

ordinary people.

Anyone who seeks an orientation in this field will find the collection of essays in *The Bible in a New Age* very helpful. They are meant as an introduction to biblical theology and its place in the dogmatic theology of the Church. Turning to the problem of studying the Bible *today*, the enquirer could hardly do better than turn to A. Hulsbosch's *God's Creation* for a discussion about the relevance of such concepts as creation, sin and redemption and how concepts which are biblically rooted can be seen to reveal new depths of meaning in the midst of a scientific culture. The discussion of biblical themes is thorough for a book of this size and is in fact the most valuable part of the book.

For an introduction to themes of the Old Testament concerning the nature of God, B. Van Iersel's book *The Bible on the Living God* can be recommended. It is an attempt to discuss the image of God in the Old Testament, especially. We all have our image of God, but in the books of the Bible, not only do we look in vain for a real representation of God, but our search for a

satisfactory definition of God does not yield any results either, although the biblical authors had an intense awareness of God. Anyone who reads this book will find help in transforming what is probably an abstract conception of God into a living reality. How necessary it is, too, to feel God as a living presence in the context of marriage, in which we mirror the relationship between God and His Church. Yet no topic of theology has, perhaps, been so neglected by theologians, as this. *The Bible on Marriage*, by G. N. Vollebregt, will be a help to all who feel the need to re-think the Church's traditional approach to the sacrament of marriage. The Bible contains no systematic treatise on marriage; it is spoken of almost incidentally. Yet it has much to say on this vital relationship between man and woman in the context of mankind's relationship to the Living God and as a sacrament constituting a bond with Christ's life and resurrection. Any discussion of marriage which neglects this can only be arid and unreal.

Mervyn Davies, O.P.

WISDOM IN PROVERBS, *The Concept of Wisdom in Proverbs 1–9*, by R. N. Whybray. *SCM Press (Studies in Biblical Theology 45)*, 13s. 6d.

It is difficult to describe the contents of this book to the 'clergy and laymen' to whom the excellent SBT series is addressed, without making it seem much less interesting reading than it really is. For non-specialists in the mysteries of biblical criticism are inclined to hold suspect the kind of fragmented literary analysis that is found here. But in dealing with works of such obviously composite origin as the Book of Proverbs some effort to disentangle the sources is a prime necessity, and whether or not one finds Dr Whybray's solution convincing, he will have been made aware of the problems in masterly fashion. Moreover he will have come a long way along the road to understanding the development of the concept of wisdom which was of such enormous importance in the religion of Israel and consequently in late Judaism, Christianity and

Gnosticism.

The author sees in the prologue or introduction to the Book of Proverbs – chs. 1–9, which differ fundamentally in style from the earlier, gnomic sections of the book – a primitive framework of ten 'discourses' of a teacher to his pupil on the value of heeding his instructions. All ten of them have a common structure which is always visible though sometimes much expanded and elaborated, and the collection is shown to be modelled upon Egyptian pedagogical works. In both Egypt and Israel this sort of teaching was largely secular in character. Into the collection of discourses, Dr Whybray believes, later writers have inserted two distinct sets of theological statements about the personified figure of wisdom. The purpose of the additions was to relate the wisdom tradition to the religion of Yahwism,

tentatively in the first set, which may be pre-exilic in date, and more assuredly in the second, postexilic set which contains the crucial passage 8 : 22–31 on the divine origin of wisdom. The author argues in detail for the view that this concept of wisdom originated within Yahwism in the personification of an attribute of Yahweh; the genuinely mythological elements are very few and very secondary.

This monograph, which is based on the

author's doctoral dissertation, is by far the most elaborate analysis of the material to come before us. Almost for that very reason the reader may wish to reserve judgment on the details of it, but he should be convinced that the doctrine of wisdom underwent at least some evolution even in Prov. 1–9 and that the evolution was along the general lines set forth here.

George MacRae, S.J.

CHANGES IN THE LITURGY by D. J. Crichton. *Geoffrey Chapman (Deacon Books), 10s. 6d.*

THE COUNCIL AND THE MASS by Dom Mark Tierney. *Clonmore and Reynolds, 15s.*

MEAN WHAT YOU SAY by Clifford Howell, S.J. *Geoffrey Chapman (Deacon Books), 10s. 6d.*

It is already clear from the documents issued by the post-conciliar commission for the implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy that a new epoch has dawned in the ordering of Church services. Where before the rubrics of the liturgical books simply laid down what was to take place without any respect for local circumstances and demanded an obedience which was seen to be an end in itself, the modern rubrics offer several ways of arranging the different actions of the liturgy so as to assure a meaningful and dignified worship whatever the local conditions. This rubrical liberty, however, demands both of those who organize the liturgy and of those who take part in it a clear understanding of what the Church desires. Experience over the last few months has shown how disastrously it can be abused by those who lack this understanding and are guided by their untutored whims. New rubrics and the instructions of authority however good and far sighted they may be will achieve little so long as the basic principles of the Constitution are not understood.

The three books under review are attempts to foster this understanding. Fr Crichton provides a welcome commentary on the *Instruction for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* which comes as a sequel to his commentary on the Constitution itself. As usual he combines the fruit of long pastoral experience with a deep understanding of the liturgy acquired

over years of careful study. Although this book was written before the appearance of the new *Ordo Missae* and the further extension of the use of English at said Masses, the clear exposition of the principles underlying the reforms make it an essential book for all those responsible for the conduct of the Church's liturgy.

Dom Mark Tierney is a monk of Glenstal Abbey which has been leading the liturgical movement in Ireland for many years. His book, which is especially directed to the Irish public, provides a lucid explanation of the ceremonies of the Mass and the basic principles of the liturgy as set out by the Council. The style is very simple, and it is to be hoped that many will benefit from reading this excellent little book. In appendix will be found the most important parts of the *Constitution on The Sacred Liturgy*, the *Instruction for the proper implementation of the Liturgy Constitution*, the directives of the Irish Hierarchy and the official translation of the Mass Ordinary for Ireland.

Fr Clifford Howell's book is basically an explanation of the short responses made by the congregation at Mass, but it goes deeper than mere exposition providing insights into the whole structure of the Mass liturgy and the mystery it proclaims. It is attuned to the simplest intelligence; yet there are few who would not learn much from it. It is a pity that some of the opinions on the meaning of the texts discussed