PLANNING TOMORROW'S MINISTRY

By MICHAEL IVENS

IT'S GOING to rain tomorrow. A glance at the weather forecast helps us to realize that prediction and planning are very different. The weather forecast tells us what is going to happen; tomorrow's weather falls within the scope of prediction and beyond the scope of our responsible actions. A plan tells us what we intend to do and falls within the scope of our responsible actions. Now the purpose of the Church's ministry is not merely to promulgate and impose a set of beliefs and a moral code; its fundamental and ultimate work is to build a praying community, a community defined by the call *to know* the Father through the Spirit of the One whom he has sent.[1] This 'knowing' is what prayer is all about. Because prayer is the creature's graced response to the creator's self-communication, we have to be cautious about our planning, about what we can do and what we cannot do. No programme of prayer education can simply bring about or arrange the meeting which constitutes the heart of prayer. Planning — what we intend to do — envisages primarily the aids to prayer. Our main concern is to survey the terrain, to remove obstacles, to set up structures, to promote values.

Pluralism

Planning starts from where we are. And to ask how christians pray here and now is immediately to become aware of the far-reaching spiritual pluralism which is one of the most striking and challenging developments of recent years. The most cursory survey of the contemporary scene reveals a variety of clearly demarcated camps, distinctive groups of people rallying to quite distinctive banners. There are those — we may call their spirituality 'personalist' — who see their relationship with God in terms of personal sanctification, the alienation of a fallen world from its God, the ingrained resistances of the human heart which only a long asceticism aided by grace can overcome. Others — we may call them 'secular christians' — give pride of place to the doctrines that integrate the believer into the world, such as the secular implications of the kingdom, man's social nature, his role under

[1] Jn 17, 3.

God to be the maker of his own world and its history. The first see christian commitment to the world as the overflow of a life of prayer which has first to be developed for itself; the second see prayer (probably renamed 'encounter with Christ') as the discovery of the divine in the depth of secular experience. For the first, prayer is essentially private — the images that appeal are those of the closed door, the quiet place, the desert. The secular view emphasizes the prayer dimension of the whole of life. For the personalist, life is a structured rhythm of solitude and commitment; the other, while believing in the occasional need for withdrawal and moments of special intensity, stands lightly to the need for structures; he is exceedingly impatient with what he sees as the arithmetical approach to spirituality. The first is constantly uneasy about touching pitch, the second positively revels in the nitty-gritty of commitment. Here, then, are two quite divergent spiritualities and each in turn is distinct from yet a third contemporary development which may loosely be termed the 'charismatic' — a development not easy to define, but recognizable by its stress on experience and by the lengths it goes to in socializing personal, as opposed to liturgical, prayer.

Lists of categories necessarily over-simplify the complex variety of people, and this one is no exception. It may serve, however, to illustrate the point I want to make. In the past, spiritual pluralism, for all the tensions it could engender, was largely confined to matters of devotional and liturgical minutiae. Today, major lines of cleavage have opened up in areas as fundamental as the christian's relationship to God and world, the nature of prayer and the place and significance of prayer structures. (It is worth noticing, by the way, that these lines of cleavage cut clean across the distinctions we used to make between priestly and religious spirituality on the one hand and lay spirituality on the other.) This pronounced differentiation confronts today's ministry with a double challenge.

First, it gives new urgency to a distinction always implicit in any pastoral theory. This might be put as the difference between a distinctive spirituality and a truncated one. The distinctive element in spirituality comes from the fact that the Church is a body, not a monolith; its members people, not cyphers. As people, they differ from one another in their manner of relating to and experiencing God. The effect of the Spirit is to build an integrated personality, characterized by a particular shape and consistency. Hence, while every christian is called to live the entire gospel according to his own pattern and call, not all will live out its multi-faceted meaning with the same emphasis. Dominant

motifs in one spirituality may well form part of the background of another. Consequently, a very highly diversified pattern of genuine christian commitment must be seen as at least an intrinsic possibility, however disconcerting the idea may appear to some of us. Tomorrow's ministry must envisage at least the possibility that people we have been accustomed to regard as members of homogeneous entitities — parishes, religious communities, students or whatever — will require to be approached with language and ideals so diverse as to appear at first sight irreconcilable.

Nevertheless, the distinctively personal spirituality is one thing, the truncated spirituality another. Where emphasis turns into exclusion and other people's differences cease to provide a constant invitation to growth and openness, integration yields to the stark and dead consistency of the personality that has called a halt to the processes of growing and learning. The first makes for the genuine pluralism that leaves everyone the richer, the second leads to fragmentation and general impoverishment.

This provides no instant solutions to the challenge raised by the particular shape of spiritual pluralism in the contemporary Church. But it may help bring that challenge into focus. If what we have said is true, there can be no question of simply sinking differences; nor does the chemistry exist that would enable us to blend the best of everything into a single universally applicable formula. On the other hand, simply to bow to the existing situation without more ado would be consistent neither with the theological implications of pluralism nor with the facts of human nature. In a pluralist situation, differences need to communicate; they are the lines of communication in the Church's prophetic network. And the all-round receptiveness this imposes is highly exacting. Genuine pluralism can exist only in so far as people learn to take down inner defensive barriers, to receive *all* truth into the matrix of their own spirit-formed individuality, to be exposed to whatever is true, good and noble in the embodied truth of a fellow's christian life.

But there is another problem. So far, I have been concerned with people who know more or less where they stand within the pluralist spectrum — the 'personalist', the 'secular christian', the 'charismatic'. These, almost certainly, are the Church's minority; they are to be found mainly among the more-than-usually fervent, the educated or at least reflective, or in the more exciting places in the Church where inspired or audacious leadership makes things happen. Over against these is the far more numerous group composed of people who want to take their christianity seriously but have no pronounced ideas on where

they fit in the current variety of spiritual attitudes. In the past, these were well catered for. When differences were not so marked as they are today, it was possible to offer a kind of reach-me-down spirituality, not perhaps a perfect fit for all its wearers, but at least a guarantee that no one need perish from exposure. To provide this was the main purpose of the parish, the retreat-house, the catholic school, the chaplaincy; and an older generation will readily recall the general programme —frequent communion, benediction, devotions according to season, membership of approved confraternities and such private observances as morning and night prayers of a rather stereotyped sort, the rosary and visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Within such clothes many grew unreflectively to maturity. Today these clothes have beome threadbare, and many who looked to them for protection find themselves at a loss, even repulsed, as they contemplate the divergent alternatives available in their place. Secular spirituality, in some respects appealing, is likely to go counter to the entire course of their religious education. The resurgence of traditional contemplation (undoubtedly a feature of modern spirituality and one which makes the prophecies of the 'death of God' theology of a decade ago appear strangely antique) comes over as hard indeed to reconcile with the pressures and sheer lack of privacy of most ordinary lives. Most ordinary catholics still cringe when they hear about prayer groups. In short, there is a neglected majority in the Church carried by events away from the common style of the past into dry and empty patches unwatered by any of the mainstreams of the contemporary spiritual revival.

With these problems in mind, we may turn to the question of ministry.

Ministry in a pluralist community

Since ministry arises out of the community, it would be surprising if differences among believers in general were not reflected in the community's leaders — the clergy, the religious, the teachers, the lay leaders. It is painfully clear that the ordinary christian who no longer knows where he stands has his counterpart in the leader who no longer knows what to teach or what sort of structures to establish. One of the saddest symptoms of inanition in the Church is an overwhelming number of priests whose store contains, to all appearances, neither old things nor new: the sacramental maintenance men whose very sacraments represent the uneasy betwixt-and-between of yesterday's conciliar rubrics performed in a spiritual context as near a vacuum as makes no difference. And corresponding to the people who know — perhaps all too clearly — where they do stand, there is the leader we may call the

'campaigner'. He is the man with a 'line', a line which may be mysticism, socio-political commitment or charismatic renewal. Powerfully convinced of the values of his own message, he approaches others with a strong 'a priori' conviction of what is likely to be good for them. He measures his success in terms of converts to his own vision; and while he may acknowledge spiritual pluralism in theory, in practice the possibility that life-situation, temperament, culture and indeed vocation have made other people quite different from himself is a complication he finds hard to reconcile with his sense of mission. He is never very far from intolerance, though at his best his intolerance is of the sort never quite absent in any genuine prophet.

Now, the purely nerveless ministry, too much in evidence at present, needs to yield to a renewed style of ordinary ministry that I want to come to in a moment. The campaigner, on the other hand, is not to be so lightly dismissed. In a pluralist Church, he plays an indispensable role. It is he who represents the essential challenge of pluralism by insisting on the strong and distinctive lineaments that distinguish one spirituality from another. He stands for the element of risk inseparable from genuine commitment, the need to come down on one side of the fence. Even so, where campaigners *dominate,* the trend, inevitably, is towards fragmentation. And if the Church is exposed today — as is very arguably the case — to the divisions engendered by a multiplicity of prophets, the virtual disappearance of an effective ordinary ministry is one of the main causes.

If tomorrow's pluralism is to be genuine, open and conducive to growth, one of the main requisites must be the rehabilitation of what may be termed the general or comprehensive ministry. This will adopt a positive and welcoming attitude towards pluralism. It will demand the sort of leader who can make many viewpoints his own, set up structures and talk languages catering for widely differing people while providing an overall teaching that does justice to the gospel, the heritage of the past and the best insights of the present — whatever their provenance. In his dealing with individuals he will recognize their need to find their own road. Unlike the campaigner, his aim is not so much to show people where they ought to be, as to help them to find out for themselves where God wants them to be. He will be less interested in the distant scene than in helping people to take their next step. If the campaigner recalls the charism of prophecy in the strong sense, the comprehensive ministry recalls the charism of discernment. Where this ministry is firm, competent and widespread, the campaigners can have their effect of arousing people in particular ways.

Where it is weak, the prophets will inevitably increase the fragmentation among the strongly committed the bewilderment among the rest. It is the task of the comprehensive ministry to provide the Church with the elbow-room to ensure that no one is excluded from any major truth, to provide the diversity of structures necessary for divergent spiritualities to flourish, to cater for the overall programme within which particular programmes can develop. It rescues from the paralysis of uncertainty those who find all the prophets equally appealing — or equally alarming.

Only an exhaustive survey could disclose the present state of this comprehensive ministry, of its nature less immediately conspicuous than its complement in the prophetic ministry. My own guess would be that the distance between the ideal and our present parochial and educational reality is one of the most dangerous gaps in the Church today, and that the very value of such a ministry is so under-rated that the training of leaders, particularly in seminaries and religious formation programmes, does not seriously aim to provide either the expertise or the exacting personal discipline it requires. But that is merely to register a malaise. Perhaps a more useful conclusion would be to sketch out — necessarily in a rather summary fashion — the main features of the comprehensive ministry needed for tomorrow's Church.

Ministry in a pluralist community tomorrow

1. *Teaching*

It is accepted without demur today that the ordinary christian should be educated in his religion up to a standard equal to his personal needs and corresponding to the general level of his secular culture. Of the past, it would be fair to say that a reasonable attempt was made to bring this about in two areas. We were taught what to believe and we were taught what to do — every catholic received a suitably scaled-down course in dogmatic and moral theology. Not so in the intimate area of the life of prayer, where little was taught beyond a general recommendation to 'say our prayers' and follow the devotions made available to us. Tomorrow's spiritual leadership will need to have rather more than that to say about the life of prayer. In the matter of teaching about prayer, two points may be singled out.

First we need a language in which to help people to develop and relate the basic secular insight about encounter with God in everyday life, and the basic personalist insight into the need, however various the implications in personal terms, for the prayer rhythm of life, the alternation of the market-place and the room with the closed door. If the

inter-relationship of these insights is to appear, the secular implications of such biblical themes as the kingdom, creation and community, as set forth in *Gaudium et Spes,* must be taken seriously as an integral part of the Church's message to every man; and they must be set forth not merely as sublime abstractions but as a framework within which the ordinary christian is enabled to interpret the most mundane and pedestrian elements of his existence — family, relationships, work, leisure — as the places where the claims of God's word are addressed to him. Prayer as an activity in itself will then be seen not as time salvaged for God from the secular swamp of everyday concerns, nor as a corrective to the 'dangers of the world', but in terms of the interplay of different but complementary aspects of an all-embracing lived relationship with God.[2]

[2] Those familiar with the spiritual literature of the past will be aware how deeply traditional is the theme of harmony between prayer and action — or to put it more accurately, between two modes of prayer: the prayer at all times, and the prayer *clausis ostiis.* One thinks of de Caussade's masterpiece *Self Abandonment to Divine Providence* and the writings, in the same tradition, of Pierre Charles or Raoul Plus. Nevertheless, the circumstances of the ordinary christian life today highlight a problem, aggravated by modern life, but probably subliminally present in the past as well. The problem is two-fold. First, for most people, the 'secular' or the 'everyday' is material, earthbound, trite, uninspiring and unspiritual to a degree that finds little echo in spiritual literature, even when it deals with the 'sanctification of everyday things'. Second, ordinary life lacks — and has probably always lacked — the privacy and leisure that the entire tradition of 'prayer apart' seems to presuppose. Both problems, which are inter-related, have been fairly consistently masked by an unchallenged convention that serious spiritual literature should address itself to a limited range of lay situations: situations which either bear some resemblance to the sort of sheltered routine familiar to a religious, or situations containing inherent possibilities of privacy. The exponents of prayer at all times are noticeably more at home with the routine of the housewife than that, say, of the factory-worker. It is painfully clear that the bulk of serious lay spirituality tacitly addresses itself to the upper class. A well known little book, published in the fifties, on *Prayer while you work,* contains a chapter entitled 'prayer before dismissing a servant'. It does not require much familiarity with published spiritual correspondence to know how much of it is addressed to ladies of leisure. The tacit convention continues to our own day. Sister Jeanne d'Arc's splendid book *The Listening Heart* recommends its readers to convert one of the rooms in their house into an oratory. To go back to the justly famous *Devout Life* of Francis de Sales, readers of this classic may recall a passage in the opening pages extolling 'devotion' as a quality that flourishes equally well in the law-court, the workshop or the barracks. The life-style commended to Philothea in the subsequent pages contains little hint on what the gentleman saint might have had to say about devotion in either the workshop or the barrack-room. Doubtless there are significant exceptions. Browsing some years ago among the back numbers of the *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique,* I lighted upon a treatise on the spiritual life for sailors, written with gritty realism by a seventeenth-century jesuit naval chaplain. Better informed readers than I will be able to cite other examples. Nevertheless, it remains true that it falls to our own time to have attempted a serious, extended and widespread confrontation with the problem. It is in this context that the development of the prayer-group assumes immense practical significance. A new type of prayer book, of a genre pioneered in the late fifties by Michel Quoist, and a new realism in approaching the prayer at all times, as exemplified in Douglas Rhymes' *Prayer in the Secular City,* may be cited as particularly encouraging signs of progress in what the ordinary minister of the future will have to consider one of his main tasks.

Second, we shall have to banish without reprieve the attitude which, in practice if not in theory, regarded the whole subject of prayer and spiritual experience as virtually a *disciplina arcani*, material so sensitive and dangerous as to be communicated only by the exceptionally qualified to the exceptionally gifted. This is not a plea for the general issue of a crash-course in *ascetica et mystica*, but for the recognition that ordinary christians are not strangers to spiritual experience and should not therefore be left completely in the dark on such matters as growth in prayer, the varieties of prayer and the more common levels and fluctuations of religious experience. The inclusion of these matters in an ordinary teaching programme is the more necessary today because of current pre-occupations with experience (greatly accelerated by charismatic renewal), and the prevalence of highly simplistic interpretations of it. Since the sum total of popular catholic teaching on religious experience has hardly exceeded the rightly abandoned tenet that 'feelings don't count', it is hardly surprising that members of charismatic renewal, followers of the Jesus Movement and the growing numbers of catholics in contact with the evangelical Churches, should have, and pose, some problems.

2. *Structures*

The structures of the worshipping community of the future will need to be such as to cater for the needs both of learning and praying. Learning structures will include courses, week-end workshops, parish-sponsored talks and discussions; but we shall need in addition many small and informal groups. To put into effect the sort of learning considered above, learning to interpret one's life in the light of the word of God, will require small and homogeneous groups, based on a common type of life experience. In practice, such groups may also be prayer groups, the same people meeting sometimes for prayer, sometimes for discussion, study or the pooling of experience.

To turn to worship structures. The main one will be the eucharistic liturgy, and a fundamental role of the Church's ordinary leadership will be the provision of the large, general liturgy for the parish, student or local community. This should create the situation for the worshipper to encounter God; it should arouse his affectivity, lead him to a desire for prayer at other times and show him that God is incarnate in the everyday realities he brings to the altar. The general liturgy also expresses the community's aspirations to diversity in unity, their conviction of the paramount need for christians, however widely divided theologically and spiritually, to be able to worship and share the Lord's body together. Hence the larger liturgies will always represent a

compromise between the various styles that individuals would find best suited to their own spirituality.

But other structures, both liturgical and para-liturgical, will be equally necessary. A comprehensive, open leadership will not stand lightly to the place of older devotional structures,[3] which may well follow their own line of development *pari-passu* with more recent developments, like the all-night vigil, the prayer-groups, the informal house or group liturgy. Among these structures, two call particularly for attention: the informal liturgy and the prayer-group.

While no one denies that the eucharistic celebration admits of degrees of formality (on the most conservative view conceivable, a children's Mass and a Mass for the consecration of a bishop are as different as a birthday party from a Lord Mayor's banquet), the word 'informal' in the present context is intended in a sense as yet unacceptable to the majority of bishops, priests and — probably — people. The people must remain entitled to their preferences. The minister of the future, though he too will retain his personal tastes, will need a highly developed sense that as president of a eucharistic celebration he is there for and with the particular people gathered in the Lord's presence. He will need to feel as much at ease with vestments as without; standing, seated at a table or squatting on the floor; consecrating paper-thin wafers or as lice of Hovis; praying in a set form of the eucharistic prayer or one produced by the group itself. This is not to call in question the sacramental 'validity' of any Mass, however inappropriately celebrated; merely to insist that a sign is not a sign in any meaningful sense unless it signifies something to particular people, and that only when the ordinary minister of the eucharist becomes capable of passing effortlessly and without anxiety from one band to another of an immensely wide liturgical spectrum, will the old adage 'It's the Mass that matters' come fully to life, in every sector of a pluralist Church.[4]

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[3] A plea for such practices as benediction, stations of the cross, and visits to the blessed sacrament by a 'progressive' theologian is to be found in J. Macquarrie's *Paths in Spirituality*.

[4] I realize that a complete justification of this paragraph would require an article in itself. Such an article would need to explore the development of liturgy as a 'growth from below'. It is relevant to notice, however, that even within the conservative bastion of english catholicism, each of the details I cite is perfectly familiar in circles which would not be considered revolutionary, nor even particularly 'progressive', such as women's religious communities. The specification is important, since women's communities are a milieu where such matters as liturgical procedure tend instinctively to be appraised by religious, as opposed to legal, criteria. For the average middle-aged priest the fundamental question is: does this fit the regulations? For the average middle-aged sister, the fundamental question is: does this help me to find the Lord?

A word on the prayer-group. Only the more perfervid prayer-group 'campaigner' will deny that, at least for the moment, the prayer-group does not suit every temperament, background, stage of spiritual growth or prayer pattern. Not only today but in the foreseeable future, we need to make sure that no one should feel censured for not participating in group prayer. Nevertheless the prayer-group has an important affinity to the style of worship favoured by the apostolic Church. It is an invaluable school of prayer.[5] Further, it provides one of the most effective answers to the pressures and lack of privacy that make protracted personal prayer so difficult for today's diaspora christian. The aim of the ordinary ministry of tomorrow should be to bring about a situation where anyone who finds it helpful to pray in a group should be able to do so; as soon as possible we should have a state of affairs where it will be as easy for the ordinary christian to go to a prayer-group as it used to be for him to go to Benediction. But this can only happen if it is accepted that the prayer-group itself admits of a wide variety of forms, some more structured than others, some with built-in restrictions that would be inhibiting and out of place in others. And while the ordinary minister of the future will need to encourage every type of group, he will discourage the tendency, current in some circles today, to equiparate different styles of group prayer with degrees of openness to the holy Spirit. This, in turn, implies a certain attitude towards charismatic renewal. A substantial case can be made for regarding charismatic renewal as one of the most momentous developments of the post-conciliar Church, and we may soon be in a position where the ordinary priest with nothing to say to it and no willingness to learn from it will have to be deemed incompetent for his ministry to a praying Church. For if ever there was a group with claims upon the sympathy, wisdom, expertise and humility of every minister of the gospel, charismatic renewal is such a group. Nevertheless the point made above still holds. The wider reach of group prayer and the full range of its potential for the community as a whole would remain unexploited should it ever happen that the parochial clergy as a body were to succumb completely to the charismatic spell, limiting their notions of group prayer to the confines of a movement, which, however significant, is not — *pace* the view of some of its adherents — co-terminous with the contemplative element in the Church.

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[5] This assertion is expanded and qualified in my article, 'The dimensions of group-prayer', *Supplement to the Way* 16 (Summer 1972), pp 67 ff.

3. *Direction*

Teaching and structures, even if those structures consist in small groups, are not however enough in themselves. Hence a third function of the ordinary ministry to which we shall need to give increasing attention is personal direction.[6] If it was once possible for fairly uncomplicated people to get by without ever talking about themselves on a one-to-one basis with a director, our own pluralist situation creates a new range of possible hang-ups that makes the lack of personal direction an obstacle to the development of the harmoniously diversified Church we should be working towards. If the individual believer in a pluralist Church is exposed to challenges he will do well to heed, he may equally incur the risks attendant in over-exposure to variety. He may need to open up or he may need, just for the moment, to close up. A prophet — whether in the shape of an author, retreat-conductor, lecturer, preacher or friend — may leave him aroused and revitalized or dampened and discouraged; and prophets, no less than speakers in tongues, need interpreters. People out of joint with their community or group may need to be encouraged to hold firm or gently helped to unbend. Instances could be multiplied almost indefinitely of

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[6] The infelicitous term 'direction' is used in the absence of a satisfactory available alternative. In the realm of spiritual direction, the last decade or so has witnessed an interesting dialectic. In the late 'fifties, spiritual directors were still thought of as operating exclusively at highly rarefied altitudes. To have a spiritual director was therefore regarded as the mark either of a chosen soul or of the religious equivalent of the social climber. The vogue in the 'sixties for 'pastoral counselling' represents a genuine development combined with over-reaction. The spate of literature on pastoral counselling, with the attitutudes it engendered in clergy enlightened enough to read it, had the important effect of breaking down the near-impermeable bulkheads between the spiritual and the natural, the problems of pneuma and those of psyche. The priest, while laying no claims to be a psychotherapist, began to be seen as a person who might possess professional competence to help people in their relational problems as well as their prayer problems. He began to learn that the human being is an extremely complex bundle of spirit, psyche and nerves, and that in his relationships with the individual he must oscillate between these different levels, never leaving any out of account and placing the emphasis where the need or situation of the moment required. But this brought its own dangers. Reaction against the one-sidedness of the past, combined with the secular tone of much spiritual writing at the time, produced a situation where many priests were happier to see themselves simply as counsellors rather than bearers of the quite distinctive charism of discernment, as ministers of a wisdom not of the world. Recent years have witnessed a further development, stimulated by the vogue of directed retreats and current interest in discernment. After a period of oblivion, the distinctiveness of spiritual direction is re-emerging, purified — hopefully — of its old unworldliness and innocence of psychology.

situations calling for treatment in a one-to-one relationship, part common search, part guidance, with as little *parti pris* as is humanly possible on the side of the director. Here in an age of heightened charismatic consciousness is a certainly under-rated charism, but one which we may hope to see flourish in the renewal of the Church's ministry.

SUPPLEMENTS TO THE WAY 1975

Ignatius Loyola constructed his *Spiritual Exercises* to enable the committed christian so to regulate his life that all his decisions would be made in the consciousness of the freedom of the children of God. The english jesuits at their Conference on the *Spiritual Exercises*, in January 1975, will be discussing *Christian choice and decision in the modern Church and world.*

The **Spring Supplement** will publish all the papers read at this Conference, which will include the following: *The First Week of the Exercises and the formation of the Christian Conscience* (Gerard W. Hughes S.J.); *The problems of Ignatian indifference* (William Uren S.J.); *Psychological problems in Christian vocation-decision* (Laurence Murphy S.J.); *Ignatius Loyola and decision-making* (Nicholas King S.J.); *Preparing for choice* (James Walsh S.J.); *Affectivity and conscience in Christian choice* (Clarence Gallagher S.J.). Other topics to be treated are *Communal discernment, Prophecy versus Structure*, the *Role of the Spirit versus individual freedom.*

In April 1975, the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary is holding its third International Conference on *The place of the Mother of the Saviour in the Divine Plan of Salvation.* The opening paper, *Predestination and Mary*, is to be given by the Rev. Alastair Heron, of the Dept. of Christian Dogmatics, Edinburgh University. The Rev. John MacQuarrie (Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Oxford University) will speak on *The Divine and Feminine.* Other papers will include *True devotion to the Blessed Virgin* (Rev. John McHugh, of Ushaw College, Durham); *The grace of Christ in Mary* (Rev. E. J. Yarnold S.J.); *The theme of Eve and Mary in Christian thought* (Rev. J. A. R. McKenzie, of Union Theological Seminary, Virginia); *Born of the Virgin Mary* (Bishop Alan Clark, President of the Roman Catholic Ecumenical Commission of England and Wales); *The impact of Our Lady on the human personality of Christ* (Dr J. Dominian); *Mary in the Lucan infancy narrative* (Dr Marie E. Isaacs, of Heythrop College, London University). Our **Summer Supplement** will publish the proceedings of this Conference.

For our **Autumn Supplement 1975,** we shall be returning to the theme of *Supplement* 22 — *Religious Education.* Details will be announced later.