

serious discussion of the nature and implications of God-talk; nothing of significance is said about the terms 'evidence', 'agency', 'intention', 'inference', 'causation', 'fact' and 'interpretation'. In the last chapter of the book Ashe suggests that "The source of all exceptions in nature is a hierarchy of Mind above our limited brains: not physically above, but in the structure of what is sometimes called Inner Space . . . perhaps a more miracul-

ous life implies humans in better sexual balance with the feminine enjoying its proper freedom. Conversely, if society progresses in that direction, we may hope to see the miraculous quietly expanding and flourishing." (pp. 190, 198) What is one to say to this? Only, perhaps, that if anyone can make sense of it the age of miracles is not yet dead.

BRIAN DAVIES O.P.

MIRACLE by Des Hickey and Gus Smith. *Hodder & Stoughton, 1978. pp. 172 £4.50.*

I fully expected to find this book annoying and generally unsatisfactory, another example of the journalistic, anecdotal piety that is currently so popular. By and large, my expectations were justified, except that I enjoyed most of the book though it is hardly an exceptional piece of writing and I cannot imagine it going into more than one paperback edition.

Miracle is an account of events leading to the canonization of John Ogilvie in 1976. Naturally, it concentrates on the family history of John Fagan, whose recovery from what seems to have been cancer led to the process of canonization. The authors write in a novelistic style, but, in spite of occasional hints of commitment on their part, they appear to present their record in a suitably impartial manner. The reader is certainly not badgered into accepting any particular theological view, and hostile opinions about the canonization, opinions like those of Robert Kernohan and William Barclay, are duly reported.

Taking the book merely as a record of

events, and passing over the fact that its character presentation is extremely colourless, I would offer only two major criticisms. First, the account is too long and by Chapter 20 or thereabouts has become rather stale. It is interesting to read about the background of the Fagans and the problems of the Postulator General, but do we need to know about the luncheon arrangements at the Scots College on the day of the canonization? Secondly, like so many of its kind, the book is marred by a complete absence of source references. There are general acknowledgements at the end, and there is also a meagre bibliography; but that is not enough. Presumably, source references would be hard to provide for many of the events and statements recorded in the book; but they could surely have been supplied in Chapters 3 and 4 where we are given an account of Ogilvie himself, together with reports of his trial and execution.

BRIAN DAVIES O.P.

CHURCH, PAPACY, AND SCHISM by Philip Sherrard. *SPCK, London, 1978. pp. 1 £2.95 paperback.*

With the official commission now established, which is to explore the theological differences between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church that continue to keep us apart, a book like this must be taken as a contribution to settling the agenda. The author, formerly of the British School at Athens, writes from an intransigent Greek Orthodox point of view. He contrasts 'the patristic conception of the Church' and 'the official Roman doctrine of the Church'. The former is

beautifully portrayed and assumed to be alive and well in the Orthodox Church except for "certain untoward actions and utterances of the Constantinopolitan patriarch in recent years". A footnote specifies the creation of titular bishops but the ecumenical spirit of Athenagoras is more likely to be the real target. The Roman doctrine of the Church, on the other hand, turns out to be an eloquent if not altogether accurate, presentation of neo-ultramontanist ecclesiology. Mr Sher-

rard is clearly unimpressed by more recent developments in the Roman communion. "My understanding of Roman ecclesiology", he says, "derives largely from the works of M. J. Congar, Y. Congar (sic), E. Mersch, and Henry de Lubac", eked out by Walter Ullmann's classical studies of the medieval papacy. It is now forty years since these scholars first exposed the distorted ecclesiology with which the author saddles the Catholic Church today, and fifteen years since the Vatican Council accepted their results. He makes no allowance for the fact that it is the work of devout Catholics that he relies on to build up his picture; he does not seem to realise that they have liberated us by this major act of self-criticism, not of course altogether but nevertheless to a considerable degree.

His main line of argument is not new. Papal supremacy has destroyed the true structure of the Church. It happened because Catholics never had a sense of the Church as a "theandric mystery". That was because of the 'Nestorian' Christology which we have had ever since the Council of Chalcedon in the year 451, and that in turn derives from our defective doctrine of the Trinity, manifest in our belief that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father. There is a good deal in this suggestion. The doctrine of the 'double procession', though developed in the east by St Cyril of Alexandria *against Nestorianism* before it spread to the west, may well in practice subordinate the Spirit to the Word: the charismatic movement might be evidence that the Spirit has been unduly neglected in the west. We might also plead guilty to being at least inclined to keep the divinity of Christ well apart from his humanity: the modern neo-ebionite doctrine of 'Jesus' that has replaced the old-fashioned Catholic emphasis on the

eucharistic Christ *might* be evidence of a certain unhappy dichotomy in our Christology. And for decades now we have been admitting that we put far too much emphasis on the Church as a visible institution.

On the other hand, it is simply wrong to say that if a man who was not a bishop were elected pope he would inherit the Petrine prerogatives before he was consecrated (p. 58). It is nonsense to say that we are committed to thinking that the canon of Scripture was ultimately settled on the authority of the pope (p. 67). If our traditional exegesis of the Petrine texts is unsatisfactory is it any better to say that the evidence we have suggests that St Peter was the chief celebrant at the first eucharist, probably on Pentecost (p. 71)? It is nonsense to say that even at our worst we believe that God is "the mere setter-in-motion of the cosmic process, the uncreated and transcendent cause of limitless created effects related to him extrinsically but not intrinsically" (p. 111). And to suggest that we regard the Church as "some kind of historical institution set up for the benefit of mankind but having no genuine ontological roots in the divine" (p. 96) is quite stupendous in its vagary.

I must simply testify, after twenty five years of adult life as a Catholic, that Mr Sheppard's picture of the Roman Church is an ignorant and offensive caricature. He should pay more heed to his own admission (p. 63) that a sense of the Church as a 'sacramental organism' is being "reaffirmed" in the Roman Catholic Church: whatever the defects of our *theology*, the sacramental realities of the Christian faith have always transcended them. But theological dialogue, if this adversary is typical, will not be easy.

FERGUS KERR O.P.

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISSI by John R. H. Moorman. *SPCK*, London, new edition 1976 pp. 118 95p.

FRANCIS: A BIOGRAPHY OF THE SAINT OF ASSISSI by Michael de la Bedoyere. *Fontana/Collins*, new edition 1976. pp. 279. 75p.

FRANCIS OF ASSISSI: THE WANDERING YEARS by Anthony Mockler. *Phaidon*, London 1976. pp. 254. £4.95.

The abiding popularity and enduring fascination of the character of Francis of Assissi, added to the 750th anniversary of his death in 1276 produced amongst other

works, re-issues of Bishop Moorman's "St Francis of Assissi" and Michael de la Bedoyere's "Francis", as well as a new biography by Anthony Mockler. Bishop Moor-