

life) would, as part of the biography, have contributed to its integrity: St John is revered by his spiritual children as the Doctor of faith rather than of light or darkness. There is no better accompaniment to the study of a saint's doctrine than the story of how he himself lived it. Allison Peers is at pains to give us this story. The endearing human qualities of the saint, his love of nature and music, even his admissions of loneliness, all have value in our understanding of his doctrine.

In contrast to the reflective and slightly awed study of St John of the Cross, the portrait of St Teresa is homely and direct. With insight and affection Allison Peers has distilled from her own writings the quintessence of this Mother of souls: her simplicity and charm, her virility and practical genius; above all, her spiritual greatness. His own enchantment with her words has made the task of selection difficult and the narrative is sometimes overcrowded with quotation. Inevitably her writing looms larger than it could in fact have done in that crowded life where her communion with God overflowed in ceaseless activity, organizing, travelling and the round of religious observance and domestic work. (When it was her turn to do the cooking, she found her Lord among the pots and pans). But it is, of course, her own *Life* and *Foundations* that portray for us the life and work that bore fruit in her incomparable teaching on prayer, which, in the *Way of Perfection* and the *Interior Castle* give her today the title of Mother of souls.

As attractive twin paper-backs these reprints of *Spirit of Flame* and *Mother of Carmel* should go far in furthering Allison Peers' purpose of making these two saints better known and loved and, above all, explored.

SR ANNE, O.D.C.

FATHER RUPERT MAYER, compiled by Anton Koerbling, S.J.; Mercier Press.

There were not so many Christian heroes in Germany prepared to stand up even to Hitler that one more or less makes no difference. So it is a pity that Fr Rupert Mayer, S.J., though hero enough to be a candidate for the Church's altars, does not find a worthy biography in these pages. One is even reminded of a Dominican 'postulator' for the canonization of Bl Martin Porres, who ascribed the reluctance of his very attractive 'Blessed' to work provable miracles to fear of more biographies!

However, the facts of Fr Rupert's life, his charity and courage are served up here and should be nourishment for a sound digestion. Some of us weaker brethren may hope for another cook to serve the sauce and condiments of a little more humanity.

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