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Proclamations of the Word: To Hear the Word of God, Homilies at Mass

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clergy, it is the kind of respect it accords to cemeteries—both are needed; both are sacred; both are out of life.

Turning to the sacraments, Fr. S. deplors the overemphasis on the juridical side of penance and would prefer to see in absolution the sign of the return of the prodigal to Christ. As for marriage, the real sin against it today is the idolization of the family itself, expressed in the sentiment that one would “do anything” for one’s family—even steal. Marriage is definitely not the concern only of those who are being married. That kind of selfishness the Christian relinquishes in baptism, which, as the death of one’s self love and the likeness of Christ’s death, is unconditional self-surrender. This is the virtue too of the candidate for holy orders. Since God made man to offer the world to Him in a sacrifice of love and praise, he is the priest of creation. Understood in relation to this fact, the Christian priesthood is the essence of manhood and Christ is the one true priest, because He is the one true and perfect man.

The book speaks frankly of Christian failures as well as Christian glories. It is not meant to be reassuring reading, but its deep insights and vivid expression will stimulate thought in those who are willing to think.

THOMAS J. O’SHAUGHNESSY, S.J.

PROCLAMATIONS OF THE WORD

TO HEAR THE WORD OF GOD, HOMILIES AT MASS. By Gerard S. Sloyan, New York: Herder and Herder, 1965. 304 pp.

Fr. Sloyan gives us here a selection of homilies which he preached over a period of twenty months. They are good examples of homilies: They spring almost palpably from the Scripture readings of the Mass for the day—in fact they can be appreciated only after reading the Epistle and Gospel referred to. Secondly, they incarnate the Scripture into the lives of present-day hearers. Finally (no mean feat for a preacher) each homily averages less than three minutes of slow delivery.

A word of warning: As Fr. Sloyan insists in the foreword, this is a book of homilies; it must be read aloud (and I would add, slowly). I tried to cheat in my first reading. The rapid pace only left me a cloying disgust at the banality of Fr. Sloyan’s style. But a second *slow, vocal* reading transformed the homilies into vibrant proclamations of Christ’s Word for us. Chalk it up to “economy of

word use, reiteration at need, rhythm of language," says the foreword.

Useful as models, these homilies will hardly ever be preached as they are written here. They were preached on weekdays, and hence the greater number are based on ferial and Saint's-day Gospels. They are moreover addressed to a well-educated audience (university students). The pastor who dares to preach this way to his parish may well lose half his audience after the first two sentences.

EDUARDO P. HONTIVEROS, S.J.

"POETAS FILIPINOS"

POÉTICA: Antología de poetas filipinos. By Alfredo S. Veloso. With a parallel text in English. Quezon City: Asvel Publications, Inc., 1966. xlv, 238 pp.

It is difficult to come across any work these days on Filipino literature in Spanish, and the volume under review is by no means a new one. While its copyright date is 1966, the author confesses with candor that "*Poetica es una edicion revisada de 'Anguish, Fulness, Nirvana'*," which first saw print in 1960.

The present work is not as comprehensive as the title might suggest: "*poetas filipinos*," for one thing, excludes those other brown bards who have chosen to write in any language other than Spanish; for another, even from among those who did write in Spanish, the anthology ignores such writers as, say, Pedro Alejandro Paterno whose *Sampaguitas* was probably among the first individual collections, at least in point of time, of Filipino verse in the language.

After a series of short congratulatory notes and testimonials from a handful of "*camaradas en letras*," the book divides itself into three parts. The first is a six-chapter dissertation on poetic composition; the second, a selection of works by seventeen "*Bardos idos*" from Jose Rizal to Evangelina E. Guerrero-Zacarias; and the third, a similar selection from the poetry of seven "*Trovadores de hogaño*." The difference in number between the poets of a by-gone day and the lyre-pluckers of the present is in some way sad: it seems that here is eloquent evidence that, the Spanish Instruction laws notwithstanding, fewer and fewer Filipinos seem to be able to versify in Spanish. After all, the collection begins with Rizal whose birth is only 43 years removed from that of the youngest poets in the book (Francisco Zaragoza y Cas-