structure of ministry which keeps the movement faithful to its origin', but he derives *church* from LXX translation of *qahal YHWH*, and directs attention to the liturgical celebrations of the people that God has called together. He is most sensitively and intelligently aware of the Church as 'a community of disciples', who long for meaning 'in the midst of the meaninglessness of suffering', who are 'guided by the programme of Jesus', who share 'a discipline', who have 'a remembrance of the experience of faith down the centuries', and who enjoy a life-style that is constantly renewed'. There is no prospect of trapping Professor Houtepen in any single image. The Church is 'God's field, God's building'; the Church is 'the Lord's body, bride, flock'; the Church is the company 'anointed by the Spirit', the community of those who want to learn to believe', 'the catechumenate'.

All images of the Church must be partial and provisional because the experience each christian has of the Church is partial and provisional. The Church in Ephesus is experienced differently from the Church in Corinth. In Rome from the Church in Montevideo. And since the Church is experienced partially and provisionally, 'ecumenical commitment from the churches is not just an attractive feature but an essential quality of the communion of saints'. And it prevents some usages. Bishop Murphy O'Connor, escaping from Professor Doohan's mean parochialism, presents the Roman Church as 'the maternal community that begets us'; another bishop, when Pope Paul VI proposed proclaiming Mary as 'the Mother of the Church', recalled that old language and wondered if, the Church being our Mother, Mary was now our Grandmother; Professor Houtepen has oecumenical objections to all this talk. It has been known for churches to allege their antiquity as justifying a claim that others must be 'reconciled' to them. 'As long as churches maintained this model, and in doing so regarded themselves as the faithful continuation of the primitive church, so that they could set themselves up over others as the 'mother church'—and a mother of degenerate daughters at that!—they could hardly participate in the ecumenical movement, as was demonstrated above all by the Roman Catholic Church'. That observation, and Bishop Murphy O'Connor's recourse to larger languages, would certainly persuade me, if I were not already of the opinion, that there was something suspect in Professor Doohan's shouted advocacy of *family* as model for the Church.

HAMISH F.G. SWANSTON