

EXTRACTS

THE CHORAL CHANTS OF THE MASS are considered by Dom Gregory Murray in a pamphlet recently published by the Society of St Gregory for ninepence. This 'brief account of the origin and development of various chants of the Mass' should do much to encourage a lively interest in the people's part in the offering of the sacred liturgy. Pope Pius X's teaching that the faithful assist at Mass 'for no other object than that of acquiring the true christian spirit from its foremost and indispensable fount, which is active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church', is in fact scarcely realisable through the elaborate settings of the existing *Kyriale*. The ordinary parish lacks the musical resources to cope with such ambitious recitals, for, as Dom Gregory shows, most of the present *Kyriale* is post-Gregorian and reflects the medieval practice of leaving the singing, even of the ordinary of the Mass, to a schola of clerics. He suggests the use of the simplest versions, such as that of Mass XVIII, which retain the singable, popular quality of the litanies to which the *Kyrie* originally belonged. Such easy melodies provide an ideal congregational setting. Sung Sunday after Sunday, irrespective of liturgical rank, they make it possible for every member of the congregation to take his share in the singing, and so to give effect to Pope Pius XI's wish that 'when the faithful assist at the sacred ceremonies . . . they should not be merely detached and silent spectators . . . but sing alternately with the clergy or the choir, as it is prescribed'.

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THE GRAIL have by now achieved a high reputation for their publications, and two of their recent books intended for Lent must, because of the inevitable delay nowadays between writing and publication, be welcomed in paschal time. However, neither Bishop Myers's *Lent and the Liturgy* (1s. 0d.) nor *Four Witnesses* (the four gospel narratives of the Passion, with illustrations by R. de Bezer) will 'date' with the passing of Lent. Mgr Myers's scholarly essay emphasises the basic importance of the Lenten Liturgy. In Lent, as in all times of the ecclesiastical year, the Church finds the centre of its supernatural activity in the sacrifice of the Mass.

If the purpose of a truly Christian life is to garner the fruits of the Redemption wrought by Christ, the chief divinely appointed means is the great liturgical act of the Mass. And when the local Roman Church sought to revivify real Christian grace-activity in the souls of its members, was it not natural to lead them all to the altar of

God, and in the unending renewal of the one Sacrifice of Calvary to seek inspiration to practise the full teaching of Christ? That is exactly the purpose of the Lenten Stational observance, with its daily summons to priests and people to gather round their Bishop, in the solemn repetition of the One Redeeming Sacrifice. And so the whole Lenten effort is made to centre round the daily Mass, which is one and the same sacrifice with that of the Cross.

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THE APOSTOLATE AND HOLINESS is the theme of the February number of *La Vie Spirituelle*. (Recently the editor of *The Month* expressed his admiration for this French Dominican review, but seemed doubtful about its availability in this country. It is, of course, readily obtainable at 2s. 0d. a copy from Blackfriars Publications.) Père Dewailly asks 'What is a Mission?' ('mission' being a synonym for the 'apostolate': etymologically the words are one).

A mission is really a commission. In the Church it is part of God's work entrusted to men by God. The Father sends his Son and his Holy Spirit, and all three send men, first the prophets, then the apostles and their successors and through them the whole Church, so that the Church may be available throughout the whole world and that all men, having heard the word of God and having accepted it through faith, may enter for all eternity into that glorious life of the Father to which he calls them.

Père Daniélou continues with a consideration of Prophecy, which finds its culmination in the person of Christ our Lord. The Priesthood is the subject of Père Henry's essay:

The christian priest is ordained to consecrate the Eucharist and to be at the service of the Church in every respect which is implied by the Eucharist, whether through preaching (for the sacrament is a mystery of faith) or through his ministerial authority (for the Church takes its origin from its sacrifice, and in it she ever finds the source of her unity).

The condition of the apostolate is holiness, and Père Plé, in a final article, stresses the indispensable rôle of the inner life of sanctity in the outer life of apostolic activity:

As 'God's coadjutor' the apostle knows, through his faith, that God acts through him. As 'God's instrument' he must make himself sensitive to the action of God which comes through his agency. Every instrumental cause, the theologians insist, must exercise its own causality so that through it the effect of the principal cause may operate. So that God may work through him, the apostle must therefore exercise his own human activity, but in such a way that God applies it and raises it up to the level of his divine effect.

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