

BOOK REVIEWS

The Study of Liturgy. Ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright and Edward Yarnold. S.P.C.K., London, 1978. Pp. xxvii + 532 + indexes. Limp covers, £8.50.

This "introduction to the study of liturgy" is both wider and narrower in scope than the celebrated *Liturgy and Worship* (S.P.C.K., 1952) which it succeeds. It covers fewer areas of the liturgical field — nothing on the Coronation Service or about extempore prayer; but the range of contributors is extended beyond Anglicanism to include Roman Catholics and Methodists. The last are charged with "a watching brief for the other Protestant Churches"; and of the sections devoted to Eastern Christianity one is written by an Orthodox contributor.

The scope is encyclopedic, and with the help of the index the book will certainly have this use. The content is chiefly constituted by statements on Baptism and Confirmation (unhappily called "initiation"), the Eucharist, Ordination, the Divine Office, and the Christian Year; and each statement offers a historical outline of the beginnings, followed by an account of denominational developments. Comments, too brief to be thorough but long enough to be illuminating, are made on music, language, and architecture. The whole is flanked by "A Theology of Worship" and a "Pastoral Orientation". On these the editors rightly lay stress, for without theology liturgiology degenerates into archaeology and without practical application into antiquarianism. The twenty-four theses of "Worship and the Pastoral Office" are real contributions to the subject and merit both study and implementation. On the "Theology" two comments may be offered.

(a) This theological note prefaces "The Development of the Liturgy" and is no doubt deliberately styled "a theology": the booklist cites titles in eight denominational categories, and a consensus here would be as artificial as Esperanto. The balance is carefully held between crediting liturgy with too much and with too little generative efficacy. Beginning with "the more primitive religions" endangers this balance, but it survives the threat. By means of primitive ritual action "the past event was in a way made present". The same words can be rightly used to define what happens in "the liturgy"; but the meaning is absolutely different. Pagan ritual is credited with the power of making the past present — without solstice rites, the sun will

not turn the corner of its nadir and increase in strength. Christian *anamnesis*, as merely our remembering, effects nothing of this order: it is only the specific dominical command: "Do this in remembrance" that enables us to say in shorthand way that *anamnesis* makes him and his sacrifice present. This representative efficacy resides not in our remembering but in his Word, not in our obedience but in the mandate that enjoins it. Or otherwise said, "because Christ is the head of the Church and committed himself to the liturgy he inaugurated, in response to the Church he always makes himself present in the liturgy".

"I have tried to be neutral," says the writer. It might have been better candidly to admit a not easily reconcilable diversity of views at this point. Dom Casel (liturgy "the place where the Christian could meet Christ in the fulness of his redeeming activity") and de Taille ("Mass-sacrifice") — these are too uncritically acceptive of the dictum of Leo the Great, *quod redemptoris nostri conspicuum fuit, in sacramenta transivit*, to be easily accommodated in a single theology with other views.

(b) The importance of the "local church" is justly appreciated: "the celebration of the liturgy by the local community actualises the great Church" rightly states the relationship of Church local to Church catholic. But those not committed to episcopalianism must be uneasy at the thought of "the diocese as the local church", and downright unhappy at the description of liturgy as "the full active participation of all God's people 'in the same liturgical celebration, especially in the same Eucharist, in a single prayer at one altar, at which there presides the bishop surrounded by his college of priests and ministers'. Here the Church can be seen for what it really is." This is to play fast and loose with history, to elevate the evidence of *Ad Smyrnaeos* above that of Holy Writ. From the famous "tunnel" period, no decisive arguments can be extracted about bishops. But before that period, "the Church can be seen for what it really is" already in Scripture itself: in Acts 8, the reality of the Church is quite independent of second-century episcopacy, and the unity subsisting between the two local communities of Jerusalem and Samaria is based on nothing other or more than Jesus present among "two or three gathered in my name". It is a pity that the start made by "A Theology of Worship" is anachronistic, arbitrarily selecting as criterion, from a point in *medias res* and later than the New Testament, a Church already fitted out with bishops, and a *leitourgia* already formalised by development into a full eucharistic "liturgy". Such New Testament data as there are may not be so cavalierly ignored.

But when this has been said, here is an invaluable book, beautifully produced, with illustrations and diagrams, to be kept on or very near the desk, for frequent and worthwhile reference. Readers of the *Review* may like to know that tribute is paid to the influence of the Church Service Society, and that the work of the late Professor W. D. Maxwell and of Dr A. A. McArthur is cited.

J. K. S. REID, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Children of Promise. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1979. Pp. 116. Paperback, £1.95.

This is a new edition of the author's booklet "The Baptism of Infants", published earlier by Vine Books. Professor Bromiley was at one time Anglican (*sic*) minister of St Thomas's Church in Edinburgh, and is now Professor of Church History and Historical Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. He has produced a superb little book which fills an embarrassing gap. There is still great confusion and ignorance among church members on the subject of baptism, in contrast with Baptists who usually know what they believe. Great pressure is often put on young people who experience conversion or filling with the Spirit as teenagers and adults, to be rebaptised; even if they resist this they are left feeling guilty about their baptism as infants. This book is both simple enough and deep enough to help paedobaptists renew their assurance about infant baptism and its meaning, and is very timely in Scotland and the U.S.A. today.

In the introduction the writer points out that with the lack of direct evidence in the New Testament the decisive factors must be theological, in particular the role of children in the covenant community. He reaffirms the theological unity of both testaments (so important in face of not only anabaptists but some biblical scholars!), and explains the meaning of baptism, avoiding the extremes of sacramentalism and nominalism. Later chapters consider the election of the Father, the reconciliation of the Son, the regeneration of the Spirit, the salvation of infants, and deal helpfully with nearly all the problems one can think of.

Among his most thoughtful points are: the call and challenge of baptism to the as yet unconverted; regeneration as a process parallel to conception, gestation, birth and life; and a memorable quote, "The right to baptism cannot easily be overthrown by the lapse of a single generation".

He concludes with some excellent practical guidelines, e.g. no rebaptism . . . yet the need also to respect the scruples of

parents who wish to postpone the baptism of their children. (This incidentally happens in most Presbyterian Churches — the Church of Scotland is very insular.) The tone of the book is eirenic, though firm; one wishes that he had expanded on his regret that “the Reformation Churches did not find a place for the Baptist witness, as they have now been forced to do by the increased scale of modern apostasy”; this may sound a little unclear to readers in Scotland!

The reviewer has two small regrets of his own: first, that Professor Bromiley chose to retain the KJV; second, that he made no attempt to deal with baptism in the context of the “charismatic” renewal (as Roman Catholics do so ably). While the arguments against rebaptism after an experience of the Holy Spirit run parallel to those against rebaptism after a conversion experience, not all readers will see that. Just as Pentecost is the fruit of Christ’s atonement, so it would have been helpful if the author had related baptism to the outpouring of the Spirit as well as to our Lord’s death and resurrection.

There are (possibly) two typing errors in a nicely produced book: a “not” is omitted on p. xi line 10, and (it would seem) on p. 73 line 12. The book costs five times what it did in its previous edition, but ministers of varying theological “positions” will find it invaluable to lend and recommend to others. It is available also from Eerdmans in the U.S.A.

JOCK STEIN, Dundee, Scotland.

Aufklärung Catholicism, 1780-1850, Liturgical and Other Reforms in the Catholic Aufklärung. Leonard J. Swidler. American Academy of Religion Studies, 17, Scholars Press, Missoula (Montana), 1978. Pp. viii + 101. Paperback, N.p.

What Aufklärung Catholicism was really like is not known, as a non-tendentious history of the entire movement still awaits writing. What we know is, (a) that it was meant to be a movement for the reform of Catholicism “in the light of reason”, (b) that it was condemned by the Catholic hierarchy, and (c) that the very memory of the movement and the reputations of its advocates were either obliterated or distorted beyond recognition by Catholic historians who were almost the only ones to write on the subject.

Professor Swidler’s monograph was prompted by the realisation that “when one digs through the anonymity and defamation of Aufklärung Catholicism a picture emerges that is extraordinarily similar to the Catholicism that arose over a

century later from Vatican II" (page 2). If the reforms of Aufklärung and Vatican II Catholicism were to be found substantially similar, the author argues, the implications for Christians of all denominations would indeed be manifold. On the basis of extensive research in the libraries of Southwestern Germany, Professor Swidler outlines the liturgical reforms of Aufklärung Catholicism under twenty-four different headings, with particular regard to the movement's battle against superstition and "mechanical ritualism", the strong emphasis on both preaching and community, the advocacy of the vernacular in the liturgy and the movement's ideas with regard to both the celebration of the Eucharist and the reception of Communion. In an overview of the movement that goes beyond the strict realm of the liturgical, the author then proceeds to highlight, among other things, the movement's stress on the centrality of the Bible, its ideas on Christian Education and its views on assorted topics such as mixed marriages, ecumenism and the restructuring of papal government.

The documentation is impressive, and yet one cannot help at times a definite feeling of frustration, as all too clearly too much material had to be compressed into far too short a space. The overall message of the book, however, comes through loud and clear: the Catholic Church does reverse itself officially on basic issues, despite the most emphatic protestations. For the author, who is himself a Catholic, this undeniable fact has important implications for Catholic and non-Catholic alike. Within the Catholic Church, historical documentation of the Church's reversal of basic commitments should help "to relativise the old authoritarian claims and to further discredit the powerful authoritarian mentality that dominated Roman Catholicism for many generations until Vatican II". As the Catholic Church in its authoritative structures does at times make what it later in practice recognizes as errors, Christians of other denominations should be encouraged to take "a more cautious, at times even sceptical, attitude toward descriptions of the "only acceptable" Catholic positions on various issues" (page 3).

The book concludes with a warning of highly topical, if not prophetic, value in the light of recent historical events (page 69): as all reform movements in the Catholic Church "were swamped by a flood tide of conservatism led by authoritarian, energetic and long-lived popes," "unless a shift in the flow of power to a from-below rather than a from-above direction is accomplished in the Catholic Church, all the reforms of Vatican II are likely to evaporate as did those of the Councils of Constance, Basel and subsequent reform movements like Aufklärung Catholicism,

which vanished even from the pages of most of our history books”.

GIANFRANCO TELLINI, Edinburgh, Scotland.

The Forgiveness of Sins. Edward Matthews. Collins, London, 1978. Pp. 94. Paperback, £1 25.

Fr. Matthews is a priest in the Westminster Diocese and in this little book he provides us with a useful “history-at-a-glance” account of the Sacrament of Confession, ending with a description and interpretation of the new rites now in use in the Roman Catholic Church. Matthews is a skilled educationist and the book is clearly designed to answer the sort of questions thoughtful lay members of his church are asking about the role of “penance” in our time. He adopts a question-and-answer technique in his final chapter on the new rite, but throughout the book one is aware that it is written by some one who is well used to answering the difficulties raised by both adults and children in the course of continuing Christian education. It is one more bit of evidence supporting my conviction that modern Roman Catholics are second to none in their commitment to what they call catechetics.

The sacrament of penance raises particular difficulties for many reformed churches. Luther esteemed it highly, of course, including it in his list of three gospel sacraments. He quoted Tertullian, I think, in describing it as a plank “after shipwreck”. Post-baptismal sin was clearly a worry and a surprise to many early Christians. There’s enough evidence in the New Testament to suggest that many felt that after baptism “there was no forgiveness of sins”. This was not the final view that prevailed, however, and Fr. Matthews shows how the early Church developed a system of penance that allowed a second chance, but no more, after serious sin. Only one plank was thrown to the man overboard. If he fell off again he had to sink. Prudent Christians, therefore, kept the plank until just before death. One effect of this was a falling-off in taking Communion. And there must have been other, more hidden effects, including the growth of double standards in the Christian community. I was fascinated to learn from Fr. Matthews that it was Celtic Christianity which came to the rescue. In the Irish Church there had grown up the practice of “private” confession followed by reconciliation of the sinner. This was a more tender and realistic approach to the problem of continuing sinfulness among Christians. It constantly held out to them the reality of forgiveness and built the experience of reconciliation into their

regular Christian living, and not just something saved for the death-bed. In time the Celtic practice prevailed throughout the Western Church, and private confession as we have known it developed. There were losses, of course. The system of penance or satisfaction lent itself to abuses and by the Reformation the very word "penance" had become emblematic of that flight from the Gospel which the reformers saw concentrated in this sacrament. Most of them threw it out. Luther didn't, as I've said, and the Anglican prayer books have always provided for it, though it was tucked away in the form for the Visitation of the Sick. I remember George Macleod calling for its reintroduction into the Church of Scotland away back in the 1950's.

Any lingering doubts that Protestants might have of this sacrament should be dispelled by Fr. Matthews. He is always at pains to emphasise that this is not a juridical device for holding some sort of control over members of the Church (as many have rather conspiratorially held) but a means of actualising that forgiveness and reconciliation which is the central and abiding work of Christ. The New Rite brings this fact out very well. It is grounded in scripture and it provides a greater flexibility in both form and content than did the old rite, particularly in the new offices for public reconciliation.

In my experience those who oppose the sacrament of penance quite literally do not know what they are talking about. I have been making my confession regularly since my thirteenth birthday. During the years since it has become for me a constant means of actualising the love and forgiveness found in Christ. It is the most tender and loving of the sacraments. I see it as essentially an extension and realisation of baptism, grounded in scripture and important in any spiritual formation. Fr. Matthews' little book though it is based on sound learning is hardly a scholarly book. Its real importance lies in the warm and homely way he discusses this most domestic of sacraments.

RICHARD HOLLOWAY, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Heaven in Ordinarie. Noel Dermot O'Donoghue. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1979. Pp. xx + 201. £5.95.

It has long seemed to me that philosophers, no matter at what length they write, have at the centre of their systems some one single vision which provides the insight into all their subsequent elaborations and qualifications. (A good example of this is to be found in the three successive drafts of John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* where the first draft

consisting of only a few pages holds the key to everything that is in the much more elaborate and longer final version.) From this point of view Fr. O'Donoghue's very fascinating book seems to me written from back to front. The book consists of papers written on various occasions (with rather a discrepant array of different readers in mind) collected with a few specially written chapters into a book; but it is the last chapter of all which sets out the underlying vision which dominates everything he writes (and I would recommend readers to begin there, and by the same token leave to the end Josephine Newman's Introduction, which provides an admirable extended review of the book but one hardly to be appreciated without first reading the book itself!)

The last chapter makes it clear what the rest of the book is "on about" as well as solving the puzzle (as it must be to any reader unfamiliar with George Herbert's poem "Prayer") of the title. That "haunting phrase" — as Fr. O'Donoghue himself describes it — is almost exactly equivalent to St Theresa's more homely "God walks amongst the pots and pans" and provides a very good title for the author's central theme which can be described as "a pressing of the finite to its own limits where the infinite reveals itself within it" (p. 192) or again by the idea that "in that very evanescence which is the deepest layer of his finitude man touches the infinite" (p. 194), or yet again by Hopkins' line "there dwells the deepest freshness deep down things". Fr. O'Donoghue himself quotes that line (from an obviously favourite poet of his) but his own exploration of "the deepest freshness" is by an inward path. He focuses, as Josephine Newman says, "on what he calls 'human dimensions': response, pathos, loneliness, belonging, playfulness, listening and so on". He says himself "I offer nothing more or less than inward looks" (p. 190) and writes revealingly "Plato pictured the spiritual journey as an escape from the cavern of appearances into the bright sunlight of reality. But there is also a journey inwards, into the caverns beneath the cave, a journey made in darkness, into the nothingness beyond the half-reality of appearances, in the relinquishment of all that is familiar and comforting" (p. 193). In this journey Fr. O'Donoghue is obviously drawing on his own Carmelite tradition of St John of the Cross's *Dark Night of the Soul*, and it is in this context that he writes two very interesting chapters on "Pathos" which is the reflection, usually on the occasion of bereavement, upon the "vanishing of significance into insignificance". "The vacuum left by lost or vanishing significance is not simply negation or nothingness. It is something positive, or, rather, it is that

strange middle 'element' which is neither being nor nothingness, but somehow partakes of both" (p. 37). It is this 'horizon' that the infinite appears as the counterpart of the finite. "Man is obviously finite yet as we examine more closely the interior modes of his finitude, what appears to him as he looks into his own mind, we find that the infinite shows itself as a kind of receding horizon. . . . Beyond this horizon *He* dwells, He who is . . ." (p. 200).

But, I would suggest, here is the rub. John Wisdom, in a famous article, told the parable of two men in a garden; one was convinced that an invisible Gardener visited it and tended it; the other was convinced not. The garden looked the same on whichever hypothesis. Fr. O'Donoghue is convinced that the ultimate pathos of human existence (man's total failure) points to a God of pathos (and here he has most interesting, if highly problematic things to say about *God's* suffering). But for philosophers of a different bent it is surely the sign of ultimate absurdity. And how do we decide between them? There are the hard headed positivists, for whom our author has no use (e.g. pp. 171, 196); and there are those who might be described as "ontologists" not simply as being concerned about being, but being convinced, as Fr. O'Donoghue is, that to say "there is" (in any context) is to utter a "foundation word" and that "the foundation word reveals the foundation of all speech and the foundation of all thinking: unconditioned reality". "By his speech and the thinking which his speech expresses man opens towards the all-encompassing dimension, the dimension which indicates that other dimension as the foundation word underlies all other words" (p. 195). (Incidentally, "dimension" in each of its three occurrences in this last rather obscure statement is printed in the plural, which I take to be one of the too many misprints which disfigure this book.) There is much else in this interesting book, too difficult to summarise in a short review.

COLUMBA RYAN, Glasgow, Scotland.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Evangelical Theology: An Introduction. Karl Barth. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1979. Pp. xvi + 206. Paperback, £2.95.

An Introduction to the Theology of Karl Barth. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1979. Pp. xiv + 253. Paperback, £3.60.

ADVANCE NOTICE

We have received notice of the forthcoming publication of *Sacrifice of Praise*, a volume of essays written in honour of Canon Arthur H. Couratin, the well-known English liturgical scholar and writer. Some of his friends and former pupils have secured the collaboration of a number of distinguished scholars in this book. It is being published by the Centro Liturgico Vincenziano — Edizioni Liturgiche, as part of Collana "Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae, Subsidia", at an estimated cost of Lire 16,000 (£9, \$18). Copies may be reserved from the Editor, The Rev. Bryan D. Spinks, Churchill College, Cambridge, England CB3 0DS.