

OBITER

THIS YEAR sees the commemoration of a saint who has his meaning for our times. St Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, 'Garmon' to the British, died in 448. The teacher of St Patrick, he is said, too, to have ordained St Illtud and so to have established monasticism in Britain. Called by the British clergy in 429 to combat the Pelagian heresy, he brought with him St Lupus of Troyes, and the 'Alleluia Victory', when Picts and Saxons fled, it is said, at the solemn invocation of the Easter antiphon, remains in Welsh tradition to make Germanus a national hero.

St Germanus came on a second visit to Britain (in 447), where Pelagianism had reappeared. Once more he was to destroy, by his preaching, that most insidious of heresies, and the churches still dedicated to him reveal the extent of his influence.

The Pelagianism of our own day, disguised by a more respectable name, needs its Germanus. The appositeness of centenary celebrations is not a mere matter of dates and historical coincidence. The work of the saints is not ended with the years that saw their work on earth, and the remembering of them is the Church's recognition that they are still strong to intercede for new times with old needs.

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THE ACTUAL LESSONS of ancient art provide the theme of the latest number of *Art Sacré* (Blackfriars Publications, 4s. 6d.). It is sad to learn that prohibitive costs make this the last issue to appear entirely in a heliographic form. But the review is to continue, if less sumptuously presented than hitherto. Adopting his customary method of illuminating an argument by concrete illustrations, the editor takes the Flemish Primitives and Rembrandt as examples of *aller au-delà du métier*. In other words, as Roger-Marx has observed, 'For them knowledge and innocence are joined, the love of created things and divine love are met. Intuition has its part no less than experience, the capacity to suffer as well as the gift of wonder'. More technical essays discuss the 'geometry of architecture', the 'Gothic' survival of the 17th and 18th centuries and the significance of a local school of painting, that of Toulouse, in the 17th century. Finally, a summary of the sections on sacred art of the *Encyclical Mediator Dei*, and an account of recent exhibitions, complete one of the most valuable numbers of this excellent review, which all who care for the Church's art should be sure to see.

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PAX CHRISTI continues its magnificent work for peace among Christians, and the latest number gives details of the International Pilgrimage to Lourdes in July, which, in the words of Cardinal Salège, 'will unite all nations in a common veneration of our Lady and in a common faith in her Divine Son, so that we may realise our christian brotherhood and declare our hope and our love'.

In September, the seventy-second annual congress of German Catholics is to be held in Mainz. It makes the centenary of these gatherings, the first of them being also held in Mainz in 1848. The organisers hope that Catholics from abroad may be able to join with their German brethren in this manifestation of Catholic unity. Particulars may be had from Dr Eibel, 72 Deutscher Katholikentag 1948 im Mainz, Lokalkomitee, Mainz.

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JEANNE D'ARC is commemorated in the latest issue of the *Fêtes et Saisons* series (Blackfriars Publications 1s. 1½d. post free). Magnificent illustrations as usual accompany the vigorous text, which tells, from original sources, the story of St Joan's martyrdom and her subsequent glory. 'The youngest of French saints', Joan 'kept intact the soul of a shepherdess as she led her armies at seventeen years of age. At nineteen she died at the stake, forgiving her executioners'.

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PILGRIMAGE, PRAYER, PENANCE (obtainable from Charles Osborne, 41 Hockerill Street, Bishop's Stortford, 6d.) gives details of the cross-carrying pilgrimage to Walsingham planned for July of this year.

The idea is to form parties of men to carry heavy wooden crosses through the land to the shrine of our Lady at Walsingham in Norfolk; and to have this done in a spirit of very humble repentance for our sins, and dominated by ardent, constant prayer.

Fourteen parties, each of thirty men, will set off from such centres as Westminster, Middlesbrough, Wrexham, Canterbury and Oxford, and the pilgrimage will be joined at Walsingham by that of the Union of Catholic Mothers. An all-night vigil in the open before the Cross will precede the final celebrations on July 16th, the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

The booklet (richly illustrated with photographs from *Pilgrim Cross*, the account of the Vezelay Pilgrimage of 1946 which has inspired this year's pilgrimage to Walsingham) is an appeal for all to share in the aims of a movement that looks to the prayers of our Lady and to the penance of her children as the only way out of the miseries of our time. Even those who cannot themselves carry the cross to Walsingham can enter into this pilgrimage, and the booklet tells them how that can be done.

CHARLES WILLIAMS is the subject of a deeply interesting study by John Heath-Stubbs in *Time and Tide* (May 1st). 'Spiritual Power and its Temptations' is seen to be the dominant theme of Williams's work, and Mr Heath-Stubbs does well to emphasise the importance for contemporary literature of a writer (whose influence has yet to reach its peak) who faced so squarely the problem of evil—not as a speculative matter, but as a powerful determinant of the springs of human action with which the imaginative artist is concerned.

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THE COUNTRY PARISH (S.P.C.K., 1s. 0d.) is an entertaining essay by Lord Bridgeman on the problems of rural life today. Originally designed for 'the clergyman from a town parish who is appointed to a country living and who comes to the countryside for the first time in his life', it will in fact interest a larger audience. Lord Bridgeman has a deep understanding of the traditional pattern of the English countryside, but he is far from being a romantic, and quite a lot is wrong in his imaginary village of Oakley. The point of his essay is that the newcomer should get to know Oakley before he condemns—or idealises!

ALDATE.