

with his wife are lost, making his emotional temperature difficult to gauge. That Molly became addicted to opium after having lost five children to early childhood diseases surely cannot be laid at his door, for this drug was then freely prescribed. After her early death, Carroll the Signer remained a widower for fifty years, until his death.

Hoffman's book is especially useful because of its extensive documentation, genealogical charts, and index. The style is relaxed, not academic. On the other hand, the book illustrates the problem that arises when someone unfamiliar with Catholic history composes a study of eminent Catholics who lived under persecution. In

Hoffman's account, the first two Carrolls emerge as a pair of near-Scrooges deeply embittered by the sufferings of old Ireland. In the Preface, Hoffman likens the Carrolls to the Jews carrying the burden of their past. Thus, he misconstrues the Carroll's fidelity to Catholicism as loyalty to an ethnic heritage, at one point in the introduction even calling the second Carroll's Catholic piety "atavistic." He seems not to grasp that the Carrolls embraced Catholicism as the universal form of Christianity. Indeed, in the midst of all the anti-Catholic hysteria of the 1750s, the elder Carroll heroically tried to assist 900 French-Canadian refugees who had been deported from Nova

Scotia for their religion and had arrived destitute in Maryland. He was prevented only by the provincial government from carrying out his generous plans.

The evidence provided in these pages often lends itself to a different interpretation from the one Hoffman gives, for the simple reason that the Catholic faith and Maryland's Catholic history are not factored in. Thus we see how necessary it is for us Catholics to study our own history and how important that history is for Catholics like the Carrolls of Maryland, who acted impressively, even heroically, in the long struggle for civil rights and liberty of conscience. ■

THOMAS STORCK

"THE CHURCH'S BEST KEPT SECRET"

An Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching. By Rodger Charles, S.J. *Ignatius*. 111 pages. \$9.95.

Catholic social teaching is something Catholic writers have often called "the Church's best kept secret." And although the Church's social doctrine is an integral part of her patrimony, it has

elicited little interest, even from Catholics. But in a world in which economic controversies make the front page of newspapers nearly every day, Catholics ought to be interested in what their Church says about economic justice.

Catholics need to learn what the Church actually teaches, for there are those who will spin Church teaching for their own ends — I'm thinking of the abridged and distorted version of the 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus* put out by a neoconservative, which both omitted and obscured passages apparently considered too critical

of capitalism. Several months ago a secular magazine reported that George W. Bush was studying Catholic social teaching at the feet of this neoconservative (in order to learn how to attract Catholic voters).

One wonders whether Bush's tutor was giving him the real thing. For those who want to know what the Church really teaches, a reliable source is essential. Many books on Catholic social teaching approach the subject chronologically, summarizing each papal encyclical in the context of its times. Another approach, the thematic approach, is

Thomas Storck is a Contributing Editor of the NOR and author, most recently, of *Christendom and the West: Essays on Culture, Society and History*.

at Fr. Charles provides here. In each section he introduces the problems, discusses Catholic teaching, and then includes excerpts from Catholic teaching — usually papal documents — illustrating the subject of that section. Unfortunately, in giving his excerpts, he does not quote them word for word but gives paraphrases.

Fortunately, however, Fr. Charles does boldly confront the foundations of modern liberal capitalist society. For example: human society...needs a principle of unity that goes beyond simple self-interest." His statements on private property are excellent. For example: "God gave the world to all men in common, that they might use its gifts for their benefit, and this universal destination of created goods gives a proper perspective on private ownership: it is a good insofar as it helps mankind to realize the universal purpose for which the

goods of the world were created." He is also clear on the right of the state to own certain forms of property that "carry with them a dominating power so great that they cannot without danger be entrusted to private individuals," on the right of the state to make rules and set limits for the use of private property, and on the state's right to expropriate private property with compensation to the owners, all of which have been explicitly upheld by 20th-century popes.

Likewise, Fr. Charles offers a fine discussion of the origins of capitalism. He locates it squarely in the progressive de-Christianization of European society at the end of the Middle Ages, and does not hesitate to lay blame for the evils caused by socialism and Communism on those whose prior evils were the cause of their inception: capitalists and capitalism. And though he rightly points out that the excesses of capitalism

today have been curbed by legislation and labor unions, he is not afraid to note that the spirit of capitalism is the same as it always was and that "whenever it is given the freedom to do as it wishes without let or hindrance" it reverts to its old ways.

Although this book is a valuable introduction to its subject, there are two additional objections that must be raised. The first is the omission of any mention of Occupational Groups, which Pius XI and Pius XII considered a key to solving the entire socio-economic problem. Such groups are designed to promote economic self-governance by all involved in a particular line of work, be they workers, managers, or owners. John Paul II has elaborated on this theme.

My second objection occurs when Fr. Charles, paraphrasing *Centesimus Annus*, asks whether capitalism is the "only alternative" today. His answer omits the crucial passage from *Centesimus*, namely, "it is unacceptable to say that the defeat of so-called 'Real Socialism' leaves capitalism as the only model of economic organization." To omit this passage is to give the impression that *Centesimus* teaches that some form of capitalism is all that we can hope for today. But this passage shows that Catholics are free to work for alternative forms of economic organization.

Nonetheless, I do recommend this book. And although there is no substitute for reading the social encyclicals themselves in their entirety, Fr. Charles's book can be a helpful *vademecum* in learning about this important part of Catholic doctrine. ■

UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPTS

All unsolicited manuscripts (articles or guest columns only) intended for the NEW OXFORD REVIEW should be sent to Associate Editor James G. Hanink at this address: 443 W. Hillsdale St., Inglewood CA 90302-1123. Rejected manuscripts will be returned *only* if the sender supplies a stamped, self-addressed return envelope with sufficient postage. Nonresidents of the U.S. who cannot supply U.S. postage should always send a copy of the manuscript which they do not need returned.

Please send a dark,

double-spaced manuscript, and include your phone numbers, indicating when you can usually be reached where. Do *not* submit your manuscript to the NOR if you are submitting it to any other periodical simultaneously.

The NOR does not accept unsolicited book reviews or poetry.

Letters to the editor should be sent to the Letters Dept. at our main office, NEW OXFORD REVIEW, 1069 Kains Ave., Berkeley CA 94706-2260, or faxed to 510-526-3492.