

within comes the question, 'What have you brought?' From outside the answer: 'A baptised lamb, a lamb pure as an angel, a sacrificed lamb! The lamb of God has redeemed also the beloved new-born lamb of the mother! *Agnus redemit oves.*'

NICOLETTE GRAY

SUMMARIUM DE CULTU CORDIS IMMACULATI BEATAE MARIAE VIRGINIS.

By T. M. Sparks, O.P. (Marietti & Libri Liturgici, S. Sabina; Rome.)

Father Sparks has done a service to all priests by indicating in this little treatise the theological foundations of devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He puts the question firmly into its proper place as a special section of a special section in Theology—in other words, a particular question in Mariology, which is itself one part of Theology. Incidentally, he does not believe that Mariology is a *scientia* in its own right. He also asserts without discussion that the Divine Maternity is the single fundamental principle in Mariology (in which one agrees with him wholeheartedly, but with respect for other opinions). Tracing the cultus from its faint beginnings in the Fathers (building on Lk 2; 19, 35, 51) to St John Eudes, with a milestone in the thirteenth century under the name of St Mechtilde, he calls the last three centuries—from St John Eudes to the present time—the period of public liturgical cultus. His second part, 'De Natura hujus cultus', consists of a theses, of which the gist is that in this devotion we pay honour and veneration to the Heart itself, literally, but as a symbol, and that this honour and veneration is directed mainly to the holiness of Mary and her love of God, of Jesus, and of mankind redeemed by him. This leads him naturally to the conclusion that the most perfect of all devotions to Mary is devotion to her Immaculate Heart.

It seems, just slightly, a case of special pleading, but if one considers carefully the comprehensive meaning Fr Sparks gives to this devotion one wonders less about his enthusiasm and more about his use of terms. By 'devotio' does he mean a 'devotion'? In that case we must ask ourselves whether it is a 'modality' (as Pope Pius XII would call it), and, if it is, we must be careful of calling it 'the most perfect of all'. If it is not, then it must be simply another way of saying 'devotion to Mary', in the most general sense: and then another confusion arises with St Grignon de Montfort's phrase '*la vraie dévotion*'—'true devotion' as against '*the true devotion*'. It is a point worth considering.

The bibliography is good, but it does not include *The Immaculate Heart* (Mgr Messner, Mercier Press, 1950), nor *The Heart of Mary* (H. Keller, S.J., Clonmore and Reynolds, 1950).

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