

underlie everything that P. Congar writes. But underlying is not enough. The enemies of the Church are not slow to exploit both art and philosophy in their great and effective campaign to win masses of our people to the cause of materialism. Sometimes one feels that not nearly enough attention is being paid to the directives of the supreme pontiffs since Leo XIII began to call the Church back to philosophy and the arts.

MATTHEW RIGNEY, O.P.

THE SON OF MAN. By François Mauriac. (Burns Oates; 12s. 6d.)

'If I were to give a human reason for my fidelity to Christ in this evening of my life, I would call it the quieting of the radical anguish that is in me' (p. 121).

It is then fittingly to the epilogue to these meditations that we must go in order to find the personal solution to the eternal problem—personal to the writer who has let us into his own particular anguish for so many years. A book of meditations should be judged in isolation from any other work of the same author; but to read the meditations of Mauriac without being aware of what has gone before is not possible. This must be the fortune, or misfortune, of one who has laid bare for us the human soul, who has probed the depths and heights of human action and who in the 'evening of his life' wishes to take us by the hand and lead us to peace.

'What I propose as a defence against this form of anguish is another anguish which is generative of peace and joy' (p. 128). Alas! are we to jump out of the frying pan into the fire? Are we still to be yearning for Maria Cross? and are we never to be allowed to stand silently at the foot of the cross with Mary the mother of God?

The new 'anguish' proposed is the 'anguish for another', the anguish of charity, making their suffering ours. This at the present time is piercingly relevant as our dulled emotions, dulled by endless onslaughts from refugees, persecutions, and torture, need resensitizing.

We are taken by Mauriac through the life of Christ, the childhood, the hidden life, the passion and the resurrection, and we see ourselves as the imitators of the persecutors of Christ. In this part, with the undertones of the Algerian torture revelations, we have Mauriac at his best. Pilate wanted to move the crowd to pity with the *Ecce homo*. This was Pilate's effort to avoid the ghastly end by appealing to the humanity of the mob. Today there is no humanity left to which we can appeal. There is the mob, but too hard of heart, and charity is dead.

All sincere writing of this kind carries insights and true vision, and these flashes abound in this book; but how often one is pulled up sharply! The fire that Christ came to pour out on the world seems

always before our eyes, but we rarely see the tongues of flame at Pentecost—only the flames of destruction around the doomed cities. Twice we are told of the 'tyranny' of the Christian choice. Christ is said to be among young boys 'tyrannically present' demanding a choice (p. 62). We are told 'Christ remains just as we know him in the gospels with his *inordinate* demands, separating man from woman and woman from man' (p. 61). Here we are back over old ground; here is no peace, and here surely no anguish has been stilled. Yes, we are not meant to be lulled; the cross is not comfortable, but are we never to know that the burden can be light, and the yoke sweet?

All of us who are in the evening of life will follow Mauriac along the road to Emmaus, for on this road he can help us to regret more than anyone else that we never recognized our Saviour on the way. I would gratefully allow Mauriac to carry my humble request that the Lord should stay and eat with us. I know he would persuade him better than I could, but I think I would choose another emissary to carry my gift to the cave at Bethlehem.

G. T. GRISEWOOD

PRAYERS FROM THE PSALMS. Arranged by Hubert McEvoy, S.J. (Burns Oates; 6s.)

A little treasure of a book. It is like one of those lovely Chinese boxes holding innumerable tinier boxes, but in reverse. It is small and compact, but opens out wider and wider vistas of thought and spiritual enlightenment to the reader.

With the increasing emphasis on the significance of the liturgy, the popularity of manuals of devotion is on the wane. The psalms, we know, are a source of prayer as well as an ideal prayer in themselves. They cover all walks of life and every human need, but not everyone has the time or ability to search out suitable extracts, to fit the necessities and desperations, or the exhilarations and perplexities of the moment.

Father McEvoy has done this so invitingly that, instead of finding ourselves bogged down by our lack of receptivity to the inspired word, we are actually encouraged to study the psalms more deeply and make their praise, petition and intercession our own.

Specially to religious who wish to unite themselves more intimately with the *opus Dei*, but are perhaps hampered by inadequate knowledge of Latin or lack of time to ponder the true meaning of a translation, this little book will be valuable.

P.C.C.

THE BAPTISMAL SACRIFICE. By George Every, S.S.M. (S.C.M. 'Studies in Ministry and Worship' 14; 9s. 6d.)

This is an absorbing and informative book, but in the last resort rather disappointing. The theme is outlined in the preface: what light