

The true philosopher is a lover of God; Inner Word; The Image of God; God is Truth; The Great Instauration; The vision of God, all of which indicate the kind of religious thinker Hedley considers Coleridge to be.

In those passages which deal, relatively straightforwardly, with Coleridge's thought in *Aids to Reflection* Hedley succeeds in making Coleridge the interesting, though rarely easy, religious philosopher he is. But, though it may be necessary to give Coleridge his rightful status by showing that he is not just a muddled purveyor of other people's ideas, the erudition with which Hedley accomplishes this task becomes a distraction if one is interested in Coleridge's thought rather than the multifarious dependencies and distinctions between one kind of philosophical and religious position and another (-isms abound). Of itself this is a kind of *tour de force*. But it is also a disincentive for anyone but a scholar who has a good grasp of the history of Western religious philosophy and can also read Greek (quotations are not transliterated). This is a pity, since, as Hedley wishes to maintain and in some measure succeeds in showing, Coleridge deserves to be better known not only as a poet but also as a religious thinker. At the very least, however, Hedley's book is a welcome counterweight to those critics who underestimate Coleridge's achievements.

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LAY SANCTITY, MEDIEVAL AND MODERN: A SEARCH FOR MODELS
edited by Ann W. Astell *University of Notre Dame Press, South Bend, IN,*
2000. Pp. x + 250, £29.95 hbk.

This book of essays, which came into being as a result of a conference to explore the challenging and changing historical relationships between medieval and modern ideas of laity and sanctity, examines the discrepancy between canonisation and lay status. The interest of the various participants is concisely summed up in Anne Askeff's introduction. First, as she points out, it is important that the official Church should recognise and take seriously the sanctity of lay men and women as a model for life in the Church.

In focusing on the lives of specific personages and movements, the questions this book sets out to ask are summed up in the first few pages. Namely: what distinguishes the spirituality and sanctity of the laity from that of religious? To what extent must laity orient themselves towards monastic ideals and practices in pursuit of holiness? Is it really possible to become holy 'in the world' or must one retreat from it? Does marital sex, ownership of property and involvement in politics impede sanctity, or the recognition of sanctity by the Church, and if so, why? Is lay sanctity something inferior to the sanctity of religious? Why have so few lay saints been canonised, resulting in so few canonically recognised models of lay sanctity? Here it would be germane to draw attention to the lack of married saints. It needs to be asked whether marriage and sainthood are in some sense mutually exclusive or, rather, has this dearth more to do with which holy lives are promoted and written up?

In a collection of essays, the variety of topics will mean that some appeal to a particular reader more than others. Part One on the medieval period covers lay sanctity and Church reform in France (Mary Skinner),

Angela of Foligno: a eucharistic model (Mary Meany) and child saint (Patricia Wasyliv). I personally found the essays on pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Kristine Utterbank), *sexuality and lay sanctity in Margery Kempe* (Peter Pellegrin) and *Catherine of Siena and lay sanctity in Italy* (Karen Scott) particularly interesting. Although in line with many of the writers in this section, I do have doubts as to whether lay sanctity meant the same then as now. Certainly Catherine of Siena seems to fall somewhere between the lay and religious state and her own view of her situation appears to be somewhat ambiguous.

Part Two which deals with the 20th century includes: Elisabeth Leseur (Janet Ruffing), Gertraud von Bullion (Ann Astell), Raissa and Jacques Maritain (Astrid O'Brien) and Chiara Lubich (Donald Mitchell). Although I found all these essays enlightening, I was particularly pleased to see included 'The Political Holiness of Dorothy Day: Eschatology, Social Reform and the Works of Mercy' (Patricia Vinje). It makes a refreshing change to read the words political and holiness in the same sentence and to find this linked to community action, with and for the poor. Since, as Ruffing argues (p.118), saint-making remains rooted in two streams, the authenticating process of the magisterium and the recognition and imitation of the people, a situation can arise where the concerns of both of these parties seem to be out of kilter.

One that springs to mind is the case for the sainthood of Archbishop Oscar Romero. Certainly what many people today are seeking, as Ruffing also points out, is exemplars who in lives of concrete holiness confront serious problems in social and personal situations and show 'the action of God's grace working in and through them'. Perhaps what this book will sum up for many of us, is a request that the official Church should watch for, and give greater recognition to, the example given by the sanctity of lay people. Until that time, maybe there is as much honour in being plain Dorothy Day.

ANTONIA LACEY

THE NEW WORLD OF FAITH by Avery Dulles SJ *Our Sunday Visitor Publishing, Huntington, Indiana, 2000. Pp.175, 10.99 pbk.*

For Avery Dulles, as for many others, the modern world is undergoing a crisis of faith which calls for 'a more confident and knowledgeable assertion of the bedrock truths of faith.' On the face of it Dulles would seem an ideal person for the task. Throughout his long and distinguished career, whose value has recently been recognised by the announcement that he is to be created a cardinal, he has gained through his many books and articles the reputation as one of the most influential and balanced American Catholic expositors and apologists. His works combine the qualities of breadth of reference and systematising clarity with an avoidance of unnecessary polemic and evasion, and are expressed in clear and accessible prose. This book is his response to the modern dilemma. However, unlike most of his *oeuvre*, it is not written for a more theologically literate audience but is a presentation of Christian doctrine for the general Christian believer or inquirer into