

MARY AND THE PRIESTLY MINISTRY

by Emile Neubert, S.M.

This is a book review of the English translation of *MARIE ET NOTRE SACERDOCE* by Emile Neubert, S.M. The translation into English is the work of Thomas Stanley, S.M., who was a seminarian under the direction of Father Neubert many years ago.

The review appeared in *HOMILETIC AND PASTORAL REVIEW*, March 2010, pages 72-74. It was written by Kenneth Baker, S.J., former editor and current book review editor.

The book sells for \$5.00 per copy, and is available from the publisher or from NACMS in Dayton, OH.

While addressed to priests, the message is applicable to all the baptized.

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MARY AND THE PRIESTLY MINISTRY

by Emile Neubert, S.M.

New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2009

xiv + 269 pp., paperback, \$5.00

This book was written more than fifty years ago by a French Marianist in order to promote devotion to Mary on the part of priests, especially parish priests. It proposes a spirituality based on seeking union with Jesus through daily constant prayer to Mary, Mother of Priests.

The material is presented in three sections. In the first part the author develops his ideas about the importance for the priest of living in close union with Mary. He says that since Mary is mother of the Christ-Priest, it follows that she is also the mother of every priest. He argues that the spiritual effectiveness of the priest is greatly enhanced when he works under the tutelage of Mary.

The second part is entitled “Mary Forms the Priest as Another Christ-Priest.” The point here is that Mary can educate the priest to be more like Christ. Here he offers chapters on faith, self-denial, poverty, chastity, and obedience, and stimulating a sense of yearning for the salvation of souls. An excellent example of this is St. John Vianney, who is now the patron of all priests.

In the third part he writes about performing priestly ministry with Mary. Here Fr. Neubert says that devotion to Mary helps the priest in offering Mass, praying the Liturgy of the Hours, administering the sacraments, preaching, and giving spiritual direction to others.

I have read many books on Mariology, but I have never read one quite like this one. The author goes into much detail regarding the life of the priest and shows how devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary can make him a better – that is, a holier – priest. The main point is not to glorify Mary as something like a goddess, but to realize that she is the closest human being to Christ the Lord and that she possesses an awesome power of intercession, which we acknowledge every time we pray the “Hail Mary” and say, “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.”

Priests who seek a closer relationship to Mary, Mother of Priests, will find this little book very helpful. It offers ideal reading for priests who make the daily “Holy Hour” before the Blessed Sacrament.