to attempt to recover the “original meaning” of the biblical texts and represents this meaning as the “true” interpretation. . . . (p. 57)

Authors who use the helps the historical-critical method can give/find little or no place in Coward’s references to sources. For example, in Chapter Two, Scripture in Christianity, no mention is made of Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland E. Murphy or David M. Stanley. In Chapter Three, Scripture in Islam, the outstanding Muslim scholar, Fazlur Rahman, who has written much on this subject, is referred to only twice, but Labib as-Said twenty times, Mahmoud Ayoub fourteen times, and Ahmad von Denffer nine times. The standard work on the Qur’ān, Bell’s Introduction to the Qur’ān by W. Montgomery Watt, is not even mentioned.

Refusing to cite authors or books widely acknowledged to excel in their field, because they disagree with the prejudices of some believers, offends objectivity. If what a competent authority says is true, ultimately it will not avert from God or from the goal of religion sought by every sincere believer. The book depends excessively on secondary sources in English. Most of the documentation refers to books, but much also to encyclopedias, to periodical literature, to collections of essays, and to personal interviews. Typographic mistakes in the form of misspellings and omissions of words or phrases are common. A few are egregious, e.g., on p. 205, Encyclopaedia Britannica (3rd ed.1), Macropaedia, and should have been picked out by any alert proofreader. The index is inadequate, and the book to be fully useful should append a list of all books, articles, and essays cited, together with full bibliographical data.

The book contains much valuable information on world religions and can be a useful addition to any theological library. For the reasons mentioned above, however, the reader is advised to use it in conjunction with other sources.

Thomas J. O’Shaughnessy, S.J.


Among the great challenges for any retreat director is to give a retreat to priests. Perhaps this is because priests spend so much of their lives preaching to others — and have spent so many years listening to seminary professors — that it is difficult to say anything fresh and inspiring to them. As St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Great and others realized long ago, the real danger is that our
nearness to the altar can destroy the wonder with which the "ordinary" Christian responds to the mystery of God’s love. Carlo Martini, S.J., is a priest, a former superior of the Biblical Institute in Rome and Rector of the Gregorian University. He is now the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan in Italy and has been the president of the Italian Episcopal Conference. Thus he possesses both the biblical and the pastoral background which should enable him to speak meaningfully to priests of their commitment to Christ. And this is precisely his purpose in Through Moses to Jesus. As the dust jacket of the book tells us: "He is the author of a dozen books that have been published in Italy, Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, France, Holland and Spain. [This is, however,] his first book of spiritual reading published in North America." The book originated as an eight-day retreat for priests in northern Italy in 1978. The translation, which is smooth and clear, is by a Holy Spirit Adoration sister, Sr. Mary Theresilde Skerry.

Cardinal Martini’s work follows the basic pattern of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, though explicit references to the Exercises are few — and only one who knew the Exercises well would recognize the Ignatian framework. Thus a person (priest, religious or lay person) who was not familiar with the Ignatian Exercises could use the book quite comfortably. And one, like myself, who has been raised in the Ignatian tradition could find here a fresh perspective on familiar truths. I used Martini’s book in my most recent annual retreat. While I did wish for a more explicit Ignatian framework, I also realized that I could supply that for myself. What Martini gave me was precisely that fresh perspective which led me deeper into truths and experiences which I knew only too well.

Martini’s basic pattern is to speak of Moses, of Jesus, and of myself. If we judge by the space allocated in the text, the book is mostly about Moses. But this discussion (which gives the book its distinctive freshness), is merely intended to "prime the pump," as it were — to lead us to encounter Jesus from a new angle. The briefer sections on Jesus (as the new Moses) and ourselves are to provide the real subject matter of our prayer. At times Jesus is contrasted with Moses; more often we see the essential attitudes of Jesus' own life and mission foreshadowed in the call and ministry of Moses. In every case, the challenge is to incarnate in my own life the essential attitudes of Moses and of Jesus. Since Martini also draws on Midrashic commentary on the Bible, we consider not only the familiar events of Moses' career (such as the burning bush, the encounter with Pharaoh and the passage through the Sea of Reeds), but also the three periods, of forty years each, in the life of Moses as well as his role as "Propheta Traditus" (the "passion" of Moses). We are challenged to ask (p. 25) in which of the three periods — Preparation, Generosity and Failure, and the Inbreaking of God — we find ourselves at present. Again, in considering Moses as the "servant of God," Martini draws upon the insight of St. Gregory of Nyssa in his life of Moses — that "Christian life entails be-
coming like Moses” (p. 77) who was, above all, the trustworthy servant of God.

The use of the Fathers of the Church as well as Midrashic sources, in addition to the central role accorded to Moses in leading us to a deeper following of Jesus, made *Through Moses to Jesus* a valuable companion for me in my 39th year of following the Spiritual Exercises. And occasionally a passage caught my imagination and became a leitmotif of my own prayer. For example, in the final day of the retreat Martini introduces the contemplation of the Resurrection with this striking thought (p. 120): “God is small and great at the same time, and he eludes all our attempts to program our dialogue with him. God is Love, and love does not let itself be programmed. God becomes small and frustrates our programs; he accepts being a scandal to all who do not want to leave him free to love as he wishes. . . . It is this love that the small Jesus, the Logos become small, offers to Mary of Magdala, the two disciples of Emmaus and the apostles, “wasting” his time with them. In this way God’s love repeatedly disconcerts us in our pagan nostalgia for a revelation that is complete, total, absolute, definitive and always under our control.”

Shortly after reading — or rather, praying through — Martini’s *Through Moses to Jesus*, I celebrated my 25th anniversary of priestly ordination. My retreat experience was a beautiful preparation for that day. Martini concludes the Foreword with these words (p. 8): “May this book give its readers courage to dare the leap of trust, so that their own lives may be marked by the paschal experience of following in the footsteps of Moses and of him whom he prefigured, Jesus.” To any who desire to make, or to renew, that leap, be they priests or religious or laity, *Through Moses to Jesus* can be recommended with confidence.

*Thomas H. Green, S.J.*


An Asian Rahner or Augustine? Too bold a statement — even out of place? Would the recipient accept the compliment — find it odious — prefer that it had never been spoken? Such comparisons-questions-flights of fantasy engulf one’s mind while reading *An Asian Theology of Liberation* by the Sri Lankan Catholic theologian Aloysius Pieris, S.J. Without doubt, this is a uniquely original and creative book! It is authentically Asian and poignantly perceptiv! Pieris’ passion and sensitivity for contextualized theology distinguish him as one of Asia’s foremost theological visionaries.