

Reviews

JUSTICE, PEACE AND DOMINICANS 1216-2001 edited by John Orme Mills OP, *Dominican Publications*, 2001. Pp 229, £9.99 pbk.

Most of the articles in this valuable book first appeared in previous numbers of *New Blackfriars* in a series that traced Dominican involvement in issues of peace and justice through the centuries. Those who have read them there will welcome their appearance again in one volume. Taken together, they can be seen in a new perspective, for the book, as Timothy Radcliffe writes in the preface, 'is more like a family album than a family history,' offering 'snapshots' of individual friars pursuing the Order's commitment to justice and peace.

A family album cannot contain photos of all the relatives; it is, perhaps, only the favourites who are finally selected—and then, only their best pictures. There is something of that in this book, which the editor acknowledges when he speaks of 'the ambiguity of the Dominican tradition' and of the 'two conflicting visions.' Some Dominicans have supported what we today would describe as control or domination yet they themselves understood their efforts as a work in service of the truth and of justice. The influence of both visions endures and 'the best pictures' in this book 'create a mood, a feeling, that did extend beyond their lifetimes.'

With an excellent preface by Timothy Radcliffe and an introduction by the editor, the essays proceed in more or less chronological order (the same way they originally appeared in *New Blackfriars*). Radcliffe's hope is that the Order may now be able to make 'a small contribution to the search for a just world, offering a discourse in which rigorous reflection, spirituality and the commitment to justice are knitted together again.' John Mills, in his introduction, offers a rationale for the book: 'There can be no appreciation of God's mercy where there is no appreciation of his justice and our sins against it,' and, quoting Vincent McNabb, 'If our mission is the salvation of souls, the aim stated by our fundamental constitution, we must give hope to those who long for God's justice.' This is a book that gives hope.

The first essay, by Richard Finn, describes some of the 'Early Voices for Justice,' 13th century Dominicans who were involved in 'the practical search for a just peace.' The friars were often called upon for their services as reconcilers, arbitrators, and peace-makers, and the friars' concern for peace and justice is seen first in the brethren's interest in 'a proper understanding of the issues.'

It is this 'proper understanding of the issues,' this attention to contemporary challenges, that determines the characteristic, incarnational response of Dominicans to injustices. This is implicit in Nicholas Sagovsky's article, 'Thomas Aquinas on Justice.' For Aquinas,

justice requires of individuals a passionate commitment to the common good, so that they seek consistently to discern and to follow what is good not merely for themselves but for all.' His notion of commutative justice is explained by Sagovsky as a 'conviction that there is good or "dignity" in all things and that there is a proper use of money which is conditioned by the recognition of this dignity (and not the other way around).'

Articles on St Antoninus of Florence, on Francisco Vitoria, Las Casas, Dominican involvement in the Distributist Movement, French worker-priests, all bear witness to the common good as the organising principle for action. Even a surprising article on 'The Medieval Rhineland, Eckhart and Popular Theological Preaching,' by the editor, is witness to this. For Mills, 'Eckhart's teaching on "inwardness" was an early contribution towards the making of modern identity,' and he remarks on just how much respect Eckhart and his followers had for 'outstanding religious women and for the women in their charge, in spite of the negative attitude of so many senior ecclesiastics of their time. These Dominicans were open to learning from them, and did so.'

Some might judge the book uneven: some articles are scholarly, others more journalistic. Yet this actually makes for a good balance, and makes browsing attractive (though this could have been made easier with an index). There are new things learned (on Eckhart, eg, and Antoninus) or old learning deepened (Las Casas). Inevitably, the reader will have his favourites—as in any album—and the two essays by Richard Finn, on 'Early Voices' and 'Antoninus of Florence' are wonderfully informative. The most interesting chapter, and the most appropriate, in today's political climate, is Roger Ruston's on 'Francisco Vitoria,' the founder of international law.

A helpful reference is given in Viktor Hofstetter's survey of the 'Teaching of Recent Chapters and Masters, and the editor offers an epilogue that is also a rallying call: 'One of the challenges which Dominicans of the coming age who are concerned with justice and peace issues will have to confront will be an increasing devaluing of the individual human being. 'Here,' he writes, 'is a trend which may not result in as much suffering as global warming will bring, but Dominicans are likely to see it as more immediately their concern, for fighting it is fighting a war of the spirit.'

This is an excellent book and will help readers, and Dominicans especially, to answer the question: 'What can the Dominican Family do?'

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KARL RAHNER AND IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY by Philip Endean, *Oxford Theological Monographs*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2001. Pp. x + 291, £45.00 hbk.

This book is a thoroughly researched, mature, critical and enlightening judgement of Karl Rahner's own assessment of the influence on him of St Ignatius Loyola, the author of the *Spiritual Exercises* (a manual for

586