The contemporary emphasis on materialistic values, consumerism and the prevalent sensate culture leave these high-minded young people feeling cold and empty. They hunger for the transcendent, the sacred, as Fichter analyzes them, and they are willing to pour themselves into a life of sacrifice and even missionary zeal. They want to be challenged.

F. denies that these converts are victims of brainwashing. He sees them as undergoing a genuine conversion away from the secular culture that is identified more and more with industrialization and economic development.

One disturbing feature of this movement is its claim to unify all religions. For them no one renounces or leaves his or her original religious affiliation. Catholic Moonies say that they are better Catholics now than they were before joining the Moonies. They say that they did not really leave their Church but have enriched their relationship with it. They know there are differences but they say that the beliefs and practices they now embrace are an improvement — not a repudiation — of Catholicism. When visiting their families they even attend Mass and receive Communion!

Very recently there was much grave concern here because of the inroads of the "Children of God" cult with its blatant appeal to the baser instincts in unlimited sexual freedom. The Moonies are at the other end of the moral spectrum insisting on pre-marital chastity, marital fidelity, and condemning adultery as the greatest moral evil. Their belief that they can be Moonies and good Catholics defies all analysis since they have to deny the most basic and cherished Catholic beliefs. In this they are very different from the many Fundamentalists and Evangelicals who strive mightily to separate Catholics from all Catholic practises and devotions as soon as possible, especially devotion to Our Lady.

For Catholic parents, educators and religious leaders this work of Fichter will stimulate reflection on the proper approach to modern youth. Indulgence or watering down the teaching of Christ can be the worst possible approach to those who are hungry for the sacred, the transcendent. Helping them to material prosperity could leave them feeling cold and empty. Centuries ago St. Augustine put it very succinctly when he said that God has made us for himself and our hearts are restless until they rest in him.

Gerald W. Healy, S.J.


This book is actually a textbook on The Last Things. A glance through the Table of Contents gives one a good overview of the subjects treated. The
book is divided into five parts: (1) Is There Life After Death? (2) What Are We Before Death? (3) What Happens At Death? (4) What Happens After Death? (5) What Happens At The End Of The World?

Each part is divided into chapters (27 chapters in all). Most of the chapters are treated in methodical fashion: First, a general overview of the chapter; then the evidence from other religions; the evidence from the Old Testament; from the New Testament; from the Fathers of the Church; from the Church Magisterium; from theologians, both Protestant and Catholic; and finally, a conclusion.

Once in a while Fortman argues his own position on the matter discussed; but most of the time he is content to outline the doctrine gleaned from his sources.

Most of the subjects treated in the book are pretty much the subjects found in the traditional manuals De Novissimis: Death, Judgment (Particular and General), Heaven, and Hell — as well as Purgatory, Limbo, the Parousia, the Resurrection of the Dead. But the presentation of the doctrines of modern theologians brings the discussion of these subjects up to date. Many readers would find interesting the modern description of Heaven, Hell, Death as final option, and the fate of unbaptized infants. Fortman also adds a discussion of questions of modern interest, such as Reincarnation, Out-of-the Body Experiences, Spiritualism, and Parapsychological phenomena.

The value of the book, in my opinion, is the thorough and systematic presentation of the various views on the Last Things, and the easy access to the pertinent bibliography. This book is apparently the result of the author's experience as theology professor in West Baden College, Campion Academy in Wisconsin, and Loyola University in Chicago.

Eduardo P. Hontiveros, S.J.


The immediate impression that a reader gets upon first reading this book is a feeling of the immensity and complexity of the problems of inculturation. When Vatican II opened windows to the cultures of the world, it also opened a Pandora’s box of problems that almost defy systematization. In response to this defiance, Pope John Paul II, in January 1983, created the Pontifical Council for Culture. Ten months later, the theology department of the University of Notre Dame organized a regional conference to address these complex problems. Two years later, this book is published.

It is to the credit of the editor, Msgr. Joseph Gremillion, that the difficult task of systematizing such complexity has been achieved with remarkable success. Undoubtedly, this is due to the methodical way in which the detailed