

strand of Dionysian influence and shows how it bore on Albert. The other part of the introductory material that begs for comment is his life of St Thomas (again a substantial essay—65 pages this time). Here Tugwell sifts the evidence for various periods of Thomas's life and shows that much that is commonly taken for granted rests on very shaky foundations. His interpretation of Thomas's final silence, relating it to his love for the Mass, is particularly well argued.

The texts are, as we would expect, finely translated and very clearly annotated. The selection of texts on prayer and on contemplation are especially interesting, enabling one to trace the development of the Angelic Doctor's thought on prayer from a stage when he at least entertained the notion that it is an affective activity to his settled thought which sees prayer as essentially petition, an activity of the intellect, interpreting desire. Tugwell presents this as the recovery of a primitive, authentically Christian understanding of prayer from the confusions being introduced in the Middle Ages. In the texts on contemplation, we see various very different traditions jostling with one another, and never properly sorted out in Aquinas' thought. His basic conviction, that contemplative and active are traits of character, is caught up in other contrasts—intellectual v. practical, eschatological v. this-worldly, love of God v. love of neighbour—and never thoroughly worked through.

This is a very long book, but it is a continual delight to read, a delight enhanced by the sharp humour and clear-headed erudition of Tugwell's annotations, as when he remarks at the end of a footnote on the notion of God's changelessness in relation to prayer that 'if we find an insult in the very fact of being created, of being caused, we might as well pack our bags and set off to sample the joys of reigning in hell' (p. 430, n. 10)!

ANDREW LOUTH

**QUAND ROME CONDAMNE. DOMINICAINS ET PRÊTRES OUVRIERS** by François Leprieur. *Terre Humaine/Plon/Cerf* 1989. Pp. 785. 190 francs.

From now on, no one will be able to write about the church in the 1950s and the pontificate of Pope Pius XII without referring to this splendid and magisterial work. Access to unpublished documents in the Dominican archives has enabled François Leprieur O.P. to reconstitute the inner history of the priest-worker crisis which broke in the spring of 1954. It was of such gravity that even the moderate Yves Congar was led to lament 'the abyss that yawns between Christian people and the hierarchy, especially the Roman hierarchy.' 'Rome,' he said, 'is completely foreign to the Gospel insights that are the concern of our laypeople, and completely insensitive to their protests.'

Marie-Dominique Chenu tries to explain to a fellow Dominican how he managed to obey. A learned Jesuit had written an article in *Études* claiming that there was a virtue in obedience itself, a sort of mysticism of obedience by which faith was purified. Chenu counters that the foundation of obedience is not the will of the superior, but the common good which the superior also must serve. It is not a good thing because it is ordered; it is ordered because it is good.

But far from being consoling, that line merely accentuated the

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problem. When the Dominican Master General, Emmanuel Suarez, sacked the three French Provincials in February 1954, the only grounds he could give were that 'Rome wants some heads.' He was acting under threat: if they didn't obey, then Rome would *impose* provincials against all the democratic traditions of the Order. Thus were provincials sacked, professors silenced, and reviews suspended in the vague hope that somehow the storm would blow over and that all these measures would prove to be 'provisional.' They were not.

Suarez was in an unenviable position. With hindsight one can say that his policy of appeasement did not work. The French Dominicans judged him enigmatic. He was a consultor of the Holy Office, and seemed to think that all problems could be solved by diplomacy. He kept repeating an unfortunate phrase: '*Il faut donner la sensation de l'obéissance, la sensation de discipline.*'

Henri-Marie Féret reports the following exchange. 'Père Féret, help me save the Order in France.' 'How?' 'If your letter reaches Pizzardo, it will mean the suppression of the Dominicans in France.' 'But isn't this out of proportion?' 'In Rome and elsewhere your enemies are going to say, look, there is only one solution.' Féret gave in at this point, preferring his own suppression to that of the Order.

These examples of ecclesiastical McCarthyism do not make pleasant reading. But one document, first published here, had positive consequences. In November 1963, at the request of Cardinal Joseph Frings of Cologne, Féret wrote a full account of his condemnation by the Holy Office.

This text served as the basis for Frings' speech to the Council denouncing the 'scandal' of the Holy Office procedures which led to their eventual reform. Point by point, he followed Féret's memo. He had been forbidden to teach without knowing who had denounced him or of what precisely he was accused. This meant he could not defend himself but that hardly mattered since, he discovered, sentence had already been passed *before* he arrived in Rome. Moreover, he was bound to keep the whole affair secret. Officially, it never happened.

But this attempt to bring good out of evil only half succeeds. For the sub-text of Leprieur's book is that the same exclusively 'sacred' and 'sacramental' conception of the priesthood that made working in a factory unthinkable in 1954, is today used to attack liberation theology and oppose the political commitment of the priest. When one battle is over another begins.

The book is full of ironies. There were only 95 worker priests in France when working in a factory was declared incompatible with the 'integrity' of the priestly vocation, and only 11 of them were Dominicans. Now there are eight hundred priest workers in France, and so far no moves have been made against them.

Reviewing the book, Congar, whose diary is of course one of its chief sources, reflects: 'Acquiring a knowledge of history is the surest way of acquiring confidence in the Church. History teaches us that nothing is new and that the Church has survived sadder and more difficult situations.' Not everyone will find that consoling.

PETER HEBBLETHWAITE

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