

This attitude is indicated early in the book in the words: 'First, then, let thy heart be so oned to him in longing that it be his and not thine'. Again and again he omits passages which seemed to have a self-centred emphasis. This appears in his treatment of the virtues of humility and obedience which he stresses so forcibly. 'Obedience', he writes, 'is a gracious virtue that maketh a man to forget himself and aye tend to his Lord.' He warns us continually against the dangers of pride in the contemplative life, and above everything he warns us against any inclination to judge our neighbours. All prayer is the free gift of God: 'think in all things, God doeth all, and then mayest thou come to rest'.

This life of prayer does not necessarily imply a withdrawal from other activities; but can be arrived at through all things by the unity of their relationship to God: seeing and beholding 'right nought in all things but God himself'. At the same time he adds: 'I reprove not great yearnings and lovely longings that some men have to God, that give themselves only to attend to him in contemplation and to nothing else, for that is good'. But the one thing on which he insists is that we come to God through the humanity of Christ: 'He that cometh not by the bitterness and compassion of Christ in his manhood, he is but a thief'.

In the Preface it is suggested that the reader should, if he wishes, omit the first nine chapters. But if he does so he will miss some of the most characteristic expressions of that deep compassion with the sufferings of our Lord.

For us today this work has many attractions. It offers us a vision of mystical life in closest union with normal Christian life; never as an extraordinary state treated in isolation. It restores for us the unity of Christian experience, much of which had been lost since the Reformation. Most important of all, its Christocentric character will appeal to all who wish to see individual prayer centred in the living expression of the Incarnation, which is the Sacramental worship of the Church in Holy Mass, and drawing from this source all its strength.

ODO BROOKE, O.S.B.

LE CHRIST, MARIE ET L'ÉGLISE. By Yves M.-J. Congar, O.P.
(Desclée De Brouwer; n.p.)

This short book, of just over a hundred pages, is one of the most stimulating and thought-provoking to appear for some time, and it is to be hoped that it will soon find a competent translator. It consists of two essays, the first of which was previously published in *La Vie Intellectuelle* of October last year to commemorate the fifteenth centenary of the Council of Chalcedon. The second gives a negative answer to the question whether Catholic piety towards Christ, the Church and Mary has always succeeded in avoiding a monophysite tendency. And 'Catholic piety' for Père Congar does not only mean popular manifestations

of devotion: he is careful to show that many respected theologians have themselves been guilty of, to say the least, inaccuracies of expression. But, to remain entirely orthodox is rather like walking a tight-rope. An occasional false step is no shame provided one is willing to accept then the help of the divinely appointed guide-line. The wording of the liturgical prayers is often used by Père Congar as a corrective to the theologians (and not the other way round, as we see sometimes), for is it not true that, for Catholics, the liturgy is 'la grande éducatrice de la pensée et le la prière'?

DESMOND SCHLEGEL, O.S.B.

EDITH STEIN. By Sister Teresia de Spiritu Sancto. (Sheed and Ward; 12s. 6d.)

In this book, dedicated to the memory of Edith Stein, the author, Sister Teresia Renata de Spiritu Sancto, has taken upon herself a grateful task. She has rendered a service to all of us today, and generations to come may consider themselves fortunate that such a book was forthcoming from Germany's most bitter times. The book proves in a very clear and moving way that a Jewess, too, can be deeply pious and religious; and this saintly life should arouse the sleepy conscience of many half-hearted and perfunctory Christians of the Catholic Church. Edith is love and kindness itself; plain and simple in her way of life from without. She does not strive for fame and honour; her outstanding spiritual qualifications and her enviable command of the knowledge of philosophy cannot alter her humble character. Her clear and well-balanced way of thinking forms her spiritual life and allows us to recognise, with admiration, a certain greatness in her personality. Highly gifted for metaphysics and mysticism, Edith Stein found her inner peace in the intensive study of Thomism which finally caused her to enter the Order of the Carmelites.

Professor Edmund Husserl, the founder of Phenomenology, appointed her as his assistant. But even then she remained the lay nun. Her aim was pacification of the soul, and she was not in search of theses. The works of Edith Stein tell of her mastery of Catholic principles. When reading these works, the biography is the commentary and at the same time a guide to her Catholic knowledge—understandable, of course, only to those who take it seriously. The doctrine of the cross by Edith Stein can become clear only if one were able to meet her personally, or read the book of the prioress. For her, to carry the cross does not mean to suffer. Suffering as such is only an auxiliary means of carrying—bearing—the cross. For Edith Stein it was a joyful event. The knowledge she acquired enabled her to have the natural healthy talent of harmonising with Christian ideas. For her it was the key to the understanding of all human weaknesses which she