

done. It is hope that makes us aware that every one of us is someone needed by God for the fulfilment of his plans. And this virtue is at last coming to the fore again, largely because of our present return to the Bible which is the great document of hope.

His other, at first even more surprising, point is that what really indicates whether a parish is alive or not is its missionary consciousness. A parish may seem to be very generous towards the foreign missions, may love to contribute to the baptizing of 'Black Babies', but if those babies come over as students wanting lodgings and no parishioners want to take them in the parish has missed the point. To be mission-conscious is to long for the mystical body to reach its total stature, by being expressed in every human culture, and our longing must be not merely to bring other nations into the fold, but to understand them, to realise the unique contribution each has to make to building up the whole Christ. To be spiritually mature is to realise that the Church's success is not measured in terms of numbers converted, but by her assimilation to every society she works in, her adaptation of 'an unchangeable divine mode of life to an ever-changing human situation'.

The book concludes with two magnificent chapters on the spirituality of the diocesan clergy and the laity. If the laity are to realise that their sanctification is not something apart from their situation in the world, but is to be effected by means of that situation, they must be formed by a clergy who realise that their own sanctification is to be worked out entirely through their service of the Christian community. 'That the clergy do not always advert to the fact that in the multifarious activities which make up the parish apostolate lies the main source of their holiness, accounts for the tendency to offer the laity a spirituality which does not find its main nourishment in carrying out the duties of *their own* state of life in the actuality of their own earthly existence'.

To sum up, this is a book of which one can say unreservedly that one hopes *everyone* will read it, and talk about it, and so renew the life of every parish in the country.

ROSEMARY SHEED

WHERE DO WE DIFFER? by Gustave Weigel, S.J.; Burns and Oates, 12s 6d.

Fr Weigel is professionally engaged in teaching Catholic doctrine about the Church, in a seminary. He is also frequently asked to speak to non-Catholic Christians about the Church and what she teaches. This small book contains seven such speeches, the first three of them being the Taylor Lectures delivered at Yale Divinity School for the year 1960. The first and the third of the Taylor Lectures are the best in the book: *Catholic Ecclesiology in Our Time*, and *Sacrament and Symbol*. In them, according to his Foreword, Fr Weigel was trying to translate 'Catholic expressions into a language better known to non-Catholics', and his success is considerable. In the first lecture he frankly admits the polemical

and apologetic nature of the traditional tract *de Ecclesia* and its use of the scriptures as an armoury of proof-texts; he rejoices in the present century's better understanding of the Church as the mystical body of Christ, and attributes this better understanding of what it is important to say about the Church to the revival of biblical and patristic studies.

That Fr Weigel has participated in this revival seems clear from his lecture *Sacrament and Symbol*, a lively exposition of what provision God has made for man who 'needs and unconsciously wants to be divinized'. But Fr Weigel's mind is divided. By his own testimony he has been working in theology for over thirty years, and speaking of theology he has these things to say: 'Intellectualism is the heart of theology'; 'application of (abstract theological) principles to the concrete world necessarily gives them a twist and destroys their purity'; 'geometrical positions of abstract thought are not meant to be blue-prints for concrete structures'. Whether these statements be considered on their own merit or as contributions to an ecumenical discussion, they are disastrous admissions of triviality. The geometer's irritation with mathematical unsophistication appears most startlingly in Fr Weigel's second Taylor Lecture, *The Scriptures and Theology*. After an amiable review of the progress of Catholic biblical scholarship since the sixteenth century, a deploring of the application of Aristotelean method to the scriptures and of the 'theological McCarthyism' of the Integrists, he has second thoughts about the progress made in the last twenty years: 'as a theologian I have qualms'. Well enough, but here is his expression of one of them: 'I refuse to consider Greek a dirty word. After all, the Bible itself was written in Greek. Why Hebrew categories, which derive from a people of lesser sophistication and smaller speculative inclination, should be superior or more useful than the categories derived from a more reflective culture, deeply engaged in intellectual analysis and synthesis, is for me quite baffling.' But not only did God choose this 'peculiar people' in preference to the Greeks; their categories were formed by their privileged encounter with him and we are inescapably committed to them.

Of the four remaining lectures two, most courteous in tone, are about the Ecumenical Movement, a third is entitled *Revelation, Dogma, and Theology*, and the fourth, *Church-State Relations*. The lecture about dogma abounds in careless expressions; some of them are in serious need of qualification, such as 'only from tradition does (the theologian) know that the Bible is the word of God'; at least one other is downright false: 'we must always remember that the language and action of communal prayer is not a theological expression of faith'.

Finally, to say that 'the American Catholic' is 'simply bewildered' when non-Catholics accuse him of a desire to suppress all religions other than his own, seems a little disingenuous. If the American Catholic is simply bewildered at this, then he has been over-simply instructed.

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