

EARLY SOURCES OF THE LITURGY, compiled by Lucien Deiss; translated by Benet Weatherhead. Geoffrey Chapman, 1967. 21s.

Only a few years ago the slogan was one foreign word, *ressourcement*; now it is another, *aggiornamento*. In the one case, the true Christian spirit was to be cultivated by a pondering on the documents of the pristine tradition, in the other it is to be revealed zen-wise in commitment to the present. In fact, of course, both activities are necessary, in interaction. At every great crisis of renewal, men return to their classical books; paradoxically, it is the very sense of the contemporary that quickens imaginative sympathy with the past, just as intelligence of the past is a rehearsal for the present.

The book under review is thus in the line of *ressourcement*; and as a work of popularization it comes with particular opportuneness at a time when we are accustoming ourselves to the newly-translated Roman canon of the mass and to the further adaptations and experiments that this revelation will no doubt accelerate. For the book provides comparative material with which to view our Roman mass in all its

force and weaknesses, its dignity and its accretions. Introduced by brief notes are ten sets of liturgical prayers of the eastern and western traditions, including the narratives of the passover meal and the institution of the eucharist in the New Testament. The western prayers are those familiar to any student of the liturgy—the eucharistic prayer of the Didache, the memorial of Saint Justin, and extracts from the incomparable Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome; not so familiar are the fulsome examples of the eastern tradition, Syrian, Chaldean and Egyptian.

The work of an eminent musicologist rather than of a liturgist strictly so-called, this book is not meant for scholars. For many others, however, the notes will prove as useful as the texts are meditatively beautiful—with a beauty that is worthily served by the quality of the translation and the tact with which many passages are laid out like free verse. There is a touch that betrays the translator for the poet he is.

PASCAL LEFEBURE, O.P.

MAN, CULTURE AND CHRISTIANITY, by Giles Hibbert, O.P. Sheed and Ward, 1967, 241 pp. 27s. 6d.

'It is the intention behind this work', so we are assured on page 30, 'to show that the compatibility which there is between Christianity and those aspects of modern culture represented especially by psychology and literature is something far more realist than what we get in either Gerald Vann or Victor White.' What this means, I think, is that Giles Hibbert finds it possible to make use of the work of Jung and D. H. Lawrence to develop an even more deeply Incarnation-centred sacramental piety than either of his distinguished predecessors attempted to produce.

He certainly sticks loyally to the English Dominican tradition of writing books which are almost unclassifiable. The best parts of this book seem to me to point to the spirituality shelf as the most appropriate place for it in the library. Perhaps such categorizing is out of date, but the blurb and the foreword make claims about the book which most mislead the reader. It is not fair to speak of Fr Hibbert as grappling with the fundamental issues in contemporary theology. In so far as these issues come up at all, he skirts round them: the problem of demythologization is raised in the first chapter but not discussed in terms of the work of Bultmann himself. On the other hand,

Laurence Bright's assertion in the foreword that the social-political ideas deriving from Marx are an essential element in the book is plainly just wishful thinking. What is said in the last chapter does not make up for the tendency throughout the book to play down the importance of structures. We are told that law is not to be dismissed (p. 190), but when it comes to the bit, we find Fr Hibbert treating it 'almost as an appendix' (p. 208). 'Perceptive sensitivity' is rightly preferred to legalism; but one is reminded of Professor Cameron's point about the reluctance of liberals to accept that legislation is a *disciplina*. 'The essence of Christianity', it is claimed, 'is this life which the people of God lead as such. . . . Attempts to pin it down and legislate for it will only reduce its actuality. . . .' Obviously dogma and law can be restrictive, but Fr Hibbert sometimes sounds close to meaning that they are so even in principle.

One wonders where Fr Hibbert would be without his Aunt Sallies, but it is abundantly clear that his denunciations of various aspects of Catholicism spring from an impressive sacramental mysticism of the Incarnation: this is how he takes man and God absolutely seriously. He keeps up a running fight with

those who regard Christian revelation as simply propositional (when he says 'facts' he usually means 'propositions'); but there are more complex issues in theological epistemology than he seems to appreciate when he says that 'true meaning is something to be participated in, not something to be "cracked" by logical analysis' (p. 108). It depends on what you mean by 'meaning'—and truth! The ideas, however, which Fr Hibbert draws from Elizabeth Sewell's book, *The Orphic Voice*, though they might benefit from some analysis, are certainly suggestive of new perspectives.

The best chapters are in the middle of the book. Using *Women in Love* and some of F. R. Leavis' work on Lawrence, Fr Hibbert persuasively exposes the will-to-power in our behaviour and presents the traditional doctrine of 'abandonment' in an entirely new light.

What he has to say about the body, what he says about dancing and smiling, where the mantic tone breaks through the denunciatory rhetoric, touches on something very important indeed: a deep sense of the reality of the Incarnation yields insight into the possibility of a new development in spirituality.

Fr Hibbert goes in for 'meaningfulness' rather than 'clarity' (p. 211), and the circuitous and minatory style can become irritating, but he has a rare gift for unsettling one's conventional assumptions. 'However difficult belief may be', he says (p. 204), 'fundamentally it is no more difficult to believe in God in Christ than it is to treat another human being truly as a person rather than as a thing.' That, unless I am very much mistaken, is the message of this remarkable first book.

FERGUS KERR, O.P.

CHURCH AND MISSION IN MODERN AFRICA, by Adrian Hastings. *Burns & Oates, London, 1967.* 263 pp. 21s.

This study of modern Africa is an important contribution to the present struggle for renewal in the whole Church. Africa has problems of her own, but many are such as can only be tackled by the Church as a whole, and are extreme manifestations of those which are calling for solution everywhere. Our question of mixed marriages is spotlighted when we read that in many parts of Africa 60 per cent to 80 per cent of baptized Catholics are permanently excommunicated due to the impact of canon law on African social custom (polygamy appears to be only one factor, and not the most frequent, in this loss). Our own need for biblical and liturgical reform is magnified in a Church which has grown up without any vernacular Bible. And the movement towards greater flexibility and diversity in seminary training gathers speed in a country where the dominant urge is towards political and educational development, and where the shortage of priests is becoming disastrous. Fr Hastings believes that the Church has unconsciously erred in assuming that all priests should have approximately the same training. This fails to cater both for the brilliantly intellectual and for the non-intellectual seminarians. He pleads for 'a very diversified ministry, bound together by charity but not by uniformity' (in line with the teaching of St Paul), and asks for available training in the sciences and humanities, in the arts, and in practical skills such as electricity, plumbing and gardening. He also asks for a

stronger link between contemporary theologians and the missions, to the advantage of both.

The rule of clerical celibacy is approached by this missionary from the point of view of a large amorphous company of imperfectly taught and mostly non-eucharistic baptized Catholics. 'The local community is, maybe, one that prays together, but it is not one that regularly celebrates the Eucharist together. The majority of the faithful are quite unable to join in the Mass even once a week. Priests strain themselves to the utmost to get round the villages as often as possible, but they and their people are basically victims of a mistaken ecclesiology.' The ratio of priests to people in Africa is about 1 : 1,800, and, according to one authority, parishes of 40,000 staffed by two priests are by no means unknown. (Our priest : people ratio in England and Wales is about 1 : 644). 'The situation is far worse than this, for work in Africa is not merely pastoral but missionary. There are all the millions of pagans beyond, and so many of them are ripe to enter the Church. 'The lack of trust which has failed to ordain African priests in sufficient numbers (though now the number has been increased to about 150 a year) has resulted in a ratio of one African priest to 10,000 African Catholics. Fr Hastings' recommendation that tried and tested married deacons should be ordained, and form a second order of priests after the manner of the Orthodox Church, is