THE WORD AND EUCHARIST HANDBOOK. By Lawrence J. Johnson.

Since the reform of the Mass in 1969 good liturgical celebration has been an important priority in the pastoral life of the Church. Crucial in this regard is a knowledge of the rite itself and its potential for a creative and fruitful celebration that is faithful to church guidelines, receptive to the recommendations of liturgists and sensitive to the needs of God's people at worship.

The Word and Eucharist Handbook is a valuable aid towards such a goal. Written "to aid ministers and planners in acquiring a basic understanding of the structure and meaning of the Order of Mass," it provides a wealth of information and recommendations that will surely enhance the celebration of Sunday and weekday Eucharist.

The book is divided according to the outline of the Mass, with the Liturgy of the Eucharist rightly meriting three chapters (Preparation Rites, Eucharistic Prayer, Communion Rite). Each chapter considers the various elements within that part of Mass. The pertinent text from an official document (usually the General Instruction of the Roman Missal) introduces the section. Then follows a commentary to explain the history, meaning and proper liturgical practice for that element.

This rich material is presented in a layout which makes it easily readable and handy for quick consultation. The author's style is smooth and concise — no minor achievement, considering the wealth of sources, articles and liturgical experience on which the commentary is based. The selected bibliography, list of periodicals and useful addresses provided at the end add to the practical value of this work.

Anyone working in the field of pastoral liturgy will find this a useful guide to effective celebration. Priests, first of all, can learn much for the improvement of their role as presiders. Lay liturgical ministers will find answers to a variety of questions touching their ministry and at the same time deepen their knowledge of its historical and theological basis. In truth, anyone who loves the Mass will be enriched by reading and consulting this book.

James T. Meehan, S.J.


This book is written in a fascinating style. From beginning to end, in Fr. Miranda's masterful use of English both technical and literary, a perceptive reader senses a passionate concern. From the introduction, modest and
apologetic, to the final chapter, aglow with the joy of EDSA, he keeps the reader aware of a theological imperative emerging in recent Philippine history. Thoroughly dedicated to theological aims, his interdisciplinary concerns embrace a wide-ranging variety of academic pursuits: anthropology, criteriology, linguistics, history, political science, psychology, and sociology.

What is the object of this passionate concern? The first four chapters, analytic in intent, barely articulates this. But the fifth and final chapter, entitled "EDSA as paradigm for Asia," that arose, he says apologetically, "out of theological conversation that had to be hastily addressed," reveals a desire, shared with many Filipino theologians today, to discover the jewels of a pauper, the riches that we can call our own, for us to share with the rest of the world. The very spontaneity and haste with which he has managed to put his reflections together in seventeen tightly packed pages can give a clear idea of the object of his passionate concern.

Clear, yes. But now, what is the best word for it? Readers will have to decide that for themselves. Whatever the English word for the central concern of the fifth chapter, it is a good norm with which to critique the preceding four chapters. In these chapters, one sees Tagalog theology launching out into the unchartered seas of indigenous linguistics. As a linguistic venture, it cannot as yet be criticized adequately until after a few more semestral voyages in other oceans of academe; other theologates must carefully check out the etymological details. What is now of importance is the desire and the decision to launch out.

But why linguistics? Because faith comes from hearing. Because theology has to be shared and articulated in the language familiar to the hearers. Because the insights accumulated in every worshipping community through centuries of Christian thought are for all nations. Because a linguistic sharing of faith experiences generates transcultural creativity, raises levels of consciousness, and reveals hints of hierophany — like the EDSA experience.

In Miranda's hesitant choice of linguistics, his intuition can be trusted to provide a fruitful agenda for recasting theology in a Filipino context. Congratulations are in order.

Vicente Marasigan, S.J.


Ibn 'Abbād was born in Ronda in Spain in 1332. He emigrated to Morocco while still young, completed his studies there, and wrote a commentary on the sayings of the Shadhili master, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh al-İskandarī, a work that