

at least a much fuller treatment can be found in his earlier work. Even here, though, he does succeed in putting a case,

even if only in outline, for speaking of the judaism of this period as 'hellenised judaism'.

GARETH MOORE O P

PAR DEVOIR or PAR PLAISIR by Albert Plé O P. *Les Editions du Cerf, 1980.*

No price given.

It is certainly not a *devoir* but a *plaisir* to read this book, the fourth in a series of *Recherches Morales*. Its aim is to fill a gap both in the history of morality and in the study of the relationship between theology and science. It is particularly concerned with the works of Freud, a special interest of Father Plé judging from his earlier contributions to the series *Avenir de la Théologie* (the series to which the present book belongs).

The author starts from the story of Adam in Genesis. He does not shrink from the term 'myth', but he recognizes the richness of the Genesis teaching on original sin. He also believes that the great sufferings caused by the plagues of the 14th and 15th centuries led to a distortion of Christian morality. According to Father Plé, it became afflicted with a form of schizophrenia. The rich relationship between reality and symbolism was ignored, and a cleavage within man was discerned – one between intellect and will, rationality and affectivity. As a consequence of this the affective life of man was denigrated and effectively came to be seen as something to be controlled and dominated by law and authority. The result of this in turn was that the affective life sought its expression in piety and mystical experience.

It became divorced from its roots in the scriptures and the mysteries of the faith. Only in the world of unbelievers was there a continued belief in the goodness of man and nature (J J Rousseau), in Humanity, Science and Progress. Morality became based on law promulgated by an absolute divine power and thought of with reference to that which is allowed and forbidden. The result was a moral juridicism, an obsessional casuistry, and a confusion between religious authority and the political powers. Security was thus found in a fixed moral order the existence of which was deduced from an essentialist conception of human nature and which was itself expressed in universal and unchanging moral laws.

'I want', says Father Plé, 'to stress my indignation when I hear this "traditional morality" described as Christian and Catholic. It seems to me nearer to the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod (Mk. 8:15), not that of the Gospel'. According to Father Plé, then, moral theology's true task is to humanize and evangelize. Evangelical morality, he says, is truly joyful. And it can usefully be promulgated with reference to the work of St Augustine and Aquinas.

ROLAND POTTER O P

COMMUNITY AND GROWTH by Jean Vanier. *Darton, Longman & Todd, 1979.*
pp 248 £3.40.

In 1964 Jean Vanier took Rafael and Philippe out of a mental institution in France and began living in community with them. This was the first L'Arche – a community with a message of hope to offer and love to communicate. This message is being accepted and the hope spreading with already over 40 L'Arche communities throughout the world. Jean Vanier's latest book *Community and Growth* distils the experience of sixteen

years living with the weak and handicapped, preaching retreats, founding and visiting his communities. This wisdom is loosely gathered under such headings as 'Growth', 'Nourishment', 'Welcome', 'Living with every day'. It is a *Vade Mecum* for those who make the pilgrimage of community life, "people who have left their milieu to live with others under the same roof and work from a new vision of human beings and their relationships with

each other and with God" (p 2). He lays down essential principles for any pilgrim: "Community is the place of forgiveness", (p 15); "the beauty of man is in fidelity to the wonder of each day" (p 68); "contact with people who are weak is one of the most important nourishments of our lives" (p 138); "a community is always built around people: people should not be shaped to suit community" (p 157); "to welcome is not primarily to open the doors of our house: it is to open the doors of our heart" (p 197).

But he does not ignore the practical difficulties of a journey shared so closely with others – the section on meetings and chairmanship should be required reading for all members of committees (p 212ff). Again and again the surest guides are the weak and the poor. For Vanier understands that every human being is handicapped, hiding a deep wound of loneliness and inadequacy – and the special grace of the "handicapped" is to help us see, understand and accept this essential part of our being: "The most precious gift in com-

munity is rooted in weakness" (p 192).

For anyone living in community this is a book to be dipped into constantly, savoured and pondered. But Vanier would agree with Aristotle that man is a "zoon politicon" – 'made for community'. Much that he writes has a relevance beyond L'Arche. On freedom, he comments "the important thing is not freedom for its own sake but freedom to love and serve better" (p 179). On marginalisation, he warns "a community which allows unemployed members to exist within it will perish because of them" (p 29). And he is only too aware that a world dominated by ideals of productivity and efficiency needs communities of hope and forgiveness. For Vanier community is essentially missionary. It shares Christ's mission for the poor, the Church and society. For in community we discover that the wound of loneliness we carry can become sacrament and "this sacrament is purification and presence of God". (p 247).

AIDAN TURNER

A NEW CHRISTOLOGY by Karl Rahner and Wilhelm Thüsing, trans. David Smith and Verdant Green. *Burns & Oates*, London, 1980. pp 239 £7.95.

To get biblical scholars and systematic theologians to collaborate to such an extent that they would subject their work to each other for real criticism might seem a pipe-dream. Nearly ten years ago now, however, in an attempt at just such an "interdisciplinary lecture course", Karl Rahner gave his usual set of lectures on Christology at Munster but invited his New Testament colleague, Wilhelm Thüsing, to reflect on his "results" as an integral part of the course. This gave rise to an extremely interesting book, published in 1972, in which Rahner's course, reduced to pemmican, provided the theme for much more extensive reflections by Thüsing. In a nutshell, while Rahner sought to show that classical Chalcedonian Christology can be secured against monophysite and mythological misunderstandings only by something like his own "transcendental" approach, Thüsing suggested that a retrieval of the diverse New Testament

Christologies would provide an even richer starting-point. Given the scrupulous fidelity of the two authors both to the classical tradition and to the exigencies of modern exegesis and reflection, not to mention the internal dialogue within the book, it constitutes one of the most distinguished Catholic contributions to the recent wave of studies in Christology.

The book under review consists of a less than felicitous translation of Thüsing's reflections, preceded by three essays by Rahner which date from the period 1976-77 and have been included in volumes XIII and XIV of his *Schriften zur Theologie* (and presumably will eventually appear in the English series). This change, about which we are not informed directly, appears to have been made on Rahner's initiative or at least with his consent. One of them, devoted to how the Church derives from the death and resurrection of Jesus, although of course as interesting as