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Scripture

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THE JERUSALEM BIBLE

The importance of *The Jerusalem Bible* published last October has already been widely acknowledged. It would indeed have been astonishing if the implications of this long awaited event had failed to be recognised, for *The Jerusalem Bible* is unique. There is no lack of English bibles, but none is comparable with this, since it contains the most helpful and reliable aids to a proper understanding of the Scriptures than can be expected of any single volume. To students of the Bible familiar with French, the *Bible de Jérusalem* has been an unfailing source of inspiration for the past twenty years. It has also been a quarry from which many English writers on the Bible have obtained their material, and readers of this literature will therefore find in *The Jerusalem Bible* much with which they are already familiar. But for the much wider public which this Bible is already reaching there will be time and again the thrill of seeing light thrown on puzzling obscurities and the wonder of penetrating depth of meaning never before suspected. In fact it would seem true to say that the effect of this publication, particularly on English speaking Catholics will be even greater than is at present realised. After a slow and timid start the conviction has by now become firmly established that our religious teaching must draw once more directly from its source, and that the Divine Revelation cannot be revitalised except in this way. The steadily increasing stream of books on the Bible is evidence of this. But this has also served during the last ten years to emphasise our lack of a satisfactory biblical text which without further trouble and expense would be made intelligible by means of an accompanying commentary.

This need has been most strongly felt by those responsible for religious education at all levels, and it is they especially who feel deeply grateful to Father Alexander Jones for his courageous enterprise, and for the years of persevering and devoted work which have been demanded of him. The church throughout the English speaking world owes him a great debt of gratitude, and will continue in his debt for a very long time to come. It needs little imagination to appreciate how heavy a burden such a work placed upon him, leaving aside the unimaginable frustrations and the crushing difficulties which in fact were

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also his lot, and which would have caused a lesser man to abandon even his most cherished project. We congratulate him on having overcome many difficulties and persevered through many trials. We admire the qualities of erudition and fine judgement which he shows in this work, and we rejoice with him to see *The Jerusalem Bible* beautifully printed and produced, a reality at last.

T. WORDEN