

Some speak of a revision of the liturgical martyrology. We do not complain of that. But we think it rather a tall order! What will be the principles of the undertaking? Will it only attempt to correct the innumerable errors that the better historians have pointed out? Or will it opt for a reconsideration of the principles by which the venerable lists have been established?

SURSUM CORDA, the Australian review for priests and religious, is a useful and 'down to earth' spiritual journal. In the July issue Fr Herring, C.P., deals with the question of the gifts and mental prayer for the priests and religious who by their very mission are destined to be overwhelmed by cares and weariness.

Priests and religious find their time for formal prayer lessened because the number requiring their ministrations have increased, as also have their needs. Even when free to attend to prayer, spiritual reading, conferences and such like, frequently neither priest nor religious is in 'the mood' for these things. Their most earnest efforts at meditation and mental prayer are hindered by a tired mind and a fatigued body. Even morning prayer and morning Mass become almost a signal to continue one's sleep.

The problem is a common one to almost all clergy and religious. And the first answer given by Fr Herring is basic.

It is to this life of activity in the apostolate that we are called. We are called by God. God has chosen our work for us.

And the practical answer is to be found in the gifts of the Holy Ghost who comes to strengthen our Faith and our Charity in the work of the apostolate to the degree to which the demands of the divinely appointed work require.



BOOK REVIEW SUPPLEMENT

THE EUCHARIST AND THE CONFESSIONAL. By F. D. Joret, O.P. (Blackfriars; 12s. 6d.).

The governing idea of this book is that grace in one form or another flows through our lives and we shall best understand the sacraments by first understanding the manner of God's communion with his creation. Therefore the first chapter is entitled *The Sacrament of God*. 'The gift of God is himself, and it is grace which flows from him into our soul.' Father Joret is blunt and direct and this is most welcome: 'We must beware of underrating these symbolic utterances on the plea that they are just figures of speech. They are the actual expressions our Saviour

used to reveal the truth to us and to bring it home.' In this way he makes very sure at the outset that the notion of grace is clear to his readers. Then after considering the institution of the sacraments, their power and the part we must play in receiving them, he comes to the main work of the book which is to consider in some detail (150 pages as against 30 or so of introduction) the two 'routine' or daily sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist. True, he has nothing new to say, but it is the manner of saying which is valuable. He writes colourfully with numerous illustrations from contemporary life, vivid images and metaphors, but all the time the fundamental principles of the Church's teaching on the sacraments are being driven home. The use of the Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church and the saints and mystics is flexible and thoroughly well adapted to its purpose, which is to enlighten the mind. Nor does learning bear down heavily on the work. Frequently one is startled to find that here is nothing more than St Thomas' plain teaching; but it is so competently and neatly applied to our practical problems that we cannot believe it is so old. A neat explanation of *reviviscentia* freshens the mind, and simple practical instructions about making a good communion or preventing frequent confessions going stale make this an admirable book for routine spiritual reading, and for priests who want to pass on the advice to others.

THE WINDOW IN THE WALL. By Ronald Knox. (Burns & Oates; 15s.)

On the back of the dust-cover of this book are to be found two arresting titles, *In Soft Garments*, *The Hidden Stream*. The greatness, and it is true greatness, of Monsignor Knox's preaching shows itself in his power to command our attention with the first words he utters. And he never loses that command; I found myself forcibly carried along in reading these sermons on the Holy Eucharist delivered annually over the last twenty years at Corpus Christi, Maiden Lane. But this command springs from no brittle urbanity; true, Mgr Knox has all the superficial virtues, but style always serves matter. The first sermon which gives the title to the book is an excellent example. Mgr Knox takes the text from the Canticle of Canticles, 'And now he is standing on the other side of this very wall; now he is looking through each window in turn, peering through every chink. I can hear my true love calling to me, Rise up, rise up quickly, dear heart, so gentle, so beautiful, rise up and come with me.' At first he appears merely to be setting the text in its context, until with the art of a great preacher he plunges us right into the middle of the situation with the remark, 'that voice at the window brings to my own mind a fancy which I have often had . . . that the glittering Disc of whiteness which we see occupying that round opening [in the monstrance] is not reflecting the light of the