

However, even though we have as yet had nothing quite like the collaboration between Rudolf Schwarz and Romano Guardini, or like that between Father Couturier and Le Corbusier, there are a few of our new churches which are good. The most notable is the Church of St Peter, at Milford, Co. Donegal, by Messrs Corr and McCormick of Derry. They had already built very creditable modern churches in Limerick City and in County Clare, and the Milford Church is the fruit of a good deal of thought and experience. (When they were working in the south of Ireland, they were fortunate to have had the advice and help of an open-minded and thoughtful Limerick parish-priest, Monsignor Moloney, for whom they built their first church.) The Milford Church seats five hundred and was built for a total cost of £29,000, which amount includes the cost of commissioned works of art of high quality. Apart from the stained glass already mentioned, there are statues by Oisín Kelly and Garry Trimble, a tapestry by Colin Middleton and ceramic Stations of the Cross by Imogen Stuart. St Peter's is essentially a modest church (is this not true of many of the most successful modern churches?) but it is in St Peter's and churches like it that our best hopes for the future lie.

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German Opinion

Last year, the editors and publishers of the periodical *Wort und Wahrheit* asked more than 160 German-speaking Catholics to answer two questions: (1) What are, in your view, the most pressing questions that the situation of the Church in the contemporary world poses to the Council? (2) What actual measures would you advocate for the accomplishment of the tasks of the Council? The replies were published as a special issue (vol. 16, No. 10, October 1961). Although the questions were of limited scope and those whose replies are published are not perhaps a representative sample of German-speaking Catholics (being predominantly intellectuals, as will appear below), it is true, nevertheless, that the problems canvassed range over the whole field of the work of the Church, and that the writers, being leaders of opinion, express what German-speaking Catholics generally think. The special issue is, therefore, an admirable summary and survey of Catholic opinion.

Eighty-two replies are published; of the writers (the categories not being mutually exclusive) six were women, fifteen priests of whom eight were regulars, fourteen journalists and writers, twenty-nine academic teachers, and twenty-nine professional people including senior civil servants; twenty-five

were resident in Austria, one in Switzerland, six in non-German-speaking countries.

If a common theme can be discerned in all, or at least most, of the replies it is the anxiety for the removal of barriers; in the last analysis, this means removal of barriers between God and man; at a different level, it means barriers between the Church and the world, between the Church and Christians not in communion with the See of Rome, as well as with Jews and Mohammedans, and perhaps most important, barriers within the Church itself, between priests and laity, between the Bishops and the faithful, between the laity and the Bible as well as theological scholarship, between the laity and the Sacraments.

Among the subjects mentioned by many writers, we may begin with the position of the Bishops. It is known or assumed that the Council will complete the work of the Vatican Council of 1870 in this respect. It is desired that their position should be strengthened, and that it be made clear that they possess the autonomy and authority that belongs to the successors of the Apostles. This fits in with the demand for decentralization and the dissatisfaction with some aspects of the work of the Roman Curia which is felt to be unfamiliar with conditions outside Italy. The development of regional Bishops' conferences is suggested. At the same time, it is desired that the Bishops should be closer to their flocks. All remains of feudalism within the Church should be swept away; points listed here include ecclesiastical titles, styles, modes of address, etc. Other suggestions here include election of the Bishops by the people.

A great deal of thought has been given to the priesthood. It is felt here that, because of the shortage of priests and for other reasons, priests should confine themselves to their proper and essential work, i.e., the cure of souls, and should be relieved of activities that could be carried out equally well if not better by laymen; the most obvious sphere is that of finance. This fits in with the position of the laity generally. On the other hand, the priests should be better fitted for their work so that they may be more effective in it. They should have some sociological training and should be much better prepared for work with children; this would improve the quality of religious instruction. They should be freed from some of the present obligations concerning the breviary; a prescribed period of mental prayer and contemplation might be better than the requirement, incompatible with present-day urban conditions, of reciting excessively long set prayers. It is remarkable how many of the writers are alive to the problems of the Church in Latin America. In order to relieve the pressing problem of a shortage of priests, something like a large scale redistribution of priests from other continents is suggested and a re-thinking of the requirement of celibacy on the ground that there will never be enough men who have a vocation both to the priesthood and to the celibate life to go round (particularly true of Latin America) and that it might be better to have a married clergy rather than to allow Latin America to be lost to the Church. It is to be remembered that these are the individual views of some only of the contributors.

The demand for freeing the priests from extraneous duties is linked with

one for a general overhaul of ecclesiastical administration which is widely considered to be cumbersome, obsolete in its methods, and inefficient.

There are frequent references to the position of the laity. Apart from what has already been indicated, it is asked this be fundamentally reconsidered. It should be made clear that the lay vocation is different but not inferior to the priestly one, and that laymen are not something like auxiliary members of the Church. This is not, however, simply a demand for an assertion of the dignity of the laity, but also one for making them play their proper part in the work of the Church. Catholic Action should be re-examined, the apostolate of the laity be put on a new footing, and the diaconate be revived. Also in areas where there is a shortage of priests, laymen might hold services, consisting of readings from the Scriptures, and prayers. This is already being done in Latin America and very successfully.

It is considered essential that the laity take a more active share in the Liturgy and be brought closer to the Sacraments; Communion under both kinds, at least on special occasions, is urged. The overwhelming majority of the writers are anxious to extend the use of the vernacular or rather, having written before *Veterum Sapentia*, assume that it will be extended. Two of the writers on the other hand, are anxious to maintain the position of Latin; one of them draws attention to the difficulties of using the vernacular in countries or areas where the population is linguistically mixed, and the different elements mutually antagonistic.

There are demands for a reconsideration of the family in the sense that it should be much more the unit with which the cure of souls is concerned than it is now. This does not only mean reappraising the vocation to family life, but making the parents more responsible for the religious training of their children than now. Preparation and presentation for First Communion should be the responsibility of the parents. Other problems of family life should be considered and the Church's teaching on birth control should be more firmly based.

Much criticism is levelled not only at the *Index Librorum prohibitorum*, but on the whole apparatus and methods of ecclesiastical censorship as administered now. It is widely felt that the present restrictions, which exceed anything known to the Fathers or in the Middle Ages, do not serve any useful purpose, hamper Catholic scholars even in their apologetic work, are widely disregarded, and serve mainly to present a distorted picture and an obvious target to those outside the Church. The possibility of anonymous denunciation and condemnation without being heard is thought to be particularly objectionable. It is suggested that the system should at least be completely reformed if it cannot be abolished and that Catholic scholarship, particularly biblical and theological studies be encouraged. Coupled with this are demands that greater attention should be paid to contemporary secular learning, e.g., in the sciences, and an effort should be made to present the Church to the world in an idiom that the world can understand. It is made clear that all writers are anxious not to compromise the deposit of Faith.

Further measures suggested include: a declaration of the rights of man or rather an affirmation of the dignity and worth of the human person and a reform of canon law in the sense of making the Church of the West less legalistic. This again is linked with demands for a restatement of natural law. It is considered necessary that the Church should be, and should be seen to be, dissociated from groups responsible for policies that are not only considered antisocial, but are incompatible with Christian charity. Latin America is cited here, with particular reference to the reasons for the present difficulties of the Church in Cuba.

Unnecessary barriers and a lack of charity in relation with other Christians is condemned; what is particularly criticized are the often quite needlessly harsh forms and expressions used. There are demands for a revision of the legislation relating to mixed marriages. It is demanded also that the relations between Christians and Jews be re-examined. One writer pleads for an improvement of relations with Mohammedans.

The foregoing gives some indication not only of what some German-speaking Catholics hope from the Council, but also of what they generally think of the Church at the present time. It must be pointed out that not all writers confine themselves to points of detail. One of them very effectively makes the point that what matters is not dealing with symptoms, but that the Council should do two things: base our Faith again firmly on what is its centre, the Incarnation of our Lord; and make clear that Christian morals are not mainly concerned with sex, but that they are an integrated whole based on love of God and neighbour; everything else will follow.

W. A. STEINER

Reviews

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION, by John Wilson; Oxford University Press; 12s. 6d.

About five years ago several groups of writers attempted to present an account of religious belief which would be acceptable to an influential school of British philosophy, sometimes called 'logical empiricism'. *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, a collection of papers published in 1955, was followed in 1957 by two further symposia, *Faith and Logic* and *Metaphysical Beliefs*, and by Professor Ramsey's *Religious Language* and Professor Braithwaite's *An Empiricist's View of the Nature of Religious Belief*. Few readers, whether philosophers or believers,