

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST. By Father James, O.F.M. Cap. (Mercier Press; 7s. 6d.).

"In the mystery of the Incarnation the descent of divine perfection into the depths of human nature is considered of greater import than the ascent towards God of human nature." This text from St. Thomas gives us the essential movement of this excellent book, in which the mainsprings of the spiritual life are revealed by fixing the mind upon the inner meaning of key incidents in the life of Christ. All Grace comes through Christ so that meditation upon his life is a living source of holiness. Self-knowledge is attained by keeping the attention fixed upon him and not upon self.

Here is a piece of sustained theological writing, rich in references to the Scriptures and bearing throughout the imprint of St Thomas's thought. It is a pity that such pure waters of doctrine should be somewhat clouded by awkwardness of expression, for the style is painfully laboured and broken up. But it would be showing sad lack of sense of proportion to attach too much importance to a minor defect in a book which has so much to teach us.

SIMON BLAKE, O.P.

RITUALE. Edited by the Revd. John Lane. (Dublin: Gill; 14s. 6d.).

Both publisher and editor are to be congratulated on this most useful edition, *ad usum cleri accomodatum*, of the Rituale. The first part contains all the usual forms for the administration of the sacraments, together with the full texts for the reception of converts. A more generous use might have been made of English translations, especially for the sacrament of Extreme Unction. The second part consists of all the Blessings that are normally needed.

Typographically, this *Rituale* is excellent. The use of a Gill Perpetua fount gives a clean and readable page, slightly marred by the use of decorative capitals deriving from the "ecclesiastical" convention of fifty years ago. But that is a minor defect in a book, which, for arrangement, legibility and convenience in use, should be indispensable for priests in English-speaking countries. The idea that liturgical books can only be satisfactorily printed on the Continent should be completely disproved by such admirable achievements as this, "printed and bound in Ireland".

D.Y.

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