

founding of the Irish province in 1484; the first attempt to establish the province in law was completed in 1378, but the province actually came into effective existence in 1536. It is quite an achievement, especially in 1984, to make no mention at all of Las Casas (born in 1484).

Macias writes excellently and tells a splendid story, with great imaginative verve, but unfortunately his claim that everything in his book rests on solid historical foundations is unjustified. The most bizarre inaccuracy is that, in his desire to make Dominic personally responsible for the whole constitutional structure of the Order, he ascribes to the General Chapter of 1220 such institutions as the triennial General Chapter (which goes back in fact to 1453) and the twelve-year term of office for the Master (which was only introduced in 1862)! As an historical novel, this is a delightful book; as a life of St. Dominic, it has little value.

The most exciting and original new book on Dominic is that by Koudelka. Koudelka has in the past made several contributions to Dominican historiography; now, in the substantial introduction to *Dominikus*, he has given us an impressively authoritative synthetic presentation of the saint's life and personality. Like Ferrua, he stresses the novelty of Dominic's foundation, and he fascinatingly depicts the diplomatic way in which Dominic only allowed this novelty to become gradually apparent. After the introduction, there is a most ingenious and attractive mosaic of texts, translated into German, from all the major thirteenth century sources, arranged with brief comments, to build up a sort of composite *legenda*. I have no hesitation in recommending this book as one of the best modern introductions to Dominic, and it is to be hoped that an English version of it will soon be produced.

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**SPIRITUAL PASSAGES. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**  
by Benedict J. Groeschel. New York: *Crossroad*, 1983; 203 pp. \$12.95.

Benedict Groeschel, unlike many other spiritual writers today, has written a detailed and classically structured work in his *Spiritual Passages*. The author, a Capuchin priest and director of the Office for Spiritual Development for the Archdiocese of New York, states that his goal is "to relate some of the sounder insights of contemporary psychology to the classical outline of the spiritual journey..." While the book achieves little in the way of contemporary psychology, it does say something about the spiritual journey.

Dividing the book into two distinct sections, Groeschel first examines a general psychology of spirituality. This includes the call of God in the four distinct voices of the One, the True, the Good, and the Beautiful; a chapter on the unique features of Christian spirituality, including warnings against a spiritual quietism and Pelagianism; a general treatment of human development and stages of life, based upon the classical outline of Erikson and the recent work of the Whiteheads in *Christian Life Patterns*; a consideration of religious and spiritual development which introduces the reader to the three steps in the spiritual life; finally, a somewhat limited examination of the relationship of psychology and spirituality. In part II, Groeschel examines with much more historical and critical detail the three stages of purgation, illumination, and union in the spiritual life. Throughout the book, the reader is introduced to Jerry, Fr. John, Sister Helene, Fr. Carl and others, characters in various stages of spiritual development who provide a constant allusive backdrop for his unfolding theory.

The book's sub-title is misleading in so far as Groeschel is more concerned with preserving the autonomy and theological purity of the spiritual life than shedding any significant light on spiritual passages from the discipline of psychology. For example, in discussing anxiety during the purgative stage, he makes no effort to consider the fundamental distinction between fear and anxiety. Again, in warning against pop psychology and the dangers of selfism, he appears to reject the positive valuable

contributions contemporary psychologists (he mentions Rogers, Fromm, and Maslow) have made to understanding the human person. Granted the dangers of Reiff's psychological man and therapeutic culture; granted that psychology often moves into theological and philosophical areas only in an effort to deny transcendence; still there is no reason to reject "that limited science called 'modern psychology'," as he calls it, no reason to believe that "using psychological concepts to understand contemplation is like using Newton's telescope to measure the distance of galaxies". Both psychology and spirituality, concerned as they are with human experience, cannot be mutually exclusive; the path to God does not leave the world and all its knowledge behind, but carries these things along as part of God's handiwork. To enter into the mystery of the Lord is to enter into our own mystery and all that is light and dark, frightening and consoling, within us. Psychology helps us to unlock this mystery, not as a self-contained set of truths, but as knowledge which takes on special meaning when placed on the ontological ground of the person's relationship to God. For Groeschel, because there is little of this ontological grounding, psychology must be kept at arms length. He warns his reader of a "return to another round of the psychologists and psychiatrists as prophets and philosophers, with priests serving as their devout cup bearers. Lord, may it not be so!" Such prayerful sentiment speaks for itself.

Other questions about Groeschel's work must be raised. While he is concerned with the "deeply felt needs of modern people", little is done to examine the peculiar nature of these needs and their correlation to the spiritual life. His theology is also hard to date: certainly after Trent, but surely before Vatican II (not one reference to the documents of the Council can be found in the entire book). In addition, a strongly rationalistic, moralistic, and individualistic attitude toward sin and the moral life is present consistently. He defines rationalization and intellectualization as defense mechanisms which easily become "trump cards in the devil's deck". He warns us that "we live in such an un-Christian world and are immersed in its values to such a degree that if we were deprived of these two defenses in an instant, we would probably despair". The tone is often reminiscent of sermons heard in parish missions in the 1950s. Nothing is said about the need for critical and intelligent thinking. Indeed, authority appears as a convenient and all purpose substitute: "Whereas many see the moral teaching of the Church as a burden or imposition, the person who is becoming a spiritual Christian will welcome gratefully the guidance of the pastoral office".

Since Groeschel uses the classical writings of Garrigou-Lagrange and Tanquerey extensively, perhaps there is little reason to be surprised at this reincarnation of an ultramontane worldview. Yet even in this worldview something was present that is missing in Groeschel's book: a sense of God a person can be drawn to, one who beckons us to intimacy not only in spite of, but also in and through and because of our world today; likewise a Christ who is not an abstract deity incarnate, but a human God who suffers with each person in his or her time and place.

There is a pervasive attitude in Groeschel's book that has alienated many in my generation from interpreting their own "spiritual passages" in the light of God's love and truth. As an historical presentation of the three stages of the spiritual life with abundant citations from the great spiritual writers, the book is of some merit. But as a work which seeks to link the "ancient wisdom and the deeply felt spiritual needs of modern people", it is widely off the mark. Moderns will find little of interest in Groeschel's work. Even those who uphold the "ancient wisdom" will be more than a little disappointed in this current state of the art.

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