

Indicative of his own outlook on the active life and a useful reminder to those energetic people who attend lectures on 'The Urgent Need of Catholic Action' (a title announced in the Catholic Press only a few weeks ago) is his reminder that the Conferences of the St Vincent de Paul Society were really meant to be conferences, to educate the members in faith and charity, with good works as a means of preserving them from temptation and to provide opportunities for exercising their love.

EDWARD QUINN

CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS. By A. Gardeil, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 2s.)

This is a translation by a Dominican of Carisbrooke of the author's *Le Sens du Christ*. It presents a series of six meditations on the Pauline theme, 'For me, to live is Christ'. Besides being the sole medium of redemption, Christ is our justice, sanctification and wisdom; above all, he is our 'life'. 'But what is the meaning of this expression, "For me, to live is Christ"? It is used in the same sense when a mother says of her child, "He is my life": that is to say, "All my thoughts and my love and my hope are centred on him". When one being plays a preponderant part in the direction of the life of another, we can say that it is its life.'

This brief extract illustrates the simplicity, the homeliness almost, of the late Fr Gardeil's treatment; which is what we should expect in notes for retreat conferences. And yet there is a depth and accuracy of statement which reveal the true theologian: 'You may ask, "What about God? Is not God in his essence, in his Trinity—is not he our life?" Of course God is our life. He is our Father, in that he has adopted us in his Son. But so long as we remain on earth, as members of Christ who saves us, under whose direct action we are, Christ first of all is our life.' And again: 'In the sixth chapter of his gospel, St John presents communion as first of all a participation in Christ by faith and love, and then as the real eating of his body and blood'. How acceptable it is, yet how comparatively rare, to find the point made that our Lord's insistence on the need for men to eat his body and blood is the climax of his teaching on the necessity of faith and charity! This little book will be welcomed by all who seek to build their spiritual life on the principles of sound theology.

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