

LIFE IN CHRIST. RELIGIOUS DOCTRINE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS. Three volumes. By Fergal McGrath, S.J. (Gill & Son; 4s. 6d., 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d.)
 'The teaching (of religion) should aim at training the pupils to bring their faith to bear on their lives . . . it should appeal to the imagination and to the heart as well as to the understanding. . . .'

These are some of the aims set forth by the Irish hierarchy for the programme of religious instruction in Catholic Secondary Schools, and quoted in the introduction. The first aim is undoubtedly well catered for in these volumes, which follow the pattern of the *Summa*.

The first volume deals with God, Creation, Sin, Redemption, and the Church, with an interesting section on the Liturgical Year. The second volume covers the Commandments of God and of the Church, while the third takes the Sacraments in considerable detail. The text is comprehensive and to the point, with up-to-date practical applications: e.g. the question of strikes by employees is dealt with under the fourth commandment, and many sections carry much useful information in their notes.

It is unfortunate, therefore, that the presentation of so much valuable material should be rather unattractive. Although the sections of text are subdivided, and clearly headed, yet the work has a 'solid' appearance, and in spite of the fact that each volume carries reproductions of a great many famous religious paintings, these are printed in a rather dreary monochrome, which in many cases is blurred and foggy, so that the general impression is gloomy instead of inviting.

It is perhaps inevitable that this work should be compared with the Catholic Catechism newly translated from the German. While it must be borne in mind that this latter is a far more expensive publication, yet the general layout and use of brightly-coloured line drawings makes for a better first impact. It is on this count, perhaps, that this book falls somewhat short of its aims.

ROSEMARY HEDDON

THE YEAR AND OUR CHILDREN. By Mary Reed Newland. (P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York; \$3.95).

At the first reading this book, a description of the liturgical year as lived to the fullest possible extent by parents and children in the author's own home, may give rise to the feeling, 'How wonderful! This is how Catholic family life should really be lived', to be followed a moment later by the thought, 'It would be unbearable'. There is something of truth in both these reactions. The author warns us that the life as she has described it, 'this making of wreaths, baking of cakes, . . . cutting, pasting, sewing, planting . . .' did not spring suddenly from nothing. It grew from the necessity which she and her husband felt, that the reality of the Church's year was not something which should be confined within the walls of the parish church but which should be