

is evident from the fact that a large portion of his writings consists of parochial sermons. He also spent most of his life as a Catholic at the Birmingham Oratory, a busy parish. He describes the “object” of the Congregation of the Oratory as “the formation of good secular priests, who shall at once be a blessing to the population among which they are placed, and a standard of the parochial clergy or missionaries”. It exists to bring people to God, to foster holiness. In his chapter, “Mary, the Mother of Jesus”, Mgr Strange notes how it was not Newman’s explanation of Mary’s title as Mother of God that caused unease, but rather the devotion that it fostered, and it is this devotion that Newman strongly defends (and also tempers). He was deeply concerned with the faith of Christians and their path to holiness, as is well illustrated in the chapter entitled “Preaching a Living Faith”. The fact that Newman adopted as his motto *Cor ad cor loquitur* (Heart speaks to heart), gives an indication of how dear the souls of the faithful were to him. Like St Philip Neri, the founder of the Oratory, he sought to catch souls on the “fishing rod of personal influence”. His unfair reputation as a “dry” writer is shattered when one looks, for example, at his poem *The Dream of Gerontius*, dripping with devotion and passion, and which Mgr Strange explores beautifully as a conclusion to his book.

Mgr Strange recounts that when he was already a priest and continuing his studies at Oxford he was asked why he did not quote Newman more often in his preaching. On reflection he says he came to realise that “in fact I was quoting him frequently, but rarely word for word. His influence goes deeper. My debt is incalculable, my gratitude profound”. In testament to this, he brings many aspects of the Cardinal’s thought together in this book to make it accessible to those who have not explored Newman’s writing in depth. With its simplicity and personal touch this book is a wonderful addition to the Newman world, and the author’s devotion to the man who may be a saint is tangible.

GREGORY MITCHELL CONG ORAT

THE NEW SCM DICTIONARY OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY, edited by Philip Sheldrake (SCM Press, London, 2005). Pp. 657, £50

There are few theological disciplines that divide opinion as much as Christian spirituality. For many theologians, the discipline lacks credibility, both because they feel that it should be a natural part of other theological disciplines, particularly moral theology, and because much of what is written in the field is of poor quality. Anyone who is interested in spirituality must quickly get used to sighs and eye rolling from many fellow theologians. But their suspicions are often justified. A trip to the ‘spirituality’ section in any good bookshop can be a disheartening experience. There are many books available, but few are rooted in the Christian theological tradition, and those that claim to be often reduce the Christian life to some sort of therapy, or are simply poor. There are few good books also that treat those great masters of the spiritual life. It is rarer still to see good editions of the spiritual classics for sale.

Nevertheless, the study of Christian spirituality has never been more necessary. Most of our pastoral encounters involve people who are struggling in the search for God. The struggles are so often related to problems in the moral and spiritual life, and those who are to be engaged in pastoral work of any kind need to be able to draw on the spiritual wisdom that has accumulated in the Church over two thousand years. A familiarity with this wisdom requires careful study of the lives and works of the masters of the spiritual life, the major spiritual movements that they have inspired, along with knowledge of the theology on which they draw. Such study has benefits for those whom we try to help, and also for the

student of spirituality, who will be challenged and encouraged in their journeying towards Christ.

One would expect that *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, which the dust jacket claims 'stands as the definitive reference work on all aspects of Christian spirituality today', would be a very useful resource for any student. This dictionary was brought out some twenty five years or so after *The SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, a work edited by the late Gordon Wakefield. In the years since Wakefield's dictionary much has happened in the field of Christian spirituality such that the 'new' dictionary is more than simply a second, updated edition of the first. It boasts an impressive list of contributors; impressive in that there are more than one hundred and fifty of them, and many of them scholars of the highest calibre. The bulk of the dictionary is composed of alphabetically arranged entries, in the form of short essays. At the end of each entry there is a short selection of reading related to the entry, so that the reader can find suitable in-depth reading on a given topic. There are also lists of related articles to be found elsewhere in the dictionary, which is particularly helpful. As with all such publications, there is some variation in the quality of the contributions, and at times the topics covered are a little strange, Mary Boys' entry on anti-Semitism being a case in point. There are some entries which seem to take political correctness a little too far, showing aspects of 'spirituality' that will only serve as grist to the mill for those who feel that the discipline lacks credibility as an academic and theological endeavour.

This is, however, compensated for by some very good articles. Richard Woods' entry on the Rhineland mystics does an excellent job of showing some of the main features of this interesting group in a very small number of words. N.T. Wright's entry on the Lord's Prayer is also very good. It is short and to the point, but informative and an excellent introduction to the petitions. Also to be commended are entries on theological topics such as grace, the Trinity, and entries on each of the theological virtues. This dictionary needs more entries on aspects of Christian doctrine and moral theology, since both are so important in shaping and informing the spiritual life. Shel Drake states in his introduction that it was decided not to include entries on particular texts or individuals, with the exception of some biblical names. It is very easy to appreciate how difficult it would be to decide who or what should be included. Yet full entries on, say, John of the Cross, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Francis de Sales, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, *The Way of Perfection*, just to mention a few, would, surely, be more useful than entries on clothing or place. It would be worth considering working towards adding entries on individuals and texts were a second edition to be produced.

Also well worth reading are the thirteen extended essays at the very beginning of the dictionary, which highlight some of the themes in spirituality that the editor clearly thinks are of great importance. The first essay by Sandra Schneiders is given the title "Christian Spirituality: Definition, Methods and Types". In it she writes well of how the Christian spiritual life is concerned with orientation and journeying towards our ultimate goal, which is union with the Triune God. For the Christian, this involves 'living the paschal mystery in the context of the Church community' (p. 1). Valerie Lesniak's essay on contemporary spirituality is an accurate account of the trends we now see, though it does make depressing reading, showing how spirituality has been divorced from religion, a separation which is the cause of so much of what is bad in the spirituality sections in the bookshops. The question of the relationship between spirituality and theology is treated sensitively by Philip Endean, who suggests that problems about the relationship between the two are often caused by a misunderstanding of what theology actually is, particularly the creative tension that Christian doctrine brings about.

This dictionary is a useful contribution to the field of spirituality. It contains much of what one would hope to see in such a work. When some of the entries lack quality, it is often because the authors have been unable to do justice to their topic in such a small number of words, or because the topic itself is strange. The lack of articles on individuals and texts is certainly a limiting factor, along with a lack of entries relating to moral theology. Serious study of spirituality means engaging with texts and other theological disciplines, something which is vital to restoring its credibility, and this dictionary needs to be developed in this way in further editions. Nevertheless, there is much that is good and useful about this work. It is to be hoped that future editions will build on this foundation to produce a more comprehensive work. Does this dictionary ‘stand as the definitive reference work on all aspects of Christian spirituality today’? There are not too many other works competing for the title, so the answer is yes. But it could be improved so that it is genuinely worthy of the title.

ROBERT GAY OP

OPENING UP: SPEAKING OUT IN THE CHURCH, edited by Julian Filochowski and Peter Stanford (Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 2005). Pp. 160, £14.95

Usually when you read a compilation of essays written by a variety of authors you are required, along with enjoying a number of the pieces, merely to endure the others. *Opening Up: Speaking out in the Church*, is quite different in this regard, as it is a compilation, in large part, of a uniformly high standard, something that is of great credit not only to the essayists but also to the editors of the text.

Written in honour of the work of Martin Prendergast, who as the Introduction claims “has given most of his life to cherishing those who are on the margins, whether of society or the Church”, *Opening Up* contains essays dealing with topics ranging from poverty, abortion, homosexuality, ecumenism, liturgical reform to political activism, conscience and democracy. Broad in its selection and treatment of issues *Opening Up* is also an interesting, thought-provoking and refreshing read. Importantly, one need not always agree with the content to enjoy this text for its style and high level of writing, and the reader is constantly challenged on a number of levels, not least morally and theologically.

Timothy Radcliffe’s analogy of kneading bread from the outside margins to the centre sets a wonderful thematic tone from the outset. The power of his analogy is further enhanced when he extends the original idea to the baking of Eucharistic bread. In short, how can we have a true Eucharist without a concern for those on the margins? Radcliffe’s analogy could be further extended if he were to use the work of the Norwegian peace theoretician Johan Galtung and the notion that nations are either “centre” or “periphery”. Jon Sobrino’s text on “Getting Real About the Option for the Poor” is another piece that stands out in the early part of *Opening Up*. Particularly memorable from this essay is his forceful depiction of the poor of the world: “They are children, the street children, the child soldiers, those coopted into prostitution and the shadowy world of paedophilia. They are the women, those who suffer rape and abuse, those who are effectively cheated by the sorts of jobs they can get and the pay they receive. They are the emigrants, the men and women who have to leave their own country, culture and religion, watch their families break up, and get treated with contempt in a foreign land. They are the indigenous, exploited for centuries, seduced by false promises of a better future, helplessly watching their tribe disappear. They are the millions of people living with HIV, who look on powerlessly as so many die” (pp. 25–26).

In the entire compilation, no single essay delivers as much passion and sense of urgency as Sobrino’s. Aside that is from Conor Gearty’s confronting essay