

masculist in a way that now seems preposterous' (p. 2).

It is not for me to tell readers of *New Blackfriars* that there are, to say the least, a few mightily illegitimate jumps in this argument. I am, after all, 'middle-class, white and male', a group that our sister Sara regards as inclined to 'deny the validity of experience ... of corporeal experience, seeking the creator in creation' (p. 7). In French: *Touché!* In English: Ouch!

PETER HEBBLETHWAITE

THE CHURCH IS ALL OF YOU—THOUGHTS OF ARCHBISHOP OSCAR ROMERO.
(translated and compiled by James Brockman SJ) *Collins 1985, pp 123. £1.75.*

This little book contains no great new insights that cannot be found in the work of the present generation of Latin American and other theologians. It is a collection of snippets from sermons, letters, interviews etc., illustrating many of the main themes of the preaching of the Archbishop of San Salvador: the constant call to repentance; the identification of the church with the poor and the victims of repression; the Word of God as inseparable from "the historical reality in which it is proclaimed"; the rejection of any attempt to reduce the Gospel to a single political ideology. It was for preaching this gospel that he was regarded as a prophet in his own lifetime, and as a martyr after his death, by his people. And, of course, that was also why he was killed in March 1980. As Henri Nouwen says in his foreword, "His life and death have given these words a unique authority". (p. 14) Perhaps it is this authority that has occasioned the publishing of these "thoughts" of his. It is certainly the reason for the continuing attention of the Salvadorean people to the man's preaching.

Inevitably, the process of selection of such "thoughts" will reveal something of the translator-compiler as well as of the man whose mind the book seeks to reveal. In this case the selection of a number of passages in which the archbishop condemned violence has not been offset by statements that he made which reveal a somewhat different view. Every conceivable obstacle is piled up against the revolutionary organisations in El Salvador. All they have on their side is the not too far-fetched belief that they have a just cause. We should think twice before dismissing this belief. Romero himself wrote in his fourth pastoral letter, "The Church cannot assert in a simplistic way that it condemns all forms of violence". A few days before his death he said, "When a dictatorship seriously threatens human rights and the common good of the nation ... and close themselves to all channels of dialogue, understanding and rationality ... then the Church speaks of the legitimate right to insurrectional violence". This aspect of his thought ought to have been included in the selection which otherwise provides a thought-provoking and moving insight into the life of Romero and of the church he served.

GILBERT MARKUS OP