

wards a goal to be reached at the end of time. It is God's presence and his activity that constitute history, giving order, cumulative meaning and a goal to human activity and experience. The consummation is already present, though not wholly so, in the Church, which is the eschatological community of those who have faith in Christ. All its members take part in a forward-moving, concrete history, that is partially expressed in the life of the visible Church, vehicle for the expression of the believers' faith and love. So each man's activity and achievement are placed by Paul in an eschatological setting; they are evoked by God's call, according to his purpose. The 'works' on the other hand which Paul repudiates are 'works' of the law, human activities apart from Christ. But although he expresses himself strongly about such 'works', Paul's chief concern is with man's only real *work*—that which is performed by those having faith in Jesus Christ and which is founded on love. The faithful are caught up into the on-going purpose of God, while yet retaining undiminished their own individuality and responsibility. Their achievement is no longer simply their own work, but God's. 'In the Lord your labour is not in vain'.

Catholic readers of this book will find it encouraging to see how close we now appear to be to a possible rapprochement with liberal Protestantism in the old controversy over justification by faith. The solution, which happily seems on the verge of wider recognition, lies in the fact that justifying faith cannot but be a principle of charitable action. It is salvific inasmuch as it is the dynamic response of the *whole* man, with all his powers, to the summons of God.

ROBERT SHARP, O.P.

MARIE MERE DU CHRIST ET DES CHRETIENS, by J. M. Perrin, O.P.; Desclée de Brouwer, 87 FB.

This excellent book is a theologian's exposition of Mary, the Mediatrix of grace, a sure way that will lead us to God. As Père Perrin asks in his preface: Is one a better Christian, more closely united to God, thanks to the teaching of the gospel concerning the mother of Jesus? And the answer is: One is, for one can adhere firmly to the truth, not by adding anything, but by having a better understanding of it; not by isolating Mary from its mysteries, but by associating her with them.

The chapters are prefaced by quotations from St Bernard, St Ambrose, St Louis-Mary, St Teresa of Lisieux, Bossuet and others. The five chapters of Part I show how life can be lived under the aegis of Mary. The three chapters of Part II explain her privileges. Part III deals with her life. Part IV explains the way in which she is our mother, and interprets her essential role in the mystical body of Christ. There are two appendices: one on the rosary and one on St Joseph.

The book actually covers ground which has often been broken before, but

there is this important difference in approach; the emphasis is laid, not so much on Mary as she is in herself, as on her perfections and privileges as they are a road to God for us. To take an example. In the fact of her being the Mother of God, the emphasis is laid not so much on her active share in giving her substance to form his humanity, as on the passive side in being overshadowed by the power of the Most High. Whereas in speaking of the Immaculate Conception the emphasis is placed not so much on the unique privilege as on her active response to grace. Having read the book, one is left with the impression, as was intended, not so much of an increase of devotion to Mary, as with a desire to attain greater love of God through her.

As a personal matter I found the variations in type somewhat distracting, and the blank spaces which introduced each section, through which the reverse of the type on the next page could be faintly seen, left me with an uneasy feeling that I was facing the writing on the walls of Nineveh. But with so much, including the illustrations, which is very good, this is a small matter.

S.M. CATHERINE, O.P.

THE MEANING OF SUNDAY, by J. A. Jungmann, S.J.; Challoner Publications, 2s. 6d.

When I began to read this essay I found myself murmuring 'a nice little book', and so it is, but it is considerably more than that. Half a crown is a modest price for so simple a book that has yet the weight of much learning behind it, but it is a good thing it is cheap since half-crowns are scarcer than they used to be, and it says things most of us need to hear, and in a way that almost all can read.

I am sure we do take Sunday too much for granted. Only when we have had to work straight through a week-end ourselves do we fully realize the human value of a break; and perhaps it is only when we have been cut off from Sunday mass for a time that we realize how very incomplete life is without it.

I do not think Fr Jungmann's reference to those who go to mass because it is 'the done thing' applies to this country. It might, in a place where Catholics happen to be fairly thick on the ground, and live, so to speak, in their own enclosed circle of society. But the normal reaction of the secular society in which most of us live is one of surprise, tinged with amusement or contempt for our antediluvian ideas, or with a trace of envy because we 'have something' vaguely perceived as valuable. For a Catholic to go to mass, or any other Christian to go to church of a Sunday, is to stand out against the customs of present day society where absence of religious observance is often taken for granted. I think others besides myself must have found that it is precisely this feeling that it is *not* done to go to mass that sometimes keeps the young away.

It seems more universally true that many people go from habit, since happily good habits as well as bad die hard, but as Fr Jungmann says, habit is not enough.