

that the volume would have benefited from a similar note on the *Bland Case*, and perhaps some of the other British and American cases in this area. But Book Two certainly points us in the right direction by presenting a most powerful case against the legalisation of euthanasia, both voluntary and involuntary. There is a cogent restatement of the basis and content of traditional medical ethics, a critique of influential pro-euthanasia writers such as Dworkin and Warnock, an analysis of the pre-eminent themes in the current debate (dignity, dualism, autonomy...), recommendations regarding appropriate care of PVS patients, and an exploration of the roles of living wills, proxies, 'responsible medical opinion' and the courts. The Centre's 1982 position is greatly strengthened by reflection upon data of recent experience: the outstanding successes of Britain's hospice movement and the appalling failure of the Dutch euthanasia experiment.

As a work of modern apologetics and polemics (in the good sense of each) this volume is a model: forthright yet balanced, fair to opponent views, analytically precise, well evidenced, compassionate, immensely persuasive. Yet as the authors recognize, "it is not to be expected that in a pluralistic culture the insights into the nature of human existence on which the tradition of common morality depends will come easily to all readers, even to all Christian readers." For all that, "unless these insights are reappropriated and medicine honours the traditional conception of human dignity, it is difficult to see what *in principle* stands in the way of a repetition of the historical betrayal of medicine that took place in Germany in the second quarter of this century" (p. 12).

This new volume is a representative fruit of a foundation which has built a reputation not just as the premier Christian bioethics institute in Britain, but as one of the finest in the world, Christian or secular. All this despite resources so meagre it should make the Catholic community blush. Bravo, Linacre Centre.

ANTHONY FISHER OP

THE CATHOLIC FAITH — A DOMINICAN'S VISION by Richard Conrad OP, *Geoffrey Chapman*, 1994. Pp 200. £8.99.

The subtitle of this much-needed book — 'A Dominican's Vision' — indicates the inherent reasonableness of belief. 'The truth...goes beyond, but not against, reason'(p.35), and the whole book is really an elaboration on this theme. Fr Conrad's profound Biblical scholarship, and grounding in the Fathers and St Thomas Aquinas are used to brilliant effect in explaining simply and cogently the doctrines of the Catholic Faith. The Biblical and historical background of these doctrines is always the starting-point for further explanation: for example, in the cases of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation, an understanding of heretical teaching makes it easier for us to focus on the truth. The Introduction, providing a concise outline of what Christian faith is, uses the life story of St

Augustine as an example of the difficult lessons, and attractions of faith for us. In an important discussion of what it means to be human, in the first chapter, the author does not explicitly challenge materialism (or any other false view of the person), but rather implicitly demonstrates how unworthy such a view is by reasoned exposition.

Knowledge of the truth is but the first step towards love of the truth, and friendship — intimacy even — with God. 'The Holy Trinity is not a puzzle to be solved, but a life to be lived' (p.35). The central section of the book — 'Jesus Christ the Way' — presents Our Lord as a deeply attractive figure, our Redeemer and our kinsman. A discussion of all the (apparent) difficulties of the person of Christ — the co-existence of divine and human natures, the meaning of judgement, or the significance of the title 'Bearer of our Sins' — serves to emphasise the beauty of holiness. 'The humanity of Jesus, aglow with charity because of the divine nature within Him, can set others on fire with the love of God' (p.120). As 'the chief liberation won by Christ is liberation from sin' (p.105), Fr Conrad points out that sins are actually 'negative choices'. Therefore Catholic morality is actually exercising a series of positive, life-enhancing choices, and it is by living as God's children now that we can lay hold of eternal life. Each section of the book concludes with a reference to the Kingdom: the theme of the section is lyrically expanded and the 'eternal' aspect made clear. Heaven is our destination; and this destination must never be lost sight of as we continue our pilgrimage.

This would be an ideal reference book for teachers, those involved in confirmation preparation or the instruction of adults. Each section is prefaced with a relevant passage from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, inviting the reader to explore the topic further. No aspect of Catholicism is neglected: indulgences, liberation theology, and the Harrowing of Hell are all included. Fr Conrad is particularly good on the Sacraments, and morality: the cardinal virtues are explained beautifully, using modern terminology, and made relevant to everyday situations.

Teachers would find the simple, but never facile, explanations invaluable in communicating the Faith. For example, Purgatory is ... 'learning to have died', allowing God to prise from our grasp the things we only reluctantly give up for His sake' (p.106). On 'unanswered' prayer: 'More important than any particular good is God Himself' (p.148). Analogy is used successfully to convey complex realities. Thus causality, the purpose of law, and the Church as embodying the authority given to the apostles are illustrated using a kettle boiling on the gas, a game of football, and acorns, hazelnuts and oak trees. The parents of teenagers who are rebelling against the Church could also find this book invaluable: the sections on the nature of evil, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Church, the Body of Christ, are examples of usual sticking-points logically and lucidly explained.

My caveats are few. It would have been helpful to have had a longer, more thorough exploration of conscience, and a fuller treatment of sin as

evil committed. The constraints of space have meant that currently 'controversial' aspects of the Church's teaching — priestly celibacy, the question of women's ordination, the ban on artificial birth control, and intercommunion — are not given the detailed examination which the present situation demands. But this book rises above 'partisan' Catholicism; there is no 'liberal' or 'conservative' axe to grind, and Fr Conrad's clear and penetrating mind is put wholly at the service of the Church he loves. The inspiring last paragraph, drawing a parallel between the Church and the Holy Eucharist, sums up beautifully everything that has gone before, and once again points us forward to the Kingdom, where at last we shall know as we are known.

JEAN KYRKE-SMITH

JACK DOMINIAN: LAY PROPHET? by Jock Dalrymple, London, Geoffrey Chapman 1995, Pp. 176, £12.50.

Sent off by his bishop to Leuven to do postgraduate study, the author (now a parish priest) chose a topic in the general area of marriage and was asked by his supervisor to work on the writings of Jack Dominian. The thesis, completed in 1992, has resulted in this very lucid and attractively written book (good writing runs in Dalrymple's family), part biography but mainly a study of the subject's immense influence on Catholic ideas about sexuality and marriage. The list of Dominian's writings runs to seven pages. Dalrymple enjoyed the friendship and cooperation of the Dominians throughout the project. Far from hagiographical, the book concludes with quite severe criticisms that Dalrymple does little to refute.

Born in Athens in 1929, of an Armenian Catholic father (a British subject) and a Greek Orthodox mother, Jack had to flee Greece with his family in 1941. They settled in Bombay, where he first learnt to speak English, at a school run by Spanish Jesuits. Arriving in England in 1945, he completed secondary education in Stamford, did national service and went to Cambridge to study medicine. While still a schoolboy he confided to a Jesuit retreat-master that he hoped to become a psychiatrist and was told that there was no surer way to damnation. He was a zealous Catholic student, in a chaplaincy presided over by Mgr Alfred Gilbey. He married Edith Smith in 1955, the year he qualified as a doctor (they first met in 1950 at Spode House). In 1958 he finally began his psychiatric studies in London. His first article — 'Family limitation: a Catholic doctor's view' — appeared in (old) *Blackfriars* (May 1961). His first book, *Psychiatry and the Christian*, appeared in 1962 (Burns and Oates).

Invited in 1958 to become one of the CMAC's medical counsellors, Jack Dominian began to learn, at first with great reluctance, that the teaching of the Church about marriage was not the answer to people's marital problems — 'a staggering realisation for a traditional Catholic'. He moved away from the idea of marriage as a contract towards seeing it as