

cannot be there. It is painful." Christ's sacrificial death on Calvary is real, even dear, to Andrews — she carries it with her in her actions. She has given her life to God's children, offering herself up on their behalf, holding nothing back. She has no job, no home. She is an itinerant life-saver.

If that is the totality of her work, what constrains Andrews from kidnapping abortionists and blowing up abortion clinics? Her restraint is found, again, in the imitation of Christ, whose infinite love compelled him to take on the human condition in order to transform it. Christ identified with humanity; Andrews, in turn, strives to identify with the unborn, actually to take on their condition.

The unborn child's pre-eminent condition, which has made him or her a victim of the world's sins and fears and rage, is an utter defenselessness. To a significant degree Andrews adopted this de-

fenselessness during her famous Florida incarceration. When Judge Anderson sentenced her to five years for knocking over a suction machine, she abandoned legal ploys, bail bonds, and the seductions of reduced time for "good behavior" — and simply sat on the floor. Thereafter she had to be carried — literally — through the prison system: "When rulers use the appearance of law to enforce their edicts, that is a tyranny. And the only way to stop a tyrannical rule, with its mass murder, is to refuse to cooperate in every little way that we can."

A lot of proliferers didn't understand her nonco-operation. Even the hard-core Joe Scheidler admits in his Introduction that he wrote a "Dutch Uncle" letter to Andrews telling her to do whatever was necessary to get back to the streets and "lead the troops." After all, the goal of the prolife activist is to save lives — a goal severely ham-

pered when one is sitting in solitary month after month.

However, when Andrews takes the step into nonco-operation, she seemingly takes the step from "activist" to "prophet." The cycle of violence whirls and whirls, picking up momentum gradually and ominously until it flings out into chaos. It stops only when the person, as person, refuses to co-operate. Such a refusal, however, puts one in an extremely precarious position: Not to co-operate with evil is to step in its way, just as Christ stepped in the way of original sin and paid with his life. Nonco-operation, then, means willingness to die, whether figuratively or literally.

Andrews has good reason to be relentless in resisting evil: If a mother cannot, is not allowed to, or is not encouraged to love the child within her own womb — flesh of her own flesh — then how the dickens are we going to love our enemies? ■

Philip E. Devine

Alasdair MacIntyre: "Thomist"

Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry. By Alasdair MacIntyre.

University of Notre Dame Press.
236 pages. \$24.95.

One of the most frustrating features of Alasdair MacIntyre's writing until now has been its combination of brilliant critiques of other positions with fragmentary and apparently incoherent positive proposals. *After Virtue* asked us to become followers of both

Trotsky and St. Benedict, while at the same time somehow managing to stay sane. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* concluded by commending Thomism in a paragraph, after arguing at length that the case for one tradition against the others must be made in detail. MacIntyre's Gifford Lectures — published as *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* — are his attempt to remedy the unsettled state in which his earlier writings have left his read-

ers.

MacIntyre defends what he calls Thomism — represented by the encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (1879) — against two

Philip E. Devine is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Providence College in Rhode Island, and the author of *Relativism, Nihilism, and God*. His *The Ethics of Homicide* has just been reprinted in paperback.

other traditions: that of the Enlightenment, and that of the subversive insight represented by Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*. ("Genealogy" thus becomes MacIntyre's word for the tradition founded by Nietzsche.)

MacIntyre claims to do on behalf of St. Thomas what St. Thomas himself did with the Augustinian and Aristotelian traditions that contended in the University of Paris of his day. He claims, that is, to be able to explain and resolve the epistemological crises generated by the Enlightenment and the genealogical tradition, and to answer the criticism each of these traditions might make of Thomism. The outcome of such an argument, if successfully stated, would make a very strong claim on our assent. (Still: Jewish, Islamic, and non-Western traditions need to be taken into account. And some showing that MacIntyre's approach yields persuasive resolution of concrete moral issues is also required.)

In a spirit of holism, MacIntyre is hostile to the distinction between philosophy and theology, for which many people have found authority in the writing of St. Thomas. He attributes to St. Thomas a conception of philosophy as a craft, in which the apprentice must learn from his master the distinction between real and apparent goods before being able to give reasons for such judgments. Authority and tradition are consequently as important for philosophy as for theology. Even interventions by authority to correct the results of philosophical inquiry are in order, as a check on the pride of philosophers. He reads St. Thomas' metaphysics of being as an implication of the distinction between truth and warranted assertibility

necessary to the project of synthesizing contending traditions. It should be clear that MacIntyre's "Thomism" fits the text of St. Thomas somewhat loosely.

From the perspective of Thomism so understood, MacIntyre proceeds to criticize both the Enlightenment and the genealogical tradition. He sees the morality of the Enlightenment as a fragmentary survival of the cohesive way of life once sustained by Catholic Christianity. The genealogists, MacIntyre argues, lack a way of sustaining their own identity behind the masks they assume in order to express their subversive insights. Thomism, by contrast, is able to understand personal identity in terms of bodily continuity and accountability to a visible Church.

In his diagnosis of the problems of the contemporary university, MacIntyre, virtually alone among cultural conservatives, refuses to engage in the ritualistic 60s-bashing which by now has become a substitute for thought, even in writers, like Allan Bloom, who know better. The rebels of the 1960s were right, MacIntyre points out, and their victorious opponents wrong, on one crucial *academic* point: The university of the 1950s had lost its credibility as a place in which inquiries concerning the good life for human beings in society could be carried on with any effect. And the reading of the Great Books, however necessary to a sound education, does not provide a resolution of the cultural conflicts we have inherited, for these conflicts include conflict about

"A profound and stimulating work."

—*Washington Post*

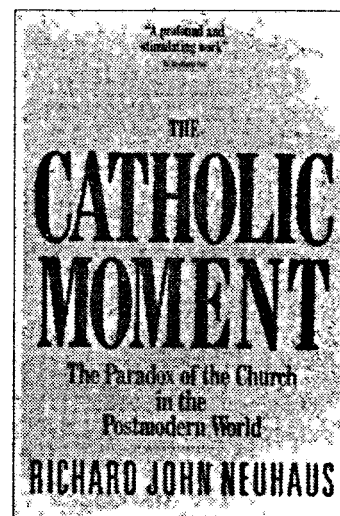
"At once ambitious and thoughtful . . . a striking rethinking of the Roman Church's possible future relationship to American society."—*Commentary*

"A work of authority and brilliance . . . enormously instructive to anyone concerned with the fate of religion in this modern world."—Peter L. Berger

"[Neuhaus] has written one of the dozen best books of the postconciliar period and has put Catholics, Roman and others, in his debt."—*Wall Street Journal*

Paperback, 304 pages, \$12.95

Available at your local bookstore.
In Canada available through HarperCollins Books of Canada.



Harper San Francisco
A Division of HarperCollins Publishers

the proper way of reading texts.

MacIntyre argues for the replacement of the regime of constrained agreement characteristic of the pre-liberal university, and the regime of unconstrained agreement toward which the liberal university vainly aspires, with a regime of constrained disagreement. He rejects both the idea that inquiry can proceed without agreed upon presuppositions, and the exclusion of alien traditions which his critique of liberalism might be taken to imply. He appears to support a collegiate structure, in which scholars pursue their research programs among like-minded others during the bulk of their professional lives, but in which representatives of the various colleges regularly come together for purposes of disputation. Thus we may expect Thomist colleges, genealogical colleges, and colleges representing the tradition of the Enlightenment to co-exist within a consortium or university that makes regular provision for intercollegiate dialogue.

MacIntyre would be the last to expect his work to put an end to controversy. I here offer three criticisms, one on behalf of the Enlightenment, one on behalf of Nietzsche and his followers, and one on behalf of MacIntyre himself.

MacIntyre downplays those aspects of St. Thomas' thought that support the Enlightenment project. But it is a direct consequence of St. Thomas' philosophy that, say, atheists and Buddhists, as rational creatures made in the image of God, are able to know at least the most important parts of the natural law, ignorant though they may be of its metaphysical basis. And it is possible to call interests protected by the natural law

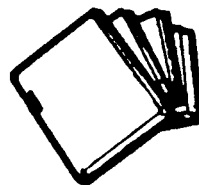
"natural rights" without lapsing into the contemporary conception of rights as demands arising spontaneously and self-evidently from the shared consciousness of some vocal group.

As for the genealogists, it is easy to see their philosophy as the product of pride — even an atheist like Bertrand Russell so argues in his *History of Western Philosophy*. Hence Russell's remedy for pride — a realist conception of truth — and MacIntyre's — the accountability provided by a visible Church — are both in order. But the genealogists' reply is their claim to have discovered the will-to-power behind every known intellectual position, including those backed by claims to objective truth and those supported by appeal to — or exercise of — religious authority. An answer to Nietzsche requires a deeper foray into theology than MacIntyre is prepared to undertake.

Sometimes MacIntyre appears to take the view that the progress of human thought ended with St. Thomas, and that its subsequent history is merely that of sin and error. But in fact MacIntyre's reading of St. Thomas is an idiosyncratic one and his Thomism a mask. On MacIntyre's own principles, his position is intelligible only as developed in dialectical opposition to views of which St. Thomas was necessarily unaware. Also, MacIntyre's philosophy owes a great deal to the unacknowledged influence of Hegel. What place is there for a person such as MacIntyre in the university as he conceives it? Not in one of its constituent colleges, whose loyalty oaths he could not take in good faith. Not in some sort of intercollegiate appointment, since MacIntyre's holism

makes it difficult to fragment a person's position in the required way. If such a person is to escape the condition of homelessness to which MacIntyre's proposed constitution for the Republic of Letters would otherwise consign him, he will need to become its ruler. ■

briefly reviewed



Fragments of Stained Glass. By Claire Nicolas White. Mercury House. 230 pages. \$18.95.

Claire Nicolas White, a distinguished poet, was born into an artistic family and married into another, with all the concomitant creativity, iconoclasm, and instability. The book is less a biography than a reverie, a fragmented chronicle of life in Europe and America over the last six decades. It tells of a world that no longer exists as it did before World War II and one which the present generation probably will never be able to understand thoroughly.

Joep Nicolas, White's father, was an eminent Dutch stained-glass artist (hence the book's title) who immigrated to America just before World War II. Her husband, Robert White, a sculptor, is the grandson of Stanford White, the architect, whose "exuberant public life" created difficulties for the family.

She describes well the pain, inconvenience, and dis-