

a sanity which can subordinate personal difficulties to the happiness of the community and can see human pettinesses balanced by his total love. And laugh.

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CATHOLIC ACTION AND THE LAITY, by Arthur Alonso, O.P.; B. Herder Book Company, 36s.

Since the pontificate of St Pius X until that of Pope John XXIII, ever increasing prominence is being given to the lay apostolate in the life of the Church. The subject of this book is Catholic Action as defined by Pope Pius XI, 'the participation or collaboration of the laity in the hierarchical apostolate of the Church'. In this country at any rate the term 'apostolate of the laity' seems to have become more current to describe this movement, and might well have been a more appealing title to this book. The author, Fr Alonso O.P., is well qualified to deal with his subject on an academical level, since he is one-time professor of Canon Law at the Angelicum in Rome, and is now professor of Canon Law in the Pontifical Theological Faculty at Salamanca. He divides his study into three parts, under the headings, 'What Catholic Action is not', 'The Nature of Catholic Action', 'Catholic Action in Ecclesiastical Law'. Thus he covers the whole field of his subject, considered from the theological and canonical points of view. Rather too much space has been spent on theoretical questions, and the refutation of other writers. The third part, on the ecclesiastical law in the matter, may be an interesting piece of speculation perhaps acceptable in the class room; but it will be of little interest to the layman deeply engaged in the lay apostolate, to be told that he probably belongs to a society which should be classified as a pious union. The fact of the matter is that the Code of Canon Law has not yet legislated for Catholic Action, just as no place has been found for secular institutes. We may expect that the coming General Council will make some revision in this respect. In this country the lay apostolate is conducted through existing organizations such as the Legion of Mary, the Young Catholic Workers, the Grail, and perhaps through secular institutes, of which the inner circle of the Grail is one. Catholic Action does not exist in the abstract.

This volume would serve better as a manual for the lay apostolate if the reference notes had been placed at the bottom of the pages instead of at the end of the book, though many of the works referred to there, in Latin and Spanish, are inaccessible to English readers. The book would also have been improved for its purpose by being furnished with an alphabetical index.

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