of Our Lady of Lourdes was of the Immaculate Conception. It was accompanied by several miraculous sensations, all of which were carefully investigated later. On one occasion, a miraculous spring of water was revealed to her; on another, she was commanded to build a church at a specified spot. These phenomena are part of the mediæval piety which had been made popular again during the early years of the nineteenth century. The experiences of this peasant girl matched the popular piety of the day encouraged by such eminent figures as F. W. Faber* in England and Mgr Gaston de Séguir in France. The vision itself of the Immaculate Conception was also consonant with the popular demands which had led to a proclamation by Pius IX in 1854. The piety of the period was concentrated upon Christ and his mother, but soon became widely popular in relation to Mary, almost to the extent of Mariolatry.

Bernadette was herself part of this, but in a quiet modest sense. Her visions roused popular enquiry and she suffered much from constant questioning and publicity. To escape from this and develop her own spiritual life she joined the Sisters of Notre Dame at Nevers, and remained there until her death in 1879. She was beatified in 1925 by Pius XI and canonized in 1933. Her feast day in France is 18 February, but this is not part of the universal calendar; in some parts of the world it is observed on 16 April.

The new devotional trends of the mid-nineteenth century of which Bernadette was a part were related to the advance of Ultramontanism, but the pietistic expression of these trends was unfortunate. Its good intentions were no protection against mediocrity and bad taste, as can be judged by its many artless hymns and insipid devotional writings. It drew too much of its inspiration from suspect sources, e.g. legends of the saints, whose critics tended to be taxed with rationalism. The accent was too often on Christianity, verging on Deism, which had grown up in the eighteenth century. The stress on regular confession, the exhortation to more frequent communion, the attention given to the essentially sacramental character of Catholicism, the intense concentration on the Infant Jesus in the manger or on the Sacred Heart, all focused attention on the reality at the centre of devotion. It was the rediscovery of Christ which led to a renewal of devotion to his Mother.

Bernadette was the most famous of those who saw visions of Mary, but not the first. Almost all the apparitions were in France. They were apparitions which gave further impetus to the mounting tide of Marian devotion among the mass of clergy. The apparitions to Catherine Labouré (1830) began what has been called 'the epic of the miracle-working madonna'. Bernadette had started what became the miracle cures of Lourdes. The Roman Catholic Church had since tried to get both into perspective and control the excessive expectations and claims.

André Ravier, Bernadette, 1981. EDWIN ROBERTSON

Bernard of Clairvaux, St

Bernard of Clairvaux was the most versatile and widely influential leader in the early Cistercian movement. Bernard (1090–1153) was also a prolific writer on contemplation and the soul's pilgrimage. The core of his doctrine can be found in some of the shorter works like the treatise Dei dilegendo Deo (On Loving God) or de considerazione (On Consideration—or perhaps better, On Meditation); but it is stated at its fullest in the sermons on the Song of Songs, a magnificent sustained commentary on a book already ruminated by Origen* and Gregory of Nyssa as an allegory of the spiritual life. Although Augustine* and Gregory the Great* are clearly important influences on his thinking and terminology, he also had some acquaintance with Origen and other Eastern Fathers—perhaps in the first hand: there is good evidence that the library of the abbey of Clairvaux in Bernard's lifetime contained translations of a surprising number of Greek writers. However, although he probably knew some of the writings of Denys the Areopagite*, there is no real trace of indebtedness to the Corpus Areopagiticum. Thus the title 'Last of the Fathers', often applied to Bernard, is intelligible enough. He stands at the end of a long tradition which saw reason and faith as fused together in a single intuitive loving act. To be 'reasonable' was to activate (or allow to be activated) oneself in the image of God, that capacity for conformation to the divine archetype, the eternal Word and Wisdom, which is alone truly rational. Hence Bernard's sharp hostility towards Abelard, who seemed to be reducing reason to dialectical technique and faith to 'judgment', estimaatio (see the pamphlet Against Some Errors of Abelard).

So in common with most of his predecessors, Eastern and Western, Bernard thinks of Christian discipleship and Christian prayer as beginning with self-knowledge—which is the knowledge both of the divine image and of one's own empirical distance from the realization of this image. This is humility; but on its own, it is 'cold' humility, not of itself saving or transforming. It must be kindled into warmth and love by the playing to us of the divine compassion in Jesus (Sermon XXII on the Song of Songs). God humbly and lovingly gives himself into our hands, and so shows us and creates in us the manner of his free and thankful self-surrender, to God and to each other (this is the key to the meaning of obedience in the monastic life). In this way, fear yields to love, winter to summer (Sermon LVII.2, on the Song of Songs, de dilet. III.8, Letter 109, etc.).

And compassion in turn leads to the loving, longing contemplation of God for his own sake. The more we discover of him, the more we find remains to be discovered; so that we never become absorbed into God, united with his nature, but are united with his loving will. This is what 'dedication' means (de dilet. X.27): we are restored to our nature as God's image when we mirror the love of Father and Son—when we will and grace reflect that eternal and natural harmony. As for Greek writers like Maximus the Confessor, the process is seen as the temporal analogue of an eternal fact; we attain or grow into what God the Son eternally and unchangeably is. And this, incidentally, should remind us that, although Bernard is often credited with encouraging and intensifying devotion to the humanity of Jesus, it is always the eternal Sonship of Jesus which is the focus of his theology of transcendence.

It should be noted, too, that Bernard, like Gregory the Great (and like several of his own Cistercian contemporaries such as William of St Thierry*), avoids any facile disjunction between contemplation and action. The fruit of contemplation is always properly the nourishment of the entire church (e.g. Sermon IX on the Song of Songs); and the fruit of loving and compassionate action, the sharing of gifts given, is properly an increased longing for and openness to the graces of contemplation (e.g. Sermon VII on the Song of Songs). The contemplative life is—and can only be—a life in and for the sake of the church.

Various works in the Cistercian Fathers series; B. Scott James (tr), The Letters of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, 1953; E. Gilson, The Mystical Theology of Saint Bernard, 1946; Benedicta Ward (ed), The Influence of Saint Bernard (esp. articles by A. Louth and M. Smith), 1976.

ROAN WILLIAMS

Bérulle, Pierre de

Pierre de Bérulle (1575–1629), diplomatist, reformer of the clergy, a cardinal, was the founder of the 'French school' of spirituality. Born of an old family, he was educated by the Jesuits* and at the Sorbonne. After 1594 he came under the influence of Madame Acarie's circle, which included Benet of Canfield and Dom Beaucouzé. The latter became his spiritual director and encouraged him to publish his first work, the Brief Discours de l'abnégation intérieure (1597). In 1599 Bérulle was ordained to the priesthood and in 1601 was appointed Royal Almoner. Zealous for reform, he established the Spanish Carmelites in Paris in 1604. His main work, however, was the founding of the French Oratory in 1611 on the model of the Oratory of St Philip Neri* with the chief difference that the French fathers devoted themselves to controversy and education. The most important writings of Bérulle's maturity are the Discours des Grandes de Jésus (1623), les Élévations sur l'Incarnation (1625), and les Élévations sur Sainte Madeleine (1627). In 1627 Bérulle was awarded a red hat for his diplomatic work. But in 1629 he was disgraced for opposing Richelieu's foreign policy and died later in the same year.

Drawing eclectically on the Greek Fathers, the Flemish mystics and contemporary Jesuits, Bérulle evolved a powerful christocentric spirituality of adoration.
Cyprian of Carthage, St

Cyprian's sanctity is shown by the completeness of his conversion in middle life when he was a wealthy lawyer at Carthage, his wisdom as bishop in dealing with the disciplinary problems arising from the Imperial persecutions, his courageous leadership during the plague, and his martyrdom or 'Coronation' in 258. The evidence is contained in his fifty-nine letters, six synodal directives, his tracts Concerning the Lapsed, On the Unity of the Church, On the Lord's Prayer, and in the eye-witness account of his martyrdom. Cyprian was twenty years a Christian and ten years a bishop.

At his baptism he gave his money to the poor and his estates to public uses.

In the Decian persecution (249) Cyprian was persuaded to sustain his church from a place of concealment. Some Christians stood firm, suffering death, mutilation, imprisonment or forced labour. Others lapsed by sacrificing to Caesar or surrendering the scriptures. The problem of the lapsed became acute when certain Confessors claimed the right to issue certificates reuniting apostates to the eucharist. Cyprian insisted that reconciliation await the return of peace; then each case would be considered by the bishop in council. To act prematurely was to ensure disorder, desecrate the sacrament and dishonour the bishop. Meanwhile Cyprian was willing to permit penitents to be communicated in articulo mortis. The strength of his judgment rests on the seriousness of apostasy, the need for public repentation, and the danger of schism in arrogant self-righteousness. 'He cannot have God for His Father who does not have the church for his Mother' (On the Unity, 6).

Persecution temporarily ceased with the death of Decius and the outbreak of the plague. Cyprian called Christians 'to act as a worthy of their birthright' and himself led a noble work of relief. His exposition of the Lord's Prayer dates from this time. It owes something to Tertullian*. Our Father is the corporate prayer of the church; 'since we are God's children let our deeds be consonant with our words'. We ask that God's Name may be hallowed and his Kingdom come within us; for where else does he not reign? 'Thy will be done' means both done and borne - we ask that we may prefer nothing to Christ, who preferred nothing to us. We pray for bread and for forgiveness, the primary needs of body and soul. 'Do not extend your prayer beyond necessity.' The last petitions, for deliverance from temptation and from the power of the Evil One, are all we need to make when we are too tired or too ill to pray more; so Augustine tells Cyprian to say the letters on the eucharist (63) and baptism (73) are of the same period. 'The sacrifice we offer is the passion of love... The infant is not to be debarred from grace: he has no way sinned except that being born in Adam after the flesh he contracted the contagion of the ancient death.' Cyprian denied the validity of baptism by heretics, but African rigorism yielded to the Roman view; the unorthodoxy of the minister does not hinder the efficacy of the sacrament.

The Valerian persecution (257) sought to destroy the church by destroying its leaders. Cyprian was decapitated on 14 September 258. He chose to die among his own people, avoiding apprehension whilst the Proconsul was absent from Carthage. 'God asks not for our blood but for our faith.' Martyrdom itself is no proof of sanctity. He had received the certainty of his own 'coronation' a year previously. Among his last written words were these to Fortunatus: 'If God's soldier... is called away without attaining martyrdom, the faith which is ready to welcome it will not lose its reward. The crown is given for field-service in time of persecution. If time of peace it is given to him who is certain of God's word.' On the scaffold Cyprian did not give the inspired word that the people expected. His serenity was his own message.

Augustine's deep veneration for Cyprian appears at the end of De Baptismo. The radiance of Christian charity everywhere gleams forth in this man.'

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Dance

Dance as a form of religious devotion has been and is universal both in time and space. Evidence for it in prehistory is provided by cave paintings; it was a normal feature of Egyptian and of Classical Greek religion; it was central to Shaker practices; it has never ceased to be a part of Hindu worship and at the present day it is found throughout the world: in Africa, Australia and North America; in Israel, where Jews dance with the Torah; in Spain, where choristers dance before the high altar at mass. To the dancer, it is not a diversion but a making visible of the invisible movement of the spirit - no Pueblo Indian, to take one example among many, would ever dance without an intense preparation through fasting and prayer.

The attitude of Christianity in the past has been complex. No one could forget the many examples recorded in the OT, with pride of place given to David grating before the ark - an action that was a solemn ritual and not a mere gambolling for joy (II Sam. 6:14). The Psalms in particular treat dance as a normal part of worship (149:3). The Fathers, however, under the later Roman Empire when dancing had degenerated to a lascivious spectacle, were by no means enthusiastic. Influenced too by Neoplatonism and its tendency to exalt the soul above the body, many of them sought to discourage the practice, but they were unable to suppress it. Throughout the Middle Ages, and indeed up to the nineteenth century, churches and cathedrals gave it regular space.

In the twentieth century dance is becoming more and more recognized as a means not simply of recreation but of spirituality, it being understood as a religious exercise whereby the interior homagage rendered to God may be externalized. Without doubt dance can express praise, supplication, spiritual joy; it can become a prayer, articulated not by words but by the movements of a person's whole body. Since worship is not only the offering to God of ourselves as bodies (Rom. 12:1), but also of the best we are capable of, the gift of dance, in equality with other creative talents, such as music, painting, architecture, may become an obligation.

Within a congregational setting dance can be not only a part of the liturgy, in the sense that it itself constitutes a form of worship, but it can also take the form of a dance-drama to explore and present the meaning, for example, of parables or OT stories. This is to draw attention to the mimetic aspect of dance, which may take balletic form, but modern or free dance is equally appropriate. It is particularly so when what is envisaged includes both a living being, not static but dynamic, and the one who according to Jewish eschatology will himself, when the kingdom comes in its fullness, lead his people in a triumphant dance.


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Dark Night, Darkness

'God is light and in him is no darkness at all' (I John 1:5). Texts such as this have made some Christian writers hesistant about speaking of the ascent to God in contemplation as an advance into darkness. Yet, from Philo onwards, the Judeo-Christian contemplative tradition had come to look on the story of Moses' ascent of Mount Sinai as an image of the maturing soul; and Moses, in Ex. 19 and 20, goes into cloud and darkness to meet God.

'Darkness' (gnosphos, as opposed to skotia or skotos, which usually has very negative connotations) serves as a metaphor both for the unfathomable transcendence of God and for the blindness of the soul confronting God - though it is a mistake to look for absolutely clear and watertight distinctions between the two. Some writers see gnosphos as culpable ignorance, spiritual obstinacy or immaturity; others see it as the unavoidable condition of the understanding while still in the shadow of the body (Oriigen's image); and others again as a kind of liberation from the obstruction of images and ideas.

This last interpretation is characteristic of Gregory of Nisibis, who is the first to combine the 'cloud' of Exodus with the 'night' of the Song of Songs*, the darkness in which love is consummated. As we learn that the divine nature is not to be held or grasped, eludes all definition, we learn that to know

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* Song of Songs also known as the Song of Solomon.
Dark Night, Darkness

God is a matter of longing, love and active discipleship, not a possession of the mind alone. The darkness of our experience of God is a revelation of his inexhaustibility, and so it stirs the growth of endless yearning, self-transcendence. Thus from initial light - the illumination of conversion - we move into a 'luminous darkness', as we become increasingly free of attachment to created objects and goals, material or mental.

But it is Denys the Areopagite * who gives fullest expression to the idea that darkness is itself both the condition and the quality of true knowledge of God. Dionysius does not bother to distinguish graphos and skotos, and can speak, in a famous passage in the Mystical Theology, of God sending out a 'ray of darkness', with which the self-forgetting self is united. Beyond both affirmative and negative language concerning God lies the 'darkness' of an encounter with what cannot be named or imaged, in the ecstasy of self-transcendence where we meet the self-transcending, 'ecstatic' love of God. As Vladimir Lossky noted, Denys's language unites the notions of God's self-communication, as light, and his essential unimageability and inexpressibility, as darkness. The paradox affirms that Christian speech is incurably dialectical. No attempt to resolve it even by supposing that there is both a communicable and an incommunicable 'part' of God will do. The illumination is itself a revelation of the dimensions of inconclusiveness, challenge and questioning in all talking about what we refer to as God.

In the Christian East, the imagery of light more and more dominated the mystical writing of the Byzantine period; but in the West, the later Middle Ages saw a striking retrieval of the Dionysian language of 'divine darkness'. Both Tauler * and Ruysbroeck * speak of the 'night' of contemplation, and the English Cloud of Unknowing * develops the picture of the soul suspended in the dark cloud: below is the cloud of forgetting, the veil which hides created concerns and lesser loves; above, the cloud of unknowing, the darkness of God which can be passed through only by the 'dari of longing love' answering the obscure ray of grace which kindles it like a 'sparkle from the coal'.

But Tauler and Ruysbroeck, more than any earlier writers, stress also that the darkness in question is not only a blockage to knowing; it is, equally importantly, a blockage to feeling. The 'night' is thus also an experience of emotional or 'affective' aridity - an image almost interchangeable with 'desert'. Thus Tauler, in a Passionite sermon, speaks of the 'incomprehensible dark desert': a picture of the self (or the desert as way or mode, for it is above all mode) and of the 'hidden darkness' of the modeless God. Darkness and desert alike stand for the contemplative's experience of basic disorientation, which appears at first as a total undermining of the self's reality and value.

The clearest systematization comes in John of the Cross * . Taking (like Gregory of Nyssa) the nocturnal imagery of the Song of Songs as his starting point, he divides the night into three parts. There is the growing obscurity of the 'night of sense', in which the self concentrates its desire on God alone rather than any external ends. But the darkest part of the night is the 'night of spirit' (what is usually called the Dark Night of the Soul) in which the self is stripped even of any remaining spiritual gratifications and of every consoling image of itself. Only beyond this does the dawn of illumination break into final union.

These are not conceived as straightforwardly successive stages. They overlap and interact a good deal, and both 'night' have active and passive aspects (struggle and receptivity together). John can use the language of 'annihilation' to describe what is happening in the night of spirit, yet it should be remembered that he consistently pre-supposes throughout the reality of a freely consenting human will. The final stage of the self's utter transparency to grace is not a merging into a kind of cosmic consciousness. Thomas Merton * compares the process to the Zen enlightenment, a simple wholeness of response, attained by the 'dark night' of a systematic breaking down of the picture of the self外界 as detached and omnipotent problem-solver. There are valid parallels here, though John is far readier to see the 'night' as something forced on us, not by a spiritual master according to technique, but simply by a combination of outer circumstances, an inner honesty about the necessary formlessness of our experience of God, and a consequent suspicion of intellectual or spiritual satisfaction, of ideas as feelings suggesting achievement and finality.

The sense of dereliction involved in the night of spirit (John refers here to Jesus' cry from the cross) is sensitively explored by later writers, notably Augustine Baker * in the seventeenth century and J.-P. de Causse * in the eighteenth. The positive interpretation of these negative experiences was one of the issues in the heated debate between the Wesleyes * and William Law, though John Wesley in old age was to come round to something much closer to John of the Cross's view. Among twentieth-century writers, Abbot John Chapman is perhaps the best interpreter of this theme; though it has also become immensely important in some modern religious poetry - Eliot's * , Four Quartets, the latter R. S. Thomas, Geoffrey Hill.


ROWAN WILLIAMS

Death of God

Theological use of the phrase stems from the publication in 1961 of Gabriel Vahanian's book entitled The Death of God. Although Vahanian was not advocating Nietzsche's position, there was an appropriateness about the metaphor, since Vahanian was writing at a time when Christianity was being challenged by modernity and post-war America. In the fashionable religiosity of the time he saw true religion to be the first casualty. In this Vahanian was discarding the 'hard' line of Nietzsche for the 'soft' use of the phrase which would find its way into the early Barth's rejection of the God who was used to justify capitalism and war. It is time, Barth claimed, 'to declare ourselves thorough-going doubters, sceptics, scoffers and atheists in regard to him . . . He is dead.' In the flood of books, articles, lectures and sermons of the 1960s dealing with the 'death of God' it was normal to adopt this 'soft' use, to declare death a false conception of God or a false attitude towards God.

The 'death of God' theology would not have had the impact which it did on the basis of this 'soft' use. The pace was set by three theologians who were unwilling to accept the original 'hard' sense. Their positions were completely different from one another but they all seemed to begin from the same premise, the fulfillment of Nietzsche's cultural prophecy, 'the report that the old God is dead'.

The most complex and creative of the three was Thomas Altizer, a professor both of English literature and of religion, in whose thoroughly dialectical works and articles the influences of Blake, Hegel, Nietzsche and Eliade are evident. If the sense of the presence of God is lost for many in the midst of modern secular culture, it is tempting to attempt to rectify the situation by turning the clock back, by seeking to re-establish the conditions of a previous religious life. Altizer not only considered this unlikely to succeed, but proposed an interpretation of the incarnation which shows why God is dead and how the sacred must now be pursued through the profane. To accept the full implications of God becoming man may in the end lead to a new consciousness of God. William Hamilton constructs no metaphysical model in describing the death of God. The influence of Bonhoeffer * is
Defication

The word has acquired a very suspicious sound in the ears of perhaps the majority of Western Christians, partly as a result of the claims of mediaeval and sixteenth-century sectarian and apocalyptic groups to be united in essence with God (and so incapable of sin). Discussion of the subject has also been a good deal hampered by the confusion of doctrines of defication with speculations about a divine and uneccrated "core" of the human soul.

The only biblical text which seems to bear directly on defication is II Peter 1.4, where the destiny of Christian believers is described as becoming "partakers of the divine nature". However, other passages (such as Rom. 2.7; II Tim. 1.10) speak of Christians being endowed with the divine property of "incorporation" - freedom from the tendency of the finite world to disorder and disintegration. There is an unmistakable borrowing here from the vocabulary of Hellenistic religiosity; and it is not confined only to the later parts of the NT.

At the same time, however, early Christianity was developing a doctrine of incorporation into Christ through the indwelling of 'Spirit': what distinguishes Christians is their right to relate to God as Father, in the way that Jesus did (Rom. 8). And this can also be expressed in terms of Father and Son 'making their home' in the believer (John 14.23). Thus the Christian is taken into a relation of unlimited intimacy with God; and for the Johannine tradition, this relation exists in an essentially divine reality in God's life, because the Word is in relation to God (pros ton theon) from the beginning (John 1.1), and the Son shares the Father's glory before the world is made (John 17.5). The 'glory' and 'eternal life' given to the believer consist precisely in sharing this relationship.

Thus there are two strands making up the classical patristic view of defication. One, the more obviously available convention in the religious language of the day, thinks primarily in terms of a communication of divine attributes, the other in terms of participating in an intra-divine relationship. These are not seen as contradictory by the Fathers, though we can learn a good deal about the general cast of a writer's thought by observing which strand predominates.

They are brilliantly synthesized in Origen, for whom the goal is to return to the soul's pristine state of union with the eternal Logos, a condition of immutable rational contemplation of the Father, a perfect reflection back to God of his own interiorality. For the tradition stemming from Origen, therefore, defication is very closely linked with the shedding of the 'passionate' (and thus unstable) part of the empirical soul, and the restoration of the soul's primitive purity as nous gymnos, 'naked understanding'. This scheme is most fully elaborated in the writings of Evagrius Ponticus at the end of the fourth century.

Other writers in the fourth and fifth centuries avoid this model, with its hints of a doctrine of the pre-existence of souls. Cyril of Alexandria and Augustine show far more concern with the theme of adoptive sonship and the restoration to human beings of a divine image which consists most profoundly in the capacity for free and loving response to the Father's initiative. For Augustine in the de Trinitate, the final restoration of the image occurs when, by the grace of Christ and incorporation into Christ, the powers of the mens (the whole process of our inner life) come to have God for their object. It is God who then defines and determines the soul's active reality, so that the soul reflecting upon itself cannot but see God. This is 'defication' by means of perfect reflection.

Defication had played a major role in the fourth and fifth century christological debates (Christ must be God if what he imparts to us is divine life). This made it necessary for the Eastern Christian world from the Councils onwards to distinguish carefully between Christ's 'natural' sonship and our incorporation into it by will and grace. Maximus the Confessor, in the seventh century, claimed that we may be by grace that God is by nature; but this occurs only through God's free self-emptiness in the incarnation, enabling and prompting our self-emptiness in reply. So in Christ and in Christ's people there is a movement of mutual interpenetration (perichoresis) between divinity and humanity; not that the natures are confused or mingled - the acts (energies) of both interrelate, and human nature is transfigured by being perverted with the loving, self-giving action of God - for Maximus, as for earlier writers like Gregory of Nyssa in the fourth century, defication meant taking on the characteristic modes of activity of God (compassion, self-surrender) rather than simply sharing a nature transfigured by being perverted with the loving, self-giving action of God. For Maximus, as for earlier writers like Gregory of Nyssa in the fourth century, defication meant taking on the characteristic modes of activity of God, self-surrender rather than simply sharing a nature transfigured by being perverted with the loving, self-giving action of God.

This formed the basis of the theory associated with Gregory Palamas*, Archbishop of Thessalonica in the fourteenth century, which distinguished sharply between God's essence and his energion: the essence is simple, indivisible, not capable of being shared, the energies are multiple and shareable. Defication is union with the divine acts or operations, the rays streaming out from the inaccessible source. The 'Palamite' system was linked with a strongly realist view of the transfiguration of the whole person: the saint's spiritualized senses can perceive the uncreated light (the light seen at Jesus' transfiguration), and the saint's body may itself radiate the same light. This has been a very important theme in Eastern Orthodox spirituality up to the present day.

The Western tradition has generally preferred Augustine's* approach, systematized by Thomas Aquinas*: defication occurs when the formal object of will and understanding is God, so that God determines entirely what is loved and grasped by the soul (this is what is sometimes called 'intentional' union). But this does not at all preclude a theology of comprehensive 'substantial' transformation, the reconstruction of the human spirit at its very roots indeed, properly understood, the concept of 'intentional' union demands and presses towards such a theology. St John of the Cross* builds on Aquinas' foundations in his account of the state of union.

The revival of Catholic mystical theology at the end of the nineteenth century, and the recovery by theologians such as Scheeler of the patristic and early mediaeval understanding of grace as the indwelling of the Trinity helped to awaken interest in this area; and this was further stimulated in the present century by the Orthodox theological renaissance, and the extraordinary and fruitful 'retieval' of Maximus and Palamas by writers of the caliber of Staniloae and Lossky. Some Orthodox scholars see the 'transcendental anthropology' of Karl Rahner as coming closer than most Western theology to the classical language of defication; Hans Urs von Balthasar has also - in a very different way - utilized Eastern as well as Western perspectives on defication in his theology of divine beauty and its communication to us in Christ. There are valuable leads here for the use of the 'defication' tradition in constructing a contemporary
Denys the Areopagite
teology and spirituality of Christlike freedom — freedom dependent on relation with the Father, yet 'divine' in its own authority, creativity and capacity for self-giving and compassion.


ROWAN WILLIAMS

Demons see Devil, The

Denys the Areopagite

The Areopagical Corpus is a body of writings which purport to have been written by the Denys (or Dionysius) who became a Christian as a result of St Paul’s speech on the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17.34), but which were probably written towards the end of the fifth century and bear the mark of the influence of the late Neoplatonism of such as Proclus (410-485). They first appear at the beginning of the sixth century in a form which is not the Orthodox, and though initially rejected by the Orthodox, very soon their spiritual power was felt and they were accepted as authentic. The writings (which are presented as the surviving works of a still greater number of writings which is being augmented) as written consist of the Divine Names, the Mystical Theology, the Celestial Hierarchy, the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy and ten letters. They all have a single ultimate aim: the union of the whole creation with God by whom it was created, a union in which the created order will attain perfection, or become divinized, as Denys is fond of saying. This union is the final stage of a three-fold process of purification, illumination and union: the famous three ways of the mystical tradition, found first in this form in Denys.

The different works expound in different ways how this goal is achieved. In the Divine Names it is told how our praise of God may be increased in the various ways in which God manifests himself, first as the Blessed Trinity, and then through the various divine attributes, beginning with goodness and ending with unity, are explored. This knowledge of God through affirmations about him drawn from creation and the scriptures is called cataphatic theology. In the two works on the hierarchies the glittering beauty of the created order, as it consciously praises and serves God and seeks to be united with him, is explored. The celestial hierarchy consists of three orders of celestial beings, each of three ranks: seraphim, cherubim and Thrones; dominations, powers and authorities; principalities, archangels and angels. The ecclesiastical hierarchy is also presented as a triad of triads: first a triad of the hierarchical mystery of the Church: baptism, the eucharist or synaxis, and the mystery of oil, secondly a triad of sacred ministers, the threefold apostolic hierarchy of bishops, priests and deacons; and finally a triad of those who are commended to the Church: the sacraments, the monks, the laity (called the contemplative order), and catechumens, penitents and the possessed, who are all excluded from the celebration of the sacraments. These two hierarchies - the celestial and the ecclesiastical - themselves are represented as the lower ranks of a triad, the pinnacle of which is God himself, the Blessed Trinity, or the Thearch (as Denys habitually calls him). Hierarchy is defined as a 'sacred order' of knowledge, a form of controversy which is being augmented as much as possible to likeness with God and which, in response to the illuminations that are given it from God, raises itself to the imitation of Him in its own measure: the whole system of the hierarchies describes the souls divided into ranks of men, mutually supporting and supported, by which the whole society is raised to union with God and so enabled to radiate as perfectly as possible the inexhaustible glory of God. The hierarchies are static; that is, they are not a ladder of ascent, but a graded hierarchy of beings, at every level of which creatures find union with God by fulfilling their vocation as perfectly as they may. As far as mankind is concerned this means that an ordered ecclesiastical society fulfills its vocation in the celebration of the liturgy through which all are drawn into union with God and all the vehicles of God's love for his creation. The theology of the hierarchies is called symbolic theology, for in the liturgy a symbolic reality is disclosed through which God is borne to his creatures. But in his treatment of both cataphatic and symbolic theology Denys is at pains to show how they point beyond themselves and all affirmations fall short of God, and the most important aspect of understanding symbols is in passing beyond them to the reality they disclose (something more evident when there is no natural similitude between the symbols and what they symbolize, for which reason Denys prefers 'unlike symbols'). Both cataphatic and symbolic theology point beyond themselves to the theology of negation, apophatic theology, which is the subject of the short but powerful treatise, the Mystical Theology. In this the soul passes beyond anything it can perceive or know into the darkness where God is: it is reduced to 'complete speechlessness' and 'united in its highest part in passivity with Him who is completely unknowable, it knows by not knowing in a manner that transcends knowledge'. This is the divine darkness, the cloud of unknowing: and Denys both draws on the development of this theme by earlier writers such as Philo and Gregory of Nyssa, and is himself a powerful influence on later tradition. In the darkness the soul learns to relinquish its own activity and to submit to God who himself brings about union. Denys speaks here of a 'suffering' of divine things, of an ecstasy in which the soul goes out of itself and is united to 'the ray of divine darkness which is beyond being'. But his dominant thought here is that this is a union of love: the soul in its love for God knows God's love for itself and is united with him.

Apophatic theology is a theme of Denys' theology, but it establishes and does not undermine cataphatic and symbolic theology. Underlying all three theologies is the realization of the unknowability of a God who is therefore 'known in all things, and apart from all things... Therefore everything may be ascribed to Him at one and the same time, and yet He is none of these things.'


ANDREW LOUTH

Desert, Desert Fathers

Early monastic writers like Peter Damiani sometimes speak of the monastic life as having its origins in the withdrawal to desert places of desert saints like Elijah. John the Baptist was also invoked as a primitive 'monk', and the Jewish Therapeutae described by Philo of the first century (a group not unlike the Dead Sea sect) were thought by mediaeval authors to be Christian recluses, living lives of celibacy and discipline in remote places. For all the lack of historical perspective here, such notions were not entirely absurd. The idea of withdrawal to the wilderness was not a Christian invention; for apocalyptic Judaism (picking up certain themes in prophetic literature, notably in Hosea and Jeremiah), the desert was a place for the return of the exiles of the covenant community. Israel had first received the Torah in the wilderness, and the flight to the desert could be a return to its sources, stripping away the corruptions of state and cult. The wilderness is also the place of refuge, for prophets like Elijah and Job and as a protest to the Maccabees: the community led out into the wilderness is gathered under God's protection, shielded from the assaults of the godless. All this is built into the Christian ideology and is explicitly or implicitly left its mark on Jewish Christianity (Rev. 12.14). And Jesus' own sojourn in the desert is clearly for, the evangelists, a recapitulation of Israel's period of trial and temptation after the Exodus, and thus a radical renewal of the covenant.

Origen * interpreted the desert wanderings of Israel as a type of Christian spiritual life, characterized by separation from sin and passion, withdrawal from the world and growth through a process of asceticism (see his famous Homily XXVII on Numbers). But there were probably already in Origen's day some Egyptian Christians who lived out this 'separation' by literal withdrawal from society. When in about 269 the young Antony* received his call to poverty and asceticism, there were some recluses from whom he could learn. But it was his own withdrawal, in the 280s, to the 'inner desert', beyond the reach of his fellows, which established a new Christian asceticism - a physical flight from human society to confront the deepest human tensions and frailties in solitude.

Antony emerged from a long period of complete isolation to become the father of a large number of companions of the same mind and of the same view of things; and by the end of his life (c. 355) the Egyptian 'desert' was quite highly populated with ascetic comm-
Desert. Desert Fathers

munities, varying in style from the very tightly-organized monastic townships established by St. Anthony in Upper Egypt to the more freewheeling groups of smallish groups in the north (in areas around the Nitrian lakes, and at the Wadi el Natroun, usually called the 'desert of Scetes'). The popularity of the movement owes something to the legalization of Christianity by Constantine; martyrs of a sort, the crowning symbol of Christian detachment, but, now that this had ceased to be available, monasticism took its place. It has been said, with some reason, that the monastic movement was a protest – half-conscious – against too facile an accommodation between church and world. In that sense, it was an 'apocalyptic' phenomenon, as much as the Qunmar community had been.

The desert was seen as a place teeming with hostile spirits, and a major part of the early monk's vocation was repeated confrontation with the destructive and deceptive power of the demons. Sometimes this might mean spending time in the ruins of a pagan shrine, exposing oneself to the wiles of the evil spirits who had been served there. More often, though, it was a matter of learning to discern genuine and inauthentic 'religious experiences' – acquiring a degree of suspicion of vivid or consoling visions and revelations, easily manufactured in the extreme conditions of hunger and isolation, learning to endure faithfully, in boredom, depression, frustration, without taking refuge in the devilish lure of dazzling spiritual dramas (angelic voices and visitations, etc.).

Thus the desert is a place for overcoming illusions and purifying desire. All the great monastic teachers of the fourth century, Macarius, Pachomius, Moses, the more intellectual and philosophical Evagrius, agree in insisting that true solitude means a refusal to imprison others in your own projections or, in their terms, a refusal to 'judge the brethren'. And this often means in practice a readiness to interpret and direct the spiritual lives of others. The novice puts himself under the guidance of an 'old man' (geron), the abba, 'father', of a small circle, and accepts the abba's word and example as absolutely God-given; but correspondingly the abba must have a profound sensitivity to the varying needs of those in his care (a point stressed heavily in the monastic rules of both Basil and Benedict, in a more structured setting). The characteristic literary form generated by this pattern of life is to be seen in the Apophthegmata Patrum, the Sayings of the Fathers, extant in a large number of differing versions and languages (in its earliest form dating from the first quarter of the fifth century) – a loose compilation of anecdotes and obiter dicta, often beginning with the novice's request for instruction ('Give us a word, Father'). (See Apophthegmata.) From the same period come the more literary and polished summaries of the teaching of the Fathers by John Cassian, in his Conference and Institutes – the main means by which the desert tradition was transmitted to classical Benedictinism.*

Most monastic reform movements in the mediaeval West looked back to a 'desert' ideal and made a point of geographical withdrawal to inaccessible spots. One rather special case deserves mention, though, as opening up a rather different interpretation of the tradition. In the thirteenth century, an association of hermits based on Mount Carmel in Palestine and looking to Elijah as their first founder gradually turned themselves into the Order of Carmelites.* However, their original eremitical nature was never wholly forgotten, and the sixteenth-century reform of the Order attempted to secure, for the fathers and sisters of the reformed observances, a balance between apostolic activity and withdrawal to a 'desert', an isolated retreat house, at regular intervals. Similar provision was made for the Capuchin branch of the Franciscans.* Thus the possibility was established of integrating the 'desert experience' into a religious life more closely involved with ministry in the world than that of the first monks. And in our own age the prophetic figure of Charles de Foucauld*, with his lonely witness and death in the Sahara, has inspired the experiments of the Little Brothers and Sisters of Jesus in combining serious and demanding contemplative life with apostolic activity and direct ministry, and found in the teachings of Jesus, in St Paul (see, for example, Col. 3.9–10; Eph. 4.22–24), and are a prominent feature of the teaching of partriarchal and medieavl authors. The concept of 'detachment' was criticized and reinterpreted by the Protestant reformers and reaffirmed by Roman Catholic monasticism. A secular version of recognition of the importance of detachment takes the form, in contemporary life, of a critique of the aggressive acquisitiveness of modern society. The practice of detachment does not only as its object rejection of any created good, but rather aims at correcting one's own anxious grasping in order to free oneself for committed relationship to God. Although a temporary sacrifice of particular objects and/or forms of relationship to which an individual is compulsively attached may be an important stage in coming to understand the attachment, only objects or relationships towards which one is unable to prevent compulsive addiction should be permanently given up.

Meister Eckhart*, a fourteenth-century German mystic, describes detachment as a process of stripping oneself of everything that defends or conceals the centre or 'core of the soul', the place of experience and knowledge of God. His agenda of identifying and relinquishing habits, rituals and practices, social conditioning, feelings, and ideas is preliminary to a spontaneous gathering of these in constellation around the new centre of the self which has been constituted by an experience of God. After this process of stripping and gathering, Eckhart taught, the person is less likely to identify herself or himself with either objects or relationships. Eckhart's description of the meaning and importance of detachment is characteristic of the description of many spiritual leaders. His insistence that, when one is not attached to characteristic patterns of thought and behaviour, created goods no longer prevent but actually 'point you to God', is an important correction of the view that the need to reject implies a pejorative estimation of the goodness and beauty of creation and other human beings.

*Depouillement*, DS, III, cols 455–504; Owen Chadwick (ed), Western Asceticism (LCC), 1958; Donald Nicholl, Holiness, 1981.

MARGARET R. MILES

Devil, The

The idea of a chief evil spirit is widely attested in late Judaism and in Christianity. Before the exile there are hints of a primitive view of such a being (e.g. Azazel in Lev. 16 and Lilith in Isa. 34.14), but Satan remains...
Iconography

version of the spirituals is to be found in the type of hymn popularly called 'Sankeys'—it is significant that J. D. Sankey (1840–1908) was a musician and tune writer, not a hymn writer. Yet if the profound effect on popular Protestantism in the late Victorian age. Here was a spirituality of comfort, security and hope. It overworked individualistic sentiment and was feebler than the irresponsible ecstasies of the eighteenth century. Yet if popular religion is to be taken seriously, this element in Christian hymnody is important.

Hymns became part of national and civic piety in Britain at the time of the strength of the British imperial tradition. In more recent years the movements of social protest have thrown up hymns and songs in profusion and the Charismatic Movement* in all the main stream churches (not least in the Church of Rome which has witnessed a popular renaissance of hymn singing) has provided short, effective scriptural 'choruses' which are now much used in formal worship as well as in small groups, where they play the role once played by Charles Wesley.

End of the epoch of hymnody carries with it equally characteristic music; the chorale, the psalm tunes of Geneva associated with Louis Bourgeois (1510–1561), the lilting lilted terror of the early Methodist tune, the chaste richness of Croft and Ravenscroft, the haunted melodies of Wlaet, the sturdiness of H. J. Gauntlett and John B. Dykes, the poignant refrains of the 'spirituals', the homespun melodies of Sankey, the gusto of the 'charismatic' choral all provide essential music to supplement the poetry and popular religious participation. Here indeed is the folk song of the church. While much of it may seem mawkish and sentimental to the purist, it is in its generation authentic popular religious culture and of crucial importance in the history of Christian spirituality.


Ignatius of Antioch, St

Ignatius of Antioch lived in the first century. He was a bishop of Antioch, a city in modern-day Syria, and was known for his writings that were significant in the development of Christian doctrine. His letters, which are considered early Christian documents, reflect the concerns and teachings of the early church. Ignatius is often referred to as the first Christian martyr, as he was imprisoned and ultimately martyred in Rome. His writings provide insight into the early Christian community's beliefs and practices.

Ignatius' letters demonstrate a deep understanding of the Christian faith, emphasizing themes such as the incarnation of Christ, the importance of the Eucharist, and the role of the Christian community as the Body of Christ. His writings also reflect a sense of spiritual warfare and the importance of maintaining a faithful witness in the face of persecution.

The influence of Ignatius' teachings can be seen in the development of Christian doctrine and the early church's understanding of Christ's role as the mediator between God and humanity. His letters provide a window into the early Christian community's worldview and the challenges faced by early Christians.
Ignatius Loyola, St

God as embodied in Jesus (Ephesians 111–V, Smyrnaeans VIII, Philadelphienses I).

Martyrdom, self-oblation, is a gift to the church as a whole, uniting with the eucharistic self-giving of God in Christ: the martyr is the victim, like Jesus and in Jesus, 'pure bread' (Romans IV). Those heretics who do not believe in the reality of Christ's sufferings (presumably gnostic of one sort or another) undermine the entire logic of Christian corporate life: if Christ did not really suffer and die, we might as well say that the martyr does not really suffer (Smyrnaeans IV). And if this free, redemptive, self-sharing suffering does not occur in the flesh of Christ, there can be no communication through it of the 'immortal love' and stable or 'incorruptible' life by which believers live and hope (Romans VII.3; cf. Ephesians XX for the famous description of the eucharist as 'medicine of immortality'). So it is not surprising if heretics rupture the community of love and fail to show compassion for the destitute (Smyrnaeans VI). Their Christ is unreal, they have no communion in the reality of a God of crucified love, and so their own lives are phantasmal (Smyrnaeans II, Trallians X).

The Christian, in contrast, lives in the truth. Ignatius commends silence to the believer, because 'it is better to keep silence and be, than to speak and not to be' (Ephesians XV). The eloquent speech, the system-making, of the gnostic can never compensate for a fundamental illusoriness; but the Christian, even—or especially—the Christian leader, characterized by silence (Ephesians VI) allows God's truth and reality to speak in life and act. So it was in Jesus, whose whole life is 'worked in the silence of God' (Ephesians XIX): he communicates truth and life by silently witnessing to the love of God which is beyond containment in word or concept. His life is word and testimony; so must the Christian's be. Although the terms 'silence' (sigel) and 'espousal' (beuchelich) are popular terms in gnosticism, it is clear that Ignatius has given them a distinctive and powerfully incarnational transformation; perhaps a deliberately polemical move.

The letters were well-known in the early church (Origen refers to Romans); and some of Ignatius' imagery is echoed in later Syrian writing (Ephrem, perhaps even the Odes of Solomon). But he is in no sense the founder of a 'school'. His importance is in marking out the ground for an eucharistic and incarnational devotion which could provide a bulwark against excessive spiritualization or de-historicizing of the gospel.


ROGAN WILLIAMS

Ignatius Loyola, St

Ignatius Loyola was born, most probably in 1491, in the family castle of Loyola in the Basque province of Guipuzcoa. At baptism he was given the name Ignacio de Oñaz y Loyola. Many years later he took the name Ignacio. Originally intended for a career in the church, he received a rudimentary education which was soon abandoned for a career at court and in the military. He underwent a profound change of life after being severely wounded while fighting in France at the battle of Pamplona in Navarre (20 May 1521). Long months of painful convalescence followed by almost a year at Montserrat and Manresa changed him into a man whose leading Christian and mystical heroes were Francis and Dominic. At Manresa he began writing the Spiritual Exercises*. In late August 1522 he landed in the Holy Land in the hope of spending the rest of his life there. When he was refused permission to remain, he returned to Spain via Venice. At age 33 he joined schoolboys on their benches to begin his studies 'so as to be able to help souls'. He tried schools in Barcelona, Aix-la-Chapelle and Salamanca, but it was at the University of Paris that he found the course of studies which fitted his needs. He remained there from 1528 to 1535 to complete his studies in philosophy and theology. During the Paris years he was studying in Paris at the University of Paris that he found the course of studies which fitted his needs. He remained there from 1528 to 1535 to complete his studies in philosophy and theology. During the Paris years he was studying in Paris and Salamanca, but it was at the University of Paris that he found the course of studies which fitted his needs. He remained there from 1528 to 1535 to complete his studies in philosophy and theology. During the Paris years he was studying in Paris and Salamanca, but it was at the University of Paris that he found the course of studies which fitted his needs. He remained there from 1528 to 1535 to complete his studies in philosophy and theology. During the Paris years he was studying in Paris and Salamanca, but it was at the University of Paris that he found the course of studies which fitted his needs. He remained there from 1528 to 1535 to complete his studies in philosophy and theology. During the Paris years he was studying in Paris and Salamanca, but it was at the University of Paris that he found the course of studies which fitted his needs. He remained there from 1528 to 1535 to complete his studies in philosophy and theology. During the Paris years he was studying in Paris and Salamanca, but it was at the University of Paris that he found the course of studies which fitted his needs. He remained there from 1528 to 1535 to complete his studies in philosophy and theology. During the Paris years he was studying in Paris and Salamanca, but it was at the University

Choice of Paul III for whatever missions he might choose. In summer 1539 they petitioned the pope to permit them to form a new religious order. On 27 September 1540, all three issued the bull Regimini Milliarius which established the Society of Jesus. In spite of his strenuous objections, Ignatius was unanimously chosen the first Superior General of the Jesuits. The last fifty years of his life were spent in Rome as head of the new order. These years were occupied with writing thousands of letters, indefatigable efforts to secure support for apostolic projects, and the writing of the constitutions of the Society of Jesus. He dispatched men to missions throughout Europe to Asia, Africa, and America. When he died, there were 10,000 members in the Society in various parts of the world. In the midst of his heavy burden of work and care by continuing ill health, his experience of mystical prayer grew and became a constant in his life. On 31 July 1556, he died peacefully and unexpectedly in Rome. He was canonized a saint of the Roman Catholic Church by Gregory XV on 22 May 1622. See also Jesus, Society of.


GERARD J. CAMPBELL, SJ

Imagery, Images

Ikeas are the most powerful theme when washing were drawings were made in underground caves, humans have created representations of objects, animals or human forms, in the external world. In the original pattern leading to this exercise cannot be determined. The fact is, however, that innumerable images exist in the world today: painted, sculptured, modelled, photographs, etc. It is the central task of the image to become a means to women and women to detach themselves from immediate experience and to hold onto their imaginations significant moments in the world outside of and beyond themselves.

Edgwyn Bevan used the term holy images to denote those expressing some apprehension of religious reality. Whenever there has been a perception of some manifestation which appears to concern an individual or a community supremely and ultimately, the desire has arisen to hold it within the memory by expressing it in some outward form. This has been accomplished by hollowing out natural objects (fire, water, rocks, bread and wine), by carving and painting (as in woodcuts, engravings, sculptures) and by reproducing sounds (words, music). Cultures have differed in the choice of which of these means shall have the ascendancy.

Hebrew culture, particularly in the prophetic tradition, repudiated images as improper means of representing divine realities and concentrated attention on words. The same has been true of Islam. In India and in Greece visual images played a major part in the life of religion. In the history of Christianity there has been a marked ambivalence: in Russian Orthodox images of great beauty have been honoured as links with transcendent realities, whereas in puritan Protestantism images have been denounced and frequently destroyed.

Broadly speaking four attitudes have appeared in Christendom.

1. Uncompromising iconoclasm supported by an appeal to the second commandment of the Decalogue.
2. Encouragement of image-worship, images being regarded as mediators of supernatural grace.
3. Defence of images as a valuable means of instructing the unlearned and stimulating their devotion.
4. Concentration on images of Christ himself as the unique 'image of the invisible God' (Col. 1.15).

These attitudes have influenced answers to the crucial question whether it is legitimate to construct external images of the Christ of the New Testament. Some have urged that it cannot be the noblest exercise of the human imagination to create an image of the human Christ: others have rejected any attempt to portray one who is essentially invisible. The great majority have taken the view that because the Son of God was 'made in the likeness of man' (Phil 2.7) it is permissible to depict him as baby, as youth, as teacher, as crucified.

Whether any image can adequately represent him as resurrected, as ascending, as reigning depends largely on the view taken of the nature of matter and spirit and of their inter-relationship. The necessity of
noble in the idea of evolutionary progress, without secularizing religion or positing a Deity vitally involved in the fortunes of his creatures, so indicating his debt to Plateau

‘nism as distinct from orthodox dogmats and institutions. He was personally most at home at his desk, in a college chapel or a village church. His devotional books, especially Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion, led thoughtful people to a greater appreciation of religious experience, especially in connection with grief, seen as shar

ing the sufferings of Christ — Inge's finest thoughts were inspired by his daughter, Paula, who died as an infant and his son, Richard, killed in the Second World War. Publishing in St Paul's Cathedral at the age of 82, he said I came on a sentence in a French book the other day: "Suffriss passe; avoid souffret ne passe jamais.""

His veneration for the Fourth Gospel, of which he was one of the finest interpreters, led him to describe eternal life as the equiva

lent of the mystic's austere contemplation. As leader of the Modern Churchman's Union, arguing for a reasoned critique of the law, he was suspicious of the Roman Catholic Church and of Anglican episcopal authority. He hesitated in accept

In this mystical studies of his contemporaries, Baron von Hugel* and Evelyn Underhill*. He continued to lecture, preach and publish the end of his life, attracting very large audiences to whom he explained faith as the contemplation of absolute Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Depressed and dea

ness did not dim his faith, though he found the lack of worship in the Church was born and bent: at the new liturgical services of little value, and distrusted William Temple**, who urged that fidelity to Christ himself required changes in Church and state, so that justice could be done to the 'have-nots' at home and abroad. His prophetic insights into the failure of shallow secular optimism were occasionally marred by narrow class prejudice.

Inge's gift of self-expression and mordant wit (the 'complimentary Dean') ensured him a place amongst twentieth-century religious teachers of those on the fringes of the churches. Like St Paul, the subject of one of his most famous essays, for him the gospel was not a religion, but a way of life. In its most universal significance. He saw himself as a Christian Platonist, a successor of the Cambridge Christian Platonists*, a third

school within the church, not less legitimate than Catholic or Protestant. In his 'Confes

sion Fides', he wrote: 'Faith needs the help of imagination to make its affirmations real . . .

The true religion for each of us is the most spiritual way of realizing and living by.' At St Paul's, he was naturally drawn into constant comment (his dislike of taxation and trade unions was outspoken, and his advocacy of eugenics enthusiastic). Despite his philosophic idealism, he const

antly returned to the incarnation and the person of Jesus in the New Testament. He

held, with the Platonists, that at the core of our personality is a spark lit at the altar of God in heaven, an inner light which can illuminate our whole being: the Gnostics the saints seems me absolutely trust

worthy, and the divinity of my own vision would be disquieting only if I felt I had deserved better. There is a considerable ele

ment of agnosticism in true Christianity. To such themes he constantly returned as he endeavoured to reconcile Christianity, science and philosophy.

Adam Fox, Dean Inge, 1960. ALAN WEBSTER

Intercession

see Prayer (3) Intercession

Invocation of the Holy Name

see Jesus, Prayer to

Irenaeus of Lyons, St

Although bishop of Lyons in Gaul, Irenaeus c. 130-202 brought up in Asia Minor, where he had known Ignatius' colleague, Polycarp of Smyrna. His major concern was with the defence of Christian tradition against Gnosticism, and it is to this that his long treatise Against the Heresies (otherwise, The Refutation and Overtwist of What is Falsely Called Knowledge) is devoted. There is also a shorter

work, rediscovered in this century, the Epis

dixis or Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching.

Irenaeus is the first Christian writer to make the explicit point that the purpose of God's sharing of human life is that we might share the divine life (e.g. Heresies IV.529,5). If God is not fully incarnate in Jesus, we are not saved — i.e. our life is not transformed into the immortal and incorruptible life of

Heresies IV.34); but the point of this seems rather to be an insistence that God is only known through his Son, and that therefore there can be no speculative or 'neutral' knowledge of God, as the gnoses implied (Heresies I.4, III.6, II.11.34, etc.) independently of the 'community of union' established between God and humanity through the incarnation and the work of the Spirit (Ephesians 4.24). In the Johannine tradi

tion, living in the truth means participation in the divine life and light — 'seeing God and enjoying his generosity' (Heresies IV.34), living in 'wisdom by the Word, through faith in the Son of God and love' (Ephe


Irish Spirituality

Pagan Ireland lay outside the Roman empire. Yet it received with enthusiasm the new religion from Rome and Christianity there took on a complete personality and a remarkable synthesis took place between the strong native oral tradition and the Christia

n Latin culture. In modern terms, a virtually complete inculturation was achieved.

More, St Patrick himself marvels in his Confession at the numbers of the new Chris
tians who sought eagerly to be monks and virgins of Christ. These foreshadowed the multitudes who in the following century made the Irish Church overwhelmingly monastic and overwhelmingly monastic. In a rural society divided into a hundred or more little states (tuatha) ruled each by its king the monas
teries became centres of religious life and education. In the happier age of the 6th century and new there was a remarkable tolerance of the pagan inheritance, and that the monks and their successors persisted in writing, although for them the new book

learning was centrally scriptural. That understanding of the material world and in them in their evangelization abroad. These monks too it was who left us the beautiful eremitical and nature poetry, so intensely clear and beautiful, even to modern eyes or ears in translation.