

them to take an active part and to wean them away from the habit of 'looking on'. The matter is as topical as it was over ten years ago when it was first produced in German. One could select numerous points for discussion; a few headings will suffice: silence as an activity—active listening—the altar table. This sort of instruction brings the Mass to life, everyday life. The three chapters on liturgical—and for that matter general prayer—difficulties deserve note. They afflict us all from time to time, and we can often help one another with them without being high-grade theologians; they are staleness, the desire for emotional satisfaction and the oppressive sense of our own sins. Dr Guardini's study of all these matters is most practical and helpful, and many of the chapters can be read in isolation for their own sakes, as can the methodical study, historical and theological, of the nature of the Mass, which occupies almost all the latter half of the book.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE PATRISTIC AGE CONCERNING MARY'S DEATH.

By Walter J. Burghardt, S.J. (Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland; 95 cents.)

This reprint from *Marian Studies* (Vol. VIII) is a collation of the evidence for and against the belief that our Lady died. It covers the first eight centuries. It is thorough, as was to be expected of the author, and comes down definitely on the positive side, i.e. that she did actually die. But only as a strongly felt opinion. It does not dispose of the question and those theologians (few, but not negligible) who for other reasons like to think that our Lady passed from earth to heaven without death will be grateful to Father Burghardt for having set out so clearly the weakness as well as the strength of the Patristic evidence.

His conclusion is that 'there emerges a widespread conviction of the early Church that our Lady died a natural death. . . . However, the nature of much of the evidence . . . is too fragile to sustain an apodictic conclusion on the theological significance of this conviction. But the conviction is there. More than that, the consistency of its liturgical expression and the uniformity of its homiletic articulation warrant the conclusion that it was conscious, abiding, and informed.' But whether, in nearly all the evidence provided, it is a conviction or an assumption is just the point at issue. Only when we have answered that can we consider whether it was conscious or informed.

G. M. CORR, O.S.M.

LE TRÔNE DE LA SAGESSE. By Louis Bouyer. (Editions du Cerf.)

Masterly is an accurate word for this book. It is a richly reflective long essay (296 pages) on the implications of all the data of revelation which can help us to understand the doctrine of the motherhood of