

relation to God, but has some kind of independent being with which God has to reckon); and that, as a consequence of this, it is forced into a 'synergist' conception of man's appropriation of grace. But in fact the Catholic view of the matter is that man, even when fallen and unredeemed, depends for his being entirely upon God, who has not only created him but conserves him from moment to moment. (On p. 108, the author remarks that Aquinas in his treatment of the problem sees more to the heart of it than either Augustine or Luther. One wishes he had given some space to a comparison of Aquinas' theory with his own). Professor Reid's insistence that man should not be thought of as having a 'substantial' existence, but only an existence in relation to God, is in all but verbal agreement with the Thomist doctrine of God as necessary being, and the whole creation, including man, as contingent being. But if man depends for his existence *totally* upon God, and man's relationship to God is *totally* ruptured by the fall, as Professor Reid appears to hold, then the singular conclusion follows that man ceased to exist altogether at the fall. Catholics, of course, would accept the major premiss but contest the minor, holding that even when man falls away from God's grace, he is still essentially related to God as creature to creator. This disposes of the first of Professor Reid's objections; his own arguments lead either to an absurd or to a Catholic conclusion. As to 'synergism', Professor Reid rejects as Catholic the Pelagian view that man appropriates grace without being moved thereto by grace itself; but even a Molinist, who lays the greatest emphasis possible within the limits of Catholicism on the place of the human will in justification, would agree with him there. The passage quoted from page 134 is, of course, entirely Catholic. In fact Professor Reid only avoids dogmatic universalism or double predestination by admitting that each man has the power of saying 'Yes' or 'No' to God's salvific will for him. And it is simply the conviction that man has this power, which the various Catholic theories which describe the relation between grace and free will are attempting to safeguard. If the existence of evil is really 'incomprehensible' on a theory of grace, as Professor Reid, following Barth, insists that it must be, it follows either that evil does not exist, or that the theory of grace is invalidated as failing to deal with one of the principal facts with which such theories exist to deal.

In fine, Professor Reid's arguments against Catholic doctrine, in as far as they are not really consistent with it, and indeed a salutary re-emphasis of some of its central features, result in intolerable antinomies. The book as a whole is an illustration of the interesting paradox that it is just those theologies which most intransigently uphold their own special traditions that have most of real value to contribute to the ecumenical debate.

HUGO MEYNELL

FACING DEATH, by Alfred Delp; Bloomsbury, 22s.

Alfred Delp was a German Jesuit who acted as adviser to the group of Christian anti-Nazis led by Count von Moltke. After a farcical trial he was executed for

high treason by the Nazi government shortly before the end of the war. This book is a collection of what he wrote during his seven months imprisonment. There are a few extracts from his diary, but most of the book consists of reflections and ideas both spiritual and secular which are all informed by an unusual intelligence, a wise humane understanding and a deep faith in Christ and his promises. What he has to offer us is not only an example of great fortitude; fear and loneliness, far from weakening his faith, gave a profound and urgent meaning to it which we, in our comparative ease and security, have a great need to learn today.

From his situation of complete helplessness he speaks of man's vulnerability, his dependence on the love of God, his futility and incompleteness if he ignores this—'The man who insists on isolation and never grows conscious of the inner presence of the Spirit is doomed to failure—If I had tried to cope with all this mountain of trouble unaided I should have reached the end of my tether long ago.' Total independence is an illusion of pride; typically the 'our' beginning the 'Our Father' comforts him in solitary confinement. Again from immediate experience he speaks of God's unfailing answer to prayer—'Humanity is made to see that it is not only under the law that demands grace but it is also under the law of genuine and effective grace.'

His isolation gives depth to his understanding that God is a personal and loving God who will, if we ask it, 'bend what is rigid', 'melt what is frozen', 'water what is barren' and 'heal what is wounded'; that our relationship with him is a creative dialogue as it must also be with our fellow men. Like Martin Buber he believes that 'We are only genuinely alive when we are engaged in dialogue. All mono-tendencies are evil.' Thus his concern and interest is turned outward to the brotherhood of man in Christ, to the work of the Church about which he writes with perception and common sense. The Church must break away from 'sentimentalism and outmoded liberalism', and from impersonality; she must work for unity and return to the idea of service; she must see herself as 'a sacrament, as a way and a means, not as a goal and an end in itself'; no amount of liturgical reform, he says, will do anything without 'social and economic regeneration'. The Church must 'Go forth' to men as Christ commanded; she herself must live the 'creative dialogue'. The character and teaching of Pope John XXIII might seem to have been an answer to many of Fr Delp's prayers for the Church.

What is the consequences of this dialogue between man and God and between men themselves? 'Freedom' he says 'is born in the hour of contact' and this is the marvellous paradoxical theme which runs through all his writing; handcuffed, and isolated in a small cell from any human contact save what was cruel and unjust, he propounds to us a true doctrine of freedom. 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven' is man's prayer for freedom, which is 'truly the breath of life.' Man is not whole or fully alive unless he is free; 'Pray and praise are the two key words to human liberty. The kneeling attitude with outstretched hands is the correct attitude for a free man.'

Fr Delp hoped to do much if he had not been condemned, but he wrote after his trial 'This is seed time, not harvest. God sows the seed and some time or other he will do the reaping.' This book in itself is proof that his death was not a waste but a creative act.

FAITH TOLKIEN

THE GOD WHO LOVES US, by J. Kilgallon and G. Weber; Sheed and Ward, 12s. 6d.

THOUGHTS AT MASS, by Edward Quinn; Darton, Longman and Todd, 15s.

LA VIE SACRAMENTELLE, by A-M Roguet; Les Editions du Cerf, 4.50NF.

SEASONS OF GRACE, by Pius Parsch; Challoner Publications, 42s.

In a world of fission, disintegration and political and social strife mankind's deeply felt need is for unity and for the realisation of the brotherhood of man at something more satisfying than the merely humanitarian level. The Church is opening her heart and renewing her life at the source of life to show where that unity may be found.

These four books are a not inconsiderable drop in the ocean of literature which increases almost daily to enlighten Catholics and to assist them to realise this unity first among themselves: to achieve a greater sense of Christian brotherhood with fellow-Catholics, regardless of class, race, colour, and what is often overlooked in the Western Church—difference of rite.

In *The God Who Loves Us*, the writers of that highly successful new look in catechisms, *Christ In Us* have compiled a year's course of outlines for sermons which will be invaluable to the layman seeking a deeper perception of the Church's role in the world and his own part in it. (Needless to say this book will be immensely helpful to priests and religious, not excluding contemplatives who will possibly benefit by the touch of extroversion which the enclosed life needs to preserve its equilibrium.)

The sermons show the unity of the Old and New Testaments and the necessity for some study of both to arrive at a mature conception of the Christian faith. The reader is taken on an exciting and stimulating journey through the Church's year and introduced afresh to each gospel and epistle.

Earnestly recommended to every Catholic who wishes to deepen his spiritual life and expand its horizons, the latter being perhaps particularly necessary in Britain where we tend to cling so tenaciously to what was 'good enough for the English martyrs.'

It is not too much to say that an open-minded non-Christian reading this book and following its suggestions for further study could not fail to acquire a