

denomination the Church is all too arrogantly exclusive as if she were a club rather than the Universal Church. And secondly, following from this, the frequent double morality and hypocrisy of Catholicism: sexual morality is all important, while social justice is ignored or suspect; what is Right Wing is all right (no matter if Christian ethics are contradicted), what is Left, is not; prejudice and ignorance are deliberately fostered so that (irony of ironies) Christianity may serve to buttress the interests of class and property. A first hand impression of this kind which is so free of bitterness, and coming as it does from a man so clearly devoted to his work as a priest, is shocking but potentially constructive. Of course it is not the whole picture, as Fr Lepp makes very clear; and now nearly seven years after the end of this diary there is a 'wind of change' from which much can be hoped.

Apart from a brief clear distinction between the Church and the 'Christian world' this book offers no answer or explanation. Many Catholics find this distinction a hard one to live with in practice, so one hopes that more will come of Fr Lepp's suggestion that 'one day I may be able to write a book which will show the eternal youth of the Church and the Holy Spirit's ever active presence in her'.

FAITH TOLKIEN

THE PARISH COMMUNION TODAY, edited by David M. Paton; S.P.C.K.; 7s. 6d.

COME, LET US WORSHIP, by Dom Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B.; Darton, Longman & Todd; 21s.

If the rubrics of liturgy be compared to the rules of football, what is there in liturgy that corresponds to the excellence of the game and the winning of it? What do people have in mind, leaving its rules aside, when they talk about improving our liturgy? Enthusiasts of not so long ago answered this in terms of heightened spectacle. Liturgy was theatre of a particularly awe-inspiring sort; the clerics were up there on the stage, and the laity attended and reacted as best they could. This theatrical model suggested obvious laws for improvement: the clergy could be better rehearsed, and so could choirs and organists. A whole range of cultural experience from sophisticated purity to popular sentiment could be exploited, depending on the taste of the clergy and the background of the parishioners. Unfortunately, the laws for improvement never got on with the rules; it was rather as though a choreographer had been appointed as a football team manager. Liturgy was reluctant to go along with the theatrical model; complicated plainchant sung by sensitive medievalists has, for most people (many monks included), very little entertainment value.

Many attempts have been made in the course of history to overcome this difficulty - theatrical music, for instance, and diligent instruction of the laity in means for exercising their passivity, meditations, private prayers, the rosary and

popular hymn singing. A different performance in the stalls was correlated rather awkwardly with the action on the stage. The mistakeness of this model has been thoroughly exposed by modern liturgists – churches are not theatres. But the model is old and firmly established, and the recent instructions for the participation of the laity have often been interpreted, not in terms of the liturgical theology that inspired them, but in terms of the old theatrical model. The result has been a new awkwardness which has caused nothing but uneasiness, disturbance and resentment. Our imagery, as Fr Charles Davis pointed out in *Liturgy and Doctrine*, is coming from the wrong source.

This fact dawned upon Anglican liturgists some time ago. Prominent among the demolishers of the theatrical image were men like Fr Gabriel Herbert, S.S.M., who produced that profoundly important work *The Parish Communion* from which the present book gets its name. Anglican liturgical theatre then (and now) stemmed, on the one hand, from the cathedral style of worship as imitated pretentiously by parish churches, and on the other, in Anglo-Catholic circles, from a Catholic exemplar, medieval or baroque. *The Parish Communion* was based on a scriptural and liturgical reappraisal of the nature of liturgy and its place in the parish; it broke the exclusiveness of the alternative parties, and gave an impetus to internal ecumenism, liturgical theology and experiment. *Parish and People* is the official champion of this new movement, and this book which David Paton has edited is a collection of addresses given at its annual conference. It brings out very interestingly the many difficulties facing *Parish and People* enthusiasts. The sympathetic and radical criticism, for instance, made by the present Archbishop of Canterbury is obviously felt, but is not seriously tackled. The excellent articles by such experts as Professor Moule, Canon Couratin and Brother George Every are too specialist to refer to these difficulties. One gets the impression that *Parish and People* is interested in many significant modern trends, but lacks an internal intelligence of its own. When the experts have finished, the conversation returns to slogans and catch words.

Basil Moss is the only contributor to this book who makes an attempt to exercise the fundamental concepts of the movement. His article is significant not so much for its analysis which is necessarily sketchy, but for its method which is firm and revealing. He takes modern liturgical words like 'participation' and 'dialogue' and looks at them in the living context of contemporary seriousness. His conclusions are intelligent and practical. The growth of a contemporary liturgical expression in which clergy and laity play their respective parts *inside* the action will only come about when there is a satisfactory dialogue between clergy and laity – when they both learn to be practically creative in liturgical expression, when they both become open to each other. It is a matter of theological discussion between priest and people, a more serious realization of the notion of participation. The rules of liturgy are controlled by the Church and altered from time to time: the excellence of liturgical action depends on the ability of priest and people to express in an authentic form their common faith. The whole area is wide open for imaginative experiment.

Dom Godfrey Diekmann's book is a collection of essays given at various liturgical weeks in America over the past twenty years. The audiences, I would guess, were not made up of liturgical experts - how else can one explain the disparity between the weight of the footnotes and the lightness of the material? People often lament the lack of a liturgically inspired prayerfulness; although it might not have been Fr Diekmann's intention, I am sure that the usefulness of this book is its ability to remedy this deficiency.

CHARLES BOXER, O.P.

CARYLL HOUSELANDER, by Maisie Ward; Sheed & Ward, 12s. 6d.

Caryll Houselander died in October 1954; eight years later appears her first biography. Her books, *This War is the Passion*, *The Reed of God* (on our Lady), and the larger work *Guilt* made her name known to a wide public. Now Mrs Sheed has written the story of her life and an appreciation of her very unusual and attractive character. Caryll came from a broken home, was subject to frequent illnesses, some of them nervous, truly a 'contemporary' personality, and for this reason able to help her fellow sufferers in a way few of those who had never experienced similar afflictions could have done. This side of her will come as a surprise to those who have known her only through her writings.

Besides being an author she was also a gifted artist whose wood-cuttings were much appreciated; she was a devoted air-raid warden during the Blitz, an unofficial assistant of several psychiatrists who sent her many of their cases, and in general a confidante and adviser of an ever widening circle of men and women who came to her for help and comfort. Though always in poor health, the range of her activities was truly amazing; she mercilessly deprived herself of sleep to answer her enormous correspondence and rarely allowed herself sufficient time to have her scanty meals in peace.

Mrs Sheed's book brings out well also the intensity of her spiritual life which was wholly Christ-centred, with a special emphasis on the Passion. Communion was the food that sustained her, and she would hardly ever miss early morning mass, however late she had been kept up the night before. Caryll had a very critical mind which saw the shortcomings also in the attitude of many of her fellow-Catholics. 'Some people cling to what is past . . .' she once wrote, 'My position is that I am obsessed by the spirit of this age, with all its faults I love it and believe in it . . . I find no sympathy with this view in the thought of my fellow-Catholics, who seem to me to be always striving to return to the past and to set fierce limitations on the use of the present.' (pp. 108f). How she would have welcomed the stirring of new life in the Church of our own day!

It cannot fail to strike the attentive reader that this Christian woman of the twentieth century combines in an extraordinary way a wholly sane modernity with the single-minded devotion to poverty and the following of Christ of a medieval saint; indeed, one of her friends once called the circle of men and