



# Looks at **NEW** Books

DESIGN in the hands of Sister Mary Corita becomes fine art [see *Survival With Style*, March, page 33]. Her work is on exhibition at major art museums around the world, but we, too, can have our Corita. *To Believe in God* (Harper & Row, \$3.95) is a small book of poems by Joseph Pintauro presented by Sister Corita in her own inimitable, effervescent style. It is both book and work of art.

Poet and playwright, Joseph Pintauro is an ordained Roman Catholic priest who obtained special permission from his bishop to join the secular world. He works for an advertising firm in New York City. Sister Corita often uses words and slogans from advertising in posters that express the excitement of believing in God.

The one book to have read this month is, of course, the *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (Bantam Books, \$1.25). No matter how many reports about this *Report* have reached you via television, newspapers, and magazines, it is different when you read the full text for yourself.

In a special introduction, Tom Wicker of *The New York Times* says: "It is a picture that derives its most devastating validity from the fact that it was drawn by representatives of the moderate and 'responsible' Establishment—not by black radicals, militant

youth or even academic leftists. From it rises not merely a cry of outrage; it is also an expression of shocked intelligence and violated faith."

The paperback edition was rushed into print in March, ahead of the cloth edition to be published by Dutton, and weeks ahead of the edition published by the Government Printing Office. It is authoritative, complete, and designed to be read by as many people as possible as quickly as possible.

Timeliness was never more important, as this country learned during the disorder following the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Members of the commission do not accept America's deepening racial division as irreversible. Choice is still possible, says the *Report*; but a commitment to national action on an unprecedented scale is necessary, and the major need is to generate "the will to tax ourselves to the extent necessary to meet the vital needs of the nation."

A university president from the United States who had made a special point of visiting Alan Paton during a visit to South Africa, wrote to the novelist later saying he was not the kind of person he had expected to see.

Paton replied, asking him what he meant. The university president wrote back that he had expected to see more a man of joy—a man of Christian joy.

"This observation, which was as sharp and clean as a knife, led me to do some thinking," Paton says in *Instrument of Thy Peace* (Seabury, \$3.50).

"Why can I not be described as joyful? Why on the whole can my friends not be described as joyful? Most of them have a decided sense of humour, and all of them have experienced joyful occasions, reunions, blessings, achievements, and expect to experience many more. People have been known to shout for joy, leap for joy, dance for joy, weep for joy. All these things they do on joyous occasions. Some of the most spectacular joyous occasions are those on which our cause has triumphed, and someone else's cause has been defeated!

"These joyous occasions I understand well. I have often experienced them. I have often been able to be the bringer of joy to others; this is a country in which small things, small gifts, small recognitions, small identifications, can bring disproportionate joy. Not only does one bring joy, one experiences joy in bringing it. And the reason is that when one brings joy, and when one experiences joy in bringing it, one has what I can only describe as an experience of God. I am not speaking of mystical experience, because I do not have much mystical experience. What I am speaking of, to coin a pretty terrible phrase, is the

No air of pious solemnity marks the religious statements of Joseph Pintauro or the art of Sister Mary Corita in *To Believe in God*.

to believe in god  
is to have the great faith  
that somewhere, someone  
is not stupid.

joy of instrumentality. The more I am used as an instrument, the closer do I approach a state of abiding joy.

"The world, however, is a tough place. It brings frustrations, and frustrations in this context mean that one's instrumentality is restricted in its scope by forces that one does not control. This calls for fortitude, patience, and constancy. These are the qualities of the friends with whom I have worked. Not for a moment do I suppose that they are the only ones who have them, nor do I suppose that those who are opposed to me do not have them.

"Now I think it is quite possible that the espousal of a cause which one believes to be worthy of one's devotion, the facing of difficulties with fortitude, patience, and constancy, the willingness to endure suffering for the sake of this cause, can bring joy. Instantly there comes to my mind the famous photograph of Gandhi and Nehru sitting together on a mat, with Gandhi the picture of childlike gaiety, which is a manifestation of joy. That Jesus could be gay, I could not for a moment question, though the Gospels do not tell us about it; they tell us much more about the graver joy of a hard course chosen and pursued to the end.

"Therefore, while I wish I could be more joyous, and do more of this shouting, leaping, dancing, and weeping, I shall tell myself to accept myself, which, as everyone knows, is dangerous advice. I shall not take too desperate a view of my own situation. I remember, though not well, one of the well-known stories of World War II, told of the man who was responsible for the safety of British merchant shipping. This man I shall call Sir John, but that was probably not his name. Things were going pretty badly for British shipping, and one of Sir John's colleagues was in his office, filling the air with gloom. Sir John said to him sharply, 'You've forgotten Rule No. 4.' His colleague asked with surprise, 'What's Rule No. 4?' 'Rule No. 4,' said Sir John, 'is, "Don't take yourself too seriously."' His colleague asked, 'What are the other rules?' Sir John replied, 'There aren't any others.' So I shall try, and those like me should try, too, not to take too serious a view of our failure to attain this state of permanent joy. St. Francis did it, but, as someone said to me reproachfully, 'St. Francis was a saint!' Yet he, too, passed through a long period of what could only be called absence of joy.

"This year a friend of mine wished me a happy Easter, and I, because my wife was gravely ill, replied that I did not think it would be happy. When he reached home, he sat down and wrote to me that no Christian

should be unhappy at Easter because what had happened at Easter was of an eternal order, whereas our griefs were temporal.

"I replied to him that I did not expect to be unhappy at Easter, I was prepared to face the future and whatever it might bring. I wrote: 'I like to see happiness and to see happy people, especially happy children. I hope they may grow up happy also, but if I had to choose, I would rather see them brave.'

"And many of those I know have had to choose. They do not show the outward signs of joy, but they have an inner fortitude, a kind of inner equilibrium that has cost too much to be tranquility, and is still too much on guard to be serenity. I think that such an inner equilibrium might possibly be called joy."<sup>1</sup>

*Instrument of Thy Peace* is a book of reflections based upon the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi: "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace." Included are 19 original prayers by Paton, who is a man of our time—Christian, sensitive thinker and writer, and man of action. In addition to being world renowned as a novelist, he is a leader in the reform movement in the Republic of South Africa.

*A Cup o' Kindness* (Abingdon, \$2.95) is a good-humored collection of the kind of stories you find punctuating the sermons of successful preachers. **Hugh C. Stuntz**, retired president of Scarritt College, tells them well, and they make you wonder why preachers go ahead and surround them with elaborate interpretations. They make their points very well by themselves.

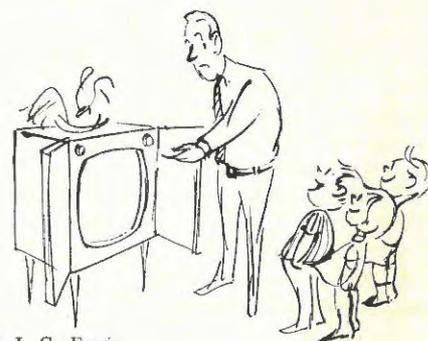
Readers between the ages of 10 and 14 can find their way handily through the current presidential campaign with *How We Choose a President* (St. Martin's, \$3.50). This excellent book by **Lee Learner Gray** first appeared in 1964, now has been revised for election year 1968.

This is a political year in which the impossible started happening early and may keep on happening right up to election day. The pattern of events is not likely to follow the plot of the political horror story **Russell Baker** tells in *Our Next President* (Atheneum, \$3.95). But Baker, who is a Washington columnist for *The New York Times*, catches the mood if not the reality of 1968.

The story hinges on the Electoral

College system, which permits the presidency to go up for grabs in Congress if no candidate turns up with a clear majority of electoral votes. In Baker's book John Lindsay gets a slight majority of popular votes over President Johnson but is four votes shy in the Electoral College. The House of Representatives is deadlocked and can't elect a president either. Finally the Senate elects Robert Kennedy vice-president and he moves into the White House.

Fiction? Yes. But this book shows the ever-present danger of an electoral system that no longer can be counted on to speak the will of the majority.



J. G. Farris

"This is a democracy.  
Let's take a vote on what  
program we'll watch."

Four books on Vatican II not only gave readers an "inside outside" view of that great Roman Catholic council, they also created a great guessing game. The author had to be a Roman Catholic with exceptional opportunities for knowing what was going on, but **Xavier Rynne** was not his real name and nobody knew what it was.

As far as I know, nobody knows his real identity yet, but now we have his fifth book, *Vatican Council II* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$10). This new, one-volume version of the four previous books skips chronologies, lists of speakers, and documentary appendices, and retains the timely, on-the-scene flavor of the original texts. It is a lively Roman Catholic view of the "human side" of the council, and of the Catholic Church. Some aspects of the view will look familiar to United Methodists since we, too, are involved in rethinking the faith and forms of a great church.

A slim, attractive woman doctor is responsible for a new kind of medical treatment that is sending drug addicts back to their families and to work as responsible members of society. The treatment substitutes the drug methadone for the narcotics that formerly

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts from *Instrument of Thy Peace* are © 1968 by the Seabury Press and are reprinted by permission of the publisher.—EDDORS