

UNUSUAL BAPTISMAL NAMES. By Fr Walter Gumbley, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 4s.)

In ages less sophisticated than our own, names held a far greater prophetic significance than they do for us now. But to the Christian this should be no less vivid: 'thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins'; and the patronage of the saint whose name we are given is simply an aspect of the doctrine of the Communion of Saints and the Mystical Body. These are the considerations which underlie the Church's insistence on a saint's name being used in baptism; and which have led Fr Walter Gumbley to produce this useful and interesting little book. In it he lists about 400 names which might not be recognized as saint's names, giving the derivation of each and a few brief facts about the saint who bore it. It will be useful to parish priests and parents who are doubtful about the suitability of a name for baptism; and a wider public will find in it much of interest and even of entertainment. How many of us knew for instance that Stacey is a shortened form of Anastasius? or that Gwen is the Welsh form of the English Blanche or Candida? or that Irvine is a variant form of Urban? Many of the names are either contractions or different forms of more familiar ones; for example, Stanley is contracted from Stanislaus; while Eileen, Eleanor, Leonora, and Lorna are all derived from Helen. And it is good to know, too, that the English Martyrs have added to the Calendar Brian, Humphrey, Marmaduke, Miles, Percy, Ralph and Sydney.

F.R.

THE MODERN CHURCH. By Edward D. Mills. (The Architectural Press; 30s.)

The author begins with the correct idea of showing the modern church in its historical setting. But this is perhaps the weakest part of the book. The brief and sometimes jejune survey of the liturgical development of the Christian church would give little assistance to the uninstructed architect in understanding the significance of the various items of importance in the make-up of the building. But the rest of the book is a magnificent synopsis of modern needs and methods in constructing a place of worship for Catholics, Anglicans or Free Churchmen in England. The great number of principles and details covered in such a comparatively small space is a remarkable feat. And Mr Mills has at heart the spiritual needs of the modern Christian. In particular he sees the need for the church to be a community centre as it used to be, but as it has so often failed to be in the last century or so. The modern church must comprise other buildings as well as the actual place of worship: church parish halls equipped with a