

Life of the Spirit

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BY

THE EDITOR



THE present issue of *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* is principally concerned with the Liturgy. This does not mean that it wishes to trespass on other ground well marked out by boundaries of liturgical signs. The liturgical apostolate is already provided with journals such as *Music and Liturgy* and *Magnificat* which, though perhaps still limited in their circulation, provide specialised treatment on the nature and practice of liturgical worship. It will be evident, nevertheless, that no treatment of prayer or the spiritual life could possibly be complete without this essential element. In fact prayer without the liturgy as its centre of activity is not really prayer at all. The main confusion of the modern mystical movement outside the Church lies in its isolating the life of prayer from the formalised external prayer of the Church. We are therefore determined to avoid any danger of an 'over-spiritualising' of the spiritual life by frequent reference to and treatment of this form of prayer. In the present issue the notes on Obedience set the tone as it were to the whole because obedience lies at the heart of sacrifice and fertilises all the exercises of external religion. The article by Mr Geoffrey Webb indicates the value of the principal object in every church—the altar of sacrifice upon which the obediential act of man is accomplished through the obedience of Christ to his cross. No doctrine about prayer can ignore such necessary elements in the Christian's approach to God and to that extent *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* can be considered a review quite considerably concerned with the theology of liturgy.

FRONTISPIECE

The illustration opposite is that of a linen antependium of the 13th century from Helmstedt in Germany, illustrated in *Der Christliche Altar* by Joseph Braun, S.J. It portrays Christ in glory between St Peter and Our Lady on one side, and St John Baptist and St Paul on the other; figures of St Augustine and St Nicholas, which complete the antependium, are not shown. The bottom border contains half-figures of Our Lady and the Holy Child between the twelve Apostles. (Cf. *Inspired Symbolism* in this issue.)