

PAUL: HIS LETTERS AND HIS THEOLOGY, by Stanley B. Marrow S.J. *Paulist Press, New York/Mahwah 1986. pp. 278.*

This is a somewhat unusual book, aimed at Catholic readers who know little about Paul's life and thought, and wish to know more. It is not a book for other scholars. Marrow's procedure is to spend three chapters on Paul's background, his life (including his conversion), and his letters in the context of his missionary work. All this is generally up to date and well done, though here as throughout the book, he tends to assume rather a lot of understanding on the part of his readers. It must be doubtful whether most lay Catholics, or other Christians, could use this book without regular recourse to expert guidance.

The remaining six chapters are given over to discussing the letters: 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Philippians, and Romans. In other words he deals only with the Paulines usually regarded as undisputed. His treatment is selective. He does not attempt to go through the letters in commentary fashion, but deals with those parts of them which he considers to be particularly relevant to the modern reader and the modern church. It is often the case that his discussion is as much expository as exegetical; that is to say, the message for today's Christians often seems more important than explaining the difficulties of the text. This is not always so, however, and is perhaps least so in the last chapter, on Romans.

Therefore, readers who want a thorough treatment of any Pauline letter have better resources than this (the *Jerome Bible Commentary* is still one of the best). On the other hand, those who wonder what on earth 1 Thessalonians has to say, at least in some of its parts, to late twentieth century Christians, may well find this book useful. On Paul and the Law he is not altogether up to date and reliable, and readers should be warned that it is now seriously questioned whether Paul opposed the Law because it led, or he thought it led, to self-righteousness.

J.A. ZIESLER

THE UNCHANGING GOD OF LOVE: A STUDY OF THE TEACHING OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ON DIVINE IMMUTABILITY IN VIEW OF CERTAIN CONTEMPORARY CRITICISMS OF THIS DOCTRINE, by Michael J. Dodds O.P. *Studia Friburgensia, Nouvelle Série 66. Editions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse, 1986. Pp. xviii + 489. No price given.*

This is a truly splendid book. Dodd provides a full account of Aquinas's teaching on divine immutability, an account written with an informed eye on a range of recent objections to the picture which Aquinas advances. His book is a clear and comprehensive survey which is careful and scholarly, yet also fresh and lively. St Thomas's teaching on divine immutability has wide-ranging implications both for theology and for philosophy of religion. Its nature and significance, however, have been widely misrepresented and misunderstood, and it has never, to my knowledge, been fully spelled out and examined at book length. The great virtue of Dodd's work is that it sets the record straight. And it does so emphatically and decisively.

To begin with, Dodds turns to what Aquinas says about immutability and motion in creatures (human beings at various stages, non-living creatures, living creatures, heavenly bodies, cosmological principles, and angels). With respect to all this Dodds has used the *Index Thomisticus* to good effect, and the result forms a useful backdrop to the business of Chapter Two, in which we are taken through Aquinas's arguments for God's immutability and in which the meaning of divine immutability for Aquinas begins to emerge. At this stage Dodds runs patiently through everything from the *Commentary on the Sentences* to the *Summa Theologiae*. He also examines the sources employed by Aquinas in his arguments for God's immutability (Scripture, the Fathers, and Aristotle), as

wel: as his use of these sources and his attitude to them. The Chapter ends with an account of how Aquinas's views on divine immutability cohere with his approach to our knowledge of God in general. Here Dodds has things to say about Aquinas on analogy, metaphor, and the ways of causality, negation, and eminence.

Chapters Three and Four are about what we might call 'The Motion of the Motionless God' (which is the title of Chapter Three). The spotlight now falls chiefly on two questions. First, in what sense does Aquinas allow for movement or dynamism in God? Second, how does his view of God *qua* immutable allow him to talk about the relationship between God and creatures? This is the part of the book in which Dodds most directly engages with standard misinterpretations of Aquinas and with objections to his view of God as immutable. Topics touched on at this point include the Trinity, the Incarnation, providence, God's governance of things, the freedom of God, and the love of God (including God's friendship with and compassion for creatures).

The main conclusions to emerge from Dodd's study are these. (1) The view that God is immutable is a constantly recurring one in the teaching of Aquinas. It is central to his concept of God and is repeatedly stated and defended throughout his writings, though his manner of presenting it varies. For him it is a teaching confirmed both by faith and by reason. (2) The general notion of immutability (expressible by means of a variety of terms) carries for Aquinas both a critical and a praiseworthy sense. Immutability (lack of motion, changelessness) can be a good or a bad thing depending on the context. (3) In the case of God, Aquinas allows that there are ways in which he can be thought of as mutable. Motion can be predicated of him. But to speak of God as mutable is not to imply that he undergoes any real change in himself. (4) According to Aquinas, God's immutability is emphatically a mark of his perfection and is a consequence of him being *Ipsium Esse Subsistens* and the source of everything other than himself. The originality of Aquinas's account of divine immutability derives from his doctrine of God as creator. (5) God's immutability, on Aquinas's account, in no way entails that he is static or inert. (6) Common criticisms of Aquinas on immutability fail to take seriously its role as part of an account of God which tries to do justice to his radical transcendence. On the whole, their proponents conceive of God merely as a god, as an additional inhabitant of the universe rather than the Creator *ex nihilo*.

At the end of the book Dodds provides the latin texts of passages from Aquinas studied in Chapter Two. He also provides translations of these. So, as well as being a first-class study of Aquinas, his book can also be used as a source-work. And on both counts it is much to be welcomed.

BRIAN DAVIES O.P.

SAINT HUGH OF LINCOLN BY D.H. Farmer Darton, Longman and Todd, 1965

A short, general study of the life and times of Hugh of Lincoln, one of the greatest and most popular of medieval English bishops, is appropriate at this time as the octocentenary of his appointment as bishop of Lincoln is celebrated. As co-editor of the *Magna Vita* Dr Farmer is well qualified for such a task. The nature of the audience for whom this work is intended, however, is a little unclear. Historians of the period will find little that is new here: the general reader may think there is too much detail. Perhaps it is most useful in that it brings to a wider readership Adam of Eynsham's life of Hugh, on which this study largely depends, which might otherwise be too inaccessible or expensive. Adam's is a work of hagiography, presenting its subject in the most favourable light and though it is a most valuable source for the history of the second half of the twelfth century, its primary function is to edify. Perhaps partly because Dr Farmer's account is so heavily based upon the *Magna Vita* it too appears a work of modern hagiography. This may account for a tendency to be over-critical of the policies of the Angevin kings towards the church, to see