

COMMENTARY

THE LITURGY AND THE CARE OF SOULS. The recent International Congress of Pastoral Liturgy held at Assisi marked an important stage in the religious renewal of our time. For the liturgical reforms of Pope Pius XII, which the vast and representative gathering had met to consider, have been concerned with the primary function of the Liturgy as a means of sanctification and instruction. The mysteries which it declares are the very fabric of the Christian life, and hence the need for their presentation in terms which the faithful can understand and in which they can actively share. As Father Jungmann expressed it at Assisi, the present Pope has discarded 'the protective armour of liturgical inflexibility', just as his predecessor willingly surrendered the temporal power in the interests of his true freedom. The movement which has been inaugurated by the Pope's teaching and disciplinary decrees will unquestionably develop, but the need for a sober assessment of its true significance was emphasized at Assisi, and the important address given at the close of the Congress in Rome by the Holy Father was a magisterial statement of the necessary theological basis of a liturgical renewal within the Church. A more detailed account of the Congress will appear later in these columns.

THE AQUINAS CENTRE. On September 27 the Aquinas Centre, the memorial to Father Vincent McNabb established at the London Dominican Priory, was formally opened by the Master General of the Order of Preachers. The aim of the Centre is to perpetuate Father Vincent's work, under the patronage of his master St Thomas, and that through making provision for the spiritual and intellectual needs of Catholics who want to live an adult and responsible life as members of the Church and also through commending the Faith to those who do not yet possess it. Details of the full programme that has been planned will appear each month in *BLACKFRIARS*, and although this can only be of immediate interest to readers who live within easy reach of London (and we look to their active support in the work of the Centre), we hope all the readers of *BLACKFRIARS* will want to

know of this new and important work undertaken by the English Dominicans. An association of 'Friends of the Aquinas Centre' has been formed, and particulars can be obtained from the Warden at St Dominic's Priory, London, N.W.5. We print in this issue a poem that was written for the opening of the Centre which expresses in contemporary terms its inspiration and aims.

THE THIRD PROGRAMME. The tenth anniversary of the Third Programme of the B.B.C. has very properly been celebrated by the publication of an anthology, edited by John Morris, its present Controller (*From the Third Programme*, Nonesuch Press, 21s.). It includes some of the notable broadcasts which have marked this courageous experiment in serious radio, and it reflects the sense of responsibility that one has a right to expect in a great national corporation such as the B.B.C. At a time when cultural values are gravely threatened by the big battalions of commercial advantage, the debt we owe to the Third Programme is beyond reckoning. It has in fact achieved the function of the patronage of earlier days, when high state was conceived as carrying high responsibilities as well. Such talks as T. S. Eliot's 'Virgil and the Christian World', or the discussion on the existence of God between Bertrand Russell and Father Copleston, reflect an aspect of the Third Programme's work which one may hope to see extended. Religion has become much more intellectually respectable in the last ten years, and the Third Programme can claim some of the credit. But the B.B.C. is perhaps still too nervous about presenting argument in living and intelligent terms. It was interesting to find Philip Toynbee, when reviewing this anthology in *The Observer*, singling out the Dominican Disputations (of which several have been broadcast on the Third Programme) as examples of formal argument which in fact produce 'a wonderfully dexterous and exciting broadcast'. There is certainly a great need for the enfranchisement of intellectual discussion from a mere exchange of points of view, and those who believe in the possibility of the truth should feel no embarrassment in pursuing it.