

tribution to make to the life of the Church. This time there are no doctrinal conflicts separating Catholics and requiring authoritative definition: rather what is required is a renewed sounding of the notion of catholicity, recalling the schismatic and heretical, and equipping the faithful for pastoral work in the new world created by the decline of colonialism, the rise of African and Asian nationalism, and the success of communist movements in many parts of the world.

Mgr Jaeger has something to say on all these topics. He is not concerned to be original but he is always sensible and he puts the reader on to the considerable literature now available. If the tone of this book and its patient and scholarly approach are to be characteristic of the Council, its work should be notable indeed. Naturally such a book is not easy reading and there is some repetition but there are many rewarding insights—a most shrewd account of the real lines of division between Lutherans and Catholics for instance—and some odd and amusing details. The Vatican uses an electronic computer, apparently, for sorting out the preliminary suggestions and resolutions for the Council's agenda: Dr Fisher at the end of his famous audience with the Pope presented his host with a 'fine picture of the Queen's coronation' and got the resolutions of the Roman synod in return.

ERIC JOHN

MONASTIC LIFE IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND, by J. C. Dickinson; Adam and Charles Black, 38s.

In his preface J. C. Dickinson acknowledges a debt to the 'majestic and graceful' volumes of Professor Knowles. The impression of reading Knowles occurs frequently and very pleasantly, simply because Mr Dickinson has something of that same capacity for putting across well digested learning with a sustained lightness of touch, and a skilful use of sidelights on main issues, that produce a vivid impression of 'being there'. The book begins as a guide to help us, in a general way, through the ruins that have been so neatly tidied and labelled by the National Trust. Into the architectural framework of the more or less typical monastery, the author fits a reconstruction of the daily and yearly monastic round, and a short history of the orders. By the time we have got to Part III, on the dissolution, the monastery is thoroughly alive, due in no small measure, of course, to such delightful anecdotes as the one about the birdsnesting canons of Bolton, and the kind of vignette that catches the nuns after compline getting together for a drink and a little chat.

The chapter on the dissolution period is particularly well done, and will be a useful eye-opener for those who still think that anything but greed was involved in the motives of the dissolutionists. Indeed one can imagine this book having, with its reticent candour, the sort of effect that the mutilated pedestal of St Alban's shrine can, and does have, on the 'pilgrim' of today. It is only a pity that the photographs, beautifully chosen from the point of view of their subject matter, are not really sharp enough to make a full impact. Publishers

will have to remember that photography has made great progress, and that very high standards have been set by the art book companies. A useful addition, particularly for the non-English reader of this book (I have the Americans in mind) would have been a map.

GEOFFREY WEBB

WHOM GOD HATH NOT JOINED, by Claire McAuley; Sheed and Ward, 7s.

The arresting title of this book does no injustice to its subject matter. In 160 moving, at times irritating, but always compelling readable pages it unfolds the story of an American couple who found after several years of married life that in the eyes of the Church there was no marriage and their stable loving and extremely happy union was nothing short of adultery. The authoress, who is the wife concerned, takes the reader through her years of trial and tribulation attempting to convince the Church and her husband that a brother-sister vow was possible and, in the presence of an immense love for God and for one another, workable. Her preoccupation with banal details wrapped in a flowery American style is at times irritating but there is never any doubt of her sincerity nor of the genuineness of her account. She demonstrates convincingly, with plenty of humour and poignancy, that although sex is a very desirable channel for love, mutual fulfilment between man and woman can be achieved in its absence. There is neither debasement nor aspersion cast on the intrinsic worth of sexual love; here is a simple but moving declaration that the Christian life implies sacrifice which at times must assume heroic proportions. The publishers can be congratulated for this book which should be on the bookshelf of every priest and married couple.

JACK DOMINIAN

I BELONG WHERE I'M NEEDED, by Elizabeth Reid; The Newman Press, \$4.50

This is essentially a journalist's book, a vivid, fast-moving account of what the author has herself seen, heard and experienced during her work for the Grail in Asia and Africa, beginning in Hong Kong in 1948 and ending in Africa in 1961.

She highlights her account with excellent pen-portraits of people, from obscure peasants to personalities like Tom Mboya, and illustrates her points with true stories, told with an effective and dramatic reticence. The dark background of human misery, of sickness, of starvation, of homelessness is described so vividly that it must surely compel attention. And her appraisal of some Afro-Asian criticisms of the West is very shrewd; every now and then, for an uncomfortable moment, she insists that we see ourselves as others, so unexpectedly, see us. Nor does she spare Catholics, whose 'dynamism is so often smothered'.

The sweep of the book is so wide that the reader is inevitably left with many