

or so receive a thorough course of instruction in Catholic faith and morals, except for those who frequent the last Mass. But it might well be a gain if those at the last Mass received it also, reinforced by a suitable biblical extract; if the Sunday Gospel did not suit, leave might perhaps be given to use another. If upon each point of Catholic faith and morals the most telling passage of Scripture were always expounded, the instruction might more easily be driven home, and at the same time a considerable store of effective biblical knowledge be imparted.

These two suggestions have seemed worth making, and some others might be thought of; but I am supposing always that nothing be done contrary to the orders or desires of proper ecclesiastical authority, or without due sanction.

C. LATTEY, S.J.

*How did the Synoptists obtain the facts of the temptations of Christ in the wilderness? Would our Lord have explained so intimate an experience to His (then) uncomprehending Apostles? The same question arises with regard to the Agony in the Garden, during which the Apostles were asleep.*

The whole narrative of our Lord's fast and temptations implies that He was alone during that time. There is nothing to show when He related the facts to His disciples, if indeed He did so at all. It is unlikely that He would have done so immediately afterwards, as they were still too imperfectly acquainted with His Person and mission. Thus it was not till long afterwards that He began to speak to them of His sufferings and death and we know how badly this was received by them. He may have described the temptations to them at the end of His public life or after His Resurrection. Nor should we exclude the possibility of a revelation made later to the Evangelists, though there seems no need to assume this. Personally, I think that the Evangelists may well have learnt it from our Blessed Lady. Our Lord would have told His Mother many intimate secrets because Her's was the only heart then ready to receive them. Later the time came to reveal them to others. Our Lady spent many years in Jerusalem after our Lord's Ascension, inspiring the infant Church by her presence and her words. She must have been in almost daily contact with the Apostles—of whom, two, were Evangelists, Matthew and John. During this time too she would have been well acquainted with Mark, and later with Luke. This would also explain the account of the Agony in the Garden. But is it necessary to assume that Peter, James and John were asleep the whole time? Indeed in view of the fact that they were trying to keep awake, it seems likely that they saw and heard a good deal of what went on. Moreover, the other Apostles were at the gate and would also have seen something, e.g., the Angel comforting Him.

R. C. FULLER.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*A Short Life of Our Lord.* By Patrick J. Crean, Ph.D. *Scripture Text Books for Catholic Schools*, II. Pp. 328. Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1946. Price 4s. 6d.

This book is intended for boys and girls of eleven years of age and upwards. There is first a short introduction explaining the political and religious background. The life of our Lord then follows, divided into ninety-one sections beginning with the Incarnation and finishing with the Ascension. References to the corresponding passages in the Gospels are given at the head of each section. Finally there is an appendix on the Temple, illustrated by a sketch and plan, both well done and very helpful in aiding the young reader to obtain a clear picture of the various buildings which stood in the vast enclosure. Two good coloured maps of Palestine, another of the Sea of Galilee, and a plan of Jerusalem with the mount of Olives and Bethany add greatly to the usefulness of the book. There are also some well chosen photographs of different parts of the Holy Land.

Dr. Crean has produced a book that is simple in style and at the same time very readable—one moreover, which will continue to be read by its possessors in later years. A very attractive feature of the book is the extensive explanation of historical and topographical details, the significance of which would not otherwise be grasped.

N. J. KELLY.

*A Study of the Gospels.* By the Rev. Thomas E. Bird, D.D., Ph.D. *Scripture Text Books for Catholic Schools*, V. Pp. xiv, 270. Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1946. Price 4s. 6d.

Dr. Bird gives us first an introduction of forty-four pages dealing with such questions as "The Gospels," "The Holy Land," "Religious Bodies," and the remaining space of over two hundred pages is devoted to a life of our Lord. There are fourteen photographs of the Holy Land and two maps. (Must Capernaum be spelt "Capernaum"?) At the end a select bibliography is added.

The volume is intended for somewhat older readers than those of the book reviewed above, say from thirteen upwards—but it may be doubted whether more space might not have been given to a study of the Gospels as such rather than another life of Our Lord. This, however, is by the way. In general, the style is clear and easy to follow. The introductory articles are concise and give a fairly comprehensive idea of their subjects. Chapter 4 gives a good summary of political conditions, but there appear to be two slips on page 30. It is asserted (line one) that all babies under two years were killed. This should read "all male infants." A few lines farther down Archelaus is called "king" of

Judaea. He was, of course, denied the title of "king" by Augustus, but no doubt most people would give him the title which his father had borne before him, instead of using his official name of "Ethnarch," just as they spoke of "king" Herod Antipas. Chapter 5 "Religious Bodies" is concise though in giving an account of the origin of the Pharisees one feels that accuracy has been somewhat sacrificed for the sake of brevity. One may question whether Dr. Bird is correct (chapter 9) in asserting that those who hold both genealogies to be of St. Joseph explain the differences by means of the levirate law. This may have been so once, but it has long been known to be inadequate as a full explanation, and nevertheless the majority of authors still hold that Luke gives St. Joseph's descent. In the narrative of Our Lord's Life ample space is given, we are glad to see, to His Teaching, which is set out in clear and simple language. Very few Catholics would be found to support the view expressed in a note on page 110 that the supper described by St. Luke, chapter 7, is actually the supper at Bethany related in Matthew xxvi and John xii. For this reason, if for no other, the view should surely have been left out of a book intended for children. In the same note Dr. Bird says "There is no exegetical tradition in this matter." He is of course referring to the identity of the sinner, but as he had been speaking also of the identity of the supper, many will take it to refer to that also. It is probably not too much to say that tradition unanimously regards the supper of Luke vii as quite distinct from that of Matthew xxvi and John xii. In fact the only question raised appears to be whether Matthew relates an event different from that of *John*.

The bibliographical notes at the end will be specially useful to teachers using the book and also to those readers who desire to pursue their studies of our Lord's life beyond the scope of the book. Dr. Bird has produced a really useful work—one feels inclined to say the first of its kind—which should for many years be the text-book for the middle and upper forms in schools.

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