

intellectual mediocrity of the church's leadership, there really never was any alternative. It has become, indeed, almost boring to catalogue—as this book does—so sad a story. What Winter does not do, I think, is to point sufficiently at the small scale areas of lively survival amid the wreck. In almost no case are these areas of survival due to episcopal initiative. Nevertheless they do exist. Little networks like the Interchurch Families Association, the Catholic Institute for International Relations, the Advent Group of married priests, lively parishes here and there, Blackfriars itself, and so forth. Effectively the only thing the faithful Catholic can do today is to ignore the hierarchy and its sinking ship, and try to get as many little lifeboats afloat—as many little basic communities—as possible. The massive decline of the institutional Catholic Church, at least in this country, is now irreversible. The survival of a vital tradition, however, if there are enough brave spirits about, is still possible.

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READINGS IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY edited by Peter Hodgson and Robert King.
S.P.C.K. 1985. Pp. xii + 418. £15.00.

This book is a collection of eighty-six readings, intended to supplement *Christian Theology: An Introduction to its Traditions and Tasks*, a collection of essays also edited by Hodgson and King. The readings are grouped under fourteen headings, which correspond to the chapter headings of the latter book. They are: Theology, Scripture and Tradition, God, Revelation, Creation and Providence, Human Being, Sin and Evil, Christ and Salvation, The Church, The Sacraments, The Spirit and the Christian Life, The Kingdom of God and Life Everlasting, The Religions, and The Christian Paradigm: Alternative Visions. The readings are short (between four and five pages each, on average); hence they could not, I think, be profitably read independently of *Christian Theology*, despite the editor's claim. They are best regarded as a collection of illustrations for that book.

Each chapter (except the last) starts with one of more classical statements of a Christian doctrine, from the Fathers of the Church (especially Augustine), from Anselm or Aquinas, or from the Reformers. Then there follow readings which trace its history in the 19th and 20th centuries. The editors forestall criticism of their selection by pleading that their purpose has not been to provide representative selections from the works of major theologians of the past or the present, but to present a diversity and plurality of points of view. One notices, however, that an undue number of points of view are those of German or American Protestants! Most of the 20th-century excerpts are from Barth, Bultmann, Tillich, Moltmann, Pannenberg, the Niebuhrs and more recent Americans. There are some welcome selections from Liberation Theology, and also from Black and Process Theologies. But apart from Ruether and Gutierrez, Karl Rahner is the only 20th-century Catholic writer to be represented. Eastern Orthodoxy gets an even worse deal: one excerpt from Schmemmann, and that is all. The choice of authors has also skewed the selection of topics: there is little, for instance, on the role of doctrine or on the Holy Spirit (the chapter on 'The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life' is mostly on mysticism, ethics and spirituality); and nothing on Mary. There are, however, a few welcome surprises: Möhler (but why nothing from Newman?), Ricoeur and Rowan Williams.

Within its predictable limitations, then, this is a useful selection of short texts. It requires, however, to be supplemented by other selections and to be used in conjunction with a text book.

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