

formula for the distribution of communion (p. 34), but St Ambrose's 'Corpus Christi. R. Amen' is not as yet the one prescribed by the *Missale Ambrosianum*, where the priest is told to say 'Corpus Domini nostri, etc.', to which the communicant replies 'Amen'. Strangers assisting attentively at mass in the diocese of Braga will find more unusual items than the author has listed; the following surely deserved mention: the Ave Maria recited before the prayers at the foot of the altar, so that, with the Marian antiphon after the Last Gospel, the rite begins and ends under Mary's patronage, the attractive blessing of the person who brings up the people's offerings, the celebrant's adoration of the sacred species on both knees at the consecration.

In a second edition of this book, justice should be done to the memory of a great pope, for it is unfair to state without qualification: 'John VIII forbade the liturgical use of Slavonic' (p. 105). Certainly in 879 John VIII prohibited its use, but after St Methodius had come to Rome and discussed the situation with him, the Pope fully approved. Passages of John's letter (June, 880) to Count Sventapulco would satisfy the most ardent vernacularist. It was his successor, Stephen V, yielding to a pressure group, who forbade the liturgical use of Slavonic.

*The Eucharistic Liturgy of Taizé* is an inspiring book for anyone interested in the liturgical movement and the possible shape of things to come. The Protestant community of Taizé has handsomely profited by liturgical scholarship in evolving its own rite. Here is presented what might be called the 'Ordinary of Divine Service', preceded by an introductory essay on 'The Celebration of the Eucharist' by Max Thurian, superior of the community. The Sunday and Festival Liturgy and the shorter Weekday Liturgy are given, and, at the end of the book, the various prefaces in use. There are three scriptural readings on Sundays and festivals, when the litany or invocation, inspired by the Ambrosian rite, is also sung—measures which may one day find their way into the Roman Missal. The prefaces, although not as many as those at Milan, are more numerous than the Roman, and among them not the least interesting is that 'of the Church' prescribed for the Sundays between the feast of Sts Peter and Paul and the Transfiguration. The translation is a happy one.

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THE NOVITIATE, by Louis Colin, C.S.S.R.; Fowler Wright, 30s.

THE PRIEST AND VOCATIONS, Conference Papers; Aquin Press, 25s.

A CHOOSING, by Fr Hugh, S.S.F.; Faith Press, 4s. 6d.

There are no cracks in Fr Colin's cloisters. His book, so the foreword tells us, 'has been conceived in a purely didactic spirit': an admission which in England, anyway, is unlikely to puff the author's sales. It is made up of forty-two

methodically planned Lessons for Novices, each provided with a questionnaire and bibliography of its own. The best one can say about this book has been said on the dust-jacket: it is 'a compendium of everything the novice can learn and should practise before committing himself, through his profession, to the way of perfection'. The worst one can say of Fr Colin's lessons is that, like the penny readings in *Ruddigore*, they are not remarkably entertaining.

Perhaps, in this imperfect world, to expect entertainment as well as edification is to invite perpetual disappointment; but spiritual themes can be played with a light touch. This book is ham-fisted. Not, I think, a small defect, considering the audience to which it is addressed. When a human being, even a seventeen-year-old human being, sets out to 'acquire perfection', we can expect to witness some pretty broad comedy. The fantastic tricks that novices, and occasionally their elders, play before high heaven, will probably not make the angels weep; but they are very likely to make people laugh. And just as well. Like any other training establishment, and more so than most, a Novitiate makes heavy demands on the candidates' ability to adjust; and if you are going to keep young men (or young women) in a more or less artificial atmosphere, under constant pressure, for a minimum of twelve months, you must at least allow them to use the safety-valve of laughter. We know that the Novitiate has a serious purpose, and no one is likely to advocate, or to achieve, an environment of slapstick. By all means set your standards high. But let it be Christ and his mystical body, not themselves, that the novices learn to take seriously.

This book's careful planning, its documentation and bibliographies, justify the author's claim that he has produced a 'working tool' for the rest of us engaged in the task of Novitiate training. We shall all find it useful, but I doubt if many of us will be satisfied to pass on the Lessons exactly as they stand. The language is a problem. With all respect to the translator, it does not read like English: the thought remains starkly foreign. Here, for instance, is an extract from one of the questionnaires: 'Might not virginity be a cause of secret pride, of moral contraction and of psychological and physiological unbalance?'

And here, with a St Trinian's touch about it, is another: 'What are the little scandals which one may encounter in a Novitiate?'

*The Priest and Vocations* consists of reports presented, in 1956, to a National Conference held at St Sulpice for 'priests ministering to religious'. The title does not reveal that the exclusive concern of this book is with the vocation of religious women; but the priest who would automatically cross such a book off his reading list is precisely the priest for whose benefit it has been published. The theme of the conference, as Fr Plé says in his preface, 'emphasizes a point of law which is not sufficiently appreciated in practice: that not only wardens and chaplains but all priests, both secular and regular, have responsibilities towards religious'.

The Church needs the Religious Orders of women; and the Orders need vocations. The French, who, thank God, are given to thinking furiously about theology, have been trying for some years now to bring fresh air into the rather

stuffy and static notion that most Catholics have of the Religious Life. This book is one result of their efforts; and, as one might expect, it is positive, energetic, and stimulating. As the eleventh of the well-known 'Religious Life' series originated under the Blackfriars imprint, it is assured of a ready market; but the whole point of this particular publication is that it should be read by *priests* rather than by religious: its object is to help priests in their work—and it is their work—of awakening, recognizing and fostering vocations among women and girls.

To say that these papers raise more questions than they answer is a compliment, not a criticism. Practical difficulties (including a good cross-section of clerical prejudices) are freely discussed. Being French, the authors are alive to the importance of working through the Liturgy and the Catechism as well as in the confessional and the pulpit. Conditions and problems peculiarly continental are reflected here and there: an English mind is apt to stagger at the array of 'Catholic Action Groups' whose experience has been drawn on—J.O.C., J.A.C.F., J.E.C., A.C.O., and the rest . . . but what comes quite clearly through it all is the worthwhile conviction that, for any priest who takes his pastoral responsibilities seriously, 'work for vocations' can never be an optional extra.

The translation, from lecture-room idiom, is well done, though tolerance of jargon is part of the price one has to pay for French theological writing. (Fairly well hardened to it myself, I was yet brought to a shuddering halt by 'auscultation' on page 24 of this book.) There are too many misprints for one to allow perfection on the editorial side.

There are some unusual features about *A Choosing*. Fr Hugh is an Anglican religious, of the Society of St Francis, and the book was first written in Swedish. It is a fresh and attractive outline of the basic principles of Religious Life, with an excellent scriptural approach. I am inclined to challenge Fr Hugh's analogy of 'poverty' in the Blessed Trinity (p. 28), and find myself jibbing at the statement (p. 49) that 'Christ . . . accepted John's proclamation that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand'; but, these reservations apart, am grateful for an interesting and persuasive little book.

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