Jesus as Saviour and Son of God, and on Jesus as a human being. Dermot Lane's chapter on the doctrine of the Incarnation links patristic thought about Christ with the concerns of contemporary cosmology.

Ecclesiology has been the theological theme for much of this century and there are more chapters here on the Church than on any other subject. Thomas P.Rausch outlines the background to Vatican II and summarises the work of the Council itself. Richard P.McBrien comments on *Lumen Gentium* and Enda McDonagh on *Gaudium et Spes*. Francis Sullivan is responsible for two chapters, on a theology of the Church, and on the interpretation of Vatican II. This part ends with a chapter by Christopher Butler on ecumenism.

That leaves morality and the sacraments. Denis O'Callaghan and Vincent MacNamara write about what is involved in 'Christian' morality. Timothy O'Connell gives an overview of the history of moral theology and Thomas Rausch links sexual morality and social justice. The last part of the book begins with considerations of the meaning of symbol and ritual before passing to consideration of the Catholic sacraments as such. Here, finally, space runs out and there is no consideration of individual sacraments.

But already so much has been included that it seems churlish to carp at this point. The reader is intended to assist students being introduced to Catholic theology, there is a fine index and some of the chapters end with substantial bibliographies. It will certainly be of great help to those for whom it is primarily intended, students following the CCRS course.

It is arguable that the Catholic Church in Ireland, Britain and the USA (from which places come the majority of contributors to this volume) might well have shown itself stronger in the face of current difficulties if its general membership had a richer theological culture. This book sets out and supports a course which could easily be followed in parishes and in adult education groups.

VIVIAN BOLAND OP

Book Notes

The Durham Centre for Theological research held a weekly seminar over two terms in 1996-97 which now bears fruit in ***Where Shall Wisdom be Found? Wisdom in the Bible, the Church and the Contemporary World*** , edited by Stephen C. Barton (T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1999, pp. 389, paperback £18.95), an unwieldy title for a magnificent collection of some twenty five substantial essays, starting with Solomon and Job and ending with Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein.

The first three essays deal with wisdom in Israel (R.W.L. Moberly, Stuart Weeks, C.T. R. Hayward), followed by a paper on Qumran (Loren T. Stuckenbruck) and one on the apocalyptic tradition

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(Christopher Rowland). We then have three New Testament studies, on Jesus, the gospels and Paul (by James D.G. Dunn, Barton himself, and Richard B. Hays respectively). Carol Harrison deals with Augustine in the context of his inheritance from classical antiquity; Denys Turner with Denys the Carthusian in the 'predicament' of late medieval mysticism; Sheridan Gilley with Newman's *Idea of a University* ; and Andrew Louth with Solov'ev's and Bulgakov's sophiology. Roughly speaking, these twelve studies locate key moments in the biblical and later Christian history of the notion of wisdom, showing that 'the getting of wisdom takes time', in the editor's phrase.

The second half of the collection explores the idea of wisdom in recent philosophy (Mary Midgley, Brenda Almond), in even more misguided models of wisdom in sociology (Bernice Martin), in the 'gnosis' of New Age spirituality (Linda Woodhead), in Christian feminism (Susan F. Parsons), in virtue ethics, more or less (Robert Song), in the context of Lutheran reflections on liturgy (Alan Suggate), and in moral and theological education (Jeff Astley and Mary Grey respectively). There are two straightforward systematic-theological contributions (Daniel W. Hardy and Colin Gunton), one on marriage (Adrian Thatcher) and finally the one on Wittgenstein (Colin Crowder).

Every one of the essays is worth careful reading and will deserve re-reading. To pick out only three, perhaps the most adventurous. Susan Parsons, whose ***Feminism and Christian Ethics*** (Cambridge University Press, 1996), an excellent book, is now out in paperback, argues, very attractively, in favour of a revised form of natural-law ethics — not what a Christian feminist is supposed to want! Adrian Thatcher, even more shockingly, develops a contemporary restatement of the meaning of Christian marriage by returning to Augustine's three 'goods' (children, faithfulness and sacramentality). 'Wisdom is passionless', Wittgenstein wrote in 1946, in private notes, contrasting it with the Kierkegaardian concept of faith as a *passion* : tracing this theme in Wittgenstein Colin Crowder is allowed to conclude the collection with what the editor calls 'an antidote to complacency'. Wittgenstein, incontestably, is the philosopher who would teach us to be wary of any intellectualist version of 'wisdom'. Crowder recalls that wisdom in the Psalms is more moral than intellectual — an insight that certainly chimes well with what Wittgenstein once spoke of as his 'Hebraic' outlook.

Simone Weil, for decades now, has been a reference point for the likely readership of the Durham collection, particularly for people who find themselves nomads between faith and secular humanism. Perhaps surprisingly, she is cited only once, in Mary Grey's essay. But a new study by Richard H. Bell, ***Simone Weil: The Way of Justice as Compassion*** (Rowman & Littlefield, 1998, 224 pages, $58.00 cloth, $19.95 paper), focuses on key notions of attention, affliction, and spirituality, in this thinker's very controversial work, in connection with

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understanding and reshaping the place of the individual citizen in political life. This book is explicitly for sceptical readers. The author is well aware of the contentiousness of Weil's life and work: was dying of starvation in 1943 mere suicidal folly or principled identification with her compatriots under the Occupation; was she a 'self-hating' Jew or a self-declared Christian; a saintly mystic or a muddle-headed neurotic, and so on — or all these at the same time? Why have her philosophical notes exerted such fascination on one distinguished line of post-Wittgensteinian philosophers, such as Rush Rhees, Peter Winch, D.Z. Phillips, and of course Bell himself? We are reminded that Winch's book, *Simone Weil: 'The Just Balance'* (1989), was greeted by Rowan Williams (in his review in *Philosophical Investigations* , April 1991), as 'the harbinger of a new generation of Weil scholarship'. In the bibliography, Bell notes the forthcoming *Discussions of Simone Weil* put together from Rhees' papers. As he says, a book on her philosophy of religion is badly needed, since one of her 'most impenetrable philosophical ideas, full of paradox and contradiction' is her account of the grammar of 'God's absence' and 'presence' — tackled, so far, 'as few have dared to do', by Rowan Williams in a remarkable essay in *Simone Weil's Philosophy of Culture* (a collection edited by Bell, 1992).

Weil's political and moral philosophy is situated by Bell over against liberal rights-based views of justice (John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Richard Rorty), in the context of communitarianism (Charles Taylor, Alasdair MacIntyre and others); but also in conversation with feminist thinkers, such as Adrienne Rich and Nel Noddings. Her compassion-based moral philosophy has many resonances, for example, with the latter's 'ethics of care'. Her ideas need, however, to be placed in relation to her interest in Lao Tzu and the Taoist doctrine of 'non-active action' (*wu wei*), as well as to her frequent appeals to Plato, particularly to the doctrine of love in the *Symposium* .

Bell does not shy away from discussing her hatred of Jews ('the poison of uprooting personified'), nor from trying to make sense of her ambivalence about Christianity (Catholicism, essentially, for her). No book is ever likely to make comprehensive sense of Weil's fragmentary, elusive and surely often very experimental ideas (she was only 34 when she died); but this is an important addition to the interpretation of her work.

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