

# the CORD

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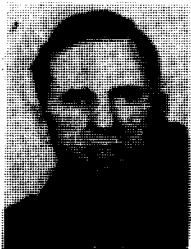
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## COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover for our January issue was drawn by Brother Thomas J. Kornacki, O.F.M., a theological student for Holy Name Province at Holy Name College, Washington; and the illustrations by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., a contemplative at Sancta Clara Monastery, Canton, Ohio.

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## Religious and Marriage Encounter

IN THE MONTH of January the Liturgy calls our attention to the Holy Family and the Wedding Feast of Cana, and accordingly, to the Sacrament of Matrimony. One of the healthy signs of renewed Catholic interest in Marriage as a Sacrament is the Marriage Encounter Movement. Aimed at strengthening the bond between partners by teaching a technique of communication of feelings, Marriage Encounter is actuating the potential of thousands of Christian married people—over 100,000 in the U.S.

The program takes a couple out of their home situation for a 44-hour weekend of listening to well prepared presentations and "dialoging" about them. The event is a couples' event, not a sensitivity session or an exercise in group dynamics. Community is created indirectly by the routine, the rigorous routine, that the couples share. The priest is an important part of the weekend, as he attempts to communicate how he has related to his Church and God, and gives insights into the problems all Christians must face.

What has Marriage Encounter to do with us religious and priests? First of all, it is a program we can recommend to our friends and families whose basically good marriages can be better (that's about 95% of the married people I know). One couple, married a number of years, remarked after one session, "Why didn't we know about this years ago!" And this is typical of the type of comment. Moreover, there is a follow-up program, so that the 44 hours is not just one great weekend, but a weekend which begins a happier and fuller marriage. Marriage Encounter is also open to priests and religious (95% of whose marriages to Church and fraternity can likewise be better). I found that the experience deepened my own commitment and created a real, special bond between myself and the friar with whom I made the weekend. Being part of a community of "encountered couples" is a real fringe benefit of the weekend.

My experience with Marriage Encounter was a good one. I found it theologically and psychologically orthodox. It does generate a good deal of emotion and enthusiasm, as you may know if you have spoken to couples just off a weekend. Hence I would recommend that common sense prevail in the selection of one's encounter partner, and that young religious not be sent off in droves to try it. For several priests I know, Marriage Encoun-

ter has proved a real boon to their priesthood. For the majority who have made it, it has helped them to appreciate more deeply their priesthood and their community. With fruits like these, the finger of God is obviously there.

*J. Julian Davis ofm*

## To The Christmas Poinsettia

Your brilliant jetting red and green  
Enhance His crib, or merrying:  
Wherever human hearts  
Reflect, expect  
Bright Life.

See, earthen vessel's seeded clay  
Has sprung a root, and rod, and spray  
Of patterned leafy form  
Save red the head,  
Bright Life.

Rich symbol gay of Christmasness.  
Our green cast red at His expense  
Who leaped to spill  
And drain through vein  
Bright Life.

Go, then, tinsel-wrapped-up slips.  
Bring Christmas joy to all men's lips  
Who choosing your disguise  
May come to prize  
Bright Life.

SISTER MADONNA JOSEPH CASEY, O.S.C.

# Bonaventure, Hopkins, cummings

MARIGWEN SCHUMACHER

all worlds have halfsight, seeing either with  
life's eye (which is if things seem spirits) or  
(if spirits in the guise of things appear)  
death's: any world must always half perceive.

only whose vision can create the whole

(being forever a foolishwise  
proudhumble citizen of ecstasies  
more steep than climb can time with all his years)

he's free into the beauty of the truth:

and strolls the axis of the universe  
—love, each believing world denies, whereas  
your lover (looking through both life and death)  
timelessly celebrates the merciful

wonder no world deny may or believe.

e. e. cummings

SIGHT, HALFSIGHT, insight, throughout the ages. In our mid-  
intuition, imagination, 20th century, there is renewed  
images: all these (both as words interest in solving the unsolvable  
and as the elusive meaning they and probing into the mystical.  
attempt to contain) have demand- We have seen actualized that im-  
ed the considered attention of possible dream of landing on the  
creative minds and of research- moon and walking in outer space:  
ers, commentators, critics we are facing energy crises that

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Miss Marigwen Schumacher, Head of the Classical Languages Department at the Emma Willard School, Troy, N.Y., is the author-translator of *Bonaventure: Rooted in Faith* (Franciscan Herald Press). She presented this paper April 2, 1974, at the Siena College Septicentennial Tribute to St. Bonaventure. The references to Hopkins are from Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems and Prose*, ed. W. H. Gardner (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963); those to cummings, from *e. e. cummings*, a selection of poems (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1938).

force us to look again into uses of our natural resources and the ecological preservation of our planet, earth. Processes long ago discarded as too difficult, too costly, or too long in coming into fruition have become the "now" focus, both in the realms of the physical and of the psychic.

Moving forward—or is it backwards?—current trends and investigations reaffirm that man is both intellect and emotion, mind and spirit; and that the integrity of each must be balanced into a synthesis of both. In the April, 1969, issue of *Scientific American*, Ralph Norman Haber, writing on "Eidetic Images," concluded that "Imagery is an important characteristic of many cognitive tasks, and it should be opened to serious scientific investigation."<sup>1</sup> On September 9, 1973, the *New York Times Magazine*'s cover illustration and main article reported current developments under the direction of Dr. Roger Sperry, psychobiologist at the California Institute of Technology. "We are left-brained or right-brained," read the caption; and the article described in detail some of the experiments being conducted to ascertain more about the functioning of both halves of our brains connected as they are, like

Siamese twins, by a thick-fiber nerve cable. The left brain is "verbal, analytic, dominant"; the right is "artistic, mute, mysterious." The final paragraph of this article states:

For centuries we have concentrated on the verbal side of our brains: the side that produces things we know how to analyze and measure. Our mute half-brain remains uncharted. We know almost nothing about how the right hemisphere thinks, or how it might be educated—and we have just begun to discover how much it contributes to the complex, creative acts of man.

Even more recently, on Sunday, February 24, 1974, the *New York Times* published an article, "Inventors invent, but the question is, How?" Defining "invention" as an "act of creative imagination," the article continued: "But the creative moment itself remains enigmatic, a puzzle that has attracted much serious study . . . both psychological and sociological."

It is this "act of creative imagination," the "creative moment," which concerns us here. How does one—anyone—make the transfer from the actual physical images which his eye presents to his brain (i.e., the things he sees): how does that get translated into "in-

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<sup>1</sup>Ralph Norman Haber, "Eidetic Images," *Scientific American* 225, No. 4 (April, 1969), p. 44.

sight," into "artistic creative invention," be it in word or painting or sculpture or space walk or mystic communion?

Constantin Brancusi is quoted as saying, "They are fools who call my work abstract. What they think to be abstract is the most realistic, because what is real is not the outer form but the idea, the essence of things."<sup>2</sup> So too the paintings of Jackson Pollack may be seen as statements about the world in which we live: "statements distilled so that we may grasp a fresh view . . . on our own terms and according to our own experience."<sup>3</sup>

James J. Gibson, an American experimental psychologist,

draws a distinction between the visual world—the world as we normally experience it during our day-to-day activities—and the visual field—what we see if we introspect our visual sensations and concentrate on the actual nature of the information that falls on our retinas. It is hard to explain scientifically how exactly we see the visual world; it is much easier to explain how we see the visual

field. And yet almost all the time we see the visual world and only rarely, and by an effort of concentration, do we see the visual field. In fact the "visual field" is really a rather sophisticated way of seeing that depends on the ability to introspect our sensations—to watch ourselves seeing.<sup>4</sup>

Eyesight is probably the best developed of man's senses. How we see, our perceptions and our sensations, is inextricably bound up with how we think and with how we express our thoughts through verbal and/or visual expressiveness and creativity. Rudolf Arnheim points out that

It seems now that the same mechanisms operate on both the conceptual and intellectual level . . . . Recent psychological thinking, then, encourages us to call vision a creative activity of the human mind. Perceiving achieves, at the sensory level, what in the realm of reasoning is known as understanding. Every man's eyesight also anticipates in a modest way the admired capacity of the artist to produce patterns that validly interpret experience by means of organized form.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup>C. B. Lees, *Gardens, Plants, and Man* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 173.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>4</sup>Paul Overy, *Kandinsky: The Language of the Eye* (London, 1969), p. 35. Cf. James J. Gibson, *The Perception of the Visual World* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950).

<sup>5</sup>Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), p. 31.

Noel A. Fitzpatrick, O.F.M.

1934 - 1974

His vision—clear, Franciscan, and timeless—has touched many of us in myriad rainbow arcs. To him, who now participates in the fullness of Vision, this paper is dedicated in great joy and with much love.

A few years earlier than Arnheim, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy had expressed it this way:

The intuitive is most accurately understood as a speeded-up, sub-conscious logic, parallel to conscious thought, in all save its greater delicacy and fluidity. Usually the deeper meanings so often ascribed to the intuitive more properly belong to sensory apprehension. Here resides the ineffable. This kind of experience is fundamentally non-verbal but it is not inarticulate to the visual and other senses. Intuitive, in the verbal universe, is always potentially explicable. Intuitive, in the plastic sense, in all the arts including poetry, is a matter never, probably, capable of conscious verbalization.<sup>6</sup>

A significant distinction is made, in that last quotation, between "non-verbal" and "not inarticulate to the visual and other senses." And notice the use of "greater delicacy and fluidity," "deeper meanings" which belong to "sensory apprehension" which, as Arnheim points

out, "encourages us to call vision a creative activity of the human mind"—that human mind which is Siamese-twinning of "verbal, analytic, dominant left-brain" and "artistic, mute, mysterious right-brain."

Just as scientists and psychologists and sociologists publish the results of their experiments and the (sometimes startling) new knowledge which these produce, so too, some writers and artists have been willing to talk and to write about the processes of artistic creation as they have experienced it, be that in music, sculpture, painting, or poetry. Amongst those who have articulated their insights and individual evolution stand such giants as Picasso, e.e. cummings, Kandinsky, Gerard Manley Hopkins. There is, indeed, nothing "new" in these attempts to explain, share, teach that indescribable, elusive, and intense power that is the very essence of artistic creation in whatever its actual final form. Theorists

<sup>6</sup>Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, *The New Vision* (New York: Wittenhorn, 1947), p. 68n.

and practitioners from Graeco-Roman times until the present have wrestled with the problem: is it some power from without, as the Greeks believed ("enthousiastikos"—possession by the god) or inspiration from the Muses ("Musa mihi causas memora!"); is it some surging, nascent force within an individual that cries out for release into creative expression; is it a complex of economic and cultural situations that triggers the response?

It is not my intention, here, to argue the merits of the various proclaimants, nor to reconcile opposing views into synthesis. I much prefer to deal with individuals rather than with issues,

IT MAY SEEM strange that I have chosen to discuss Bonaventure together with two poets—but poets who also wrote in prose just as Bonaventure, who wrote in prose, also at times wrote poetry. It is not, however, Bonaventure's poetry that I am discussing; rather I shall be looking at some experts from several of his homilies alongside a small selection from the poems of Hopkins and cummings. I have become convinced that this is a valid ground of comparison: both homily and poem must make their statement on impact—must "say something" to reader or listener the first time through

with preaching and poetry rather than with argumentation and "schools of interpretation." Thus, in my attempt to understand the "mute, mysterious, artistic right-brain" which introspects visual perceptions and articulates them into creative activity, I turn to the writings of Bonaventure, Hopkins, and cummings. From them—in very different and yet very similar ways—I see manifested the statement of Rudolf Arnheim: "Perceiving achieves, at the sensory level, what in the realm of reasoning is known as understanding," and I find that unique distillation of experience which gives me "a fresh grasp and new understanding" of the interrelation of "visual field" to "visual world."

rather than need the weighty accompaniment of commentary or the leisured hours in one's study to mull through complex and complicated thought. The poem and the homily must both be crystal-clear, focused, taut, demanding an economy of words and of time but abounding in emotional power and artistic expression of visual reality. It is only through these verbalizations that preacher and poet can speak to us of the impact each has experienced in his introspection of visual world into visual field—of sight into insight. And in the words of Ben Jonson:

Language most shows a man: speak that I may see thee. It springs out of the most retired, and inmost parts of us, and is the image of the Parent of it, the mind. No glasse renders a man's forme, or likeness, so true as his speech. Nay, it is likened to a man; and as we consider feature, and composition in a man; so words in Language: in the greatnesse, aptnesse, sound, structure, and harmony of it.

So then: Bonaventure, Hopkins, cummings. It is not easy to analyze the power and the artistry of any of these men. It is, in fact, very difficult and ultimately, perhaps, as Moholy-Nagy insists, "never capable of conscious verbalization." All three share a fantastic precision in exactness of word-choice that renders the reading of the writings at first somewhat "mind-boggling" and apparently difficult. However, as one works with the particular idiom and phraseology of each one, there comes an excitement and an almost unbelievable delight in touching through their word-choice into that experience of which each speaks.

John Ciardi, in an interview on "Poetry and the Poet" published in *America* (January 13, 1973), speaks of the need to become "language-sensitive which includes, of course, the rhythm as well as the words" and, when questioned about "difficult



poets" such as Donne (or Hopkins or cummings) insisted that "You have to capture a particular idiom but once you've captured it, you've got a gift of perception and a joy in language." Do notice that Ciardi has placed "perception" before "language"—and also that one is "gift" and the other "joy." This is, perhaps, a capsule containing the essence of all that I am trying to say here about Bonaventure, Hopkins, and cummings: that as you work with their idiom you do receive a "gift" of perception along with a real "joy" in language! Their words are pregnant with their mystic vision as they responded, in their own experience of creative forces, to the same direct reality—responded in the same way to creature, creation, Creator: Trinity in Oneness—Oneness in Trinity. To HIM WHO

IS, they responded in a lyric affirmation of "YES":

O Thou to whom the musical white spring  
offers her lily inextinguishable,  
taught by thy tremulous grace bravely to fling  
Implacable death's mysteriously sable  
robe from her redolent shoulders,  
Thou from whose  
feet reincarnate song suddenly leaping  
flameflung, mounts, inimitably to lose  
herself where the wet stars softly are keeping  
their exquisite dreams—O Love! upon thy dim  
shrine of intangible commemoration,  
(from whose faint close as some grave languorous hymn  
pledged to illimitable dissipation  
unhurried clouds of incense fleetly roll)  
i spill my bright incalculable soul.

e. e. cummings

### Hurrahing in Harvest

Summer ends now; barbarous in beauty, the stooks rise  
Around; up above, what wind-walks! what lovely behaviour  
Of silk-sack clouds! has wilder, wilful—wavier  
Meal-drift moulded ever and melted across skies?

I walk, I lift up, I lift up heart, eyes,  
Down all that glory in the heavens to glean our Saviour:  
And eyes, heart, what looks, what lips yet gave you a  
Rapturous love's greeting of realer, of rounder replies?

And the azurous hills are his world-wielding shoulder  
Majestic—as a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet!  
These things, these things were here and but the beholder  
Wanting; which two when they once meet,  
The heart rears wings bold and bolder  
And hurls for him, O half hurls earth for him off under his feet.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

In both these poems the lyric in creation is tumultuously ap-  
joy in their similar vision of God parent—be it "the musical white

spring" whose "song" of resur-  
rection "suddenly leaping, flame-  
flung" carries on upwards to that  
"shrine of intangible commem-  
oration" where God = IS · Love:  
or be it the silk-sack clouds"  
of autumn upon the "azurous  
hills" "very-violet—sweet"  
which, when looked up at with  
"eyes, heart," "rears wings bold  
and bolder" and "hurls earth . . .  
off under his feet."

This same exultant joy and  
vision of God in creation is also  
fundamental to Bonaventure's  
perception and consequent lyric  
expression. Best known, perhaps,  
from the opening chapters of his  
*Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*,  
written in 1259 on Alverno, Bona-  
venture's "exemplarism" (as the  
philosophers call it) is a constant  
strand in the fabric of his expres-  
sion. In a homily preached in  
Paris on April 23, 1251, there is  
the following passage.

First [the disciples] saw [the risen]  
Christ the Lord as Creator con-  
spicuous in the created world in  
individual qualities [N.B.: "The  
disciples were filled with joy  
when they saw the Lord— Jn.  
20:20]: "since through the grand-  
eur and beauty of the creatures  
we may contemplate God" (Wis.  
13:5). We understand Paul's state-

ment: "Ever since God created  
the world his everlasting power  
and deity—however invisible—  
have been there for the mind to  
see in things he has made" (Rom.  
1:20), whenever we are lifted up  
from the discovery [*cognitio*] of  
God through this intermediate  
ladder. As Bernard declares: The  
greatness and beauty of creation  
shouts the greatness and beauty of  
the Creator.

The wisdom of the Master-  
Craftsman is clearly seen in his  
work and shines forth in the  
result. David sings: "The heavens  
declare the glory of God" (Ps. 19:  
1), and John Damascene explains  
that "the heavens declare the glory  
of God not because they send forth  
such a voice that can be perceived  
by our human ears but because,  
in showing us from their own  
greatness the power of the  
Creator, we, then, reflecting upon  
this beauty, stand in awe and  
honor the Maker as the greatest  
master-craftsman." Because of  
this we must not remain as quiet  
observers of the beauty of creation  
but through it stretch upwards  
towards the initial Creator.<sup>7</sup>

In the final section of this homily,  
as he expands *tripliciter* on the  
theme of "rejoicing," Bona-  
venture elucidates: "Third, they  
rejoiced *superessentialiter* in the

<sup>7</sup>The date of this homily has been established by Father J. Guy Bougerol, O.F.M., in his chronology for the *Sermones de Tempore*, which Bonaventure himself tells us he "edited and published" during those early years of teaching at the University. It is a homily for the First Sunday after Easter (*Dominica in Albis*), on the text of Jn. 20:20: "The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord." Bonaventure, *Opera Omnia*, t. IX, 289-91; this passage is in col. 290a.

fullness of desire satisfied with this taste [*degustatio*] of divine sweetness." And then he quotes from Isaiah (66:10-11): "Rejoice, Jerusalem! Be glad for her, all you who love her! Rejoice, rejoice for her, all you who mourned her, that you may be suckled, filled, from her consoling breasts, that you may savor with delight her glorious breasts."

Bonaventure then connects Isaiah's "rejoice" motif with ours:

Those who wish to arrive at that that "lift-off" [*excessus contemplationis*] of "insightfulness" ought first to busy themselves in activeness through cries of repentance, because then the "insight-full spirit" suckles so much sweetness of grace from the fruitful breasts of the Holy Spirit that, plentifully fed and filled, it is lifted above the human condition into a heavenly state and suspended above itself on the highest heights and, separated from itself in such great interior dancing-joy [*tripudium*], is seduced and delighted so that it seems more intoxicated than sober. Thus Sacred Scripture sometimes calls this sweetness a "tasting" and sometimes calls it "intoxication." Therefore, if God, with a scanty drop trickling slowly down from the raging flood of his great sweetness into our human

### Pied Beauty

Glory be to God for dappled things—

For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;

For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;

spirit, so completely intoxicates us—what will it be like when our spirit is wholly swallowed and drowned in his vast ocean of limitless happiness? Since, then, our spirit is softened, sweetened, satisfied completely by one drop that cannot be explained nor reported, much less can we understand that total wide-open sea of his Love.<sup>8</sup>

I have quoted this passage at some length to capture some flavor both of the way in which Bonaventure weaves the scriptural texts into his preaching and blends their coloration through his own expansions, and also to feel some of his careful word-choice (which makes the translation difficult at times) as he contrasts "stilla" and "gutta" as small drops, almost droplets, with the huge openness of "pelagus" and "abyssus"—vast ocean and wide-open sea.

There is, I find, in all three, an experience of God so powerfully alive in his creation that their exuberance cascades forth in vigorous excitement expressed in carefully molded phrases that, despite their control, veritably burst upon us, shaking our complacency into awareness and into praise.

Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;  
Landscape plotted and pierced—fold, fallow, and plough;  
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;  
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)  
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;  
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:

Praise him.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Sometimes the short summary of a homily, preached by Bonaventure but recorded by his secretary, illustrates more directly for us his deep insight into God in and through creation. A beautiful example of this can be seen in the following text which was given on Christmas day at S. Maria de Portiuncula:

It is, moreover, important to notice that the grace-filled birth of Christ, so ardently longed for by everyone, is described in Sacred Scripture by multi-faceted metaphors so that what one does not contain another may supply.

Christ Jesus, born of the Virgin Mother, is described in metaphor:

—a whitening flower, because of his worldwide candor: "I am a flower of the field and the lily of the valleys" (Song. 2:1); "A shoot springs from the stock of Jesse" (Is. 11:1).

—a blossoming rose, because of his worldwide loveliness: "As the rose bushes of Jericho" (Eccli.

24:18); "like the roses in the days of spring" (Eccli. 50:8).

—a fragrant lily, because of his worldwide renown: "In lily and rose I shall satiate your descendants in joy" (4 Esd. 2:29); "Flower like the lily, spread your fragrance abroad" (Eccli. 39:19).

—a budding orchard, because of his worldwide wisdom: "Your shoots from an orchard of pomegranate trees" (Song 4:13)—this is said of the Virgin Mary's giving birth.

—a spice-smelling garden, because of his worldwide kindness: "My beloved went to his garden, to the beds of spices" (Song 6:1).

—a burgeoning olive-tree, because of his worldwide grace: "Like an olive loaded with fruit" (Eccli. 50:11).

—a storeroom of energizing perfumes, because of his worldwide effectiveness: "The King has brought me into his rooms. You will be our joy and our gladness. We shall praise your love above wine. How right is it to love you, Yahweh!" (Song 1:3).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Again, according to Fr. Bougerol, the date is 1265, 1268, or 1271, all years when Bonaventure was in Assisi for Christmas. Bonaventure, *Opera Omnia*, t. IX, 122: *Sermo 21 in Nativitate Domini*.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, col. 291b.

The visual affect of this homily is immediate, positive, radiant with beautiful images taken from the realities of the visual world and introspected into the visual field in and through Bonaventure's creative perception molded into language pregnant with life. How else could the equations come about—e.g., that blossoming rose = worldwide loveliness; that spice-smelling garden = worldwide kindness; that burgeoning olive-tree = worldwide grace? Incidentally, my rendering of "burgeoning" is an attempt to capture something of Bonaventure's use of "pullulation," which connotes all that is growing, increasing, expanding, proliferating, propagating of

in time of daffodils (who know  
the goal of living is to grow)  
forgetting why, remember how

in time of lilacs who proclaim  
the aim of waking is to dream,  
remember so (forgetting seem)

in time of roses (who amaze  
our here and now with paradise)  
forgetting if, remember yes

in time of all sweet things, beyond  
whatever mind may comprehend,  
remember seek (forgetting find)

and in a mystery to be  
(when time from time shall set us free)  
forgetting me, remember me.

and in Hopkins'

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 194.

growing plants and trees, and of the growing of the life of the Holy Spirit within us. His effective, frequent, deliberate use of that particular word is always and in unexpected places "life-giving"—for example:

God, then, shows compassion on the spirit of the repentant when he plucks out from it all the burrs of sinfulness so that he can sow there, as in a chosen field, the seed of the word of God which leafs out [*pullulare*] into the grain of grace and grows into a harvest of glory.<sup>10</sup>

There is the same visual radiance and mystic phrasing in what is, perhaps, my favorite poem by e.e. cummings:

## Spring

Nothing is so beautiful as Spring—

When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;  
Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush  
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring  
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;  
The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush  
The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush  
With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?

A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning  
In Eden garden. — Have, get, before it cloy,  
Before it cloud, Christ, Lord, and sour with sinning,  
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,  
Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

Do we not, each of us in our richness" of bird-song and frisk-  
own way, rejoice at the first ing lambs of early spring? But do  
glimpse of crocus leaves pointing we also "see" it as a "strain of  
upwards through the sun-melted earth's sweet being in the begin-  
snow in protected corners of the ning" before "it cloud . . . and  
garden— or feel "the rush with sour with sinning"?





# Take and Read

SISTER M. THADDEUS THOM, O.S.F.

**P**ARADOX OF A complicated simplicity! That is the topic of this review article on prayer: simple prayer made complicated or complicated prayer made simple. However one looks at prayer, whether simple or complicated, it is certain that after reading these four short books by four expert writers, both the religious and the lay Christian will find personal prayer as seen through these authors' eyes, hearts, and minds more understandable and more attainable. The four writers present an apparently progressive development of a knowledge, an understanding, an experience, and an application of prayer that will profit all who read.

It is interesting that prayer is something that religious persons discuss frequently and often dispute about as to method, time element, intensity, and value; but basically, what they discover to be most essential is the personal experience of it—an ex-

perience which is not easily defined. Once one has experienced prayer—has, that is, communicated with God in one's own unique way—the other factors fall into place. Since prayer experiences are as diversified as the number of individuals who populate the face of the earth, it would be an insult to the divine Immensity to limit God by saying that one must pray this way . . . or that way. God's Immensity ("bigness") does not allow him to refuse any sincere form of prayer which recognizes him and depends upon him.

Thus, in *The Simple Steps to God* there are statements by the great saints to the effect that "one must seek God within his own soul," "one single thought of a man is of greater worth than the whole world," and "set yourself before your own face as if it were the face of another."

Father François summarizes the theology of the interior life as it is taught and experienced

by the great mystics of Carmel, but the ordinary Christian can understand and appreciate his treatment of the lofty subject. Father suggests many excellent practices for beginners in the spiritual life as well as describes some signs by which the soul may know it is making progress, painful as such progress may be.

## *The Simple Steps to God*

By Father Francois, O.C.D.

(1943)

153 pages Paper, \$2.95

Dimension Books

Denville, N.J.

The book itself is neatly divided into five sections: (1) an awareness of Truth develops into (2) awareness of the Presence of God and (3) presence to oneself, which leads to (4) the encounter with God and (5) faithfulness in small matters which disciplines one for greater things.

After the awareness of the necessity for prayer has been established in one's life, the question arises, *What is Prayer?* Father Keith Egan's book of that title—a very short but deeply elevating book patterned somewhat after the inimitable Charlie Brown's "Happiness is . . ." schema—strings out a series of "To pray is . . ." To pray is to listen, to wait, to be simple, to

share, to say yes, and lastly, to meet God. This is a very direct approach, intellectual as well as experiential, to one's attitudes, background, influences, personal preferences—a real insight into us mass-production people. "Waiting is a painful process. We want results and we want them immediately . . ." Or, as the author quotes from *Alice in Wonderland*, it "takes all the running I can do to stay in the same place."

The problem of work in our lives is a major object of the author's treatment of prayer. He stresses our work-orientation which clouds our intellectual values and prevents us from enjoying the "one thing necessary" in our lives under the pretext that our being busy is terribly essential to the salvation of the human race. ". . . the sweat and work syndrome that we so often think leads us to success makes us a race of over-achievers," he observes. "This mentality leaves out the part that others have in

## *What Is Prayer?*

By Keith Egan, O. Carm.

(1973)

54 pages. Paper, \$1.95

Dimension Books

Denville, N.J.

*Sister M. Thaddeus Thom is a member of the Third Order of St. Francis, Syracuse, N.Y. She holds a Master's Degree in English from the Catholic University of America and is Chairman of the English Department at Assumption Catholic Academy, Syracuse.*

our lives. It fails to acknowledge the effect that care, love, and faithfulness of others have upon us." And again, "the mentality of 'salvation by work' leaves out of the picture the all important factor of God's love for us."

Father Egan takes a careful look at the variety of mentalities, personalities, and backgrounds which present themselves to God in prayer. He concludes from this examination that "prayer is a gift of God, a gift that transforms our lives into an awareness of the wonderful presence of God within us."

### ***How to Talk with God***

By Stephen Winward

(1961)

149 pages Paper, \$1.45

Harold Shaw Publishers  
Wheaton, Ill.

It follows logically that if one is aware of the necessity of prayer and asks oneself the question, what is prayer, then one must wish to talk with God. Stephen Winward's book, *How to Talk with God*, has an easy catechism-like style containing questions and answers to things many of us have thought about privately but have never taken time to discuss. The handbook form is filled with biblical quotations to reinforce the answers and is followed by a type of statement conclusion which summarizes, point by

point, the highlights of each chapter.

The text appears to be a dialogue between the soul and God, in which God suggests some worthy causes to pray for. "Pray about the coming day, the people you are to meet, the events and situations you can foresee, and the work you have to do."

This book could be very useful to teachers of religion who would like to introduce their students to prayer in their everyday lives. A little poem which the author uses illustrates the possibility of turning even ordinary work into a form of worship:

If Jesus built a ship, she would travel trim.

If Jesus roofed a barn, no leaks would be left by him.

If Jesus made a garden, it would look like Paradise.

If Jesus did my day's work, it would delight his Father's eyes.

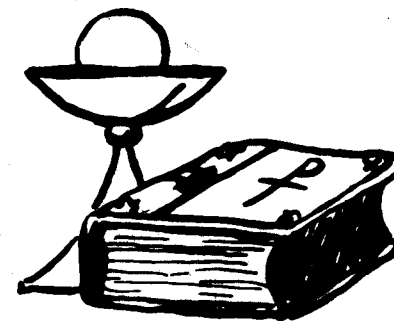
The fourth book in the process toward deep prayer and intense relationship with God is René Voillaume's book, *Christian Vocation*. The author, in his attempt to help the soul strive to be Christlike, captures it, presents it to Jesus every moment of its life, takes it into the various aspects of Jesus' life so that it becomes one with Jesus as he contemplates the Father. From such union flows a genuine fraternal love for others, as well

as apostolic witness to one's own Christian life and a wholesome, filial devotion to the Church.

The style of this book is a bit more sophisticated than that of the others. It too, though, is filled with biblical passages, but it is geared more toward the society of the Church as a whole, as the individual recognizes himself as a part of that society.

The author emphasizes the fact that it is not change which produces a man of prayer, but a deepening of the understanding. "Things at the level of prayer change only by a deepening of the understanding." Man is "split up" and finds it difficult to reach his own "centre," but failure to do so means risking the loss of self-awareness. And as stated earlier, in the discussion of *The Simple Steps to God*, it is only by personal awareness that man can grow in understanding.

Prayer, then, as Voillaume states, must become a "breathing out of self, a total forgetfulness of self, in the presence of God." Man must lose himself in God. Aids to this prayer which the author discusses are (1) the rhythm of the annual retreat, (2) setting aside one half day a week for meditation on the Scriptures, (3) a sabbatical year to take stock of one's life by study and reflection. He states: "These are what I call primary, indeed essential, means; they are not 'pious exercises.'"



The author likewise condemns the "salvation by work" theory so eloquently rejected in *What Is Prayer?*. It takes *courage* to devote a certain amount of time to prayer, he points out, and to offer time is to offer the first-fruits of our activities, thus "acknowledging God's sovereignty over time." As he says, this "presupposes a sacrifice, in that the time thus given to God is taken away from, or sets a limit to, our human activities. We must, therefore, understand what is involved when we decide to consecrate definite time to prayer."

### ***Christian Vocation***

By René Voillaume

(1973)

122 pages. Paper, \$1.95

Dimension Books  
Denville, N.J.

Voillaume's emphasis appears to lie in his attempt to strike the necessary balance between action and contemplation and in his insistence that holiness in its

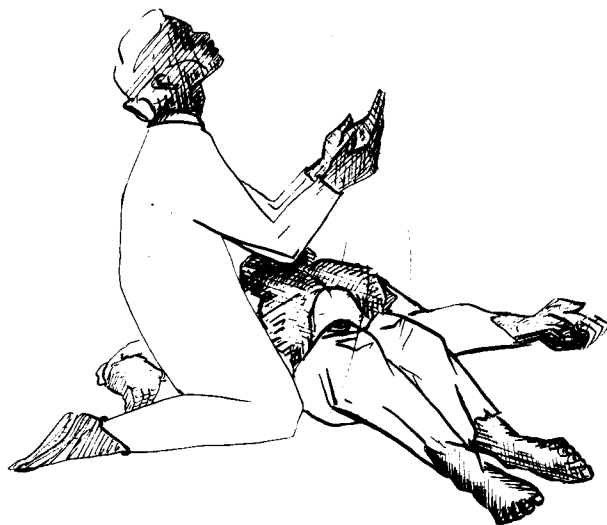
highest form is within the scope of every Christian without distinction. This constant reference back and forth from religious person to Christian in the world, sets up a type of ping-pong style of writing and of thought which seems to solidify the whole of Christianity as a working unit for perfection rather than making unnecessary distinctions about holiness, regarding religious as opposed to the lay Christian.

*Christian Vocation* is an extraordinarily rich book—the sort of book that ever breathes forth new and vibrant values for the soul.

From the somewhat brief review I have given of these four books, I am certain that two things are evident to the reader. First, although there is no pub-

lications relationship of any of these books to any other, still I found that they do comprise a series on prayer which, if followed, will be a source of great spiritual value to the reader. And in the second place, the last book, *Christian Vocation*, seems to crystallize and epitomize all that has been written in the other three. Voillaume peers intensely into our spiritual dilemma, sympathizes with it, understands it, experiences it in print, and beautifully portrays the Christian in pursuit of God.

By reading these four master writers as a progressive series on the spiritual life, one cannot but feel the compelling desire to pray, cannot but come to experience an intimate awareness of God and an irrepressible drive to attain personal holiness.



## Ebony Cross

I bore a brown child into the world  
I heard others say he was soiled.

I held him tight against my dark breast  
And was glad I could offer this shelter and rest.

He grew in his body, as all children do,  
I prayed for a soul that would always shine true.

When he asked why others condemned his dark skin,  
I told him the story of original sin.

I told of a Saviour who repaired our loss  
By dying of death upon a dark cross.

I mentioned explicitly the brown, stained wood  
Until I was certain he understood.

He came to man's stature, firm and lithe,  
I prayed for a spirit to succor his life.

His struggle to love in the face of hate  
Made me sure his battle would never abate.

His calvary came ( as I knew it would)  
I, from the doorway, did what I could.

He faced the mockery, the insults, the scorn.  
Blood pulsed in his temple, an inner thorn.

The hate-hail rattled the ground like stones,  
His caged breath seemed to be cracking his bones.

Then, as I watched, he raised his arms wide,  
An ebony cross, on which his Lord died.

My son's shattered body they laid in my arms,  
He rested serene, secure now from harm.

I kissed the cracked lips of my son victorious  
And thanked God of heaven for a black martyr glorious.

*Sister Mary Seraphim, P.C.P.A.*

# Blessed Are You—

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

IT WAS ALL SO SIMPLE. Jesus climbed up a hill and sat down there on the grassy slope. And, looking around him and down before him at all those eager upturned faces, he spoke as no man had ever spoken before. Yes, with authority, as Matthew was to comment on the occasion of the Evangelical discourse (7:29). But also with heart-breaking simplicity. We have tended to connote heartbreak with pain and sadness. Yet we know that there are many sword-thrusts that break the heart. Joy. A flash of sheer understanding. The burning simplicity of truth stripped of cumbersome trappings of words and shining like a rapier in the sun. All of these break up the hard clods of the heart and make it new.

Christ was about to deliver the Christian philosophy of life and give the first course in theological living. And he delivered and he gave in words so simple that all through the centuries the exegetes have been trying to ex-

plain them to us, sometimes to our help and sometimes to our hindrance. We make best use of the help and free ourselves of the hindrance by immersing ourselves, each one in prayer and reflection, on the message itself, so limited verbally and so utterly pure. "Candor est lucis aeternae!" One must already have attained, by preservation or by reparation, to some measure of the sixth beatitude to be prepared for the message of any of the beatitudes. Blessed are the clean of heart, they shall see God. Blessed are the clean of heart, they alone hear God and heed him. One must be without guile.

In the motley group that Christ addressed, there were many different personalities, many different backgrounds, many different sets-of-heart. Many of the poor were certainly in that crowd, the materially poor. And some of the rich, some of the Pharisees and Scribes, some of them honestly looking for the truth, some of them there out of curiosi-

ty, some of them there to try to catch him in his speech. Each would hear according to his capacity to hear. Those without guile of heart would hear truth and espouse it. Those with guileful hearts would hear truth and disclaim it. Any who were trying to trap Christ in his speech, to find something untenable in what he said, would assuredly have the dark reward of finding what they were looking for. One is always able to turn the world of divine Truth to one's own ruin if one wishes. So, with the curious. They would find something diverting, but certainly not to be taken seriously. One remembers Herod.

There were the others, though, who sat on the grass wanting only to hear what he would have to say, and to hear it with a willing and open heart, not in a debative frame of mind, not even in a dialogal reference of mind, but only to listen and to be made aware of their greatness and to be healed of whatever infirmities of thought they had had before. We want to align ourselves with them.

When he spoke to this great crowd of people, Jesus said first of all: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Here was the simple presentation of his plan for holiness, for the true revolutioning of the world and of souls. One wants to suck at the meaning as

earnestly as a baby nursing at its mother's breast, to suck at every word that fell from those blessed lips. So, first of all, what does "blessed" mean?

We know, with all respect for certain translations, that it does not mean just "happy." Rather, it signifies being favored, set apart, already hallowed, holy. Literally, it denotes that sealed-for-holiness of which the young nun sings at her first profession. "He has set a mark upon me." That is what the blessed ones are: those with the mark of God upon them, those set apart, those bearing a seal, the hallowed ones, the favored ones. And Christ said that this is the condition of those who are poor in spirit. Surely one would like to reflect on some of the qualities of those in so blessed a condition that Jesus does not just promise them a future reward, but guarantees a present one. Blessed are the meek, the gentle; they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who mourn; they shall be comforted. These things shall come about. But only to the poor in spirit and to those suffering for his name's sake, does the Savior speak of immediacy in describing the consequence. Again, those who make peace shall be known as the children of God in eternity. Perhaps even on earth they shall one day be recognized as meriting that title. And blessed are the pure; they shall

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*Mother Mary Francis is Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico. Her writings include many contributions of poetry and prose to periodicals, the immensely popular books Spaces for Silence and A Right to Be Merry, as well as the recently published series of conferences reprinted from our pages: But I Have Called You Friends.*

one day be given the ability to see God. But blessed *are* the poor. Theirs *is* the kingdom of God. It is not a promise for the future, but a present reward.

In considering the qualities of these blessed poor ones in spirit who already own heaven, we can gather them into the generic fold of contentedness before we reflect on them specifically. It is an all-pervasive serenity of soul that marks the truly poor in spirit. Contentedness, but very active contentedness. The contentedness of those who have penetrated the meaning of *fiat*! Those who have gathered strength out of suffering to pronounce upon the fabric itself as well as the pattern and the detail of their lives, the simple, dignified, noble: "Let it be!" The poor in spirit are not restive, not squirmingly intent upon alterations of present reality, but able to isolate the ultimate Reality in the present details. They are in charge of their will, which is indeed free under their steering. They are not ground down by people, by situations, by circumstances, however much they may suffer from them. Rather, they are flexible to all of these. And that may be the first quality of the poor in spirit.

How graceful an expression of contentedness is flexibility! It is to be rooted only in God. Not in circumstances, in situations, in persons, nor, above all, in one-

self, in one's own desires. It belongs to that docility which is the quality of being teachable. There is an old Swedish proverb which is very meaningful in this regard. When I heard a Swedish friend first articulate it, I could not quite make out what she was saying for her heavy accent. She was telling how her mother had always told her, "Der bush das der best ben." At least, that is how it sounded to my dull ear. A space of pondering and a slower repetition yielded the meaning: "The bush that is the best, bends." And so with persons.

He who is poor in spirit bends most easily to God's inspirations, is the least susceptible of confusing God's inspirations with his own plans and desires. The inflexible person is very susceptible of such confusions. And inflexibility of spirit can show itself in surprising ways if we seriously ponder poverty of spirit and the lack of it. There is, for example, the great delusion of preferring to sanctify ourselves rather than to allow ourselves to be sanctified by God. It is the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us, and efforts to achieve the effects of his divine ministry by our own blueprints and constructions will always be unavailing, however enticing. We do not learn very quickly here. Nor does continued failure appear to daunt us in our endeavors to arrogate the ministry of the Holy Spirit to ourselves.

But then there may arise the small, nagging question: "Are we not masters of our own fate? Is not choice ours? How do we reconcile abandonment—flexible, graceful, beautiful surrender—with self-determination? It is not, after all, such a conundrum as it would like to appear. Really, it is the same thought gone all the way around to meet itself and find itself the same. For, yea, it is our choice and our choices in life to make; and, yea, we are masters of our fate. We can choose whether God shall sanctify us, or whether we shall exhaust ourselves and waste our lives in our own self-directed "sanctification." This is our tremendous freedom. That freedom of the best bush—the one that bends.

It is a bitter, constricting, withering thing to claim Godship for ourselves. This is the oldest sin, to "be like God," to achieve our own sanctification not by seeking after God's desires and the unfolding of his will, but in the achievement of what we have decided is our sanctification. In this, the wisest man in the world is an utter dullard, for not one of us knows the mystery of our sanctification. We have only the terrible freedom of allowing ourselves to be sanctified by God, or of refusing.

Flexibility in accepting and espousing God's plan for our sanctity is one of the most subtle of all detachments, one of the

most precious of all riches, and maybe the one we are least ready to claim. The dubious currency that buys sanctification by manipulation of reality can rub so well between one's fingers. How often the saints have been sanctified in their acceptance of God's plans which were the seeming frustration of their own. Few of them have been notably marked with success as the world appraises success. What success really means is in the secret of God's Face. Whether a thing comes off grandiosely or even passingly well, does not really matter. We are called to be seekers—alert, ready, flexible to respond. How things turn out is God's business. How we do them, and how we respond to them, is our business. Flexibility is so very characteristic of those who are poor in spirit.

One sees what happens to the inflexible growth in the storm. It is the unbending tree that falls, the uncurving stalks that are broken. The bending grasses remain, the flowers can defy a tornado with their arabesques. Spiritual flexibility allows us to be disposable, disponible before God. And, far from being equatable with passivity, it demands action, arduous and persevering action. The ballerina does not achieve flexibility without long practice and much travail. Still less does the dancer in spirit arrive at

sheer grace without effort. Is this not what the poor in spirit are—the dancers of the Lord? Bending in adversity, on-point in the sun, liftable, lightsome, full of movement because unencumbered.

The bush that is the best, bends, it has life. The poor in spirit have their foundations only in God and have understood that “we have not here a lasting city” (Heb. 13:14). They bend. They move. They are flexible. They are free and full of song, because they have already the kingdom of heaven for their earthly dwelling-place.

And then there is vulnerability. To be poor in spirit and possess the kingdom of heaven, one must agree to be vulnerable. Those who are truly poor in spirit must deliver over to others the power to hurt them, for without this there is no loving. And without love, we can have only a masque of being poor-in-spirit, that masque of pride and complacency under which one feeds on one’s supposed successes in poverty and is sadly protected from real understanding. There are various expressions of the vulnerability proper to the poor in spirit. One has to let disjointed members be straightened. And this will never be accomplished without pain. One has to let oneself be exploited and misunderstood, for this belongs to loving. Our blessed Lord

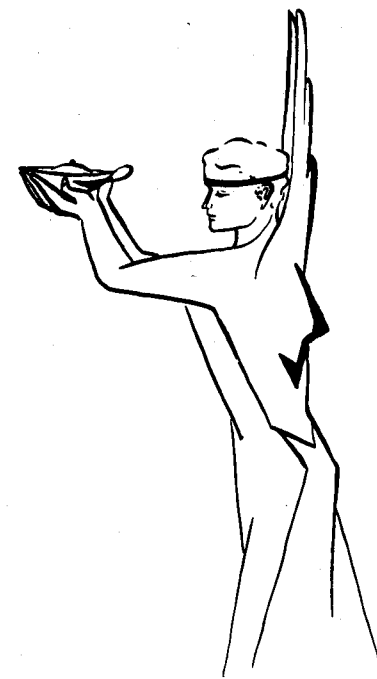
in his earthly life showed himself very vulnerable.

Christ wanted to be loved, he wanted helpers, he wanted friends. When they slept in his hour of need, he rebuked them: “Could you not watch one hour with me?” (Mt. 26:40). He wanted his friends to be with him. And when he gave gifts, when he cured ten and was thanked by only one, he revealed to us his suffering human heart: “Where are the nine?” (Lk. 17: 17). He wanted love, and wanted gratitude. He desired those things that any normal human heart desires. The Son of God was poor in spirit. He was vulnerable, and he was willing to go on being vulnerable after he had been hurt. We do not find Jesus saying the equivalent of, “Well, that is that! That is the last time I shall ever do anything for lepers. What is the use? Why scatter gifts to people who do not even thank me for them?” Nor did he revoke the cure of the ungrateful nine.

Our Savior did not ever strive to arm himself with invulnerability when he was wounded, but showed himself willing to go on being hurt even unto his Passion and death and post-death piercing. He went on working with the sorry little lot of humanity in which we find ourselves and which made up the chorus of his earthly life. He kept his vulnerability unstained. He kept

his vulnerability pure. And for us who want to stumble after him, it is necessary that we never refuse to give more when gratitude has been withheld, that we never refuse to go on loving because our love has been betrayed. What of the tragedy of the Apostolic College? For him, it was not a matter of concluding, as it might well be for us: “Well, this is the end! I cannot have even twelve men without one of them betraying me and another one denying me. What is the use?” He went on, the poor and suffering Servant. And in the end he managed to make eleven into the Church because he was willing to be vulnerable to men’s assaults on his love, to men’s betrayals, to men’s denials, to men’s persevering failures. His love survived all these, triumphed over them, was willing to be wounded again and again, never descended to inaction when rejected, never came to a halt when his best efforts seemed to come to nothing, not even when they were flung back in his divine Face. The flexible, the poor in spirit, likewise bend under blows and adversities of the spirit. They are willing to remain vulnerable. And that is why they are poor in spirit.

If we want to check on our own Christlike vulnerability in poverty of spirit, perhaps our surest check will be found in our unwillingness to hurt another.



The vulnerable ones are those most solicitous that others should not be wounded. Without subscribing to spiritual taking, we can well afford to conduct this brief investigation about ourselves.

The flexibility and vulnerability characteristic of the poor in spirit make possible that freedom which is their hallmark. The poor in spirit are, in point of fact, the only ones who are truly free. They are not locked up in a little cage of self so that when they attempt to fly all they can do is hurt their wings. The really poor in spirit are the adventure-some people. These are the ones

who, like Saint Francis and Saint Clare, always delight and exhilarate in the wonder of life, however suffering some aspects of life may be. No more than Francis or Clare do any of the poor in spirit go about with a sullen face because God's blueprints of the day are found constrictive. They go about radiant with the adventuresomeness of things. We never know what surprises God has planned. Not one of us knows what the day holds, what God has designed for our sanctification, what ambitions God has for our growth in holiness today. And so we can live with a tingling sense of adventuresomeness if we are free with the freedom of the children of God, those who are really poor in spirit, who do not dwell in cages of self, but can fly free. Even in a very small space, they enjoy the kingdom of heaven.

The poor in spirit greet the day with wonder, expecting surprises if only and precisely because they come from God, and perhaps especially so when that alone gives reason for any delight. The inflexible, those who desire invulnerability, are made sullen by surprises. If we approach the day as persons truly poor in spirit, alive with a sense of anticipation: "What does the day hold?" we also begin to experience something of a divine sense of humor. We get glimmers of understanding that, in truth,

God's ways are not our ways nor his thoughts our thoughts; but that as far as the heavens are above the earth, so God's thoughts are above the thoughts of men" (Is. 55:8-9). It is a profound scriptural declaration, yes, and appropriately solemn. Yet, is it not also replete with humor? Is it not really a delicious saying? I sometimes wonder whether the inspired writer did not have a genially wry smile on his face as he set down those words.

If we could be this free, if we could have this sense of being surprised, if we understood that the things that take us offguard and upset our plans, whether work plans or grandiose plans for our own sanctification, are delightful "alerts" from God, how joyously we could live! Are these things not God saying very intimately: "Look, you have got the whole thing wrong! My thoughts are not your thoughts." The poor in spirit are those who have learned to greet the unexpected with a sense of humble humor, of good-humored humility. One can turn this about either way, for a sense of humor is never far removed from a sense of light. A sense of humor is also as far removed from anything that is sullen, anything that is self-pitying, anything that is grudging, as the heavens are from the earth. Flexible, vulnerable, the poor in spirit are free. Not landowners, not plan-owners, they have already

come into the estate of the kingdom of heaven.

Directly out of that quality, atmosphere, reality of freedom which is the third characteristic of the poor in spirit as we run down our observations, is the fourth quality of being without holdings. It is so significant that, in that all-embracing prayer which is the sequence for the Mass of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has us cry out: "Come, Father of the Poor!" and then add: "Bring all your gifts along . . . Come, Giver of gifts." The poor ones are supposed to be the expectant ones. The truly poor in spirit are prepared for receptivity. They are vibrantly receptive to all that God gives, whether spiritual, material, emotional, psychological. There is no artificiality here, no self-conscious "detachment." Only those without holdings can be really receptive. Landowners and plan-owners in the realm of the spirit will be merely acquisitive.

What could it mean on the material plane: to be unartificial, to be without holdings? Does it not imply that we shall neither despise nor undervalue on the one hand, or on the other hand exhibit and experience complacency in the external forms of poverty? Artificiality has many expressions, and the more dangerous ones can look surprisingly like holiness. Our poverty certainly does not primarily consist

in foregoing fine garments and dainty foods. Nor do I think there is the hardy stuff of "temptations" in these for most of us. At least, I know of no one who is suffering from the lack of silk lingerie or who is troubled about the dress pattern we have not changed for hundreds of years. Yet, we cannot be so foolish as to suppose that materialities do matter. They do matter, if they are expression of the interior. They are a falsification if they are attempting to substitute for the attitudinal poverty of the spirit.

It is a normal reaction, perhaps we could even say a healthy reaction, that we do not always care for the food that is served. It could sometimes be tempting to want a more comfortable bed. But these things are scarcely material for anguish. It would be too bad to make them into material for self-satisfaction. For there is an artificiality which can be proud of its patches. There is a superficiality of spirit by which we can try to establish a security in material expressions of poverty. To be sure, it would be preposterous to think we need have no care for the material expressions. And this kind of nonsense is being set forth by entirely too many spiritual draft-dodgers these days. It is ridiculous to think that we could make a boudoir out of our cell or make a lounge-type recreation

center out of our community room, concluding that these things do not matter because we are all poor in spirit. Or that we could scatter comfortable deck-chairs over the lawns for leaning back and expatiating on poverty of spirit. No, these things *are* meaningful. But they have to spring out of a much deeper thing, and they themselves are not the things on which we establish our poverty. While exercising vigilance to maintain a material sparseness and leanness

and simplicity, we also want to fear the smugness which boasts, even if only in the auditorium of the mind: "I sleep on straw. I sit on a backless bench. I eat boiled potatoes and canned beets. I am poor." True poverty of spirit is both attitudinal and material. The latter has meaning only because of the former. The poor in spirit are without holdings of any kind. Even those holdings which are ownership of the pride of being without holdings.

(To be continued)

## Book Reviews

**The Remaking of the Church.** By Richard P. McBrien. Introduction by Leo Cardinal Suenens. New York: Harper & Row. 1973. Pp. xv-175. Cloth. \$6.95.

*Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy, Fordham University), Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Siena College, Loudonville, N.Y., a member of the Catholic Theological Society of America, and Editor of this Review.*

After reading through this entire essay, I find myself generally inclined to accept sympathetically Father McBrien's opening insistence that it is only his deep love of the Church that has prompted him to engage in such strong criticism of its institutional aspects.

The book has short introductory and concluding chapters, the former setting the scene with a vivid de-

scription of the JFK-Pope John era, and the latter expressing hope that by getting personally and actively involved the reader will join with Christians everywhere to finish the job begun in that ebullient era. But its main content is found in the two middle chapters: the second consisting in a diagnosis of what has gone wrong, and the third offering detailed suggestions for reconstruction. The word *detailed* is used advisedly; to convey adequately all the nuances drawn or attempt to engage the author on the specifics would entail writing another book. It seems more appropriate, in this forum, simply to convey a general notion of what he has done and an equally general (though I hope not unfair) evaluation.

The ("diagnostic") second chapter speaks of (1) theory, and (2) practices, each of three sorts: (a) pre-Vatican II,

(b) conciliar, and (c) post-conciliar. The three sorts are of course not exclusively, nor even primarily chronological; rather as McBrien uses the categories, they end up being mainly ideological, proceeding from right to left. He maintains that a valid revolution (not simply development) took place at the Council, but the Fathers themselves did not consistently and unequivocally embrace that revolution. People in category "c," therefore, are seeking only to work out consistently what was implied in the Council's proclamations.

The ("reconstructive") third chapter first makes use of graphic maritime metaphor to categorize three viable ecclesiological stances: like the stone, a docetic attitude refuses to budge and is thus, willy-nilly, worn away by the environment; like the kelp, a "relevantist," elastic approach is so overwhelmed by its environment that it is false to its divine vocation; and finally, like a porpoise, the "self-determinative" approach adapts wisely and productively. Next, three sorts of motivation are discussed in ascending order of emphasis on *intrinsic* rewards for successful performance: paternalism and scientific management are rejected as unworkable, in favor of a somewhat idealistically conceived "participative management."

After these preliminaries, the author discusses thirteen specific areas, including mainly papal and episcopal power and election, the sacramentality of priestly ordination, ecclesial planning, renewal of religious life, the role of women, and ecumenical practices. While I disagree emphatically with much of

what he says, particularly regarding the priesthood and religious life, I am forced to confine my remarks to two unfortunately general points. The first of these is mainly stylistic.

Easy comprehension of the book by a large audience may perhaps be hindered by the obfuscating distinction drawn between theory and practice in the second chapter. Abstractly the distinction is obviously valid, but here the "practice" section often contains more theory than the "theory" section. Similarly, in the third chapter, the author lists all thirteen points and discusses them briefly (pp. 86-108) before returning and (with identical subtitles, pp. 108-36) presenting and refuting objections to the position espoused in the earlier discussion.

My other objection has to do with the author's polemical tone ("mysteriously perverse" motivation, e.g., is attributed to the bishops on p. 120), which has the unfortunate effect of reinforcing an already simplistic emphasis on the "servant" and "body" models of the Church, to the neglect of the "institution" model. McBrien is too good a theologian to be accused of writing off the latter or being unaware of it; but I am not the first to call attention to the imbalance he introduces when it comes actually to allowing the institutional dimension sufficient play in his "practical ecclesiology." I think this difficulty is at the root of his characterization as "apparent inconsistencies" of what many take to be a deliberate, delicate, and fruitful balance in the Council's teaching (see especially pp. 63-67 on this, but note also the tendentious tone in his



description of pre-conciliar theology on, e.g., pp. 13 and 26 f.).

In sum, I would say that Father McBrien says much that is good and important in this book. Although I think it lacks balance at many critical points, I believe too that it deserves the attention of a widespread but prudent and discerning readership.

**Your Wedding: Planning Your Own Ceremony.** By Jeremy Harrington, O.F.M., and Hilarion Kistner, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1974. Pp. v-122. Paper, \$1.60.

*Reviewed by Father Vianney F. Vormwald, O.F.M., B.Ed. (State Teacher's College, Cortland), N.Y., M.A. (Notre Dame University). Chaplain of Siena College, Loudonville, N.Y.*

Several excellent marriage preparation booklets are now available. *Your Wedding* can be added to this list not only for its excellence but for its practicality as well. It is aimed to assist the young couple, but has many notes that are important for the priest. The author has drawn upon the standard sources but also his own experience and that of several others. His appendices include sources for wedding music, a recipe for unleavened bread, addresses of firms offering wedding booklets, invitations and rings, and a short bibliography on marriage.

Many of his suggestions will appeal to the young couple. In stressing the new entrance rite, i.e., the entrance of the groom with his parents and the bride with hers, the author points out the importance of one procession, the prominence given to the parents of the couple as a sign of appreciation, and the fittingness of both bride and groom being "given away." ("Giving away" the bride only is a sign of male superiority: "Why not give away the groom also?")

At the Greeting of Peace there is added to the rite, "It is a good time for both of you to start calling your in-laws Mother and Father."

At Communion the author notes, "In some places the bride and groom are appointed for the occasion as extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist." He then discusses the drawbacks and suggests as an alternative that the bride and groom stand at the side of the priest.

The listing of marriage themes provided with the appropriate readings is a real help to the priest who is assisting the couple with their planning. The commentaries after each of the readings are by Hilarion Kistner, O.F.M. (the remainder of the compiling and writing being the work of Fr. Harrington). These commentaries are short and concise, almost an outline for a homily.

The style and the attractive format not only appeal to young couples but create enthusiasm for planning their own ceremony.

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## Burning and Bright

**B**ONAVENTURE, born John Fidanza of Bagnorea in Italy some seven centuries ago, continues to call us to be enkindled and enlightened through his vision, writings, and life of total commitment to the gospel message of Christ Jesus. During recent months, there have been several significant conferences, seminars, publications, and papal documents whose central theme has been our renewed awakening to Bonaventurian thought and the importance of Bonaventure for those problems of our modern world challenged to reaffirm and restructure a vibrant Christian commitment following the guidelines detailed in the discussions and documents of Vatican II. Much has changed through these seven centuries of faith and history; and much has remained surprisingly the same. In an early edition of Bonelli's *Prodromus ad opera omnia S. Bonaventurae*, the frontispiece shows Bonaventure at his desk, writing. Two verses below surround a small medallion centered with the words *Lucens et Ardens*—Blazing and Bright. The last line of the first stanza is *Ardet lux, ardor lucet, utrumque manet*—His light enkindles, his fire enlightens, and both continue.

It is this same dual unity of glowing, shining intensity that Pope Paul VI stresses in an Apostolic Letter written on 15 July, 1974, to the Ministers General of the three-branched Order of Friars Minor throughout our world. The opening phrase of the letter (whence its "title") is *Scientia et virtute praeclarissimus*—i.e., "most outstanding both in knowledge and Christian commitment." The text continues with the assertion that "Saint Bonaventure shines with a steady and continuing brightness still today." Frequently in this letter Pope Paul supports his statements with references both to specific writings of Bonaventure and to documents from Vatican II, especially *Lumen Gentium* and *Dei Verbum*. He proclaims Bonaventure as the "herald, teacher, and facilitator (*effector*)" for all faithful Christians to respond actively and eagerly to that needed "conversion" and "renewal" that bring us to being re-built in faith, truly re-committed to Christ Jesus. Paul VI urges us all to realize that Bonaventure, "through his thought and his encouragement still speaks as a teacher of knowledge and of life-style even though he died seven centuries ago." He adds his own

exhortation, moreover, citing Philippians 3:17: that we should "take as our model the way that Bonaventure walked" and pray earnestly that "we may make progress with the help of his great learning and also strive to become enkindled with the fire of his love."

In September of 1974, Pope Paul VI came to the Seraphicum (the Conventual Franciscans' University in Rome) to address the participants in the International Congress held there to honor "Bonaventure, Master of the Franciscan life and of Christian spirituality." As one of those privileged to take part in that Congress, I especially want to share with you some of the Holy Father's words to us and to our world. After preliminary greetings, his pastoral concern became evident as he said:

... we feel obliged to express the wish that these centenary commemorations of his death will result in greater honor for the life that Saint Bonaventure, by his example and his teaching, is certainly able to transfuse into the Church of our times.

Speaking in greatest admiration of Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* (since "journey" implies "a movement of the questing spirit, in conformity with the restless and advancing taste of present day culture), Paul VI emphasized that, in this little text, we have "the joyful impression of having him, the master, near us as guide and interpreter of contemporary needs."

After succinctly summarizing the main directions of the *Itinerarium*, the Holy Father continued: "This journey ... leads to the rediscovery of grace ... of faith ... of hope ... of love." And in conclusion, he said, before imparting his Apostolic Blessing:

What is Saint Bonaventure's message, after all, but an invitation to mankind to recover his authenticity entirely and reach his fullness?

We entrust this message to you who, because of your common religious profession or harmony of ideas, are more directly the heirs of the Seraphic Doctor, so that you may study its riches and make it widely accepted. But we also recommend it to all the people of the Church, exposed today, perhaps more than at any other time, to a process of interior decomposition, so that serious consideration of this message will help everyone to make his life a valid and effective testimony in the Church and in the world.

Amen: Bonaventure, blazing and bright, still today!

—Marigwen Schumacher



## Sight into Insight—II

# Bonaventure, Hopkins, cummings

MARIGWEN SCHUMACHER

IN AN ADDRESS given recently at my own undergraduate Alma Mater, the University of Toronto, Dr. Beatrice Corrigan started with a poem by the Canadian poet, Walter Bauer, entitled "In the Reading Room"—in which he describes the birth of an idea:

I saw a student, a young girl,  
Surrounded by books like honeycombs;  
She gazed into space, unseeing, over the heads of the others,  
Then stared at her left hand, slightly raised,  
As if something were coming  
To settle upon it.

It came.  
The idea came.  
A rare brilliant bird,  
A tiny phoenix, it flew across the room  
Through the stillness, straight to her finger; it  
Settled there, singing a tiny phoenix song, only for her.

Her face brightened. Now  
The brilliant tiny phoenix sat  
On her shoulder and sang in her ear.  
She wrote.

*Miss Marigwen Schumacher is Head of the Classical Languages Department at the Emma Willard School, Troy, N.Y. This is the second half of the paper delivered at Siena College's Septicentennial Tribute to Saint Bonaventure. See last month's issue for the first half and further credit information.*

For Walter Bauer [continues Dr. Corrigan] the phoenix is the bearer of the creative idea: not the result of consideration of a problem, or of a process of logical reasoning, but the illuminating perception of a new aspect of the truth, an explanation of the inexplicable, a relation between two apparently unrelatable things. The visitation of the phoenix comes as a joyful surprise....<sup>1</sup>

And her conclusion was a "wish for each one of you that throughout your life the extended hand, the eagerly receptive ear, will never cease to invite the unique joy of creative thought." I would, of course, expand her list to insert—prominently—the "wide-open eye" for the poem does mention that "she gazed into space, unseeing, over the heads of the others"—i.e., rapt into vision, unaware of the distractions and disruptions of those around her—and in this "insightful" mood does the phoenix come! The enigma of the creative moment never lessens.<sup>2</sup>

Creative metaphor, by which the mind is pulled into the imagination, expresses that

insight into the mystical which is of the essence of poetic-artist-ic experience. The "tiny, brilliant phoenix" makes visual (for us) the oftentimes blinding, searing, incandescent light that is the "gift of perception" of which Ciardi spoke. The insight—"the relation between two things apparently unrelatable"—reflected and disciplined into words; for without words, thought—even insight—remains inchoate and amorphous—comes through: "as the phoenix sat on her shoulder/ she wrote." We, then, can only touch the experienced insight of others through their verbal/ visual expression in word, painting, pottery, sculpture, sacrament. As we became more and more sensitive of and responsive to the present moment—that God IS—and we are—Verb and not Noun—we begin to grasp something of the meaning in e.e. cummings' statement that

poetry is being, not doing....  
You've got to come out of the measurable doing universe into the immeasurable house of being.... Nobody else can be alive for you; nor can you be alive for anybody else.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Beatrice Corrigan's 1973 address at Toronto is documented in the *University of Toronto Graduate Newsletter*, vol. 1 (n.s.), n. 1 (1973).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. *supra*, THE CORD 25 (1975), pp. 5-6

<sup>3</sup>e.e. cummings, "six nonlectures" (Harvard University, 1952-53), cited by Horace Gregory in the introduction to e.e. cummings, *a selection of poems* (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1965), p. 3.

and his dedication: "With you I leave a remembrance of miracles: they are by somebody who can love and who shall be continually reborn."<sup>4</sup>

And in poem:

once White and Gold

daisy in the Dust  
(trite now and old)

lie so we must

most lily brief

(rose here & gone)  
flesh all is If

all blood And When

Visually and directly, in his use of a special "typographical code"—e.g., irregular spacing of lines, unexpected capitalization, parentheses to separate and subdue certain words and phrases as almost halftones, *sotto voce*, little or no punctuation in the conventional sense (e.g., no period at the end of the poem)—in all these ways, e.e. cummings deals with that "interplay between patterns of surface-perceptions and the pressures of depth-perceptions"<sup>5</sup> which is the particular provenance of poet and mystic, of preacher and artist. In the small poem just quoted, I am overwhelmed by the simplicity of seeing in that "daisy once white and gold," which is now

withered and lying on the ground, the whole brief encounter which is our life and its necessary meeting with death, with Dust (and unto dust thou shalt return). But the sheer power and greatness that opens unendingly in the small, little words, "flesh all is If"—the capitalization of "If" suddenly catapults upon me the uncertain fragility of human life—and "all blood And When" which again through the capitals and the lack of a period seems to spin into eternity, into the Parousia—AND WHEN??!

BONAVENTURE USES a similar directness and unfathomable depth of perception to stress the interplay, the inner relation, of surface and depth vision when he speaks of "contuitio" or preaches "ad contuitum contemplantis"—that "seeing through creation, directly into God, in and with His creation." This is the highest "gift" granted to us while yet in this human form, but it is a foretaste of the Parousia, when we shall see God as we are now seen by him. "One's spirit holds as much of Loveliness as it holds of the clear light and radiance of divine Wisdom. I say," continues Bonaventure in a homily for the feast of Saint Agnes.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>Wylie Sypher, "The Meaning of Comedy," in R.W. Corrigan, ed., *Comedy: Meaning and form* (Scranton: Chandler Publishing Co., 1965), p. 23.

that one's spirit becomes beautiful through attentive perception, joyfully, of the visual world so that by examining [introspecting into visual field] the experienced reality with a certain clear insight, one's spirit leaps up through these into its Creator.<sup>6</sup>

## God's Grandeur

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil

Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;

And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil  
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

And through the last lights off the black West went

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

In his attempts to articulate from his own experience that "interplay between the patterns of surface-perceptions and the pressures of depth-perceptions"—or the introspection of visual world into visual field—Gerard Manley Hopkins coined the words "inscape" and "instress" and used them separately and together in many of his *Journal* entries. Scholars have written reams in analyzing these terms and their importance in

Hopkins' poetry; I wish only to look at a few excerpts from his *Journal* in order to abstract some of the essence of the experience from which he created these words. First, however, it is important to keep in mind the comment of Austin Warren, in speaking of "inscape," that "the prefix *in* seems to imply a contrary, an outerscape, i.e., an 'inscape' is not mechanically or inertly present but requires personal action, attention, a seeing and a

<sup>6</sup>Bonaventure, *Sermo 2 in festo S. Agnetis—Opera Omnia*, t. IX, 505-10.

seeing into.”<sup>7</sup>

For May 14, 1870, Hopkins wrote: “The chestnuts down at St. Joseph’s were a beautiful sight . . . when the wind tossed them they plunged and crossed one another without losing their inscape.” On December 12, 1872:

Hard frost, bright sun, a sky of blue “water” . . . grounded sheeted with taut, tattered streaks of crisp gritty snow . . . I saw the inscape though freshly, as if my eye were still growing—though with a companion the eye and the ear are, for the most part, shut and instress cannot come.

[In July of 1872:] I thought how sadly beauty of inscape was unknown and buried away from simple people and yet how near at hand it was if they had eyes to see it and it could be called out everywhere again . . .

[On February 4, 1875:] The day was bright, the sun sparkling through a frostfog which made the distance dim and the stack of Denbigh hill, as we came near, dead mealy grey against the light: the castle ruins, which crown the hill, were punched out in arches and half arches by bright breaks and eyelets of daylight. We went up to the castle but not in: standing before the gateway I had an instress which only the true old

work gives from the strong and noble inscape of the pointed arch.<sup>8</sup>

From these few selections, it seems possible to infer that for Hopkins, “inscape” involves or includes every object in creation; that one must somehow become aware of this quality; that once this awareness is actual, both pain and pleasure intensify in the appreciation of, or reaction to, experiences; that it is possible for even “simple people” to develop this quality.

“Instress” seems to follow upon inscape and should seem to be—or to include—one’s response to the unique inscape of each object in creation—since it is blocked when we are with others who demand or prevail upon our attention. It requires a deep, interior, subjective, individual response at, and to, the moment—e.g., the arch at Denbigh Castle in that strange light demanded a unique response to that momentary vision.

It is in this connection that I understand Hopkins’ *Journal* entry in August of 1872, when he had recently begun to read Duns Scotus: “It may come to nothing or it may be a mercy from God. But just then when I took in any inscape of the sky or sea I thought

of Scotus.” For convinced as I am that Hopkins is really a Bonaventurean in his vision, I am equally certain that Duns Scotus’ stress on the quality of “quidditas” and even more of “haecceitas”—that untranslatable quality of “thisness” in every thing and every person—would have deeply touched a responsive chord within the young philosopher-poet-student and have helped to confirm his own growing perception of God.

Again from the *Journal*, we see Hopkins moving from sight into insight: from “attentive perception, joyfully, of the visual world so that by examining the experienced reality with a certain clear insight, one’s spirit leaps up through these into its Creator.”<sup>9</sup>

Bluebells in Hodder wood, all hanging their heads one way. I caught, as well as I could while my companions talked, the Greek rightness of their beauty . . . the level or stage of color they make hanging in the air a foot above the grass . . . It was a lovely sight. The bluebells in your hand baffle you with their inscape made to every sense: if you draw your fingers through them, they . . . struggle . . . it is the eye they baffle . . . then the knot of buds, some shut, some just gaping . . . the inscape of the flower . . . is finished in these clustered buds . . . One day when the blue-



bells were in bloom, I wrote the following: I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of Our Lord by it.<sup>10</sup>

So too, Bonaventure, in the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, exclaims:

Whoever is not enlightened by such great splendors of creation is, indeed, blind. Whoever is not awakened by such great voices is, indeed, deaf. Whoever does not praise God in all these gifts is, indeed, mute. Whoever does not consider God, the First Principle, from such great evidence is, in-

<sup>7</sup>Austin Warren, “Instress of Inscape,” in John Hollander, ed., *G.M. Hopkins: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 171.

<sup>8</sup>G. M. Hopkins, *Journal*, in W. H. Gardner, ed., *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), *in hoc loco*.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. *supra*, note 6.

<sup>10</sup>Hopkins, *Notebooks and Journals*, *passim*.

deed a fool. Open your eyes, concentrate your spiritual ears, open your lips, and arouse your heart to see God in all of creation and thus to hear and praise and love and cherish him, making known his glory and honor. Otherwise all of his creation may rise up to condemn you.<sup>11</sup>

i thank You God for most this amazing day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees and a blue true dream of skyland: and for everything which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today, and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing breathing any—lifted from the no of all nothing—human merely being doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

e. e. cummings

A SIMILAR ECSTASY in the new-seen wonders of nature can be felt in the text of Annie Dillard's recent article about "seeing" and awareness:

Unfortunately, nature is very much a now-you-see-it, now-you-don't affair. A fish flashes, then dissolves in the water before my eyes like so much salt... the brightest oriole fades into the leaves. These disappearances stun me into stillness and concentra-

tion; they say of nature that it conceals with a grand nonchalance, and they say of vision that it is a deliberate gift.... It's all a matter of keeping my eyes open.... Darkness appalls and light dazzles; the scrap of visible light that doesn't hurt my eyes hurts my brain. What I see sets me swaying. Size and distance and the sudden swelling of meanings confuse me, bowl me over....

Seeing is, of course, very much a matter of verbalization. Unless I

call my attention to what passes before my eyes, I simply won't see it. If Tinker Mountain erupted, I'd be likely to notice. But if I want to notice the lesser cataclysms of valley life, I have to maintain in my head a running description of the present.... [There is a way of seeing where] I analyze and pry... but there is another kind of seeing that involves a letting go. When I see this way I sway transfixed and emptied... Something broke and something opened. I filled up like a new wineskin. I breathed an air like light; I saw a light like water.... I was flesh-flake, feather, bone. When I see this way I see truly.<sup>12</sup>

There is a sequence here, as there is in Bonaventure, Hopkins, and cummings, of stillness, concentration, gift, seeing, verbalization, letting go, transfixed and emptied, flesh-flake, feather, bone. The mystic insight—or experience of transcendence—can be verbalized only through metaphor. Ms. Dillard continues:

The secret of seeing, then, is the pearl of great price... although it comes to those who wait for it, it is always, even to the most practiced and adept, a gift and a total surprise.... I cannot cause light; the most I can do is try to put myself in the path of its beam.

It is possible, in deep space, to sail on solar wind. Light, be it particle or wave, has force: you rig a giant sail and go. The secret of seeing is to sail on solar wind. Hone and spread your spirit till you yourself are a sail, whetted, translucent, broadside to the merest puff.<sup>13</sup>

The imagery is forceful: "the secret of seeing is to sail on solar wind: spread your spirit till you yourself are a sail, whetted, translucent...." This does not happen easily nor quickly but reminds us of the scriptural statements that the Holy Spirit blows where and when he wishes and it needs our readiness to respond to his "merest puff" so that, like Elisha, we hear the voice of God on the mountain of our being.

There is a third element or ingredient in moving from "sight into insight" or "introspecting our visual sensations and concentrating upon the actual nature of the information that falls upon our retinas."<sup>14</sup> The question is, What then? What response, what use do we make of this? If our "seeing" is with the "eyes of faith" (the "eyes of my eyes are opened"); if our insight-filled spirit declares "All things... He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change"; if "these lights of the

<sup>12</sup>Annie Dillard, "Sight into Insight: What You See Is What You Get," *Harper's* 248, n. 1485 (1974), pp. 39-46, *passim*.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>Bonaventure, *Itinerarium*, *loc. cit.*, col. 303a.

<sup>11</sup>Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, I, 15—*Opera Omnia*, t. V, col. 299b.

created world" reflect the Lord who has brought us out of darkness into his own marvellous Light,"<sup>15</sup> then, what is our response? What can it be but "Praise him"!

only whose vision can create the whole

(being forever a foolishwise  
proudhumble citizen of ecstasies  
more steep than climb can time with all his years)

he's free into the beauty of the truth.

Bonaventure, in a homily preached in Paris on March 12, 1251, for the Second Sunday of Lent when the Gospel reading is the account of Jesus taking Peter, James, and John up onto a high mountain—apart—concluded with these words:

He led the "contemplativi" [i.e., the "insight-full" who have moved from sight into insight] onto the mountain of open sharing or the ability to give freely through a love-filled spreading-out of voluntary witness. Mountains are of such sharing and giving that everything that they receive they immediately pour forth and, emptying themselves, send it forth onto the level plain. Rain, for example, as soon as it pours upon them is immediately poured forth stantly share with the valleys. Even the rocks and other materials which are tumbled forth are

poured onto the plains. In just this way, the "insight-full" ought to be beacons of rain-fresh reflections, or irrigation ditches for showers or, even, dew-drops of charismatic gifts as on Mount Sion to give to others through the word of witness and the model of dialogue. Then will be fulfilled the prophecy of Joel: "On that day the mountains will drip with sweetness and the hills will flow with milk and the waters will fill all the rivers of Juda" (Joel 4:18).

The "insight-full" ought to "drip with the sweetness" of tender compassion to console the desolate; be "hills flowing with the milk" of conscientious witness to nourish the weak; and then "the rivers" of tears "of Juda," the repentant, the "waters" of grace "will fill" to multiply deeds of justice and compassion: "Mountains of Israel, spread out your branch-

es, put forth leaves, blossom and bear fruit for my people Israel who will soon return" (Ezech. 36:8).

Bonaventure explains this text from Ezechiel:

"Israel seeing God" indicated the "insight-full" who ought to see God in their own inner selves. Therefore, "mountains of Israel" — i.e., the "insight-full"—"spread your branches" to gather together the wandering peoples; "put forth leaves" through the witness of Sacred Scripture; "blossom" in your visible, fragrant example;

"and bear fruit" in attaining your own salvation and furthering that of your neighbors; because you will be, then: "a mountain of God, a fertile mountain, a mountain where God has chosen to live forever" (Ps. 67:16, 7).

"But I can't go out and try to see this way," exclaims Ms. Dillard, half protesting, half imploring. "I'll fail, I'll go mad. All I can do is try . . . . The effort is really a discipline requiring a lifetime of dedicated struggle . . . . The vision comes and goes, mostly goes, but I live for it."<sup>16</sup>

i am a little church (no great cathedral)  
far from the splendor and squalor of hurrying cities  
—i do not worry if briefer days grow briefest,  
i am not sorry when sun and rain make april

my life is the life of the reaper and the sower;  
my prayers are prayers of earth's own clumsily striving  
(finding and losing and laughing and crying) children  
whose any sadness or joy is my grief or my gladness

around me surges a miracle of unceasing  
birth and glory and death and resurrection:  
over my sleeping self float flaming symbols  
of hope, and i wake to a perfect patience of mountains

i am a little church (far from the frantic  
world with its rapture and anguish) at peace with nature  
—i do not worry if longer nights grow longest;  
i am not sorry when silence becomes singing

winter by spring, i lift my diminutive spire to  
merciful Him Whose only now is forever:  
standing erect in the deathless truth of His presence  
(welcoming humbly His light and proudly His darkness)

e.e. cummings

<sup>15</sup>Bonaventure, *Sermo 1 in Dom. II Quad.—Opera Omnia*, t. IX, col. 217b.

<sup>16</sup>A. Dillard, *loc. cit.*, p. 46.



At the end of the *Vitis Mystica*, Bonaventure prays:

O most sweet good Lord! Look with compassion on those who humbly trust in you and truly know that without you we can do

nothing. You who gave yourself in payment for us, give us—although we are not worthy of it—to be so totally merged into your perfect grace that we are re-made, through your presence, into the image of your divinity.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Bonaventure, *Vitis Mystica*, XXIV, 4, concl. —*Opera Omnia*, t. VIII, P. 189.

we crawl  
ahead  
on unsteady ground  
leaving  
behind  
the past,  
some of which  
still  
hangs on  
like a ball  
and chain

something up  
ahead  
is beckoning  
to dare  
step out  
of the darkness  
of our selfishness  
into the glow of reality  
a step  
outside  
ourselves

afraid  
to live  
and die  
alone  
in the dark  
we crawl on  
till darkness  
overcomes us  
again

DAVID BENZSHAWELL

## Mother Marianne— A Sister of Saint Francis

SISTER M. THADDEUS, O.S.F.

### I. Tolerance Level of Frustration on the Way to God

NOT TOO LONG AGO, I was present at a lecture in which constant reference was made to a person's tolerance level of frustration. At first I was amused because we all have days when we'd like to just "forget it all" or send everybody far, far away. But something—rather someone—is always in our consciousness Who brings us back to reality and encourages us by His own victory over frustrations. One instance where Jesus seems to have reached a very high level of frustration is that memorable passage where Philip had asked him to show them the Father. Recall the Lord's answer: "Have I been such a long time with you without your really knowing me, Philip? The man who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, Show us the Father?" (Jn. 14:9). It was almost as if his three years of teaching them had been in vain. Christ may as well have said: "How can

you be so dense! I've spent my whole public life teaching you about the Father. What more can I do?" But he did not in fact give up there; instead, he remained faithful to them through his anxiety, persecution, suffering, death, and resurrection—even until now!

And so, through the centuries men and women have followed that heroic example of tolerance amid frustrations in order to reach real union with Him to whom frustration was a necessary step to holiness. All of us have the potential—all of us have frustrations—so we can identify with these holy people to make our lives pure offerings of patient endurance.

An example close to our time, of a woman of patient endurance in the midst of extreme frustrations is Mother Marianne, the second Superior General of the Sisters of the Third Order of Saint

*Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F., is Chairman of the English Department at Assumption Catholic Academy, Syracuse, N.Y. Her recent account of the establishment of a hermitage for her community—an account co-authored with Sister Marjorie Schoeler and published in our pages last Fall, has sparked some enthusiastic response from our readers.*



Francis of Syracuse, New York. Her frustrations resulted from her distinct call to leave the security of Syracuse and go to a foreign country to care for strange people afflicted with such a terrible disease that the citizens of that country would not care for them. This woman, whose cause for beatification has been introduced, entered the community in 1862, was engaged in teaching for a few years, became administrator of St. Joseph's Hospital in Syracuse, New York, was elected Superior General in 1877 and re-elected in 1881.

In 1883, when Father Leonor, commissioned by the King and

Queen of Hawaii to seek out a Sisterhood from America to help with their poor, afflicted members, arrived at the Motherhouse on Court Street, it was Mother Marianne who gave him hope. It was she who volunteered, along with six others, to pioneer this strange journey thousands of miles away. The story of Mother Marianne is adequately written by L.V. Jacks in *Mother Marianne of Molokai* and by Eva K. Betz' children's version, *The Quiet Flame*, and it is not the intention of this series of reflections to recount her life but to highlight some of the problems she encountered, relate them to

today, and learn how the saintly but human woman handled her frustrations.

One interesting and oft told scene from the life of Mother Marianne is the episode when Sister Leopoldina speaks to Mother very confidentially about her fear of contracting leprosy.

"Mother, what will you do with me if I become a leper?"

(What could be more frustrating than to know that you have traveled thousands of miles to help people with a dread disease and then find out that you may have contracted it—which would mean isolation from community, pain, deterioration, and all the horrors that go with it!)

"You will never become a leper. I know we are all exposed and I know, too, that God has called us for this work. If we are prudent and do our duty, he will protect us. Do not allow it to trouble you, and when the thought comes to you, drive it from your mind, and remember, you will never be a leper; nor will any Sister of our Order."

The answer of Mother Marianne to such a real danger has always impressed me for several reasons. First, the great confidence with which she answers

this disturbed Sister seems to show that she has fully considered this consequence and has come to a real confrontation with God, his holy will, and his justice. In the second place, she asks the Sister to dismiss the thought — in fact, to drive it away—because the result of dwelling on such a possibility would be to lessen the praise given to God by utter confidence in his care of her. And finally, it is a fact that since 1889, when the Sisters were finally permitted actual entrance to Molokai, not one Sister of our Order has ever contracted the disease.

Since frustrations are a result of the human condition and saints are only human beings who live a saintly human life, I would like to point out a few of the frustrations exhibited by the people involved in the decision to ask a Sisterhood to go to Molokai.

The first persons almost totally frustrated by the conditions present on the leper colony were the King and Queen of Hawaii who were very interested in the welfare of their people. They knew they needed help, but none of the island people would offer it because they feared contracting the disease. Father Damien, a young Sacred Hearts priest was

already there, but he, too, needed help. Most government officials were content to banish those afflicted with the disease and then forget about them. Lack of personnel, uncertainty of aid, and indifference plagued the royal pair.

Next, Father Damien, a zealous young priest who had volunteered for the task and was to remain there sixteen brief years until the disease would claim his life. He was one priest among approximately 800 diseased people. 800 diseased in soul and body, with no incentive to lead good lives. What could he accomplish? Yet he continued to pray and work, and to plead for help from a Sisterhood.

Father Leonor, commissioned by the King and Queen and given the blessing of his Bishop, crossed the continent visiting at least fifty Sisterhoods who listened attentively to him, but to no avail. All were overworked, fearful of distance and disease, or not equipped for such a task.

Finally, one Sisterhood gives Father Leonor an element of hope. A small cobblestone house in the country setting of Court Street on the edge of the city of Syracuse, New York, housed a small group of Sisters who were to relieve the frustrations of the King and Queen, of the people of Hawaii, of Father Damien, and of Father Leonor. But to relieve a person's frustration means to take it upon oneself.

That is what Mother Marianne joyfully did.

Now the Syracuse community had to come to grips with its frustrations brought about by a willingness to go to care for these poor, unfortunate people. Their ranks would be depleted at home, in fact which would increase the work load for the others; separation from beloved members of the community would be hard to bear; and especially would the absence of Mother Marianne be felt, even if only for a while. In the spirit of the Order of Saint Francis, the generosity of their foundress, Mother Bernardine, and the zeal of Mother Marianne, the Community overcame its projected difficulties and voted to send members to the Islands.

Mother Marianne, in the same confident spirit which was evidenced in her reply to Sister Leopoldina, overcame many un-called for, undeserved, and unexpected frustrations, of which I will mention only a few. Personally, Mother Marianne was never physically strong, and she suffered almost constant migraine headaches. To add to her suffering, from the first ride by ship to Hawaii on which she was deathly seasick, almost all of her traveling to visit her Sisters from island to island was by boat—and every trip was a bout with seasickness!

Public recognition by the in-

habitants of the islands in the form of cheering, lining the streets in greeting, and presenting the Sisters with leis, and publicly hailing them in the Cathedral, was short lived. Before the Sisters were even permitted to set foot on Molokai (which was some six years after their arrival), they were asked to operate two hospitals and begin a school. There was constant lack of personnel, and many who worked for them were questionable in character. Working conditions were poor, food was inadequate, many patients resented them. Environmental conditions were bad, there was a lack of governmental co-operation. Food deliveries were seldom on time, there were plots against Mother Marianne's life as well as other physical dangers, and there was the sickness and death of some of the Sisters with no forthcoming replacements.

Although the government had promised better conditions and better food, the Sisters were still managing, in 1908, on scanty funds and with inadequate help. That year, in July, Mother Marianne wrote this letter to Mother Johanna who was then Superior General.

You are aware that we out here are all growing old and consequently are not able to go on with the heavy work we have been doing in the past. In Honolulu at the Kapiolani Home there are

three Sisters, all three worn out and more than half sick. They have fifty-six children to care for, many of them infants who require care night and day. Every week letters from there tell me of their hardships and need for help. I am helpless. Is there any hope for more help in the near future? Here at Molokai there are five Sisters and we have our hands full. I am over seventy years old. You may judge from that.

We are told that Mother "was not complaining, that was not her way; she was simply stating her usual forthright honesty about the situation." And what did she do about it? All the Sisters in the States were working beyond reason, and none could be released at this time. So Mother Marianne "pushed herself a little harder."

You may very well ask: Was it worth it? Certainly she had reached a very high level of frustration at many points in her journey to God. At her death Mother Marianne, from her heavenly perch was probably not too impressed with the grand monument erected in her honor; but to see the lepers she had loved and cared for, with their mangled limbs and devastated expressions, gather up their scant funds to raise twelve hundred dollars so the good Sisters of Saint Francis might stay among them in a new convent in Honolulu, must have warmed her heart and dispelled all frustration.

## Blessed Are You—II

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

**I**F WE LOOK for a fifth characteristic of the poor in spirit, we shall surely note: creativity. Pre-requisites for the contemplative life have been set down by Andrée Emery as (1) a high degree of creativity, and (2) a capacity for the humdrum.<sup>1</sup> This seems to me very insightful, but I would hesitate at the "and." Surely there can be and ought to be a great degree of creativity in the humdrum of every day. This is what the poor in spirit discover and manifest. Those who cannot make creative the so-called humdrum things of daily living are scarcely creative persons. They are not poor in spirit, not possessed of that flexibility and elected vulnerability which are essential to creativity, not established in that freedom and that state of being without holdings which give creativity full scope.

We have a telling example in the life of Saint Jane Frances de Chantal. Aristocrat that she was, it is likely that she had her first experience with sweeping up dust after she entered the convent. One day Jane Frances was gathering in the dust with utmost care, and another sister was watching her. "It is only dust," commented the watcher who seems to have been not very notable for a sense of wonder. "You act as though you were sweeping up pearls."

This was altogether too much care and creativity for dust. But Saint Jane Frances smiled: "Pearls? Oh, better than pearls. It is the dust of the house of God." This was a woman of insight and creativity rather beyond that of her observer.

For the truly creative persons, there is no humdrum. The kind of

creativity of heart that the saint was able to manifest when sweeping up dust belongs to the poor in spirit. Loving to beautify the little that we have is a deep part of poverty of spirit. It is not that we want dinginess. It is not that we are satisfied with dreariness. It is that we are creative enough to wrest beauty out of places and things where it may not seem to exist. We can be glad that we live here in a desert land, not just settled down in lush countryside to be enjoyed, but obliged to be always busy about trying to work with God in wrestling beauty out of places where beauty has not of itself appeared. And so it is in all works. The truly poor ones add to their situation always the high creativity of trying to beautify what they have, however little it may seem to be.

Lightness and gaiety belong to attitudinal poverty, not merely imposed poverty. Bleakness must never be confused with poverty, nor should dinginess or even starkness be identified with it. Saint Francis did not talk of poverty, but of holy poverty, and especially of his Lady Poverty. She was to him a beautiful ideal, and he sought out his little hermitages in places of beauty which he beautified all the more. He adorned his own austerity, just as Saint Clare beautified

hers. The poor work with what is given them. And this does not by any means exclude the gifts of the rich.

If a gift is poor and lowly *per se*, the creative poor in spirit receive it with humility. But they do not set aside with hauteur what is *per se* less poor and less lowly. The rich, too, must be allowed to love and to give. And their gifts are to be shared and diffused.

Flexible to the whole life situation, bending to God and to fellowmen, loving devotedly on and on in the vulnerability of the poor Christ, free and spiritually nomadic, pitching what tents God indicates and where He points out, the poor in spirit exercise always that creativity which is their heritage from the Father. And out of all these qualities is formed that capacity for enjoyment, delight, wonder, which is so eminently characteristic of the poor in spirit. Il Poverello found two sticks by the roadside. "A violin!" Madman or little poor one of the Lord according to one's perspective, insight, and frame of reference, Saint Francis played his "violin" in praise of the Most High God. "I am the herald of the Great King," he announced, though there were undoubtedly some who thought he was not dressed for the part.

<sup>1</sup>Andrée Emery, Ph.D., member of the Secular Institute of Our Lady of the Way, staff member Hacker Psychiatric Clinic, Los Angeles, California.

*Mother Mary Francis is Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico. Her writings include many contributions of poetry and prose to periodicals, the immensely popular books Spaces for Silence and A Right to Be Merry, as well as the recently published series of conferences reprinted from our pages: But I have called You Friends.*

It is definitely not a property of austerity to be closed to delight. This would be to revert to what we reflected on earlier: They are called to be open to the Lord, responsive to whatever he gives. If he gives lightness of spirit, if he gives an emotional upsurge—thanks be to him. If he gives a headache or a heartache—thanks be to him. Poor in spirit, receiving with open hands and open heart whatever God gives directly or through others, we become little enough to understand that this receiving whatever is given is part of that attitudinal poorness which is poverty of spirit. On the material plane, if it is the gift of fish so full of bones, we can exercise delicate artistry in removing them. On the spiritual plane, we exercise the same grace in accepting God's ways of sanctifying us in the situations of the day. And that brings us right back to our initial characteristic of the poor in spirit: flexibility.

If we are loaded up like a safety deposit box with the blueprints for our own sanctification, the deeds for our holdings, the folio of our austerity, the armor against hurt, there is scarcely going to be room in us for the Holy Spirit and his gifts. For they are not few. It would be altogether too bad to have stocked our own receptivity when the Giver of all good gifts is looking for the poor in spirit to enrich



them. If we are overflowing with our own ideas, we cannot be open to his. Neither can he give us his light ("Veni, Lumen cordium!") if our hearts are shaded with our own plans, our own decisions, judgments, verdicts. Certainly we use our own powers of decision-making, evaluating, concluding. But in the employment of them, we remain so flexible, teachable, open to the Lord, that we do not confuse our own voice with God's.

We all have turning points in our lives, those we presently recognize as major and those which we perhaps see only in retrospect as determinative. Each day is, in fact, a turning point. However, there come great turning points when we make particular choices

which may revolve about what seems of itself a very little thing. And by these choices the calibre of our lives is substantiated. You know John Bunker's poem in which he describes his friend who made the wrong small choice, took the wrong slight turning. "A different path, one way instead of another—merely took what seemed to him the way of easier treading." And the poet goes on to detail how "by the strange irony of the unforeseen, the path he chose became for him indeed the difficult way of pain and loneliness that leads to God knows whither."<sup>2</sup> This day, too, will be replete with choices for us to make, choices for coming closer to God as the little poor

ones intent upon expressing his Will, eager to give him delight with the dancing of their flexible spirits before his face. John Bunker's friend merely took what seemed to him a better choice for self. As such choices often enough do, that one led him in the end down a difficult path indeed.

For the poor in spirit, the vulnerable, the receptive, the free, the creative, the way of their flexible choices leads, in an entirely different sense, to God knows whither. Yes, God knows whither. And it is not necessary that we should know where. It is only necessary that we be poor enough to respond readily and follow eagerly.

### Blessed Are the Meek, for They Shall Inherit the Land.

CHRIST WENT ON to tell his doubtless spellbound listeners about a large legacy and who was to receive it. Some people were to inherit the land, to possess the earth. Their identification must certainly have been startling to that large congregation on the hillside. Meekness then, even as now, was not generally considered to be the outstanding mark of large landowners. Yet that was what he said. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the land" (Mt. 5:4).

Our chaplain, Father Burcard

Fisher, O.F.M., once remarked in a homily and with quite some acuity that the first land the meek possess is the land they are standing on. They are whole persons. They take that firm stance which only the gentle can really assume. The domineering, the aggressive, the blustering are not so much taking a stance as posturing. What we shall want first to consider, then, in the meek is their strength.

The meek are the self-possessed, which is to say that they are God-possessed since God has been allowed to possess their

<sup>2</sup>John Bunker, "Dark Fields and Shining Towers."

"selves." The arrogant and aggressive have leased their "selves" out to their acquisitiveness, their ambition, their desire to domineer. And while it is a poor enough bargain, they seem to go on renewing the lease for the meager return, the even self-destructive return. They never really possess the land on which they stand; they merely wage war over it.

If meekness is not exactly the worldly ideal, neither is it universally correlated with strength. Contrariwise, is not the first connotation of meekness in many minds that of supineness, spiritlessness, weakness? It is strange that this should be so, when Jesus set forth meekness as the expression of his own divine-human heart. It is interesting that Christ asked us to master only one lesson plan in life. "Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart" (Mt. 11:20). It is certainly not without significance that he never specifically asked us to learn anything else. He knew the hearts of men and what was in them then, what is in them now. He understood that excellence in humility and meekness required the practised ease possible only to a whole lifetime of striving. A doctorate in meekness requires a studious dedication that not too many are prepared to make.

We remember that our blessed Lord also spoke of taking on a

yoke. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart" (*Ibid.*). Meekness is the very opposite of irresponsibility. Rather, in opting for emulation of the meek Christ, we are agreeing to take on a highly demanding responsibility. But there is this about the heaviest responsibilities: they are never oppressive. It can be, after all, highly exhilarating to lift something heavy and carry it. It requires much practice and dogged determination, but among the rewards are the experience of spiritual élan in oneself and the presentation of example-beautiful to others.

When the danseur lifts the ballerina high into the air and seems to float her about over his head, it is not because obscure gravitational statistics of the dance reveal that one hundred and ten pounds become ten pounds when delivered from earthly moorings. No, rather the danseur has learned how to lift a one hundred pounds-plus burden which is sweet to him. The weight has become a part of the beauty he is creatively expressing. He is for us a model of bearing heavy responsibility, quite literally, with ease and grace. He has had to learn how to do this. The danseur has been obliged to try and to experience failure and then to try again and again and again. The weight of responsibility borne with practised grace has

been transformed into the lightness of achievement. But one has to bear the burden, to carry it, to lift it, to sweep it up. It will always be nothing but oppressive when pulled or dragged along.

Jesus again invites us to respond to his initiative with our own. It is *his* yoke, this humility, this meekness. But *we* are to take it up. He does not yoke it upon us but suggests that we yoke it upon ourselves. His yoke becomes our elected own. Take *my* yoke upon *you*. There must be the labor of learning to lift the burden before we can discover the burden light. Excellence in meekness is not for the lethargic, the apathetic, the ungenerous. But it is more than élan that our blessed Savior promises us for becoming practised in his meekness. He talks of rest: "And you shall find rest for your souls."

Reposefulness is an outstanding characteristic of the meek. And it is more the magnificent reposefulness of the mountain, firm and strong and equal to the blast of adverse winds, than of the sleeper. One could agree that the meek possess the land they are standing on and go on to add that they possess themselves. The Beatitudes were not departmentalized

by Christ. One flows into another. The next is possible because of the others. One expression leads to another. Each in a sense explains all the others. And so that quality (and not only state) of being without holdings, the characteristic of the poor in spirit, is clearly illustrated by the meek.

Because they are without holdings, the meek actually hold everything. We see this patently in the life of Saint Francis. The poet's fancy of "swinging the earth a trinket at my wrist"<sup>3</sup> became spiritual reality in the little Poor Man of Assisi. That all the earth was his is apparent in the way Francis dealt with the earth. He communed with it, eulogized its singing expressions of its Creator, was literally familial with it. There was never a man more at home in creation than meek Francis of Assisi. To the pilgrim alone belongs the land, for the pilgrim is only happily passing through. He is not about to declare wars of colonization. He does not in fact need colonies. He has it all.

Thus there is this reposefulness about the meek. Without aggressiveness (he suffers no grinding to possess), without arrogance (for he is a son and heir of a Master whose infinite holdings are never in jeopardy and

<sup>3</sup>Francis Thompson, "The Hound of Heaven," Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1941.

who assigns meekness as birth-right to his progeny), he is at rest.

The world is so torn with aggression, so swollen with arrogance. For this acute restiveness and for this diseasedness there is no repose. Rather than submit to this prognosis, we often enough pretend to despise reposefulness. Life is for action, protest, apprehension! But we shall want to reflect a bit later that the hunger and thirst for justice which signals yet another Beatitude calls for an action, a protest, and an apprehension possible only to the meek.

Flailing one's arms about becomes in the end merely exhausting, and that kind of exhaustion makes repose impossible. Insisting on one's rights, suing for them with merciless dominativeness fills the air with noise but never with music. Music belongs to the meek who have the strength to suffer all things, patiently for the love of Christ, and in the end to "count them all as rubbish that one may have Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

"You shall find rest for your soul" (Mt. 11:20). The strength of the meek, the strength which is able to suffer and to suffer gladly, is identified in reposefulness. And in this reposefulness one can experience what it is to possess the land. Only those who do not stake out particular holdings are free enough to possess all of the

earth. The meek have learned to possess their own souls in peace. Therefore they stand without fear upon the land become theirs not by acquisition but by gift and reward. And they become free to roam the whole territory of their inheritance: the earth.

So it was that Jesus said: Blessed are the meek; they shall own everything. They shall possess the whole land. They indeed possess everything who do not stake out any holdings. We need, however, to ask how often and how obstinately we deliver ourselves up to acquisitiveness. We want to own some ideas and judgments and to stake out claims on them. This is my sovereign opinion which no one shall alter! Certainly we have basic convictions, but this does not entail succumbing to the aggressiveness of "This is my charge, this is my work; keep out, keep off the grass of my holdings." This idea that is my "holding" is often enough the mistaken idea on which no one is going to correct me. I put up signs and observe squatters' rights. What a dreary business, when we can run and own the land and possess the earth if we are meek and humble of heart!

It is the unending drone of the squatter and his rights that "This is mine. And anyone who wants to liberate me doesn't understand."

There rises the age-old cry:

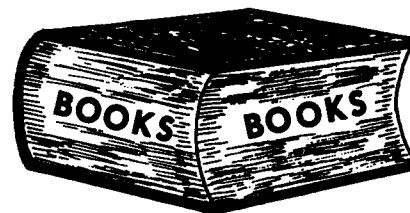
"You don't understand me" "This is *my* truth." Or, perhaps more accurately, my verisimilitude. And no one shall intrude here. No one shall bring in the truth here. No one shall point to a vision of something far greater. And so I can sit there and squat there on my holdings, proud, determined on this ownership, and, of course, forced to defend it. As our Father Saint Francis said, "If we own property, my brothers, then we shall have to have weapons to defend it."<sup>4</sup> And he went on to say that this gets more and more complicated. That is just what happens to us when we stake out a holding. We must have weapons to defend it. Somebody is coming to say that I am wrong, but

I have weapons to defend my error. And when we are busily defending this little plot with weapons of pride, weapons of blindness, weapons of arrogance, we refuse to possess the land promised to the meek.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has advised us that this is a very meager way of living. In the end, it is to render life wasted, squandered, lost. He points the direction away from such tragedy. Come to possession of the earth! Possess yourselves in reposefulness of soul. Take up my yoke and stand responsible, yoked, upon firm land. Learn of me; I am meek and humble of heart. And here is your diploma: the earth.

(To be continued)

<sup>4</sup>The Legend of the Three Companions, ch. IX, 33 (*Omnibus*, p. 921; *Words*, p. 59).



Chapel, at the Northway Mall, Albany, N.Y., and translator of many books on theology and spirituality, the latest of which is *Jesus in Devotion and Contemplation* (Abbey Press, 1974).

This is a book that every Christian should read and re-read, because it cannot be digested in one reading.

The book is divided into four parts: "The Healing Ministry" (its underlying meaning and importance), "Faith, Hope, and Charity as they Touch upon the Healing Ministry," "The Four Basic Kinds of Healing

**Healing.** By Francis MacNutt, O.P. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1974. Pp. 333. Paper, \$3.50.

*Reviewed by Father Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M., an assistant at St. Francis*



and How to Pray for each," and "Specific Considerations."

In the preface (p. 14), Father MacNutt makes this astounding statement: "I would make a rough estimate that about half those we pray for are healed (or are notably improved) of physical sickness and about three fourths of those we pray for are healed of emotional or spiritual problems." Only much further on in the book (chapter 18), does the author go into a detailed explanation of eleven reasons why people are not healed. Some of these are redemptive suffering, not getting to the root cause of the emotional suffering, resentment, faulty diagnosis (for example, praying for *physical* healing, when *inner* healing was the basic need), refusal to see medicine as a way God heals, and "now is not the time."

Father MacNutt is rightly aware that his book will meet sceptical eyes. So he has an excellent chapter (the second) entitled "Our Prejudices against Healing." When the subject of praying for healing comes up, what immediately comes to many minds is *faith healers*. His answer is: "To disparage the healing ministry because of certain excesses of snake-handling sects in Tennessee makes no more sense than to criticize the very concept of the Eucharist because of the excesses of some of the hunting Masses of the Middle Ages . . . The fault lies in the minister or in the way the ministry is carried out, and not in the validity of the act itself" (pp. 40-41).

Let me quote a few sentences that topple all these prejudices. "Nowhere in the gospel do we see Christ encouraging the sick to live with

their illness." A common objection to the healing ministry is: "It takes a saint to work a miracle, and I'm no saint." By way of refuting this objection, Father MacNutt simply quotes Christ's words: "These are the signs that will be associated with *believers*"; Christ did not say, with *saints*."

Every Christian believes that "Jesus saves us from personal sin and from the effects of original sin which include ignorance, weakness of will, disoriented emotions, physical illness, and death" (p. 49). But the basic question is: has Jesus "come to free us *even in this life* from disease and disordered emotions which, since the creation of man, have traditionally been considered the effects of evil—of 'original sin'?" (pp. 50-51).

The name "Jesus" means "Yahweh is Salvation." "This is precisely how Jesus conceived his mission; the time of the Messiah would be a time of healing, of liberation, of salvation." Because the Hebrews did not think of man as divided into body and soul, but as a whole person, when they spoke of healing they thought not only of *saving souls* but of *healing persons*. And man's person includes his body and his feelings.

And so Jesus went about healing people. He did so not just to prove that his message was true, but because he had come to set man free. Jesus himself did not refer to his healings as "miracles," but as "works"—the normal thing for him to do.

The author makes a very important distinction. There are two kinds of suffering: the kind of suffering that comes *from outside* of man because

of the wickedness of other men who are evil. And secondly, there is suffering "of *sickness*, the suffering that tears man apart from within, whether it be physical, emotional, or moral" (p. 78).

It is this second kind of suffering that Jesus came to heal. We will search the Gospels in vain to find Jesus counselling a sick man to rejoice, or to be patient because disease is helpful or redemptive. Rather, he "cured them all" (e.g., Mt. 12:16).

Father Francis believes, and the reviewer concurs in that belief, that we have tended to emphasize doctrine rather than experience, as if right knowledge coupled with will-power were enough to produce Christians.

The main thing that God seems to want to show people by the healings taking place in our day is that he is real, that he loves ordinary people, and that he wants them to draw near to him.

"Christianity," the author concludes, "is more than doctrine; it is power. it is power to transform our lives, to destroy the evil that prevents us from loving God and our neighbor. Jesus came to bring us a new life, a share in God's own life. We have always believed these things, but where is the reality of it? Where is the power truly to change lives?" (p. 95).

This is a book written by a son of St. Dominic, a priest who for years felt that something was missing in his ministry. What kind of spiritual direction could he give to those who were depressed, alcoholic, homosexual, who felt worthless and unlovable? He eventually found out that the

healing ministry was the answer.

In *Healing* Father MacNutt shares with us the fruit of his study and involvement in the healing ministry. The style is simple, clear, uncomplicated, direct, and theologically sound.

It is a text book that will clear the atmosphere of unsound teachings about healing. If read with an open mind, it will clear the way for Jesus to show people that he loves them, even in this life, and that he wants them to experience his love and heal their hurts! And who hasn't been hurt?

Even if a person has studied religion for eight years in a Catholic grade school, four years in a Catholic high school, another four years of theology in a Catholic college, and even has a graduate degree in theology, he or she has not exhausted the revelation of Jesus Christ.

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**Our Idea of God** (Vol. 3 of *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*). By Juan Luis Segundo, S.J. Trans. John Drury. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1974. Pp. vi-206. Cloth, \$6.95.

*Reviewed by Father Raphael D. Bonanno, O.F.M., member of the team ministry in the Brazilian parish of Pires do Rio, State of Goiás. A frequent contributor to our pages, Father Raphael has served in the parish apostolate for eleven years.*

I was very happy to be asked to review this book by Father Segundo because I believe this new theology coming out of Latin America is perhaps a major blessing for the universal Church. I had heard good things about Father Segundo per-



sonally, and so my curiosity was piqued to see what such a man would write. Moreover, he is a professional theologian in contact with the Holy Spirit speaking through the lay apostles he trains in the Peter Faber Center of Montevideo. For all these reasons, I approached this book with a good deal of happy anticipation, and for the most part I came away satisfied.

Segundo's subject is God—no one less. He touches on the questions: "Does God interest us"; God and History; God and Society; God and Liberty; God and the World. He ranges from Medellin and the living God to demythologizing, to the early Church invoking the Trinity, to the nonviolent God. Segundo believes that Latin America may be called by God to change the Occidental image of God. What will be the new image? Will it be truer than the last? Throughout, he insists on the trinitarian or societal God. In our days of increasing social awareness, he affirms that God's social, three-personal aspect merits more attention. For many years the focus was on the one divine nature in God, rather than on the three divine Persons. Secularization, the death-of-God movement, and atheism have helped us all to destroy false idols and reach out again for the tremendous reality that is God. Father Segundo's personalist accent is notable, as he seeks personal relations with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. His approach is more biblical and patristic than metaphysical or philosophical. His concrete examples are the Cuban Church and God, Medellin (a constant reference), poli-

tical awareness and faith, and conscientization and evangelization. I fully expected his examples to be taken from the everyday religiosity of his lay apostles, but even so they are striking for their peculiarly Latin American character.

What we find in this book is not a collection of laymen's theological utterings in the Spirit plus a professional theologian's commentary on them. What Segundo offers is rather a professional theologian's reflections on the eternal truths of revelation and endeavor to link them to modern times and situations such as Medellin, the death-of-God movement, Marcuse's thought, the theology of Henri de Lubac, etc., but most particularly to his own Latin-American situation.

The name of the series of which this book is the third volume is *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*—a rather high-sounding title for a simple, modest attempt to write living, down-to-earth theology. Segundo makes his theology living all right, but at times it is not so down-to-earth, as when he gets into Modalism, Subordinationism, and Arianism. Still, the orthodox Christian faith does have something precise and definite to say about God, and as abstruse as this sort of speculation may seem to some, it has its necessary place in understanding the underlying mystery. In spite of some shortcomings, *Our Idea of God* is a worthwhile book that will reward any reader interested in theology of Latin-American vintage.

**Theological Investigations**, vol. X. Writings of 1965-1967. By Karl

Rahner, S.J. Trans. David Bourke. New York: Herder & Herder, 1973. Pp. IV-409. Cloth, \$9.75.

*Reviewed by the Reverend Dr. Le-land J. White, Chairman, Department of Religion, Nazareth College, Kalamazoo, Michigan.*

Occasional essays appearing so long after their original composition suggest enduring value and their author's reputation. Yet serious questions about theology and renewal in the Church today arise from such a fact. Are both theology and Church reform inevitably victims of future shock? Can books be circulated before the issues that they raise seem to become passé? Can reforms be implemented before the felt needs of the Church change? Is the reader who turns to yet another Rahner volume on Church, sacraments, eschatology, and the Church-world relationship doing more than returning to concerns characteristic of the immediate aftermath of Vatican II?

Seven of these four hundred pages provide an important clue to the answers for these questions. The brief chapter is entitled "A Fragmentary Aspect of a Theological Evaluation of the Concept of the Future." There Rahner reminds us that "the future is that to which we ourselves cannot reach out, but which comes to us of itself" (p. 237). If this notion appears elementary, in fact Rahner is only doing what he has so often before done so extraordinarily well when he draws our attention to it. He is taking a basic human phenomenon, stating its most elementary meaning, then using that as the basis for a

rather penetrating theological investigation. His elementary description of the future is designed to call attention to the contradiction, inherent in both Western theorists and Marxists, who confuse the future with the "tomorrow which is already here today" (p. 236). Far from respecting the future, those who plan and project, he argues, may limit it to its present possibilities. The future is a to-be-given, beyond the fashioning of its recipients, in the realm of grace.

It is, then, the recipients who are to be fashioned rather than the future itself. Men and the Church with them are called to that care in shaping their provisional structures that will most clearly equip them to use the structures, whether of meaning or action, and then to discard them for the reality that is to be given. This reality will break in upon them unexpectedly, though not without their being expectant.

Rahner's work must be seen as so many exercises to instruct us in that expectancy. Even in his discussion of seemingly dated issues, where indeed he is trying to clear up historical problems, he sounds a note to contribute towards that awakening. For example, when he argues the case of indulgences, now so remote from the concern of most of us, he draws attention to the power of the Church, yet all the while insisting that it need not be considered jurisdictionally. That power becomes clarified as simply the power of Christ in whatsoever way it might affect the life of man.

His discussion of the Church itself probes two traits characteristically new in Vatican II: its localized existence and its reality as a sacrament

of salvation. But more than being items for consideration in a final reform program, these notions are taken as disposing the Church for realities beyond its imagination. Rahner is here attentive to the concrete possibilities. To assess the Church primarily in terms of its actual local realization of the presence of Christ and his grace serves to deny the Christian the false security of a universal and ideal community nowhere and never realized. To know the Church as the sacrament of a salvation being worked out by God's grace in the world as a whole enables the Church to assume the posture of a servant. But these concrete possibilities have their significance against the background of the incalculable opportunities towards which they are but an opening.

Concrete cases can be multiplied. Indeed, they must. The author turns to the social work of the Church, the work for peace, in fact the work for a new Earth. An earlier reader's response to the war in Vietnam can be imagined, and one may even project forwards in concern for nuclear weapons limitation and for the problem posed by the Third World. It is not that the suggestions lack concreteness, but rather that they insist on concreteness in a way that makes us sensitive to the fact that all such responses are provisional, and more that what they would provide is the man or human community more open not merely to the next challenge but to the challenge of living in its full range. It is the challenge of living in hope, in expectancy of God's own self-giving.

Hope is driven to its ultimate as a theological virtue. Rahner clarifies the relationship of faith and love to hope as this is expressed biblically and scholastically. He makes clear that hope is not merely the vessel bearing a vision and a communion not yet attained. It is rather finally the ongoing life of that vision and communion in itself. That is, man does not abandon hope by attaining the consummation of faith and love in eternity. Rather what he attains, being in fact God himself, being beyond any exhaustion, gives him a final ground for hoping.

It is rare enough that occasional essays, directed to one historical situation, will have lasting significance. It is probably still more unusual for a theologian to describe the final hope of man as such a realization of human life that we actually feel led to begin the adventure. How often it is that the more ecstatic descriptions of everlasting life, at least for those who do enjoy the human adventure, have about them an aura of a finale devoutly to be wished and all the more anxiously to be delayed. Rahner has given us an interest in our future because he brings a unique vision to our past and our present, while fully aware that nostalgia is a sickness that blinds vision even as life is a present that must continually be presented. To ask whether we needed volume ten in Rahner's investigations is to ask whether we as a Church need to know after one, nine, or an infinite number of volumes anything new—whether we are still hearing anything new about our future.

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- Alain (Emile Chartier), *The Gods*. Trans. Richard Pevear; New York: New Directions Publishing Corp., 1974. Pp. 186. Paper, \$3.95.
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- The Vatican II Sunday Missal*. Prepared by the Daughters of St. Paul. Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1974. Pp. 1120. Plastic, \$5.95; Cloth, \$6.95; Imitation leather, \$7.95; Leather with gold edges, \$9.95. 20% discount to clergy and religious.

# THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES M.A. PROGRAM

BY THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE AT ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY

## CALENDAR \*

Registration	Wednesday, June 25
Classes begin	Thursday, June 26
Modern Language Exam	Friday, July 18
Final Exams	Wednesday, August 6

## COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1975

All courses meet daily, Monday through Friday in Francis Hall

- FI 501 Sources for Franciscan Studies,**  
3 cr., Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15  
This course is prerequisite for 503 and 504
- FI 503 Early Franciscan Texts,**  
3 cr., Duane Lapsanski, O.F.M., D.Th.: 9:10 - 10:15  
Prerequisite: 501
- FI 504 Life of St. Francis,**  
3 cr., Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10 - 10:15  
Prerequisite: 501
- FI 506 Survey of Franciscan History,**  
3 cr., Lawrence Landini, O.F.M., H.E.D.: 10:20 - 11:25
- FI 508 History of Franciscan Thought,**  
3 cr., Julian Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 10:20 - 11:25
- FI 511 Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts,**  
2 cr., Malcolm Wallace, Ph.D.: 11:30 - 12:35
- FI 517 Introduction to Palaeography,**  
2 cr., Girard Etzkorn, Ph.D.: 11:30 - 12:35
- FI 521 Rule of St. Francis,**  
2 cr., Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D. Phil. Oxon: 11:30 - 12:35
- FI 523 Bonaventurian Texts,**  
2 cr., Juvenal Lalor, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 8:00 - 9:05
- FI 531 Womanhood and the Franciscan Ideal,**  
2 cr., Hugh Eller, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 8:00 - 9:05

Students intending to pursue the program in the Autumn and the Spring semesters must begin their studies in the Summer session.

**Course 501 is only offered in the Summer session.**

Pre-registration forms are available from the Office of Graduate Studies, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, New York 14778.

**This program is offered during the Autumn, Spring, and Summer Sessions.**

The cover and illustrations for our March issue have been drawn by Sister M. Raphael Fulwider, O.S.F., Chairman of the Art Department at Maria Regina College, Syracuse, N.Y.

# the CORD

March, 1975

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## EDITORIAL

### Watch One Hour . . . ?

ONE OF THE MANY shifts which set conciliar theology in a somewhat different key from what had preceded it, is the emphasis on the Eucharist as meal-event. Not only has the attitude of many people toward the liturgical celebration itself been thus altered (so that sacrifice is subordinated to banquet), but there has also been a discernible effect upon popular devotion to the Real Presence.

Thus some people make a point of marching past the Tabernacle without genuflecting so as to demonstrate their conviction that the Presence is for sharing at a communal meal and not real outside that event. Priests make the same point on occasion by ostentatiously flicking away particles of the Host that remain after Mass has been celebrated, instead of purifying the sacred utensils in the careful, traditional manner.

One recalls the "celebration" last June of the Feast of Corpus Christi, once the occasion for fervent and well frequented pageants, parades, and other spontaneous forms of devotion. For the most part the "Feast" is now commemorated only too often by the simple one-line announcement before the Mass identifying it as the subject of the day's liturgy.

With the other, even more important, commemoration of the Eucharist at hand this month, on Holy Thursday, we consider it appropriate to call attention to the Nocturnal Adoration Society, an association for Catholic men (priests and laymen) dedicated to the greater love and honor of our Lord as Priest, Victim, and King in the Blessed Sacrament.

The center of the Society is the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. One of its purposes is to atone for the coldness and indifference of so many Catholics toward the Holy Eucharist, which is the Spiritual Life of the Society and, indeed, of the Church itself. Men are brought together in witness to Christ's sacrificial action in the Eucharist by sharing in his night

prayer, spending one hour a month before the Blessed Sacrament exposed during the hours of the night. The Society, founded in Rome in 1810, now exists in practically every country in the world. For information, you can contact Father H. C. Lemieux, the National Director, at its American Headquarters, 194 E. 76 Street, New York 10021.

Whether or not you are interested in belonging to even so excellent an association as this one—and, of course, women evidently cannot belong to this one—the imperatives still touch you and every other Catholic: (1) that of attaining a balanced theological appreciation of the Eucharist as *both sacrifice and spiritual nourishment—as both transient event and abiding presence*; and (2) that of allowing some expression of such an understanding (some form of Eucharistic devotion) to mark our outward, public religious life. What better way to begin (or begin Anew) than, on this Holy Thursday, to watch one hour with our Eucharistic Lord?

*Fr. Michael D. Mailach, OFM*

### "And Jesus Wept"

There's no season for Christ weeping  
When His Apostles all seem sleeping.  
There's no Jerusalem, great city,  
Crying out to Him for pity.  
Just a Priest—a Sister—a Brother  
Who can lay blame upon no other.  
They, His salt to give earth flavour  
Somehow lost Indwelling savour.  
They His lights for candles glowing,  
His Spirit crushed, yet floods no tears.  
To drown an anguished world with fears.  
Yet His internal wounds are deepening  
While His Apostles—we are sleeping.

Sister Claire Marie Wick, O.S.F.

# Bonaventure and Contemporary Thought

EWERT H. COUSINS

A COMMEMORATIVE occasion such as this—celebrating the seventh centenary of the death of Saint Bonaventure—gives us the opportunity to re-examine his life, his thought, and his influence on the Franciscan Order and the history of Western culture. Since Bonaventure was a man of many gifts, we can examine his achievements from many points of view. We can consider him as a religious leader and administrator, the seventh Minister General after Francis, esteemed as the second founder of the Order, whose gifts of mediation enabled him to draw together disparate factions and to establish the Order on a firm organizational basis. Or we can consider him as one of the most eloquent preachers and controversialists of the turbulent mid-thirteenth century, who used his oratorical gifts not only to preach the Gospel, but to defend the mendicant orders and the theological tradition against varied attacks. Or we can consider him as a saint and spiritual writer, whose wisdom has been, throughout the centuries, a primary source of Franciscan spirituality. Or we can look upon him as one of the greatest synthetic minds in a century that is outstanding for its theological synthesis. Bonaventure achieved for the medieval Augustinian tradition a synthesis comparable to that produced by Thomas Aquinas with Aristotelian philosophy. All of these points of view would offer rich possibilities and merit extended investigation. But I have chosen to examine Bonaventure today from another perspective, which I believe is equally important: namely, his

*Dr. Ewert H. Cousins, a consultant to the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christian Religions, is Associate Professor of Theology at Fordham University and President of the American Teilhard de Chardin Association. This is the complete text of his Convocation Address, given at Siena College April 4, 1974, on the occasion of his receiving the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters. The comments on Dr. Cousins' Address, delivered on the same occasion by Father Peter D. Fehlner, O.F.M. Conv., and Father John E. Van Hook, O.F.M., will be published in our pages next month.*

relation to contemporary thought.

It may seem strange to examine Bonaventure in relation to contemporary thought; for he lived in an age separated from ours by seven centuries, an age whose life-style, modes of thought, and challenges seem very foreign to our own. In contrast with the stable, homogeneous world of the Middle Ages, we are overwhelmed by process and bewildered by diversity. In the accelerating pace of change, we are numbed by future shock and confused by conflicting visions of the future: images of utopia and of cosmic catastrophe. On the religious scene, pluralism has supplanted a narrow orthodoxy, and ecumenism has expanded to the horizon of world religions.

After Vatican II, many Catholics have rejected the past and have plunged into the modern world. After a hundred years of looking at the modern world through neo-scholastic lenses, many Catholics have thrown off medieval thought patterns and are facing the modern world on its own terms. Even if we were interested in our past, Bonaventure may be too forgotten to be recalled. During the neo-scholastic revival, it was Thomas not Bonaventure who was in the fore; and within the Franciscan tradition Bonaventure was eclipsed by Duns Scotus. Therefore to see Bonaventure in relation to contemporary thought may seem like

an irrelevant and even impossible task.

I believe that this is neither an impossible nor an irrelevant task. In order to face this task squarely, we must begin by asking the question: How is Bonaventure related to contemporary thought? We do not wish to approach this question superficially or to impose his thought patterns on the contemporary scene. Bonaventure represents one of the richest traditions in Western thought—a tradition that is very sensitive to process and diversity, two aspects of reality that are challenging us most critically in the twentieth century. Bonaventure inherited this tradition from Augustine, the Greek Fathers, Anselm, the Victorines, and Alexander of Hales. He exercised his genius in relating this tradition to the challenges of his age and in incorporating into the tradition the distinctively Franciscan spirit. If we in the twentieth century are to meet the challenges of the future—of process and diversity—then we must be in touch with all the resources of our past. It is crucial for us to know the tradition Bonaventure represents, and it is especially beneficial to know that tradition in the rich synthetic form that Bonaventure has bequeathed to us. When Bonaventure brought his tradition into contact with the issues of his day, he penetrated

deeply into the mystery of reality. It is not surprising that he touched levels which are universal, which transcend the differences of historical periods and are significant for us now in the twentieth century.

In order to reach these universal levels, we must enter deeply into Bonaventure's thought-world and perceive the inner structure and dynamics of his vision. We will see that for Bonaventure, God and the world are dynamic, God is intimately related to the world, and the diversity of creation is centered in the unity of Christ. In order to see this vision clearly, I believe we need a path, a road, a bridge that will lead us directly into the heart of Bonaventure's world view so that we can view it from the inside without obscurity or distortion. During the last several years I have attempted to build such a bridge with the coincidence of opposites. I have claimed that Bonaventure's total vision, with all of its parts, can be seen through the logic of the coincidence of opposites.<sup>1</sup> If we took another bridge—for example, through the logic of difference

—then we would never arrive at the heart of Bonaventure's world; for we would assume that God cannot be at the same time self-sufficient and dynamic and that he cannot be related to the world. Through the coincidence of opposites, however, we can penetrate to the depths of Bonaventure's understanding of process, relatedness, and diversity—to the universal dimensions where Bonaventure touches our modern problems.

I will deal with three areas of Bonaventure's thought, seen through three types of the coincidence of opposites: (1) the Trinity, where self-sufficiency coincides with dynamism; (2) God and the world, where the infinite coincides with the finite; and (3) the Christocentric universe, where unity coincides with diversity. In these areas Bonaventure can enter into dialogue with Hegel and Whiteheadian process thinkers, with Teilhard de Chardin and Tillich, and with the theology of ecumenism as it attempts to articulate the meaning of Christian unity within the horizon of world religions.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Ewert H. Cousins, "La 'Coincidentia Oppositorum' dans la théologie de Bonaventure," *Etudes franciscaines* 18 (Supplément annuel, 1968), 15-31, English version printed in *THE CORD* 20 (1970), 260-69; "The Coincidence of Opposites in the Christology of Saint Bonaventure," *Franciscan Studies* 28 (1968), 27-45; "Mandala Symbolism in the Theology of Bonaventure," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 40 (1971), 185-201, reprinted in *THE CORD* 21 (1971), 324-39.

## The Dynamic Trinity

BONAVENTURE'S doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of his entire system.<sup>2</sup> In fact, he is undoubtedly one of the most thorough-going Trinitarian theologians in the history of Christian thought. In Bonaventure's theology, the Trinity is the mystery of God's fecundity and dynamic self-manifestation. But it is also the mystery of God's absolute self-sufficiency. As Arthur Lovejoy points out in his book *The Great Chain of Being*, there has been great tension throughout the history of thought between two images of God: God as self-sufficient absolute and God as self-communicating fecundity.<sup>3</sup> As self-sufficient, God is the timeless absolute, the unmoved mover, distant from the world and radically unlike the world. As self-communicating, God is out-going related, involved, sharing his perfections with the world. These two

images seem incompatible and according to some are ultimately irreconcilable. Often in the history of thought, the image of God as self-sufficient has won out, producing the view of God as static and unrelated, a view which has been severely criticized in the twentieth century by Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne.<sup>4</sup>

Bonaventure reconciles these two images of God through the coincidence of opposites. In the person of the Father in the Trinity, the two images coincide. As unbegotten, the Father is the root of the self-sufficiency in the Godhead, for he proceeds from no one. At the same time he is the fountain and source of the divine processions. Bonaventure not only sees these two images coexisting in the Father, but he sees them present by way of a dynamic coincidence of opposites, such that one implies and demands the other. For Bonaventure, to be unbegotten implies

<sup>2</sup>For Bonaventure's chief Trinitarian texts, cf. the following sources in, *S. Bonaventurae Opera Omnia* (10 vols; Quaracchi, 1882-1902): *I Sent.*, d. 2-34 (I, 46-596); *Quaestiones Disputatae de Mysterio Trinitatis* (V, 45-115); *Breviloquium*, p. I, c. 2-6 (V, 210-15); *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, c. 6 (V, 310-12); *In Hexaëmeron*, coll. I, n. 13-17; coll. XI (V, 331-32; 379-84).

<sup>3</sup>Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), *passim*.

<sup>4</sup>Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: Macmillan, 1929), pp. 519-33; Charles Hartshorne, *The Divine Relativity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948); Charles Hartshorne and William L. Reese, *Philosophers Speak of God* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).

that the Father begets the Son; and to beget the Son implies that the Father is unbegotten. Thus at the root of the Divinity there is a profound coincidence of opposites. Because the Father is absolutely self-sufficient, he is absolutely fecund; and because he is absolutely fecund, he is absolutely self-sufficient.<sup>5</sup>

What are the implications of this? It means that the image of God as dynamic, processive, self-communicating, is not swallowed up by the image of God as self-sufficient. It enables Bonaventure to develop one of the richest doctrines of God as dynamic in the history of theology, a doctrine that has much to say to the process philosophers and theologians of modern times who have taken such pains to affirm the image of God as dynamic. I believe that the most significant contribution of Bonaventure to modern thought is his position that God is absolutely dynamic in his inner life and hence does not have to depend on the world to manifest himself.<sup>6</sup> Bonaventure claims that God is

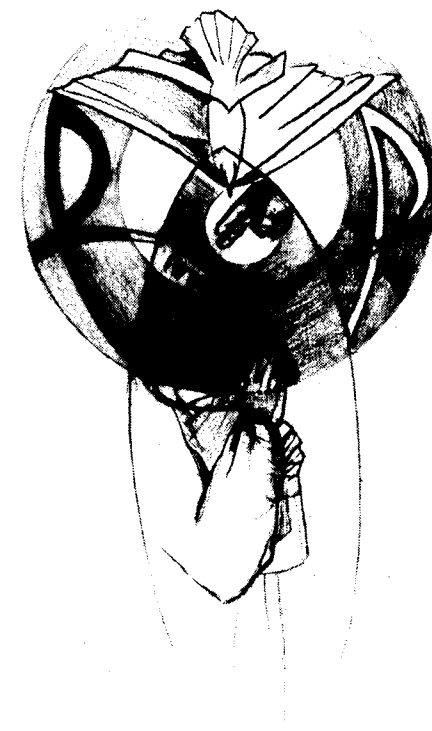
absolutely good; but the good is self-diffusive. Therefore God must be self-diffusive in an absolute way. This absolute self-diffusion of the good can be realized only in the Trinitarian processions: in the Father's generation of the Son and in their spiration of the Holy Spirit. If God had to depend on the world in order to diffuse his goodness, he would never be able to communicate himself adequately, for as Bonaventure says: "The diffusion that occurred in time in the creation of the world is no more than a pivot or point in comparison with the immense sweep of the eternal goodness."<sup>7</sup>

Bonaventure has placed God's transcendence precisely in his self-communication. Throughout the history of thought, philosophers who have affirmed the dynamic nature of God, for example Hegel, have been criticized for making God's self-communication dependent on the world. Bonaventure offers a solution to this problem: God is absolutely self-communicating within the Trinity. This frees God from

the world and the world from God, for the world would be overwhelmed by the full power of God's self-communication. But, on the other hand, the inner dynamism of the Trinity overflows into the world, activating within the world a process that reflects the dynamism of the inner life of the Trinity.

### God and the World

THROUGH THE coincidence of opposites Bonaventure can reconcile the image of God as self-sufficient and the image of God as self-communicating. Through another type of coincidence of opposites he can maintain an intimate relation between God and the world. Bonaventure shared the vision of Saint Francis, seeing the presence of God throughout creation—in the lowliest of creatures and across the vast panorama of the universe. Creatures were like a mirror reflecting God, a path leading to God, a statue depicting God, a stained glass window which reflects the richness of God's fecundity.<sup>8</sup> Bonaventure gave a philosophical and theological foundation to this vision. In generating the Son, the Father produces in the Son the archetypes or *rationes aeternae* of all he can make. Thus when creation occurs



in time, creatures reflect the Son as their divine exemplar. Bonaventure developed an elaborate system of the various ways creatures reflect God: as shadow, vestige, image, and similitude.<sup>9</sup>

Between Creator and creature we find a coincidence of opposites of the infinite and the finite. As finite, creatures are opposite from God, who is infinite. They coincide with God, however, in that they reflect God's perfections through exemplarism. All creatures are in the Son as Word of the Father, and the

<sup>5</sup>Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 1, a. un., q. 2 (I, 468-74).

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Ewert H. Cousins, "God as Dynamic in Bonaventure and Contemporary Thought," paper delivered at the Forty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, 2/28/74, Washington, D.C., to be published in the Proceedings.

<sup>7</sup>Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, c. 6, n. 2 (V, 310); English translation by Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M., Saint Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1956), p. 89.

<sup>8</sup>Bonaventure, *In Hexaëmeron*, coll. XII, n. 14 (V. 386).

<sup>9</sup>Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. un., q. 2, ad 4 (I, 72-74).

Word is in all creatures. This relation is so intimate that Bonaventure can say: "I will see myself better in God than in my very self."<sup>10</sup> Although creatures reflect God, they are not swallowed up in God as drops of water in the ocean. Rather, in reflecting God, their own individuality is intensified. While being intimately related to God, they remain radically themselves. Bonaventure holds that within the Word there are archetypes of each individual thing, not merely universal ideas.<sup>11</sup> This is Bonaventure's way of affirming the Franciscan sense of the importance of individuality and the value of uniqueness. Francis had this sense to a heightened degree, and it was expressed later by Duns Scotus in his doctrine of *haecceitas* (thisness), the property by which a thing is individualized.

In the coincidence of opposites between God and creatures, the opposites are maintained and intensified by their coincidence. For Bonaventure all the types of the coincidence of opposites—whether in the Trinity or in the world—are opposites of mutually affirming complementarity. That means that there is real opposi-

tion: both poles remain intact and are not absorbed into one another. God is not absorbed in the world, nor the world in God. But it means also that these opposites actually coincide, that they are internally related and not merely juxtaposed externally. The opposites interpenetrate and by this interpenetration intensify their uniqueness.

The coincidence of God and the world is a major theme in contemporary thought. Whitehead, Hartshorne, and the process theologians criticize the classical theological tradition for separating God and the world to such an extent that the God of Christian theology hardly seems to be the same as the God of biblical revelation.<sup>12</sup> It is here that Bonaventure has something pointed to say to process thinkers, for he represents an ancient and long-lived tradition in Christian theology that affirms an intimate relation between God and the world. It is true that Bonaventure's tradition differs from the process thinkers on crucial points, but it is equally concerned with God's relation to the world and offers an alternate resolution of the problem to that of the Whiteheadians.

<sup>10</sup>Bonaventure, *In Hexaëmeron*, coll. XII, n. 9 (V, 386).

<sup>11</sup>Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, p. 1, c. 8 (V, 216-17).

<sup>12</sup>Whitehead, *op. cit.*; Hartshorne, *op. cit.*; cf. also the selections in Ewert H. Cousins, ed., *Process Theology* (New York: Newman, 1971), pp. 3-226.

The Franciscan sense of God's presence in the world has great resonance with Teilhard de Chardin and Paul Tillich's theology of culture.<sup>13</sup> Like Francis and Bonaventure, Teilhard is aware of the presence of God throughout the universe; and Tillich is aware of God as the ground of being and the depth dimension of human experience. In this vision there is not a sharp distinction between the sacred and the secular; rather the sacred is the ultimate dimension of all secular experience. Thus through a genuine coincidence of God and the world, the tension between the sacred and the secular is resolved, and modern man can plunge into the secular in all of its depths, without feeling that he must betray the secular or abandon his religious identity.

### Unity and Diversity

BONAVENTURE brings us in touch not only with such contemporary issues as process and secularity, but also with ecumenism. This is not surprising, since Bona-

venture himself was an instrument of reconciliation during his life, both within the Franciscan Order and at the Council of Lyons, where he worked to bring about the union of the Eastern and Western divisions of Christianity. While Bonaventure himself was an instrument of ecumenism in his day, his thought can provide resources for a theology of ecumenism in the twentieth century. If his personality was effective in reconciling opposing groups, his thought can provide a matrix for integrating opposites. Since Bonaventure's thought is permeated by the logic of the coincidence of opposites, it can provide a model of diversity in unity—a model which can allow different religious traditions to realize a deep unity while maintaining their authentic diversity.

In his book *The Coming Convergence of World Religions*, Robley Whitson has drawn resources from Bonaventure to develop a model of unity and pluralism among world religions.<sup>14</sup> He bases his approach on Bona-

<sup>13</sup>Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965); *Hymn of the Universe*, trans. Simon Bartholomew (New York: Harper & Row, 1965); Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).

<sup>14</sup>Robley Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* (New York: Newman, 1971), pp. 147-65; for a longer presentation of Whitson and Panikkar in this perspective, see Ewert H. Cousins, "Bonaventure and World Religions," *THE CORD* 22 (1972), 55-63; reprinted in J. Guy Bougerol, ed., *S. Bonaventure 1274 - 1974* (Grottaferrata: Porziuncola Press, 1973), vol. III, pp. 687-706.



venture's doctrine of the coincidence of God and the world. Because God is present and revealing himself in all of creation and in the depth of human experience, one cannot draw a sharp distinction between the religions of revelation and those without revelation. For Bonaventure God has revealed through the book of creation, the book of nature, the book of the soul, the book of Life—as well as through the book of Scripture.<sup>15</sup> Thus God's self-manifestation or revelation is foundational and universal. This allows Whitson to read Buddha's enlightenment experience and certain Confucian texts as revelational. Thus Whitson avoids the logic of separation—of revelational and non-revelational—through the coincidence of opposites in a deeper unity. Through Bonaventure's doctrine of cosmic revelation, Whitson can maintain the uniqueness of each revelational tradition. I might add that such a model of plurality does not negate a hierarchical structure which would assign a pre-eminent revelation to the Judaic-Christian tradition. It rather provides a broad revelational base in

which such a hierarchy can be affirmed without denying the validity of other traditions.

In his book *The Trinity and World Religions*, Raymond Panikkar uses another model of unity and diversity for a theology of ecumenism.<sup>16</sup> He sees the different spiritual traditions of mankind according to a Trinitarian model. Stated briefly, his position claims that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are religions of the Word, since they claim to have received God's revelation through his word as expressed in their sacred books. Buddhism is the religion of the silence of the Father, since the Buddhist strives to reach Nirvana, or the void, not through the Word but through silence. Although in the Trinity the Father is viewed from the standpoint of his power to generate the Son, it is possible to look upon that aspect of the Father which is the silence out of which he utters his Word. Finally, the advaitan tradition of Hinduism represents the religion of the Spirit since it seeks for the undifferentiated union between the soul and God. In the Trinity the Spirit is the union between the Father and the Son.

Although Panikkar does not mention Bonaventure, his use of a Trinitarian model reflects Bonaventure's vestige doctrine. Just as Bonaventure saw vestiges of the Trinity in all creatures—in their power, wisdom, and goodness reflecting the Father, Son, and Spirit—so Panikkar sees in the highest level of man's spiritual quest a reflection of the Trinitarian mystery.<sup>17</sup> This Trinitarian model has great ecumenical implications, since it provides a paradigm of unity and diversity which allows even the most disparate religious traditions to retain their uniqueness and at the same time to be related to the Christian's understanding of the divine mystery. Since Bonaventure has one of the most thoroughly developed Trinitarian theologies in Christian history, he can enter into dialogue with Panikkar and provide resources for understanding this new extension of the vestige doctrine into the sphere of man's religious experience.

In addition to the revelational and the Trinitarian model, Bonaventure provides another model for ecumenism—embodying, as the other two, the coincidence of unity and diversity. This is the model of Christ the center. In

the latter period of Bonaventure's writing career, the doctrine of Christocentricity came more and more to the fore. In the first of the *Discourses on the Six Days*, delivered the year before his death, Bonaventure developed the theme of Christ the center of all the sciences: metaphysics, physics, mathematics, logic, law, ethics, and theology.<sup>18</sup> Christ is the center of all the reality studied by these sciences. Thus the whole universe is centered on Christ. As the union of God and man, Christ is the supreme example of the coincidence of opposites. As supreme coincidence of opposites, he functions as the center of the universe and history—unifying in himself the rich diversity of creation, in its process of return to the Father. I believe that Bonaventure's notion of Christ the center foreshadows Duns Scotus' doctrine of the primacy of Christ in creation.

This model of Christ the universal center is especially significant for ecumenism among Christian denominations. For Bonaventure, the mystery of Christ is as vast as the universe and as extensive as human experience. Various individual Christians and diverse Christian

<sup>15</sup>Bonaventure, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Mystero Trinitatis*, q. 1, n. 2. concl. (V, 54-56).

<sup>16</sup>Raymond Panikkar, *The Trinity and World Religions* (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1970); cf. also *idem*, "Towards an Ecumenical Theandric Spirituality," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 5 (1958), 507-34.

<sup>17</sup>CF. Ewert H. Cousins, "Bonaventure and World Religions," 59-63 [701-04]; cf. also *idem*, "The Trinity and World Religions," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 7 (1970), 489-98.

<sup>18</sup>Bonaventure, *In Hexaëmeron*, coll. I (V, 229-35).

denominations have responded to different aspects of this mystery. Some have responded to Christ as the center of human existence, others as the center of the universe, others as the center of history. Yet the mystery of Christ the universal center transcends in its fullness any single aspect. In fact, one can see in Bonaventure's image of Christ the center a reflection of the mystery of the fullness of God. In the unity of Christ the Universal cosmic center, Christians can find a point of unity that can ground their authentic diversity.

This same mystery of Christ the universal center can help Christians relate to world religions and yet retain their own commitment to the uniqueness of Christ. The two models of Panikkar and Whitson are universalizing models of unity and diversity. If a Christian employed only these models, he might feel that his commitment to the particularity of Christ is weakened and even dissolved. On the other hand if he commits himself to the particularity of Christ, he seems to cut himself off from relatedness to the other religions of the world. If he views the mystery of Christ through Bonaventure's perspective and sees Christ as the universal cosmic center, then he can see the rich diversity of religious traditions centered ultimately on Christ,

but not necessarily immediately connected to him through a direct historical line. I must state here that this is intended as a Christian's theology of ecumenism and would not be the appropriate perspective for, say, a Buddhist's theology of ecumenism. For the Christian, the tension between the opposites of particularity and universality are resolved in the coincidence realized in the mystery of Christ the center.

In summary, then, with Bonaventure we can penetrate deeply into the mystery of Christ the center, of particularity and universality, of unity and diversity, of the interpenetration of God and creatures, and of the complementarity of the images of God as self-sufficient and as self-communicating. Drawn into the Bonaventurian universe through the coincidence of opposites, we can marvel at its richness, its complexity, and its fullness. In this vision, we find ourselves not stranded in the Middle Ages but thrust into the heart of the problems of today and tomorrow. Bonaventure has been true to his origins—to the spirit of Francis. He has grasped Francis' sense of the richness of God, of his nearness to the world, of the importance of each creature, and of the centrality of Christ. By being true to his origins, Bonaventure has become relevant to our day, and I venture to predict, relevant to all times.

# Blessed Are You—III

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

## Blessed Are They Who Mourn, for They Shall be Comforted

**I**N A WAY, that plan for living offered on the Mount of the Beatitudes got stranger as it went along. It might be thought quite enough reversal of worldly philosophy that Christ should have declared that the kingdom belongs to the poor, to have asserted that the whole earth-planet and, by implication, the estates of heaven as well, are to be given not to the highest bidder or to the most aggressive claimant, but to the serene and reposeful meek. But, no!—there was more to come. For now into the company of those hallowed by God are brought the weeping ones. "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Mt. 5:5).

It is doubtful whether most of us would have arrived unaided at the conclusion that it is a blessed thing to mourn. If we had any distinct concept of blessedness connected with mourning it could likely have been that it is a blessed thing to be rid of it. Are not mourners by widely accepted definition the unhappy ones? Obviously, if a mourner is blessed, then it has to mean that he is blessed to have got out of this painful predicament, to have escaped from this sorrowful situation, to have fended off suffering. And so we might well have written the third beatitude like this: Blessed are they who enjoy the comfort of not having anything to mourn about. But then we run up against the hard fact that

this is just not what Christ said.

Again, his words are not our words. That could have been predicted, since he did mention that his thoughts are not our thoughts (Is. 56: 8). Thoughts at odds with each other are scarcely going to emerge in a verbal identity. We shall have, then, to deal with the words that our blessed Savior uttered and not with the words that we think he ought to have uttered. This confrontation for all its initial difficulty is apt to prove rather more rewarding than we might have supposed. It is, in fact, calculated to revise us, redirect us, reform us, and, in the end, overwhelmingly reward us. What do his words really mean? What, for that matter, do *the* words mean? For we do not ever find Christ manipulating words or reshaping them to his purpose or showing any predilection for the abstruse. Always, he spoke so simply. This is what devastates us. His words were so plain. That is what is so disconcerting.

It did not matter to Jesus that men even then had tacitly agreed upon a false definition of comfort any more than it matters to him now. A word is not debauched because we have played it false, even though we may be. And to comfort means "to make strong" (con & fortare) no matter how much we prattle on about ease and sensual satisfaction. We might, incidentally, pause right there a

moment to consider "ease."

To accomplish with ease implies either an initially strong and outstanding gift from God or a previous strong and persevering effort on our own part, and usually both. The poet who writes "with ease" has suffered and labored in order that ease could be possible. The dancer pirouetting with ease has practised and sweated how many hours. The ease of the concert pianist is the fruit of toilsome years. And even the established ease that comes of persevering effort is never secure of itself but needs always to be sustained by continuing effort. So much for a slight pause to consider ease—back to comfort.

It is obvious that to make strong is not synonymous with deliverance from difficulty. Rather it already implies just the opposite. We begin here to have an uneasy suspicion that to be comforted, to be made strong, may mean just precisely that we become equipped to bear difficulty. It is a well-founded suspicion. To be comforted in sorrow is to be made strong enough to suffer. If mourning, then, is to be blessed with strength, it cannot of itself be evil. It must, in fact, bear within itself an intrinsic good. How else could God comfort it, much less declare it blessed?

Before we reflect on the radix of mourning, we could stop to recall how we ourselves comfort the mourner. We comfort a sorrowing friend not by removing the cause for sorrow, which is most often quite beyond our power in any case, but by reaching out the strength of our love for our friend, our understanding of his pain, our making our-

selves one with him in it. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, heroine of our times, has brought comfort to how many of the wretched dying in India and elsewhere by the strength of her love, by her presence to them. Sometimes we can alleviate certain effects of suffering. We can at times reduce pain with drugs or therapy. Neither of these is actually a comfort, but simply an alleviation, a reduction, a mending. True, physical suffering can sometimes by God-given human skills be ended and pain eventually soothed or even eradicated. But for the mourner, it is a question of the present situation rather than making an end of the situation. There will be finale to mourning, certainly, an eternal soothing, a forever-and-ever eradication. "And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more mourning nor weeping nor sorrow any more, because the former things have passed away" (Rev. 21:4). But this does not appear to be what Christ is speaking about in the third beatitude. For he does not talk of the end of mourning which is to come in life eternal, but of the comforting that is to be given in order that mourning in this life may be possible.

Possible? Yes. For mourning is a very pure thing. Without strength, it degenerates into its very antonym: self-pity. It can even be perverted into bitterness and end in blasphemy. Why does God allow this? Why is God so cruel? Why does God do this to me? How many have sought to punish God by walking no more with him when he allows them to suffer! "I am through

with God. I have had enough of him." Or, "I have stopped going to church. I will show God what he can and cannot do if he expects me to worship him." Is this our newer mode of making idols? We agree to worship a graven image of our own decisions. We know what is right and what is fitting for God to do. And we shall do homage to a deity who behaves himself according to the way in which we instruct him. All this is, of course, to disqualify ourselves for mourning, which is always sprung out of the humility of the creature before the Creator and which is rooted in faith.

But someone may want to raise a small question here. Does not faith of itself cast out mourning? And if I believe that this sorrow, this disappointment, this betrayal is part of a divine plan, would I not show a lack of faith if I mourned over it? It is a good enough question. It has a ready enough answer, even if the answer is part of the whole mystery of suffering.

Why did Christ weep at the tomb of Lazarus? "We have not here a lasting city" (Heb. 13:14). And, "I will raise him up in the last day" (Jn. 6:40). In point of fact, Christ was going to raise Lazarus up that same day and within a very few minutes. And he knew that he was. How explain the tears? A touching demonstration of kinship with the common run of humanity? A lovely bit of play-acting? But Christ never gave demonstrations in the manner of play-acting. "I am the truth" (Jn. 14:6). And the truth which he taught at Lazarus' tomb was not only that he has complete power over life and death but also that faith does not

eliminate mourning, not even for the Son of God. What is mourning, anyway? There are many kinds of it and many definitions of it: to grieve, to lament, to sorrow, to weep. I would like to propose an addition to the dictionary definitions: to mourn is to make the right response to penancing truth.

Returning to Lazarus, we see that this is exactly what Christ did at the tomb of his friend. Death is a truth. It is right. We have all sinned in Adam and we bear together the penalty. Having come to glorious life out of the dust of non-being, we have with Adam obscured the glory. We are redeemed by the Son to the pardon of the Father which returns us to eternal glory. This is the truth. But with painful appropriateness the return to glory and entrance into eternal exaltation will be accomplished only by way of the penance of falling again into dust, this time the dust of non-animation which is assuredly a humiliation and degradation for the noble creature that is man.

This penancing truth reaches out to all who love this dead person, this *non-anima* that will so rapidly and appallingly forfeit its former physical testimony to *anima*. Those who are unwilling to mourn will strike out in fury against the truth of death. The unpenitential will hate death, fear death, execrate death. And all of these are, of course, precisely wrong responses to the penancing truth of death. Even farther removed from the right response are those who perpetrate frauds about death. We have the kind of cemetery which Evelyn Waugh observed and

memorialized with such penetrating brilliance in his book, *The Loved One*. Fountains flowing, soft music playing, dummies reposing in a play-time park of unreality. We have a thousand devices to distract us from death, even to the inane scheming to withhold from the dying the fact of their dying.

Over and against all this bitterness and fear or this escapism through fantasies themselves crumbling and decaying with the odor of that worse death which is untruth, stands mourning pure and undefiled in its right response to penancing truth.

We have deserved to die and to experience temporary spatial separation from our loved ones as well as personal physical decomposition. And so we weep. It is an act of faith, really. A humble acknowledgment that we have brought upon ourselves a penance in altering God's original design. We accept and embrace the truth without acrimony, with tears but not with protesting screams, for there is nothing to protest about. This is always characteristic of the true mourner. He does not protest. He suffers.

Lazarus' sister, Mary, wept at home. And when Jesus came, she immediately got up and went out, not to accuse him for allowing death to be, but to meet him whose power she acknowledged. Martha did not berate the Lord, but merely stated a fact: "If you had been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:21). That is, she made an act of faith in Christ's absolute authority over life and death. That she was mourning and not demanding a miracle is obvious in her concern over what seemed to her the imprudence of the Savior

in preparing to present to the senses of the onlookers the humiliating facts of death. Better to leave poor reeking Lazarus sealed in his tomb until that last day when "I know that he will rise again" (Jn. 11:24). Meanwhile, with Christ, she and Mary did mourn the separation. And while Jesus did not accede to Martha's prudent counsel that he reconsider his plan, he did mourn: "And Jesus wept" (Jn. 11:35).

So, too, did our blessed Lord mourn over Jerusalem, his tears accompanied by what is perhaps the tenderest of all his self-revelations: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem! you that kill the prophets! How often have I longed to gather you under my wing, as a hen gathers her chickens in, but you would not" (Mt. 23:37). Here is another king of mourning. That of the mother whose persevering love fails to reclaim the errant son. That of the shepherd who is so willing to leave the ninety-nine and search in the brambles for the one lost sheep, but whose bleeding efforts prove ineffectual before the determination of that sheep to remain lost. That of the spender and giver and lover who is deserted by the heirs, unrequited by the donees, spurned by the beloved. Before the penancing truth of the self-destructiveness which is one option of the human will with whose freedom God has chosen to circumscribe his own omnipotence, Christ wept. "How often have I desired . . ." God desired it. "And you would not." Man despised it.

With the parents through all ages who watch at the window like the prodigal father (Lk. 15:20) but unlike him never see the wayward child re-



turning home, Jesus shed tears. In company with all who see their best efforts go unrewarded and suffer unrequited love, Christ mourned. In

God's own way, these mourners shall be comforted. And Christ himself was "made strong" to go forth to his passion and death even in the foreknowledge that of his beloved Jerusalem there would remain "not a stone upon a stone" (Lk. 21:6).

Perhaps it is the will to go on that is God's comforting to this kind of mourning. "O, Corbie, Corbie!" mourned Saint Colette over her native city that would have none of her. Then the Poor clare saint went on with her work of the Franciscan Reform entrusted to her. "Absalom, my son, O! my son, Absalom!" mourned David (2 Sam. 19:4). Then he got on with his business of reigning. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" And blessed are all such stricken mourners. They shall be comforted.

We have said that the very antonym of mourning is self-pity. Those who mourn cannot at the same time indulge in self-pity. And those who are engrossed in self-pity will not be capable of mourning. Nor can they be comforted. For the self-pitying, it is not so much a matter of being weak, which we all are in one degree or another ("Who is weak, and I am not weak?"—2 Cor. 11:29), but of pampering weakness, luxuriating in personal condolences. This has nothing at all to do with the mourning which Christ blessed.

Grief is strong. It will cry and weep before penancing truth. Self-pity will only whimper and whine. In the manner in which we face the penancing truth of our own misdeeds and betrayals of grace there stands

forth with bright clarity the difference between the simplicity of mourning and that whimpering self-justification which can construct almost incredible elaborations of non-truth. Let's consider the mourning for our own offenses.

We acknowledge the fact that we can defeat God's ambitions for our holiness, that we can belie his expectations of us. The mourning for our having actuated this knowledge is what we mean by that abiding contrition for sin which nearly all the classical writers on the spiritual life have presented as characteristic of holy creaturehood. The modifying specific is important: abiding. The very word has about it a kind of peace and even sweetness. The implication is steadiness, stabilization, and a form of contentment which, so far removed from anything masochistic, comes of recognition of the appropriate.

It requires healthiness of mind, robustness of spirit, and rectitude of conscience to be able to mourn for our sins. The moody melancholic is disqualified, for he does not really believe himself to be forgiven by God. The man flabby of spirit cannot manage anything like the true mourning for sin. He merely spins out his endless threnody from the easy chair of his caricature of spiritual living, disavowing God's ability to heal his wounds of sin in favor of the odious pleasure of perpetually examining his sores. The scrupulous are unequipped for mourning because they will never believe that God has really got the thing straight. If God knew about themselves what they know about themselves, God would undoubtedly withhold absolu-

tion. And so they march around and around in the stuffy room of self, intent on fetching up new evidence against themselves. What all of these non-mourners have in common is an undeviating focus on self. They simply never get as far as looking at God. This explains why they cannot see themselves either, except in the distortions which are their images wrested, as it were, out of the beam of God's love.

And so it is that those who may appear to lament their sins and offenses but are actually disqualified for mourning by their non-focussing on God, do some strange things. Maybe at this point it would be salutary, however, to move away from the more facile observations on the third person plural, and humbly confront the first person. Let us agree that it is we, not any conveniently faceless "they," who do some very strange things and accomplish some very deft psychological sleight-of-hand work when we deliver ourselves over to self-recrimination loud or listless as the case may be according to mood, temperament, and weather.

We cannot have failed to notice that the person who makes most noise about his condition of black-sheepedness is usually the most unwilling to be led to the sheep-pool. Vehement declarations of our utter uncomeliness of soul often enough are used to avoid recruitment to holiness. We are no good, we explain and protest. Look at all our failures, laziness, betrayals—the lot. What we can really mean by this is that we do not by any manner or means intend to be deprived of our ticket to undemanding mediocrity.

We are no good. So, don't expect us to be good. We are black sheep. That means that no one has a right to ask whiteness of us. We shall want to inquire of ourselves before God (for we get the oddest answers elsewhere) whether we have not sritten ourselves a license card for permanent or at least intermittent very bad behavior by signing in as a black sheep—as one determined to remain so. Certainly there is no true mourning for sin in this.

So, too, in the indulgence of brooding remorsefulness, we can observe ourselves engaged in agile footwork to escape that confrontation with the penancing truth which elicits the right response of mourning for sin. If I convince myself, usually at full sound volume, that I am beyond recall and can never be worthy of forgiveness (as though anyone ever is), I give myself a kind of blank check on all manner of misdeemeanors. The past is so bad that it is unforgivable. Obviously this frame of mind will scarcely rouse me to great efforts in the present or splendid hopes for tomorrow. When we affront God's omnipotence and declare ourselves unforgivable, we grant ourselves permission to sin without limit.

There is something large about this, but in the sense of perversion. Or maybe we should call it inverse largeness that leads down to the sooty speck of a totally devitalized self, devitalized since it is no longer recognized as the image of God. Because we affirm that we have done the unforgivably wrong in the past, we give ourselves permission to live without seeking forgiveness now. We excuse ourselves from mourning. We

elect instead that bitterness of remorse which is often enough the springboard for all manner of licentiousness.

For the scrupulous, in their turn, there is obviously no possibility for mourning which is of its nature centered outside self and on the other. If we are centered on God, we of happy necessity believe not just *in* him—but *him*. We know that his power of forgiving remains forever greater than our power of offending. And we are given by him to understand that he is not only in possession of all the facts of our life but apprised within himself of all our vital (and non-vital, especially) statistics, and that he knows far more about us and our acts and our thoughts and our most secret desires than we do ourselves. We become aware of our sheer nakedness before him. And in the midst of our tears of contrition and confusion and abiding sorrow for having betrayed God's love, in our mourning before the panancing truth, we are happy with an absolutely unique joy. We understand that we have never taken God by surprise. We are given to apprehend the shaking truth that God would not have repented his having created us had he been able to foresee how we would function. For he did foresee. But one cannot go on describing all this. Anyone who has experienced it will understand, and it cannot be explained to one who has not.

Mourning of this kind is less a mourning for our sins than for our sinfulness. And this abides with us always, not just concomitantly with desiring to have our sins forgiven, but made possible precisely because

the sins are taken away and then only the consciousness of sinfulness remains, fitting us and inviting us to mourn that we may be comforted.

There are many causes for mourning. In these two: the separation and loneliness which death occasions with the helpless witnessing of pain and suffering so far as concerns our power to change it, and the abiding sorrow for our sinfulness, as in all other kinds of Christian mourning, there can never be an element of craven fear, though there is always something of the "timor Domini," the awe before God who regulates life and death, who is judge in heaven and on earth. The difference is very clear in the Latin words for these quite disparate and even antithetical fears. *Metus*, appropriately enough, is centered on *me*. I am afraid that something I consider adverse will happen to me, that something will be taken away if the truth is known about me, that I shall be brought up short, that I shall stand revealed. All that dreary company. God has nowhere promised that he will comfort this servile fear which has in it nothing of true mourning. *Timor*, *timor Domini*, is so different. It is, as the Scriptures explain, the beginning of wisdom (Sirach 1:16). It is of the Lord, yes. And it brings his comfort which will eventually release us into Love, for it is never centered on me, but on God. It is full of awe for God's power. It is informed with solicitude that he should not be offended. It is especially, a right response to penancing truth.

Up through this beginning of wisdom which *timor* is with all its

consciousness of creaturehood and that understanding love which, in the end, casts out all fear—even *timor*. God is love (1 Jn. 4:8). *Metus* knows no mourning. *Timor* mourns and is comforted. And then there remains only *amor*.

We have lingered on Christ's mourning for his dead friend, Lazarus, and for his beloved city, Jerusalem. He shows us likewise in the Scriptures how he deals with the mourning sinner. "Two men went up to the temple to pray . . ." (Lk. 18:10). When the publican put down his stricken head and said, O God, be merciful to me; I am a sinner" (Lk. 18:13), he did not add one word of justification. Mourners don't. How differently the story could have been written. I am a victim of circumstance. If only I had had different parents. I got in with the wrong people. The business of being a publican and cutting corners on tax collecting has been handed down in our miserable family. Of course I had to associate with riffraff. I was led astray. Society has betrayed me. But no, the publican made the briefest act of contrition on Scripture record. "God, be merciful to me. I am a sinner." "He would not so much as lift his eyes" (Lk. 18:13) to God—*timor Domini*—much less defend his self-justifying rights against God's invasion of salvation. Do we not see our Lord's relishing of this parable when he concludes with a ring of pride: "This man went home justified" (Lk. 18:14). What does justified mean? Made holy. If we want to be quite literal, we can say that this sinner went home a saint because he was so humbly honest in confronting the truth and

making a right response to its penancing. He mourned. Nor does one show forth one beatitude apart from others. The forgiven publican was forgiven because he was poor in spirit, because he was meek and without excuse for himself, because he mourned without any self-pity.

It is strange how deftly we sometimes eschew that *timor Domini*, beginning of wisdom. We could ask ourselves why we are so unwise as to try to defend our interests against God. Is he our enemy, then? Someone before whom we must justify ourselves as the unfortunate pharisee in that same parable did, listing all our good points? There is obviously no place for mourning in this kind of performance. To think that we have no reason to mourn for our failures is to step out of the radius of God's comforting.

Christian mourning reveals ourselves to ourselves, whether in some external sorrow, that is, not directly pertaining to our interior spiritual life, or whether in the inner court of our being. To those who are sorry and suffer without remorse, without argument, without need to defend their interests against God or against those who represent him, God says, "They shall be comforted." He comforts as he sees fit. And his most exquisite comforting is experienced beyond explanation. Surely we have all of us had this experience sometime: the moment in which God really lets us see ourselves as we are and not

as we so hotly debate that we are, and in which we know in our own being the exhilarating joy that comes of this. God does not love me because I have this or that quality, or turn in this excellent performance (cf. the elder son of the prodigal father); but I am lovable because he loves me. I am forgiven because he is merciful. And I am comforted because I have mourned, and not raged or brooded or bedeviled myself and my company.

This seems to be what the saints meant when they talked of the joy they experienced in their faults and their failings. They were not glad that they had sinned, but the headiness of recognizing what they were and that God forgave them, set them singing even as they wept. They mourned. And they were comforted.

One final word. In true mourning, there is no aggressiveness. People despair; people commit suicide, people blaspheme God because they refuse to mourn. They are aggressors of God, so he cannot comfort them. But the more we mourn in this scriptural sense of allowing ourselves to be comforted by God in our bearing of suffering, the more fit we are to forgive others and to comfort them in their own mourning. It is a beautiful circle. And it goes on and on, right into eternity, where mourning is no longer comforted because it is crowned.

(To be continued)



# Spring Is for Joy

CROCUSES shove their hairy heads out of a nest of matted oak leaves.

Tulips blaze near the doorsteps beckoning to friendly jonquils—their next-door neighbors.

A man across the street wheels out his creaky lawn mower. Soon the fragrance of newly-cut grass saturates the air.

Robins twitter deep secrets to their mates— mostly reiterating endlessly "Spring is here."

A cocker spaniel pads along the sidewalk crinkling its nose in an attempt to sort out the many perfumes of the spring air.

Children roller skate recklessly along the street, screeching their delight at their liberation from classrooms.

An old man totters hesitantly, stooping often to lean on his ancient cane. He searches for signs and smells which delight and tickle his senses.

A housewife hangs out her wash, hoping to capture the clean freshness of the early morning.

Park trees stagger beneath the heavy scent of blossoms, while bees buzz busily, harvesting a bounteous crop of nectar and pollen.

SO WITH THE SPRING COMES:

Healing of hearts.

Restoration of confidence in God, in man, and in self..

Quickening of souls, throbbing with gratitude for another winter passed.

Easter's healing balm, with forgetfulness of trials borne and wounds mended.

Joy in the present; hope for the future; love and peace enveloping all in the boundless magnitude of the heart of God.

SISTER MARY DOLORES AHLES, O.S.F.

## Mother Marianne— A Sister of Saint Francis

SISTER M. THADDEUS, O.S.F.

### II. God Writes with His Own Hand

IN NOVEMBER, 1862, at 26 years of age, Barbara Kopp dreamed only of being a Sister of the Third Order of St. Francis of Syracuse, New York. She had already demonstrated her abilities as manager of a home after the death of her mother, and she had further manifested her familial devotion by caring for her father in his last illness. Now that her brothers and sisters were established in lives of their own, she could fulfill her dream—she could become a Sister.

After her profession in the religious life, she began her teaching career; but her particular administrative abilities soon caused her appointment as the Superior at St. Joseph's Hospital in Syracuse, which was staffed by her community. As a child she had been impressed by these Sisters who went about caring for the sick and the poor in her home town, and she had longed for the same opportunity. But it was granted her for only a

short period of time, for once again her talents and leadership qualities inspired her Sisters to elect her as the Superior of the entire community in 1877 and to re-elect her in 1881.

She had moved rapidly from among the ranks in the Sisterhood to the highest position in the community; and, as in all other positions, she did more than an adequate job.

What was left for her to do? Why had she attained this position so quickly? Seemingly, God had placed her in this suitable position in anticipation of the visit of Father Leonor, who came as the representative of the King and Queen of Hawaii begging for Sisters to aid the suffering members of the Hawaiian Islands so sadly afflicted with leprosy.

Mother Marianne, as she was titled, then conducted a very direct and collegial meeting with all the Sisters present. It was providential that all the Sisters

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*Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F., is Chairman of the English Department at Assumption Catholic Academy, Syracuse, New York.*



had come together at this time for retreat. She frankly discussed the dangers of the disease, the strangeness of the land and people, the fear of distance, the depletion of the workers left at home, and the possibility of never returning to the mainland. She also expressed her sympathy for the wretched, neglected people and their poverty of material and spiritual aid, but the freedom of choice rested with her Sisters. When the vote proved affirmative, and the volunteers responded overwhelmingly, Mother Marianne was convinced that her life would never be the same. Her life script was far from complete—now she must continue to allow God to re-write her part in a foreign land under strange conditions.

How different things would be! No longer held in the security of the Syracuse Community, at the mercy of a government whose desires and claims on her energies would be almost suffocating, Mother Marianne would find, indeed, that her life-script was radically transformed by constant association with desperately ill and deformed individuals, and insufficient means at her disposal to care for them.

Although her office as major superior presupposed her role as guardian and protector, she found that role expanded now: she would now fully assume that obligation not only for those

Sisters whom she accompanied to the Islands, but also for those many afflicted members under her care, whom she fondly called "the children."

In God's plan she once more crossed an ocean to a strange land to serve a new people. Following the path of Christ and Francis to care for the leper and in imitation of the community foundress, Mother Bernardina, who had crossed the ocean to "go to that America—that country so far away—and nurse the sick people and take care of the little children as do the good Sisters of Saint Francis in the cities here in our country."

For them—the unknown sufferers—she would venture forth: relinquish her title and assume the Franciscan role of servanthood. As Francis had embraced the leper, so would she. As Francis had kissed him, so would her gentle hands bind his wounds. As Francis had felt a new surge of strength and love, so too did Mother Marianne grow and love and restore those whose faith had become superstition, whose joy had deteriorated into license, and whose future was only for a moment at a time.

Very often Mother Marianne is depicted as that great heroic soul who walked among the deformed—shaking hands, embracing each one, and greatly enjoying her welcome to Molokai. Her letters, however, reveal

her true self—her true feelings—the self that felt repelled, that trembled interiorly, but that loved so strongly that those around her would see only her smile and her gentle concern.

Is this not a greater virtue?

Mother Marianne most assuredly did not enjoy the ill treatment meted out to herself and her Sisters by one of the agents on the island who resented their arrival because it meant that he, too, must correct his ways. She probably suffered much grief when all of the lovely flowers and trees which she and the girls had planted, watered, and tended to a beautiful growth were suddenly uprooted by an official who "needed" them to win the prize offered for the best garden of the year. Certainly she did not relish the filth in which she found the lepers, nor their lack of manners caused by a type of dehumanizing despair in their lives.

All of this, and more, God continued to write in her life script. She accepted her part with the reply: "We must lean on God," or "Heaven arranges things."

The fact that Mother Marianne leaned on God while remaining a very human individual is clearly brought out in one of her letters to Mother Bernardina where she tells her how pleased she is with the progress of the hospital—but she feels a twinge of desire to be there:

I am pleased to know that the hospital is progressing so well . . .

I am painfully disappointed not to be able to return home but must submit to this as the holy will of God.

Again, in another letter to Mother Bernardina on the occasion of her feast day:

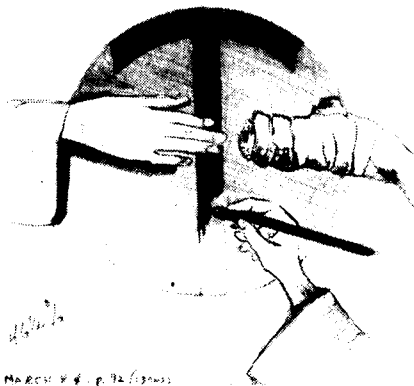
Your feast day is coming and that reminds me that I am one of your children, and as such come to you with sincere and hearty congratulations. I wish it was my privilege to do so in person. The thought of the great distance between us makes my heart heavy and sad. Will I ever see those whom I love again? God's will be done. Do not think me heartless, because I am so still and silent. My heart is all too sensitive and feels deeply and keenly the pain of separation from the loved ones and from the community.

Besides her loneliness regarding her community and Mother Bernardina, who had always been a source of inspiration to her, Mother Marianne also missed her family. In a letter to her nephew she attempts to explain her slow and infrequent communication:

We had for ten years a Japanese family living with us as servants, the women assisted in the house work, and the man was a general helper. They left us last October and have not been replaced, for the simple reason that people do



not like to come to the leper settlement, for love or money. We are obliged to do all our house work and attend to the wants of our leper girls and women; as many of them are helpless, we have to do their sewing, and all this takes more time than God allows us; consequently much that we would take pleasure in doing has to be left undone—for instance, such as writing letters to dear ones.



There were other forms of communication, too, which were equally difficult to handle. In her role as guardian Mother sometimes had to be very stern with those she loved, and obviously she suffered as much as they did when a correction had to be given for a command not heeded. One occasion which caused her much grief was the incident of a visit to Father Damian's house. He, now a leper, was so overjoyed at the arrival of the Sisters that he had his cook prepare a simple meal for them of some home-made bread, hard-boiled eggs, and coffee. Mother Marianne was not

present when Father suggested they have lunch, since she was looking over the site for the new home. The two Sisters with Father Damien attempted politely to refuse his offer; but when he insisted that he would make it right with Mother and appeared very hurt, they felt they could not refuse the dying man. Later, upon their arrival home, the Sisters confided to Mother what had transpired in her absence. Mother did not scold them, but she reminded them that she had given them an order not to eat anything since both Father and his cook were lepers. Then she simply asked them a question. "Would a sick Sister—or a disobedient one—be of use in the work the Order had undertaken?" With those few words the matter was closed. The Sisters knew that Mother would never again refer to the incident; and they also knew they would obey this careful, concerned guardian.

Mother Marianne was to assume still another role in her life script. Father Damien did not close the matter, but came, conscience-ridden, to kneel at her feet and beg her pardon for putting her Sisters in such an awkward and dangerous position. Somewhat disconcerted and embarrassed, Mother rose to the occasion, determined that this great man would not go away guilt-ridden as he had come. As he left, she was awed with

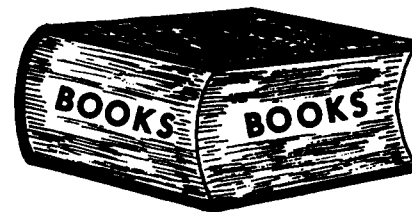
admiration for his honesty and pity for his suffering.

Each moment of the day and night presented new challenges. A knock at the door, at any time, could mean a small child wanted a needle and thread from the hands of Mother Marianne herself; or it could mean some harassment taking place in one of the dorms: Perhaps one of the

discouraged patients had decided to run away, or a small child who had been very ill was now on the verge of dying. For these human beings and their all-too-human needs, Mother Marianne schooled herself, relying mainly on God for her education. She tried reading the lines as He wished them read—not as she might have desired.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

- Carroll, James, *Forbidden Disappointments*. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1974. Pp. 60. Paper, \$2.50.
- Doherty, Catherine de Hueck, *Poustinia: Christian Spirituality of the East for Western Man*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1975. Pp. 216. Paper, \$3.50.
- Faucher, W. Thomas, and Ione C. Nieland, *Touching God: A Book about Children's Liturgies*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1975. Pp. 157. Paper, \$3.50.
- Kernan, Julie, *Our Friend, Jacques Maritain: A Personal Memoir*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 192. Cloth, \$7.95.



*Grace and the Human Condition* (Vol. 2 of *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*). By Juan Luis Segundo, S.J. Trans. John Drury. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973. Pp. viii-213. Cloth, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Gerald M. Dolan, O.F.M., Ph.D. (*Theology*.

Louvain), Associate Professor at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, N.Y., Lecturer in the Department of Theology, St. Bonaventure University.

The present work is the second volume in a projected series of five under the general title *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*.

The hope of this second volume, building upon what has already been said in *The Community Called Church*, is in the bringing to light that *newness* which is both the hope and the goal of the whole series. [For a review of volume 1, see our July 1973 issue, pp. 221-22; reviews of volumes 3 & 4 are now in preparation—ed.]. The *newness* of the New Humanity is not a new or newly warmed-over ideology; it is the newness of the New Covenant, the Gift of God which is Himself. The question which this work addresses is whether growth to full human existence today is a process of estrangement from God. This is the question which concerns the whole Christian economy, and the value of Father Segundo's work is that it speaks, not to the professional few, but to the Christian enquirer.

At a time when a once enthusiastic renewal seems to have become weary and breathless, we have a new dimension coming to us in North America from the staff of the Peter Faber Center in Montevideo, Uruguay. How fortunate it is that a theological treatment of the Grace of God comes to us, not from the theological bastions of Europe, but from that section of the World which has called upon the consciences of us all to give heed to the demand for human dignity for all. This book seeks to speak of God's Grace; it seeks to discover something of the meaning of the transformation caused by grace; and it seeks to find Grace operative in the oft jolted dimensions of contemporary Christian existence. To the North American mind, so taken up with systems and planning, this book (and hopefully, the series)

comes and asks us to listen to the meaning of life as given to us by Jesus in the Gospels and the other New Testament writings, and proclaimed anew for our day by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council.

Nevertheless, for the North American reader, the attraction of this book is betrayed on two levels of utility. It does treat, after all, of each one of us and God. To take it up is to receive a gift difficult to put aside, and the reader comes to realize that he has been happily seduced. This seduction is, however, the result of an expertly devised presentation of difficult theological questions and problems. Each chapter progresses according to two divisions. The initial article lays bare the essential aspects of the issue in three sections corresponding to (1) the biblical data, (2) the important historical moments which have clarified theological insight, and (3) our own questions. Lines of thought important for the presentation in more depth are developed in a second division, "Clarifications." Here central themes and related issues culled from human experience, literature, and other areas of study are developed in a more concrete way.

This structure is complemented by footnotes which have been engineered, not for the erudite, but for the reader of ordinary means and interest. Valuable reference texts culled from the Scriptures and conciliar documents are thematically related to divisions within the text. And, in addition to these appendices, there are discussion questions designed to promote the dynamics of study groups.

If theological discussion is to serve

Christian life today, it must open the way for each believer to respond inventively and loyally to the many questions which vex religious belief. *Grace and the Human Condition* is happily such a discussion. The theological position taken is basically rooted in the insights of Karl Rahner; but it is not merely warmed over Rahner. Segundo develops his theme by concentrating upon man, aware of his tragic and divided condition, who seeks the authentic law of freedom and liberty proclaimed by the Apostle Paul (cf. Rom. 7:14-25).

This is a work of solid worth. There are some weaknesses which may derive from the translation (e.g., "Christendom," p. 4), or from a view of the Christian life which seems overly confident in the meaning of *secular* as understood in the sacred-profane dialectic of the sixties. There can be a legitimate question raised concerning the denigration of that tradition in the development of the Church which can be called, in the very broad meaning of the term, monastic (cf. pp. 47, 64, *passim*). It is somewhat unfortunate that the author passes quickly from Pelagius to Jansenism (pp. 15-20), without further clarification. And it is unfortunate, too, that in an instance of a major citation, the "Denzinger number" cited is not to be found in more recent editions (p. 107). It seems, finally that the translator would have helped the North American reader if he had obtained permission to adjust parts of Chapter III, Part i, §3 (pp. 108-12) so as to eliminate the obviously South American bias arising from a culture which has been traditionally

understood as Christian.

These are but small items which in no way distract from the value of this book. At a moment when the anthropological dimensions of theological studies have resolutely demanded attention, and when the social dimensions of Christian faith have become more and more visible, and when the need for an educated and adult Christianity makes itself known, particularly in the area known as the "Third World," this work—hopefully, the whole series—is a very valuable tool.

**Myth and Modern Man.** By Raphael Patai. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972. Pp. xi-359. Cloth, \$10.00.

*Reviewed by James S. Dalton, Ph.D. (University of Chicago), Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.*

Although the subject of mythology is one of the most popular themes of modern scholarship (as, for instance, in Anthropology, Ethnology, Literature and, even Psychology), the term "myth" is widely misunderstood. The gap between the often obscure scholarly articles on the one hand and the common usage as meaning "falsehood" or "fiction," on the other, is a wide one. It is one of the principal strengths of Professor Patai's effort that it seeks to bridge this gap. He attempts to present a clear explanation of the scholarly discussion for the average reader and tries to show how this is important for understanding modern myths.

In the first chapter Professor Patai presents a clear and concise review of the various ways myth has been understood in the past. After reading this chapter one can no longer be satisfied with the "journal-ese" usage of the term (myth=lie).

Chapter two takes up some of the problems of myth, such as the relation of myth and history, how myths are created and what purposes they serve. Here some of Professor Patai's positions are open to dispute, e.g., myths as vehicles of psychological gratification (pp. 3-4) or the history of myth as man's attempt to create the gods which he needs (p. 162). In spite of this he cannot be faulted on his efforts to see the parallels between how myth functioned in the past and how it continues to function in modern times.

The bulk of *Myth and Modern Man* is dedicated to analyzing the various forms which myth has taken in recent years in the Western world. Professor Patai sees such phenomena as Marxism, Nazism, Che Guevara, the "God is dead" theology, new Black religious faiths, cartoons and cartoon characters (such as Mickey Mouse), Madison Avenue, the "new morality," UFO's, and even Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's evolutionary theory as examples of modern myths. These, he argues, play important roles in the lives of many of our contemporaries, religious and non-religious alike.

In such an ambitious effort it is almost inevitable that some cases will be weaker than others. Often it seems that Professor Patai strains to include too much as, for instance, when he tries to connect the dead film star, James Dean, with the

self castration of the Greek god, Attis. At this and other points in the book less labored explanations would suffice.

Another, and more distressing, weakness is the intrusion of some of Professor Patai's personal *political* biases into the discussion. The most obvious example of this is his treatment of what, in chapter eight, he calls "the myth of the child terrorist." This section strikes me as almost a polemic against the radicals of the nineteen-sixties (pp. 124-29). Statements such as the following are personal opinions which have little relevance to a discussion of myth: "The young militant is basically a spoiled child who has remained emotionally immature, infantile."

Another questionable political conclusion to this study of myth appears in the final chapter ("Wanted: a charter myth for democracy"). The argument maintains that since myth is such a powerful stimulant to action and belief, the American government should use myth to unify and control its people. This is a dangerous option for a democracy to consider. Myth, in this case is close to thought control imposed by the government on its people. Traditional American reliance on the will of the people expressed in their democratic institutions would, it seems to this reviewer, be a safer course.

In summary, *Myth and Modern Man* is an effort which partially succeeds. Despite its weaknesses it is worth considering for the insights and clues which it does provide in the attempt to understand contemporary man through an analysis of the *truth* of his myths.

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The cover and illustrations for our April issue have been drawn by Sister M. Raphael Fulwider, O.S.F., Chairman of the Department of Art at Maria Regina College, Syracuse, N.Y.

# the CORD

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A REVIEW EDITORIAL

## Myth, Failure, and Easter

AS YOU READ these pages, you will be on the verge of participating in the yearly re-presentation of Christ's paschal triumph, the most fundamental and important event of history. All of us will be set to plunge into the Church's forty-day celebration of that event—an ideal time to take stock of both our theoretical belief in the Lord's bodily rising, and the extent to which we have allowed the power of that event to shape our practical, day-to-day living.

The Paulist Press has published, during the past year, three books which, while not forming any sort of connected series or unified presentation of a single subject, can help vastly in contemplating the meaning of Easter. From one of the books we can learn the importance and true meaning of myth so as to revitalize our appreciation of Easter in the face of some recent misinterpretations and denials. From a second, we can hope to regain a balanced appreciation of our own impotence apart from Father's work through the Spirit in the risen Christ to accomplish any lasting and significant good. And from the third, we can perhaps derive an increased appreciation of the importance of Easter as the central theological mystery which illumines our whole grasp of the Christian faith.

(Continued on p. 120)

*Myth, History, and Faith: The Remythologizing of Christianity.* By Morton T. Kelsey. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1974. Pp. v-185. Paper, \$4.50. *A Theology of Failure.* By John Navone, S.J. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1974. Pp. v-129. Paper, \$3.50. *A New Age in Theology: The Marriage of Faith and History, and the Deghettoization of Christian Thought.* By Claude Geffre. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1974. Pp. v-119. Paper, \$3.95.

## Bonaventure and Contemporary Thought

*Comments on the Convocation Address of  
Ewert H. Cousins*

PETER D. FEHLNER, O.F.M. CONV.

A GREAT MANY persons, if they know anything at all about Saint Bonaventure, imagine him as a pious medieval spiritual writer, perhaps still important for those souls still sharing his world-view, hardly significant for the modern mind. Conversely, many believers (rightly or wrongly is not the issue at the moment) come away from a reading of process philosophers and theologians with a strong impression of evolutionary pantheism that empties the first article of the Creed of meaning. Dr. Cousins has accomplished at least two services in comparing certain aspects of Bonaventure's thought with the basic issues raised in the context of process philosophy: viz., right or wrong the fundamental proposals of process philosophy constitute no mere philosophy, but touch primary religious and theological questions common to all men; and whether we agree

with him or not, a truly great and authentic theologian such as Bonaventure is never dated. In proposing the following questions and observations my objective is to elicit a further exposition of the manner in which a given approach, in this case process philosophy, could or would adequately account for dimensions of Bonaventure's thought that *prima facie* do not easily harmonize with process thought.

1. The comparison of Bonaventure with process philosophy has served to underscore certain dynamic aspects of Bonaventure's theology, not only involving, but expressed by the word "process," "procession." These are the intimate relations between person and procession within the Trinity and the presence of divine persons as authentic personal agents within the world and history. But

As stated last month, these comments upon Dr. Cousins' Convocation Address, delivered at Siena College April 4, 1974, are published in full, in the hope of furthering the interesting dialogue sparked by his original interpretation of the Seraphic Doctor's teachings. Dr. Cousins is an Associate Professor of Theology at Fordham University. Father Peter D. Fehlner, O.F.M. Conv., S.T.D., is Guardian and Rector at St. Anthony-on-Hudson, Rensselaer, N.Y., and Father John E. Van Hook, O.F.M., is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Siena College.

Saint Bonaventure is quite adamant in making a real distinction between process as involving becoming, change, development, generation and corruption, and procession as it constitutes the heart of personal existence of the divine persons and the basis for those personal acts whose term is outside the Trinity. The first is complex and extended; the second, simple and eternal. Further, the difference between Creator and creature is one of the pillars of Bonaventure's thought, a difference not only not retracted but clarified in the discussion of divine presence and personal activity in the world. The Word does not cease to be eternal, simple, immutable, on becoming man in the proper sense of that term. For Bonaventure the divine simplicity and immutability are at the root of personal knowledge, freedom, and action. And while process in the first sense certainly enters into the lives of creatures who are persons, it does not define even the created person qua person for Bonaventure. It is the systematic insistence on these points that distinguishes Bonaventure's thought from what might be termed the medieval equivalent of evolutionary pantheism: viz., neoplatonic emanationism. In the desire to articulate the personal presence of God in the world as understood by modern thought, especially scientific, how does or would process philosophy account for these distinctions of Bonaventure? Or to paraphrase the point in scottistic terms, how does an apparently undifferentiated univocal concept of "process" include really different modes? And if such distinctions are introduced, are we still speaking of

"process philosophy" as that is generally understood?

2. Dr. Cousins' remarks on the "coincidence of opposites" suggest a possible approach to an answer. In this address and in other studies Dr. Cousins has developed a plausible case for the presence in Bonaventure of what subsequently has come to be known as the "coincidentia oppositorum." There can be little doubt that a thoroughly christocentric theology based on the mystery of the Incarnation must eventually come to deal with this "coincidentia oppositorum" that from apparently different directions is approached so frequently in modern thought. Duns Scotus, with his univocal concept of "esse" and its intrinsic modes, the disjunctive transcendentals, is a medieval example. Hegel is a modern representative who comes quickly to mind. I wonder, however, whether a method can ever provide a sufficient or final court of appeal for the justification of answers to fundamental questions. The same method in the hands of different thinkers can mean quite opposite and unreconcilable things. And how a method is to be understood and employed rests on considerations prior to the method itself. A few scholars in the past have noted striking similarities between the methodologies of Bonaventure and Hegel. But the same scholars have noted the abyss that separates the two, both in terms of starting point, use and results of the method. Bonaventure's synthesis rests on the first article of the Creed and is articulated by way of faith in a very singular person, the Word eternal, the Word Incarnate,

the Word inspired. The same method in the hands of Hegel becomes a universal solvent in which the differences between divine and human, true and false, good and evil, person and person are lost in the ineluctable and interminable process of spirit. May then the method be used as a way of answering the questions raised earlier concerning the ambiguity of the term "process"; or is not the clarification of the first questions a key to the interpretation of the method?

3. Bonaventure's exemplarism is especially pertinent to contemporary epistemology, e.g., to the questions of certainty, unchangeableness of truth, the personal character of truth, and the theory of sign, symbol, and myth, which for me at least is closely related to the interpretation and use of the "coincidence of opposites." I think that in his brief references to christology Dr. Cousins has touched a point around whose understanding the practical resolution of the prior questions is decided one way or another. Is Christ, i.e., the Word eternal, the Word incarnate, the Word inspired, primarily a person or symbol? If the first, then the validity of Bonaventure's thought hinges not on the consistency and all-embracing character of the synthesis, but on a particular, singular, personal mystery, the grace of union and the understanding which faith in the person of Jesus makes possible. In this context the method of coincidence becomes an aspect of the "communicatio idiomatum," whose starting point is revelation, rather than the methods of human science

apart from faith. If on the contrary the primary accent is on Christ as a symbol, exemplar, representative, then the universal rather than the particular, the consistency of a particular logic rather than the authority of truth revealed tend to become normative in the use of this method. It is difficult for me to see how such a tendency while remaining such can be made compatible with the traditional Christian experience and understanding of persons, divine and human. Nor is it clear to me, how without properly distinguishing the concept of "process" process theology and contemporary epistemological theories bearing on relativity, symbol and myth, and evolution can avoid the relativism and subjectivism that almost always accompany a failure to deal first with certain very singular and personal events: viz., creation and incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ; and these primarily in the literal, historical sense rather than the exemplaristic, symbolic, mythical sense.

4. My last point stems from the foregoing question concerning Christ. The dynamic character of Bonaventure's theology, his use of the "coincidence of opposites," the pervasive character of exemplarism in his thought provide a very strong basis for a philosophy of religion. As Dr. Cousins ably demonstrates, this perhaps is one of the most practical aspects of Bonaventure's theology for the contemporary dialogue of religions. I think, however, that the widely recognized synthetic and synthesizing character of Bonaventure's

thought should be carefully distinguished from syncretism, of which Hegel is an example and which some critics think to be inherent in the logic of process philosophy. In Bonaventure's mind only the Gospel message, the teaching of the Church, is true as a whole. This teaching is not the same as a philosophy of religion, just as the Church herself is not another instance of a religious society coming to be. Thus his theology presupposes the constant need of mission and revelation on the one hand and conversion on the other, both of which involve personal acts, and both resting on the distinction and difference between Creator and creature, personal act and process, and both centering on the person of the Word incarnate, in whom without confusion or loss of identity are united (and synthesized) divine and human, eternal and temporal, one and many. By contrast Hegel's

thought is a form of religious syncretism, a kind of gnosticism utilizing the key doctrines of Christianity and with a methodology surprisingly similar to Bonaventure's, but with a starting point, an objective, and results startlingly opposed to his. In view of the exceedingly strong urge to form the grand synthesis on human and secular terms without grace (an aspect of the darkening of the intellect through original sin), it is well to recall the radically gratuitous, unchanging, and exclusive character of the Truth as proclaimed by the Church and as proposed as the norm for the formation of thought and conscience. In the effort to attain certainty and understanding one must say yes or no simply to that which (or better, who) is unambiguously first. Is that starting point and is the initial yes or no identical for Bonaventure and for process philosophy?

### JOHN E. VAN HOOK, O.F.M.

**I**N HIS PAPER, Dr. Cousins is doing something very unique and original. He is giving us a new interpretation of Saint Bonaventure. That is not to say that this is the first time that his view has been presented. Rather, he has for several years been elaborating his new interpretation. But he is the originator of a unique interpretation of the philosophical and theological system

of Saint Bonaventure.

There is a basic point that Dr. Cousins is making for our benefit. The thesis is that Saint Bonaventure is relevant to the 20th century, is related to contemporary thought. This relevancy is particularly in the ideas of process and diversity. The basic reason for the thesis is that Bonaventure has penetrated deeply into reality, his thought transcends

his time, and therefore he is in touch with the vital issues of our time.

The thesis is elaborated in a four-fold way: there is a method and three content points. The method of the coincidence of opposites is the basic key to unlock the uniqueness of Saint Bonaventure. The three content points are about God, the World, and the relation of God and the World.

On God, the method of the coincidence of opposites elaborates a doctrine on the Trinity whereby both self-sufficiency and dynamism are brought into contact and yet preserve their opposition. This gives Saint Bonaventure the wherewithall to dialogue with process theology.

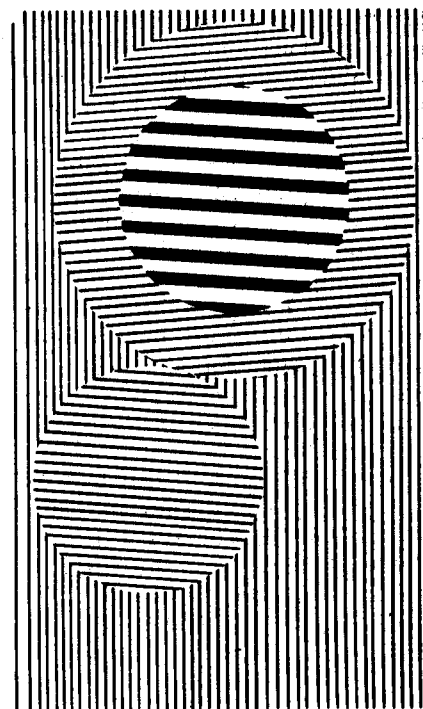
On the relation of God and the World the method of the coincidence of opposites highlights the falling together of the infinite and finite without a margin of the two. This allows Saint Bonaventure some important comments on the tension of the sacred and the secular and the contemporary issue of ecology.

On the subject of the World the method of the coincidence of opposites and Bonaventure's Christocentrism combine to tell us some important things about unity and diversity both within Christianity and about Christianity's relation to other religions. The contemporary issue to which Saint Bonaventure speaks is ecumenism.

In brief, there are four areas:

method — coincidence of  
opposites.  
God — process theology.  
God and the World—ecology.  
the World — ecumenism.

Dr. Cousins has given us a systematically comprehensive and complete view and one that is methodologically coherent. His view preserves differences: viz., it does not present everything as one undifferentiated unity, and yet his presentation gives a schematically whole view.



I have two major areas for question on the paper that was delivered. The first is on method: the logic of the coincidence of opposites. In suggesting that this is the key to understanding Saint Bonaventure and a central theme around which all of Bonaventure can be organized, I have advanced the opinion that Dr. Cousins has given us an original interpretation. It is this note of originality that leads me to formulate my first question. Is the coincidence of opposites found as a developed methodology in Bonaventure, or is Dr. Cousins suggesting a new view—a most recent interpretive device which will give us, because it is new, a new way to view the system of Saint Bonaventure? If it is the first alternative, namely, present as an already developed methodology in Saint Bonaventure, why has it taken almost seven hundred years to discover? It is because I expect a negative answer to this question that I suggest that Dr. Cousins is making a proposal—a new way to view Saint Bonaventure. Further, I ask, does this proposal come from Bonaventure, or does it originate elsewhere? I suggest that it originates, not with Saint Bonaventure, but elsewhere, for the following reason: At one point Dr. Cousins calls the coincidence of opposites a logic which is to be contrasted to a logic of difference. I searched for both of these terms. They are not to be found in Bochenski's *A History of Formal Logic* or in the other big book on logic by the Kneales, *The Development of Logic*. Further, these terms are not to be found in any of the traditional or modern glossary terms about logic contained

in the numerous articles on logic in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

But the title "coincidence of opposites" is to be found in Nicholas of Cusa—like Bonaventure a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church who was also interested in ecumenical re-union of East and West and worked for it at the Council of Florence (1439), but who lived 1401-1454, almost two hundred years after Bonaventure.

Consequently I suggest, with regard to the logical method, Dr. Cousins is giving us primarily and originally Nicholas of Cusa and only secondarily and derivatively Saint Bonaventure. This suggestion is no great objection, because it in no way invalidates the originality of Dr. Cousins' insight, and it leaves his work to be judged not as an historical truth but according to its fruitfulness as a device to unfold the insights of Saint Bonaventure.

Turning to my second point—on the subject of Saint Bonaventure and ecumenism—again, I wish to play the same game. Does Dr. Cousins have an interpretation of Saint Bonaventure that makes Bonaventure relevant and applicable in our day and age, or is it that he is making a proposal: viz., that Saint Bonaventure as now understood *could be* a fruitful source of insight and contact to further ecumenical overtures both within Christianity and in Christianity's relation to other great religious traditions? I suggest the latter. But if this is true, then once again we have a proposal.

What is my argument? Two recent ecumenical moves have received considerable publicity: the December 1973 joint statement on

orders from both Romans and Anglicans, and the March 1974 joint statement on primacy from both Romans and Lutherans. What methodology is used in these documents? I am not sure that there is any one consistent methodology. The one document does say that apostolic succession is grounded in the "historical continuity" of the Church as a whole rather than in any physical act. This part of the text does not sound like the matter and form categories of scholastic substance philosophy, nor does it come from the opposites of process philosophy. Rather it sounds like "intentionality," as used in the pheno-

menological method. And my point remains that the method that is used is not the method that we have been discussing in regard to Saint Bonaventure.

To draw together the two points I have made and generalize: Saint Bonaventure does have—or could have—a relevance to contemporary thought. I have suggested the latter is the thesis of Dr. Cousins. And I concur: it is a worthy proposal to deepen our insight into the thought of Saint Bonaventure and to use such insight to advantage in our own day and age. Now it is up to us to get on with this work.

## Response to Fathers Fehlnner and Van Hook

BY EWERT H. COUSINS

I AM INDEED grateful for the responses of Fathers Fehlnner and Van Hook, since they have raised questions that touch the nerve center of my approach to Bonaventure. In the light of their responses, which I find both perceptive and challenging, I can see more clearly aspects of Bonaventure's thought in relation to my approach through the coincidence of opposites. I hope that some of that clarification can be conveyed in my following brief remarks.

In his first observation, Father Fehlnner has touched a critical point of Bonaventure's relation to modern process thinkers. Bonaventure distinguished clearly between God and the world in a way that is frequently not the case in process thought. For Bonaventure the world is contingent, temporal, changing; God is

necessary, eternal, immutable. What does this mean for Bonaventure's relation to process thought? It certainly distinguishes him from a number of process thinkers—but not completely, since with them he holds that God is dynamic and related to the world and that the world shares in God's dynamism.

In relating Bonaventure to process thought, I focus not on the specific level of systems, but on the generic level of issues. My approach is issue-oriented in that I hold that Bonaventure, unlike Thomas for example, was concerned with the same basic issues that are central to process thinkers. However, in his systematic dealing with these issues, he did not make God contingent, but through the coincidence of opposites affirmed the transcendent dynamism of God and the radical contingency of the world. It is true



that certain process thinkers introduce contingency into God by making him dependent on the world for the activation of his dynamism. This is the case with Whitehead and Hartshorne, very likely with Hegel, although I think not with Teilhard.

Once we have situated Bonaventure within the process stream of Western thought—through his concern for the same basic issues—then we can see how his system differs from certain of the process systems. Through the coincidence of opposites, Bonaventure can maintain simultaneously the values of that wing of classical theism that emphasizes the transcendence of God. In this way, Bonaventure can enter into dialogue with contemporary process thinkers, not merely because his system is similar to theirs, but because through the very differences, he can make a substantial contribution to solving the most vexing problems of process thought.

In his second observation, Father Fehlner raises the question of method. I agree with him when he suggests that a method cannot "provide a sufficient or final court of appeal for the justification of answers to fundamental questions." I hold that the coincidence of opposites in Bonaventure is derived from his belief in Christ and the Trinity. These mysteries, then, are the source of understanding the method and of judging its validity.

In the area of his third observation, we may be in disagreement. I do not see the tension that Father Fehlner points out between the personal character of truth and symbol. Certainly, myth and symbol can be read in a merely subjecti-

vist way, as has been done by a number of modern investigators. But they need not be. Symbol can also be given a strong objectivist and personal meaning, as I believe is done in Bonaventure's Trinitarian theology, where the Son is the Image of the Father and creation is the reflection of the Son as Exemplar. I think that this reading of symbol is of at least equal importance with the singular and personal events underscored by Father Fehlner. In Bonaventure's approach—and this may be what Father is suggesting—through the person of Christ and the particular events of salvation history, one breaks through a merely subjective reading of symbol and touches the objective symbolic reality of the universe as reflecting its divine personal Exemplar.

Concerning the fourth observation, I hold that Bonaventure's thought must be distinguished from a syncretizing philosophy of religion. Bonaventure is Christian to the core, and distinctively so. It would be inaccurate to use his thought as a universal system encompassing all religious differences, either by subjecting them imperialistically to its own unity or by reducing them to a bland common denominator. I believe that Bonaventure's Franciscan love of diversity, as an expression of God's fecundity, can be a resource for ecumenism, but not by providing a master system. Rather it can help contemporary Christians to develop a new mode of consciousness through which they can relate to world religions in a more complex manner than in the past. Robley Whitson and Raymond Panikkar, whose work I cited in my talk, are

examples of theologians who are helping to shape that new consciousness and who have either drawn from Saint Bonaventure directly or reflect his tradition. For such a complex consciousness, it is of paramount importance that Christians affirm the absolute uniqueness of their own religious tradition while respecting the absolute claims of other traditions.

In response to Father Van Hook's comment on method, I agree that the coincidence of opposites is not "present as an already developed methodology in St. Bonaventure." My position is this: the coincidence of opposites forms the inner logical structure of Bonaventure's system. However, he does not bring it to self-reflective consciousness as a logical method as Nicholas of Cusa does. But this does not imply that in Bonaventure the coincidence of opposites is buried obscurely in his thought. On the contrary, I hold that it is self-conscious and on the verge of becoming a self-reflective logic. In fact, there is reason to believe that Nicholas was influenced by Bonaventure in formulating his own doctrine of the coincidence of opposites.

The fact that Nicholas brought this logic to self-reflection helps us to see it in Bonaventure. Following Nicholas' lead, I have tried to draw out of Bonaventure's thought the coincidence of opposites as a self-conscious method. Nicholas' role here, however, does not weaken my contention that the coincidence of opposites found at the heart of Bonaventure's system; it is merely its full self-consciousness as a method

that is suggested by Nicholas.

A brief comment on my calling the coincidence of opposites a logic. Although I realize that this is not customary, I believe it is justified. I hold that logics are derived from metaphysics and that different logics can be derived from different metaphysical intuitions. Bonaventure's deepest intuition was into the mystery of the Trinity and Christ; this intuition yielded a theological-metaphysical system whose logical structure can be analyzed according to the coincidence of opposites.

Concerning Father Van Hook's observations on ecumenism, I do not believe that the coincidence of opposites can be used in resolving all ecumenical problems. Rather a number of methods can be appropriately employed: for example, the phenomenological method which he cites. As he states my position very clearly, I hold that Bonaventure can be "a fruitful source of insight and contact to further ecumenical overtures both within Christianity and Christianity's relation to other great religious traditions." As I stated in my final response to Father Fehlner, Bonaventure can help us develop a new form of ecumenical consciousness, through his Franciscan love of diversity in unity. Within this complexified form of ecumenical consciousness, which reflects the logic of the coincidence of opposites, a number of different methods can be effectively employed. Against this background I would second Father Van Hook's concluding statement: "Now it is up to us to get on with this work."

# Mother Marianne— A Sister of Saint Francis

SISTER M. THADDEUS, O.S.F.

## III. Denis, a Kona, a Needle and Thread = Justice, Patience, Concern, and Happiness

THE LIFE of a saint would certainly be dull if nothing amusing or unexpected ever happened. Mother Marianne was a model of the unexpected, and it was often only her sense of humor that carried her through seemingly tragic circumstances. She was not only able to accept the unexpected good-naturedly and calmly, but she was also able to make it happen.

An example of both amusement and the unexpected is the incident of Denis, the pig. Mother Marianne was inspecting a new building under construction when suddenly a "thing" appeared from under the structure. As the unidentifiable object moved in her direction she was a bit apprehensive. A workman, noticing her astonishment, assured her that Denis, as he was called, was perfectly harmless, but any resemblance to his species had been totally annihilated. His black skin held the grime of years, forcing the bristles on his back to stand upright. His snout slanted upward, bracketed by overlong tusks that curved back towards his ears. But for

all this, Denis had love in his heart for Mother Marianne, her Sisters, and the girls. He had special devotion for Sister Veronica who cared for the kitchen, and he never complained when he had to wait for a meal. He would simply lie down, cat-fashion, with his neck extended in front of him, and wait. It was in this position that an inexperienced doctor, already somewhat shaken by some of the patients he had seen, came upon Denis.

"My God, Sister! That's the devil!"

"Not at all, Doctor. That's old Denis, a pig. He is our pet and we are very fond of him indeed."

"Fond of *that*!" The doctor hurried through the rest of his visit while Denis waited for his lunch.

A sample of the unexpected happened during what is called a "devil storm," a Kona. While the wind outside was tearing up trees, breaking windows, moving or blowing down huts, even reversing the position of rather sturdy buildings, and doing untold damage, Mother Marianne had gathered the girls

around her and was attempting to keep them calm and safe. In the midst of the confusion a girl came running in to say that one of the older girls, who had stayed in the dormitory, was badly hurt. Without hesitation Mother ventured out into the wild world and had the child carried into the convent, then hurried out again to see if anyone else was in need of help. It was at that precise moment that the Kona picked Mother up, spun her around in mid-air, and carried her to the far side of the grounds before dropping her. Luckily a leper, still quite powerful, had witnessed the whole episode and caught her as she landed. Rather stunned by her unexpected trip and grateful for the assistance in her quick landing, Mother determined to make something happen.

Even though everyone assured her that the "devil" wind would uproot anything she might plant, Mother Marianne was determined to grow a windbreaker of trees and shrubs for protection in the years to come. A tremendous variety of seedlings were set out: Ironwood, Spanish Plums, Orange, Mango, Fig, Guava, Peach, Coconut, and Avocado trees soon took root. Evidence of the success of her experiment is still seen today on the island of Molokai.

Not content with having set out this unusual assortment of trees, Mother, her Sisters, and the girls who were able, began improving the paths and roadways around the Home. It was not an unusual sight to see them dragging stones or large rocks from one area to another to fill in a hole or dangerous crack in

the road. When the Sisters complained that Mother was expending her strength too prodigally, she would only reply that no one was irreplaceable; this work needed to be done, and if she died before it was done, someone would be along to take her place.

No matter how demanding her duties, Mother never let herself seem inaccessible to the girls. Whenever she could, she would accompany them on pleasure jaunts from which they usually acquired new treasures to plant in the gardens. When she happened to be at home, and things were apparently quiet, the Sisters urged her to lie down for a time to conserve her strength. Invariably, as soon as she gave in to the urgings of concern, a child would come looking for her.

"Mother!" The call would be heard from outdoors.

One of the Sisters would quickly step to the door, finger on her lips, and offer to get whatever was needed. The reply would then come: "But I want Mother."

And Mother Marianne, who slept like any mother of a family, would appear at the door to fill the child's need.

Often it was just a spool of thread that the child needed, or a card of pins, or a word of advice—but it was important that these be received from the hands of "Mother." To be truthful, the Sisters felt the same way. What Mother did was right, and what she said was final. She was not a domineering woman, but her strength of character and her beauty

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*Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F., is Chairman of the English Department at Assumption Catholic Academy, Syracuse, N.Y.*

of soul overpowered those around her.

During the course of her duties she was in contact with a visiting doctor who was extremely concerned about the Sisters' constant contact with leprosy and expressed firm belief that they could not avoid contracting the disease. So, when a slight rash appeared on her arm, Sister Leopoldina naturally wondered what would become of her. Mother Marianne's response to her query was brief, to the point, and overflowing with faith: "You will never become a leper. I know we are all exposed, but I know too that God has called us for this work, If we are prudent and do our duty, he will protect us. Do not allow it to trouble you. When the thought comes to your mind, drive it away. And

remember, you will never become a leper, nor will any Sister of our Order."

To this day no one ever has.

The happiness of the girls was always foremost in Mother's mind. When a stranger appeared at her door asking if he could teach the poor girls how to play croquet, she was delightfully surprised. At first the girls found it difficult to understand that this man, obviously not a leper, simply wanted to be friendly with them and give them a bit of happiness. The game, however, became a source of great concern for Mother as she watched a very happy, but exhausted and ill, Robert Louis Stevenson reluctant to end a game which was taxing his strength. She then invited him in to have luncheon with her.



On the following day he returned to continue his game with the girls. With all the enthusiasm possible the game continued until five o'clock, when both the girls and Stevenson were almost at the point of collapse. But the satisfaction of all could not be measured; every girl had become an expert player, and Stevenson had been able to give them some sense of accomplishment.

His real purpose in coming to the islands had been to gather facts with which he might rebut the ugly attack on Father Damien's morals which had been made by Dr. Hyde. Daily while he was there he called at Kalaupapa, very much captivating nuns and patients with his gentleness and concern. He also received a reward as he drank deeply of Mother Marianne's serenity and wisdom.

The week after he left, the messenger ship from Honolulu brought a fine piano, his gift to the girls. The wonderful, gentle things Mother Marianne had taught the girls and the homey arrangement of things inspired by her had not escaped his notice. "As for the girls in the Bishop Home," he wrote, "of the many beautiful things I have been privileged to see in life, they and what has been done for them are not the least beautiful.... The dormitories are airy, the beds neatly made; at every bed head there was a trophy of Christmas cards, pictures, and photographs, some framed with shells, and all arranged with care."

What Stevenson had seen, had touched him so deeply that he felt compelled to express his emotion in the following beautiful lines:

To see the infinite pity of this place,  
The mangled limb, the devastated face,  
The innocent sufferers smiling at the rod,  
A fool were tempted to deny his God.

He sees and shrinks; but if he look again,  
Lo, beauty springing from the breast of pain!  
He marks the Sisters on the painful shores,  
And even a fool is silent and adores.



# Blessed Are You—IV

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

IT IS SURELY not difficult to see that the ability to mourn is a kind of prerequisite for hungering and thirsting for justice. If we are incapable of allowing God to evoke from us right responses to penancing truth, we shall scarcely be prepared to understand justice for the kind of good it is and the challenges it proposes, much less to have an appetite for it. For there are types of hunger that need to be cultivated. The hunger for justice is definitely one of them. We also need to work up an appetite for true justice. Nor can we interchange these terms. Hunger and appetite are not the same. One can be really hungry without experiencing any zest of appetite. And one can stimulate and indulge appetite where there is no real hunger. The latter fact is explicated clearly enough, all around us. It is not all that difficult, for instance, to stimulate a crowd to shriek for justice, smite for justice, maim and wound and kill for "justice," where there is no true hunger for real justice and precious little understanding of it.

To hunger and thirst after justice outside oneself is possible only to one who hungers and thirsts after justice within himself. There has to

be that determined dedication to setting things right within. And this is a work of prayer and of suffering. In promising satiety to those who hunger and thirst after justice, Christ was sounding first of all a call to personal holiness, a summons placing far greater demands on a man than promoting social reforms, and being likewise the one absolute requisite for engaging in socio-economic reforms, an absolute somewhat overlooked in many quarters and by an imposing number of organizations. This is obviously not to say that we must present ourselves as finished models of holiness before we can concern ourselves with working for the triumph of justice in the world. "We must?" As though we could! As if such a phantasm of sheer egocentrism could be good! It is only to say what comes first, what is the *unum necessarium*. It is just to be sure that we are clear on what Christ was talking about in the fourth beatitude.

This fourth beatitude is perhaps the most easily misinterpreted of the eight. We do remember one of the earlier recorded agitators for a just division of labor? Martha wanted justice done to herself. If she was not calling for equalization of wages,

she did sue for parity of working hours. Mary was busy at establishing justice within herself. And we recall Christ's immortal comment (Lk. 10:42). Yes, there is more to this fourth beatitude than may emerge from a quick perusal of our Savior's words. One has to study in prayer and humble self-confrontation before the lifelong witness of Jesus what he really meant by "justice," lest we be too facile in our personal exegesis, isolating a word defined according to our private choice among synonyms offered. One has to study from within the context of Christ's life.

Nor shall we ever be prepared to accept the stark blessedness of the eighth beatitude unless we have fathomed something of the fourth. The man who comes to understand that he is blessed in being persecuted for the sake of justice is the one who has known the arduousness of trying to establish justice within himself, of hungering and thirsting and aching to be holy before the all-holy God.

In the end, one sees that what men are most frequently and most cruelly persecuted for is their holiness.

Who is a just man? Saint Joseph comes rather immediately to mind. For, while we know very little about him, we do know that he was just. "Joseph was a just man" (Mt. 1:19). The Scriptures declare it cryptically enough, as though this is really sufficient to supply a full description. What does it mean?

Maybe we could first consider what it does not mean.

When Saint Matthew proclaims Joseph a just man, the evangelist is scarcely taking Gospel time, as it were, to eulogize Mary's husband as

one who did not cheat in his trade, engage in party politics, or smile the facile lie to attain an end. This is no scriptural lyricism about a carpenter in Nazareth who did not put his elbow on one side of the scale when weighing out material, who did not pad any figures when drawing up the bills.

Obviously, Joseph did not do these things, but that he did not do them was a predictable effect of that inner rectitude for which the Scriptures exalt him. To establish this kind of interior rectitude, one must suffer. There are simply no two ways about this. Christ learned the human internal rectitude of obedience in a school of suffering (Phil. 2:8). We can scarcely expect to learn it elsewhere. What we can always do, of course, is to elect to be spiritual college drop-outs, waving earnest protest banners for freedom and playing back the tired old record that obedience inhibits personal fulfillment. This is certainly much less demanding, even if totally unrewarding. But that is really another subject. Back to justice! It, too, is achieved only in a school of suffering.

Even the dictionary has spiritual counsel for us, defining the just man as one morally pure, perfect and upright before God, as one whose conduct conforms to the principles of right. So, it is first of all *my* conduct that I am to be concerned with. To convince ourselves that we hunger and thirst for justice because our preoccupation is an earnest and maybe even feverish concern about right conduct in others is utter delusion. The kind of inverted accent by which I establish myself as a disciple of

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*Mother Mary Francis is Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico. Her writings include many contributions of poetry and prose to periodicals, the immensely popular books *Spaces for Silence* and *A Right to Be Merry*, as well as the recently published series of conferences reprinted from our pages: *But I have Called You Friends*.*

justice because I agitate for others to do what is just is, among other things, the perennial ticket to personal libertinism.

Our blessed Savior had some very forthright words to say about removing the beam from one's own eye before getting upset about the sliver in another's eye (Lk. 6:42). And even should it be rather clearly manifest that this is a case not of beam and a sliver but of two imposing beams, it remains true that the first business on the agenda is removing one's own specific beam from one's own squinty eye. It can be surprising how differently we feel about that beam, real or supposed, in the other's eye after we have sweated and suffered and wept and groaned in our efforts to remove the persistent beam from our own. For one thing, we become gentle.

One can scarcely be harsh to a man who is not too magnificently successful in getting rid of his prejudices, psychological obstacles, inherited predispositions to wrong, and all the rest, when one is having a thoroughly exhausting time laboring to cast out one's own equivalents of the other man's beam. In fact, the other man's beam begins to appear more sliverish.

The pharisee in the familiar Gospel parable (Lk. 18:11) sought to exalt himself at the expense of the publican with whom he smugly compared his estimable self. For this we experience the healthy reaction of hearty distaste. We do not feel that we would like to linger over tea with the pharisee. It is all too easy to predict the trend of the conversation. But we want to remember also that

the publican did not condemn the pharisee. What a wearisome scriptural vignette that would make: the pharisee thanking God he is not like the publican; the publican mouthing his own *Te Deum* that he is not like the pharisee!

A hunger and thirst for that personal justice which is holiness unfailingly begets a gentleness toward others, a kind of horror of condemnation. The publican so hungered after justice within himself that he could only make the one appropriate cry of hunger: "O God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" (Lk. 18:13). This is the beginning of holiness, the initiation of the reign of justice within oneself: the acknowledgment of sinfulness. "Have mercy on me" is the plea of the man thirsting for justice. And he shall be filled. Jesus made that clear. The publican went home "justified," filled, slaked.

If he thought at all of the pharisee and that poor fellow's odious listing of his own excellences, we are surely making an educated conjecture if we feel that his thoughts were gentle and compassionate. The unerring sign of the forgiven man is the need to forgive all other men. Not just desire, but need. It is the sign of the coming of the kingdom of justice and truth described for us in the Preface for the Solemnity of Christ the King.

Then, for another thing, we grow in hope by our efforts to establish justice within ourselves. The hunger for personal holiness before a God all-holy is already His gift. We just do not get hungry in this area on our own. If there is blessedness promised to those who hunger and thirst after justice, we need to remember that the very hunger is already a

blessing and the anguish of this thirst itself a precious favor from God. Christ did not say: "Blessed are they who have their fill," but "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst." And the more filled they are, the hungrier they shall be. This is his subtle ongoing blessing which is yet revealed to the most obtuse of us if we allow him to enlighten our denseness with that revelation always gratuitously given and never earned, much less deserved.

The experience of our own yearning and aching to be what we are not yet, and this despite the findings of humble self-confrontation before the Truth: that we have a long and inglorious record of unholiness, interior injustice, fires us with hope for others as nothing else can quite do. We are robed in invincible hope for the breakdown of bigotry, prejudice, ill-gotten gaining and all the rest when we are humbly aware that it is possible to be highly unjust within oneself and yet hunger for justice, manifestly unholy while aching for holiness. We see this functioning in ourselves. One of the deductions we make from being hungry is that we are not full. Maybe we progress to a further deduction that our frightful emptiness of justice is necessitated by our repletion of indulged selfishness. We are malnourished in holiness because we are so full of self-husks.

The "hopeless bigot" no longer looks hopeless to the man struggling with the beam in his own eye, knowing the long duress of labor to remove it even with all the levers of grace operating, knowing even the difficulty of seeing the beam that is there. An eye with a beam in it can

hardly qualify for twenty-twenty vision. It's a marvel it sees at all. A marvel of grace: A marvel that fills us with hope. The world can, after all be saved. Evil can laboriously and gradually be overcome with good. Men can convert. The man blessed with that tormenting hunger for justice within himself knows this. He says: Look at me!

Returning to Joseph the just man, we observe in the Scriptures how he anguished to establish and maintain his inner rectitude. In the presence of a mystery he could not fathom, he did not angrily or otherwise demand an explanation. He did not protest, although he very understandably could have. He hungered to do what was right. And so he was filled. It was revealed to him what to do. And much more was revealed to him: a revelation given this precisely and directly, as a matter of fact, to no other man. The blessedness of his suffering hunger and thirst after justice in himself, for Mary, for God, gave way to the blessedness of being nourished and filled beyond what anyone could have predicted. His concern was that he himself should do what was right before God. That is what was clarified for him. Joseph was driven by desire for the establishment of justice within himself. That is what was filled.

If we really hunger and thirst after interior rectitude, inner justice, personal holiness, so that God can fill us, then we want everything which shows us the truth about ourselves. Here we return to an earlier point: we cannot be nourished and filled with truth if we are deliberately harboring untruthfulness within our-

selves. The more receptive we are, the more uncluttered we are so that we can be receptive, the more we shall want anything which gives us to understand what is lacking of holiness in us. This is proof that we hunger and thirst. We hunger and thirst to be corrected as a person who is driven in an art, one who yearns to do better. The man who aspires to be a great sculptor hungers and thirsts for the master to show him his mistakes. He does not want to present the angular marble which he has never really malleted into a curve and hear the master say, "Well, that's good enough; that's all right." No, he hungers and thirsts to be told that he can do better than that

and to be shown how. He is avid for correction. Christ has promised to satisfy such hunger and slake such thirst on the spiritual plane.

The fourth beatitude cannot be assumed as a slogan for philanthropists, much less for agitators. It is an excellent thing to desire and labor for lifting oppressions from the poor, for championing the cause of the underdog, leading forth the prisoners, safeguarding minorities. But it is not precisely to this, good and wonderful as it is, that God is promising his banquet. The way he expresses the work of the promoter of justice is clear enough in Isaiah, 42. Let's take a look at each verse of that passage:

I have endowed him with my spirit  
that he may bring true justice to the nations.  
He does not cry out or shout aloud,  
or make his voice heard in the streets.  
He does not break the crushed reed,  
nor quench the wavering flame.  
Faithfully he brings true justice;  
he will neither waver, nor be crushed  
until true justice is established on earth,  
for the islands are awaiting his law.  
(Is. 42:1-4)



It first of all emerges that the one who will bring true justice to the nations is the one endowed with God's Spirit. There are many spirits about, and there have always been many spirits about. Not all of them are identifiable with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of worldliness, my own wayward spirit, the spirit of anarchy, to say nothing of the crowds of evil spirits we have always with us—these are only a sampling of the myriad spirits calling for our attention and making pretense of their being the spirit of Yahweh-God.

The thing is, the voice of my own spirit can sound surprisingly like the voice of the Holy Spirit if I am not all that keen at discernment. The voice of my own spirit has so many appealing qualities; it tells me with the kind of modulation most acceptable to me all the reasons why it is excellent and praiseworthy to do whatever I want to do. So winsome a voice would just have to be the voice of God.

There is a great deal of insistence today on obedience meaning that I obey the spirit. Right. Only—whose spirit? There was an old-fashioned term, now largely fallen into disuse, by which obedience to a certain spirit (my own) was called "self-will." The New Enlightenment disdains this uncouth appellation in favor of drifting in and out of supposed lifetime commitments, wandering from one "perpetual" promise to another, and juggling pledges like gilded balls in the name of obeying the spirit.

God's Spirit is given. It is never fabricated out of myself. Does not this passage in Isaiah foreshadow the fourth beatitude to be revealed in the

New Testament? What does it mean that God endows a man with his Spirit so that man can bring true justice to the nations, if not that God gives to that man the gift of hunger and thirst for justice? It is given, never contrived. That is why it is blessed. And one must have become practised in listening through much prayer in order to hear the voice of the Spirit. God's voice never clamors for our attention. That may be one way of learning to distinguish the voice of our own spirit from the voice of the Spirit of God. We make much interior noise and often enough it is externalized as well. God speaks in a low voice. An insistent voice, yes; but it is a low insistence. He does not shout us down. Nor does the man endowed with his Spirit shout others down. Isaiah goes on to remark: "He does not cry out or shout aloud, or make his voice heard in the Streets" (*Ibid.*). This is rather a different picture of the man who is to bring justice to the nations than the image with sound track to which we have become accustomed.

God's man, hungering and thirsting for justice, does not break the crushed reed or quench the wavering flame. That he does not is less an expression of genial benevolence or natural pity than it is an effect of the personal suffering he has known in his own efforts to establish justice within himself. Anyone who has seriously and perseveringly worked to bring things within himself to rights, who has known the demanding hunger for inner rectitude and the tormenting thirst to set things right within his own heart, has learned at what personal cost and with how many frustrations and depres-

sions and failures the hunger and thirst for justice persist at all.

One can get very tired of hungering and thirsting for personal rectitude when there are other servings available. But out of allowing oneself to be blessed by God with this hunger and thirst comes a fountains compassion for others. Is it not necessary to recognize oneself as a crushed reed, spent with effort and weak with many failures, in order to be concerned about other crushed reeds? Or, at least, that the concern be deep and effective? It is not enough to say: "Too bad!" One must soothe and nurture the reed that is crushed, raise it and strengthen it and coax it back to life and growth. Not enough, either, to cluck a pitying: "What a shame!" at the wavering little flame. It has got to be fanned and refuelled. There has got to be work. And this comes out of humility and love, not out of shouting. Most of all, it comes from the prophet himself being faithful, as Isaiah observes. Faithfully hungry and thirsty for what is right, he brings true right. Otherwise, he brings something else. And we have heard that and smelled its acrid gunsmoke and seen its patterns of blood.

It is needful to remember that those who deprive the poor are themselves the most deprived. They are the weakest reeds and the littlest flames. That justice be wrought in them and not just against them is the hope of the just man. Christ came to establish a kingdom of justice and love in the hearts of all men, and that included both the blind (and prob-

ably lousy) beggar whom his apostles advised to take a detour, and rich Zaccheus who had many a change of tunic and never missed a meal and whom the apostles also thought out of order.

"He will neither waver, nor be crushed until true justice is established on earth" (*Ibid.*). That a man does not waver already implies that it is quite possible for him to do so. He has got to be crushable if his refusal to be crushed is to mean anything. The just man is himself vulnerable. That is why he is qualified to heal. He knows a wound when he sees it, wherever and on whomever it appears.

"For the islands are awaiting his law" (*Ibid.*). Justice is a matter of law and not of lawlessness. It presupposes highly personal discipline and a hunger educated to know what alone will satisfy it, a thirst suffered that it may be slaked by living water. "The endurance of trial with unresisting tranquillity is often a more searching test of courage," remarks Dom Aelred Graham, "than to meet opposition with direct assault."<sup>1</sup> It is also a sign of the just man, blessedly hungering and thirsting for universal justice.

Joseph was a just man. That is, he was holy. He had attained to inner rectitude by suffering. That is the only way for any of us. And unless we hunger and thirst for justice, right, holiness within ourselves, we had better not talk about establishing it outside.

(To be continued)

## Two Poems

I

Seeds planted in the desert  
Roses on a hot tin plate  
Life invisible from the outside  
Comfort for the troubled heart

The hermit in New York City  
Huddled under a telephone pole  
Finds God in passing, transparent eyes  
And passes into unseen time  
With roses on his lips . . .

II

Beloved,  
When times permit the clouds  
To be unbroken  
And rhymes of silent melodies  
Remain,  
Do come, be at my side  
For then will I be not alone  
To crack the symbols of our dawn:  
Living flowers of our visions  
Sacralized eternally.

ROBERTO O. GONZÁLEZ, O.F.M.

<sup>1</sup>Dom Aelred Graham, O.S.B., *The Christ of Catholicism* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Image Books, 1947), p. 51.



## MYTH, FAILURE, AND EASTER

(Continued from p. 98)

*Myth, History, and Faith* is a magnificent plea for the "remythologizing" of Christianity, by which the author means a restoration of mythological thinking as the only adequate means of coping with the spiritual environment in which we live and breathe and have our being. Kelsey is an Episcopal minister who has served in parish work for 25 years and in education (at Notre Dame University) for four. He understands quite profoundly the thirst people have nowadays for the richness of symbolic, mythic thought; and this slim volume he has distilled for them much of what he himself had furnished in earlier books on myth and on religious experience. He gives us a well rounded treatment of the meaning of myth itself and its indispensability for human life. As more and more people are coming to realize, myth is by no means equivalent to "false statement," nor does mythic mean "unhistorical." If you haven't yet had the chance to come to grips with this very important subject, the present book is one of the best available for the purpose. The psychological, philosophical, and religious aspects of myth are discussed in vivid, enlightening detail, as is the specific relevance of myth to the problem of evil and to the proper understanding and living of Christianity. The book ought to be required reading for every Christian undergraduate, and it cannot be too highly recommended for the general reader.

Jesuit Father John Navone's *A Theology of Failure* seems to be a

most salutary antidote for the overdose some of us may have taken, of utopian, immanentist, crypto-pelagian "Theologies of hope." The author explicitly disavows any pretense, in this slim volume, of setting forth a complete, systematic "theology of failure," but he does discuss in very enlightening fashion the inability of the individual human being, of society, of history, of the future, of life itself, and even of Jesus during his earthly life, to attain deliverance, healing—spiritual "success." Although the chapters read more like disparate essays than stages of a single presentation, they all certainly contribute to the main point: viz., the centrality of the cross in Christianity. We can and must work untiringly and confidently for the cause of Truth and justice, not in spite of, but often because of, and in the power of, the cross present in our lives. All these efforts are crowned with success, however, only through the delivering, glorifying intervention of the Father.

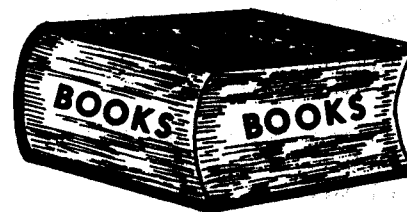
*A New Age in Theology* is intended, not to give a complete picture of the contemporary theological scene, but (more modestly) simply to explain some general themes of importance and the general character of today's theological enterprise. In line with this aim, the author first discusses the recent shift in the nature of fundamental theology from the rationalistic apologetic ideal through the anthropocentric and transcendental approaches, up to the newer emphasis on political theology. In succeeding chapters Geffre examines rather lucidly and economically (but not without some needless repeti-

tion) (1) the hermeneutic function of theology—its duty to make past facts and doctrines intelligible in our day through responsible interpretation, (2) non-metaphysical theology, by which he means, not a theology divested of all metaphysical categories (which would be a disaster even if it were possible to achieve), but one liberated from debilitating slavery to a *particular* philosophy, and (3) the transition from the various theologies of the "Word" to the newer theologies of history and of hope—those of Pannenberg, Moltmann, and Metz. The book has its shortcomings, notably an uncritical acceptance of some of Kant's thought

and a failure to understand the real meaning and significance of myth; but only good can come from a *proper* and *discerning* acceptance of its emphasis on the concrete and the historical, as well as from an attempt to implement the various pleas for methodological unification.

Jesus is risen! Carping, pseudo-scientific "definitions" aside, this is historical fact plain and simple; and everything depends on its being *physical*, hence causally efficacious for all of us. It is in the risen Christ, the new Adam, that each of us is empowered by the Father's Love to transcend every evil, every obstacle, and to work fruitfully for the definitive establishment of God's Kingdom.

Fr. Michael D. Mailhot, *ofm*



### The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton.

Edited from his original notebooks by Naomi Burton, Brother Patrick Hart, and James Laughlin. Consulting Editor: Amiya Chakravarty. New York: New Directions, 1973. Pp. vii-445. Cloth, \$12.50.

Reviewed by Father Vianney M. Devlin, O.F.M., Ph.D. (English, University of London), Associate Professor of English at Siena College, Loudonville, N.Y.

This book is Thomas Merton's

diary record of his trip to the East in 1968. Because of his tragic, accidental death in Bangkok he did not complete the manuscript which involved three diaries: one for publication (yet not finally edited), one for his private use, and another in which he kept notes on whatever he happened to be reading on his trip from Gethsemani to Bangkok.

The preparation of a publishable text... was a complicated process. A glance at one of the facsimile reproductions (see pages xii-xiii) will show how rapidly Merton wrote them, often making it difficult, even for those of us who had known his handwriting for many years, to decipher certain words, particularly Asian names or terms with which we were not familiar [Editors' Notes, p. xi].

This difficult task has been capably accomplished by Naomi Burton, Merton's former editor; Brother Pat-



rick Hart, O.C.S.O., of Gethsemani, Kentucky; and James Laughlin, an old friend and publisher of many of Merton's books, as well as Consulting Editor, the Indian Scholar Amiya Chakravarty.

Throughout his lifetime Merton kept many journals, some of which have already been published: *The Sign of Jonas* (1953), *The Secular Journal* (1959), *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander* (1966). All of these are worth reading for the personal insights which they give into the heart and mind of this most outspoken of monks. As journals, of course, they do not make easy reading. They deserve to be read slowly and meditatively.

In this present book Merton recounts his journey, the places he visited from Bangkok through India and Ceylon, the people he met, including three interviews with the Dalai Lama, his appreciations and thoughts on what was to him a marvelous and keenly intellectual adventure. In addition to this the editors have included such valuable supplementary material as Merton's Circular Letter to Friends (September 1968), in which Merton writes

...anything I do on this trip will be absolutely nonpolitical. I have no intention of going anywhere near Vietnam.... Our real journey in life is interior: it is a matter of growth, deepening, and of an ever greater surrender to the creative action of love and grace in our hearts. Never was it more necessary for us to respond to that action [p. 296; earlier in the same letter he writes:] I ask your prayers for the success of this undertaking: and of course, please do not believe anything that rumor may add to this simple scenario [p. 295].

Included in this supplementary material is the final talk delivered by Merton at Bangkok on December 10, 1968, entitled "Marxism and Monastic Perspectives," in which we see how far Merton had progressed in his thinking with regard to monasticism and contemplative spirituality since his initial explorations as a student at Cambridge and Columbia. It ends with the prophetic words: "So I will disappear." Within hours Merton was dead.

The book is fully indexed, and it contains a glossary of Asian religious terms as well as a foreword and postscript by Brother Hart telling of Merton's death and funeral in Bangkok and the final services at Gethsemani:

At dusk under a light snowfall, his body was laid to rest in the monastic cemetery beneath a solitary cedar tree. A simple white cross marks his grave, no different from the rest of the monks who have been buried there during the past 120 years. May he rest in peace [p. 259].

The book is illustrated with more than forty photographs, most of which Merton took himself.

*The Asian Journal* is certainly a "must" for those readers who are familiar with Merton's other works and who have followed the progress of his thought since the publication of his autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, in 1948. Readers unfamiliar with Merton or with what he has said elsewhere concerning Eastern spirituality would be well advised to postpone reading of this book until they have done preliminary reading in other works by this astounding monk. The last thing Merton would have wished for would

be an uncritical, superficial cult surrounding his name. He wrote down some prepared remarks for an interfaith meeting held in Calcutta in mid-November of 1968, scarcely three weeks before his death in Bangkok:

I speak as a Western monk who is pre-eminently concerned with his own monastic calling and dedication. I have left my monastery to come here not just as a research scholar or even as an author (which I happen to be). I come as a pilgrim who is anxious not just to obtain information, not just facts about other monastic traditions, but to drink from ancient sources of monastic vision and experience. I seek not only to learn more (quantitatively) about religion and monastic life, but to become a better and more enlightened monk (qualitatively) myself [pp. 312-13].

Readers of this book ought to approach it in much the same spirit.



God Tomorrow. By Charles Combaluzier. Trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell. Paramus, N. J.: Paulist Press, 1974. Pp. vi-182. Paper, \$4.50.

Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Ph. D. (Philosophy,

Fordham University), Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Siena College, and Editor of this Review.

This is not one book, really, but two rather disparate treatises. The first two of its three main parts comprise the development of an interesting thesis: viz., that the biosphere is not just an aggregate of living beings, but is itself a single huge organism. The final third of the book consists of less tightly unified metaphysical reflections (on the human soul, immortality, God, etc.) which do not seem to flow organically from the thesis already elaborated.

I found Part I fascinating. The work more of a scientist than of a theologian, it contains discussions of the roles of water, salt, blood, chlorophyll, calcium, etc., in nurturing life. The gigantic "organism" which is the biosphere is compared to a human individual. Animal life, which emerged in the course of evolution, is said to be the biosphere's nervous system; and man, its brain. In calling this the work of a scientist, I do not mean to imply that the writing is overly technical for the average reader; nor do I want to give the impression that the author himself has attempted to justify his daring comparisons on purely scientific grounds.

In Part II, in fact, he extrapolates from biological and paleontological data even further in his quest for a coherent synthesis. He suggests that mankind's current situation of conflict, prejudice, etc., is but a manifestation of its pubescent status. The emphasis seems to shift gradually from the speculative to the practical,

as Combaluzier offers prescriptions for mankind's maturation even while he admits that the process is to be measured in millennia.

The questions of immortality and the nature of spirit are briefly raised at the end of Part II, but it is in the third Part that these subjects are explicitly addressed at some length. Unfortunately, the author seems, despite his obvious erudition, to be thoroughly confused about these all-important dimensions of his projected synthesis. Whenever he brings up the subject of God he feels constrained, for some reason, to add the qualification "if he exists." He completely misrepresents what has traditionally been meant by "soul" and goes on to furnish his own very dubious acceptance of the term, according to which it denotes the emergent function of the God-man encounter. He has some fine things to say in the ensuing chapters, about the need to *choose* God, about freedom, etc., but on balance I do not think he has succeeded in presenting a compelling, organic statement of the theistic position. His is a theism narrowly grounded in Pascal's "wager" approach—if life is to have meaning, God's existence is the right "hypothesis," and the question cannot be brushed aside (as is done by the agnostic) because it is too important for life.

The book's cover describes the author as a "noted French theologian." I think that this particular work shows him rather as a competent writer who has set forth a statement of his outlook. Even as literature, his work lacks the fire of Teilhard, on whom he so obviously depends at certain key points; and

despite the evident stylistic ability of his translator, his writing lacks a certain needed coherence as well. In sum, while I hope the daring metabiology of Part I will get widespread attention and perhaps be taken up for development by others, I cannot render a positive verdict on the "theology" allegedly set forth in Part III. This book has told me nothing, really, about "God tomorrow."

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**Maranatha: Reflections on the Mystical Theology of John the Evangelist.** By William J. Fulco, S.J. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press. Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Editor of this Review.

Books, 1973. Pp. v-90. Paper, \$1.25.

As every reader surely knows, there is a unique simplicity and depth to John's spiritual vision. In this slender and unpretentious exposition, Father Fulco has provided us with yet another opportunity to immerse ourselves in that sublime vision. What particularly recommends *Maranatha* is its compact, organic unity. There have been innumerable Joannine studies of a more technical, specialized nature (Boismard's essay on the Prologue comes to mind as especially valuable from the spiritual viewpoint), and there have been lengthier and more detailed expositions of the Evangelist's spirituality (Gerald Vann's *The Eagle's Word*, and even more so Paul-Marie de la Croix's superb *Biblical Spirituality of St. John*—A 425-page mammoth wellspring of spirituality published by Alba House

in 1966—suggest themselves in this context). But for the reader with somewhat less time to devote to this important area and somewhat less expertise to bring to it, *Maranatha* is an ideal source of Joannine spirituality.

The author opens with a short discussion of the concrete context of human life—the real individual human being to whom John's preaching is directed. Such a man "thirsts" for God with his whole being, and it is only in virtue of God's prior resolve that man will indeed attain to union with him, that human fulfillment is possible. Remaining with the concrete, Father Fulco goes on to show the linear unity in God's plan to execute that resolve: creation, prophecy, Incarnation, Paschal Event, establishment of the Church, sacramental life are all seen as phases in the journey from the Word as Alpha to Christ as Omega. The key Joannine categories of life, knowledge, truth, light-darkness, and glory are given good, clear explanation and shown to be rooted, not so much in Greek speculation as had been thought for a long time, but solidly in concrete Hebrew thought.

If you are thinking ahead to some good meditative reading in preparation for Easter, I don't think you could do better for the purpose than *Maranatha*.

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**The Crisis of Religious Life.** By Thaddée Matura. Trans. by Paul Schwartz and Paul Lachance. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973. Pp. x-122. Cloth, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies,

O.F.M., Head of the Philosophy Department of Siena College, and Associate editor of this Review.

This short work is composed of five essays. The first delineates precisely and accurately the movement of world, Church, and religious life toward process, and the consequent turbulence and ambiguities which flow from that movement: what, e.g., are we to believe? What traditions are we to hold from our founder? The second and third chapters take up thoughts expressed in the author's earlier work, *Celibacy and Community* (Franciscan Herald Press, 1968; cf. my review in THE CORD 18 [Nov. 1968], pp. 344): viz., the specific character of religious life as distinct from Christian life. The fourth chapter takes up some "debated questions" as to the possibility of lifetime celibacy and even commitment, the tension which exists between continuity with the past and the need to move into the future, the unity of religious life in general vs. the various styles of it in particular, the question of religious lifestyle. The last essay speaks to the crisis of faith in the world today and notes its impact on religious (many complaints against prayer forms are rather due to insufficient faith to express, than to the forms) and to the nature and forms of prayer.

Father Matura's book is a series of observations, reflections, and suggestions. With regard to the former I found myself generally in agreement (save perhaps for too great a significance being given to small communities and the too quick assessment that habit and cloister were out the window). With regard to his reflections, however, I was less

approving, particularly with regard to his assertion that the counsel-precept distinction is no longer viable (cf. pp. 33-34) and the position that celibacy publicly vowed constitutes the religious state (with Vatican II I see the other evangelical counsels of obedience and poverty as essential).

As far as Father Matura's suggestions are concerned, I found much to agree with: e.g., that religious need to pray *communally* each day, that mixed communities are a pipe-dream. But I do not feel that the suggestions flowed from the essays; and for lack of this contextual support, they lose much of the impact they might have had.

Although it is far from being an answer book, *The Crisis of Religious Life* is by no means just a question book. Thinking Franciscans can profit from this generally balanced, but all too briefly developed, work.

**Prayer without Frills.** By Juan Arias. Trans. Paul Barrett, O.F.M. Cap.; St. Meinrad, Ind.: Abbey Press, 1974. Pp. viii-196. Paper, \$3.95.

*Reviewed by Johnmery Konecsni, Ph.D. (N.Y. University) a member of the Dominican Third Order Secular, and Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Caldwell College, Caldwell, New Jersey.*

This is the first (and I hope the last) time I've ever had to start a review with an apology to the author for an act of rash pre-judgment. All I could think of when I received this book was the old line of C. S. Lewis to the effect that it didn't matter much whether one used one's own words in prayer or someone

else's: self-written prayers become self-codifying and other-written prayers with time take on the coloration of the pray-er. When you add Lewis to Malcolm Boyd's disaster (*Are You Running with Me, Jesus?*), you can see why I was the worst possible reviewer.

Until I read the book.

Father Arias has written, no, given voice in the service of the convicts, students, children, parents, atheists, politicians, and a host of others. Don't confuse this book with the old volumes of prayers for the professions: these are not type-cast prayers designed to reinforce stereotypes. That sort of thing happens only when professionals write their own prayers, or, worse, when a total outsider writes the prayers that the professional *should* want to pray. In this case Arias has listened wisely and well and has written what others couldn't or wouldn't have written.

He has written what others wouldn't have written because the book is dedicated to "all those who, in their fight for personal freedom, have stopped being afraid or ashamed of letting others see them as they really are." Those are the very people who will only rarely need this book. It is more properly a book for cowards like me who need constant support from the community of believers. It is for those who have forgotten their dreams; for those who desire real freedom which only the Father and our Brother can give.

I will not give you any samples of the sharp insights or depth of feeling which Arias has captured. Read the book, and let it capture you.

## Books in Brief

**Bless the Lord: A Prayerbook for Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Eastertide.** Edited by William G. Storey, D.M.S. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1974. Pp. 256. Paper, \$2.95.

This companion volume to *Praise Him: A Prayerbook for Today's Christian* (see THE CORD 23:11 [Nov., 1973]), is just as welcome as the first piece. The abundance of relevant Scripture, citations from the Fathers, and aphorisms from contemporaries make this also a helpful book for the meditative praying of the Divine Office. Its compact size and readable type add to its attractiveness as a book that communities as well as individuals might well use on occasion.

**Five for Sorrow, Ten for Joy: A Consideration of the Rosary.** By J. Neville Ward. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1974. Pp. 197. Paper, \$1.45.

Rather than a mere consideration of the Rosary, this work is a reflection on the spiritual life as seen by a contemporary. After an excellent preface which explains the purpose and mechanics of the Rosary, Ward sets out to detail for us where his own prolonged meditation on each of the fifteen mysteries led him. Most impressive, perhaps, are his observations on prayer, pain, life and death. When speaking of Mary herself, the author tends to allegorize and at times to surrender literalness; yet the many good things he says of her role in the Church and of her own person are solid gold.

**Saint Watching.** By Phyllis McGinley. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1974. Pp. 240. Paper, \$1.75.

Phyllis McGinley has not only watched saints, she has studied them. Ignatius, Borgia, Teresa of Avila, Augustine, Albert the Great, Francis of Assisi, and a host of others emerge as real men and women, living in a real world. The peculiar genius of each Saint and the milieu in which he or she worked out sanctity are deftly and entertainingly portrayed, and in such a manner that even if the Saint doesn't come out lovable, sanctity does appear attractive. The author goes beyond mere biography to commentary on the spiritual life with ease. A positive plus is her treatment of Florence Nightingale, John Wesley, and Gandhi under the rubric of "All Saints Day." Most highly recommended.

**Saint of the Day, vol. 1.** Edited by Leonard Foley, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1974. Pp. xii-157. Paper, \$1.95.

This is a very handy book for homilists, as well as for lay folk who have made daily Mass and reflection a part of their lives. The brief biographies of the Saints of the Roman Missal are followed by a contemporary-oriented reflection (those following Aloysius Gonzaga and Pope Martin I impressed me) and a quote from the writings of the Saint, from Scripture, or another spiritual source (particularly noteworthy here are those from Mother Seton and

Catherine of Siena). When Volume II does come out, I hope that it will have supplement for those Saints who appear, not in the universal calendar, but only in the Franciscan one.

**The Vatican II Sunday Missal.** Prepared by the Daughters of St. Paul. Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1974. Pp. 1120. Plastic, \$5.95; Cloth, \$6.95; Imitation Leather, \$7.95; Leather with gold edges, \$9.95. 20% discount to clergy and religious.

It would be impossible, after the Council, to publish a Sunday Missal the size of those tiny ones we used to know—even though this version contains the Mass Propers only for Sundays and major Feasts, it is the

size of the erstwhile Daily Missals. It is a very attractive and practical book in which clear and contrasting type faces are used to good advantage. All the variant forms allowed in the new Sacramentary for the penitential rite and the Anaphora are included, and many invaluable features besides: a running "instruction on developing one's faith" by Archbishop Whealon of Hartford, such standard devotions as the Rosary and the Way of the Cross, and Father Alberione's "treasury of prayers" which includes the most diverse sort of prayers—the "Memorare," e.g., followed almost immediately by a prayer "for films, radio, and television." It's good to see this missal available—particularly at so reasonable a price.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

Basetti-Sani, Giulio, O.F.M., *Louis Massignon: Christian Ecumenist*. Tr., introd., & notes by Allan H. Cutler; Chicago; Franciscan Herald Press, 1974. Pp. iv-262, incl. index. Cloth, \$6.95.

Coleman, William V., and Patricia R. McLemore, *God Believes in Me: A Catechetical Program for Second through Sixth Grade*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1974. Five pamphlets include Director's Guide, Family and Classroom Booklets, total cost \$5.05.

Lanza del Vasto, Joseph Jean, *Gandhi to Vinoba: The New Pilgrimage*. Trans. Philip Leon; New York: Schocken Books, 1974. Pp. 231. cloth, \$7.95.

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## COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our May issue have been drawn by Sister M. Raphael Fulwider, O.S.F., Chairman of the Art Department at Maria Regina College, Syracuse, N.Y.

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## The Living Flame

**T**HAT GENUINE PRAYER—i.e., real experience of and communication with God—is for everyone and not just the “professionals” as some people used to consider clergy and religious, has by now become a truism. It’s a harmless enough statement as long as it can be taken abstractly and impersonally. But its effect is worse than an earthquake once one understands that it prescribes for him—for his own self—his only hope of fulfillment. Without an effort to attain such communication with God *and steadily deepen it*, the best a human being can do is paper over the neglected inner chamber of his self for the time being and look forward to the arduous task of cleaning it out and furnishing it after death. God is the living flame that quickens that inmost self of ours, and if he is to make us live, he must be allowed in.

Father William McNamara is a Discalced Carmelite who has an ability rivalled in our day only by the late Thomas Merton, to communicate this thesis in all its urgency and irresistible yet fearsome fascination. He has founded hermitages (his Spiritual Life Institute), one in Arizona and one in Nova Scotia, to which any man or woman without distinction can “go into the desert and pray.” He himself resides at the Nova Scotia site; but he also makes good use of his academic training (including a Master’s Degree in psychology and education from Boston College) by devoting a good deal of his time to lectures and retreats in academic institutions.

Some readers may recall Father McNamara’s earlier book, *The Art of Being Human*. The present volume, published last year, is somewhat reminiscent of that one in the prominence given to the solid human base on which the Christian experience of grace and the supernatural must be built. (In what may be a better metaphor, the flower of the human soul must be opened to the atmosphere of the created real in all its stark beauty before it can be warmed by the sun of God’s personal love.) So, quite logically, the book has four main sections: Human

Experience, Religious Experience, Mystical Experience, and Christian Experience. There is no attempt artificially to circumscribe the subject matter in each of the parts; the major themes recur everywhere throughout the book, but there is, by and large, logical progress in accord with these sub-titles.

The most fundamental of these themes seems, fittingly, to be the reality of God’s presence and initiative in purifying, consoling, and perfecting the human person. Granted that reality, the next step is to discern in the concrete realm of history where God has spoken his Word. Father McNamara has no hesitation, in this regard (without prejudice to a truly ecumenical spirit) in asserting the absolute supremacy and definitive character of Christianity. He even points out clearly that “mysticism” refers etymologically and historically only to the properly *Christian experience of God in and through Jesus*, the mystery hidden from all ages and now made manifest.

Still, we can and should agree that other religions have something to say to us. It is not the case that they “have something that Christianity lacks,” but it still is probably true that some emphasis of theirs may help us, psychologically, to recognize more clearly and appreciate more fully the resources sometimes hidden rather deeply within our Christian tradition. So the author probes, with the extensive and competent help of Jesuit Father William Johnston, some of the possibilities in the Zen experience. As he points out, though, it should never be a question of slavish, unthinking assimilation of everything we see elsewhere—even in the proven techniques of Zen. Kneeling with head bowed, e.g., can be every bit as effective as the lotus position in centering oneself into the spiritual dimension.

Father McNamara has some harsh words for us Christians of today’s institutional Church. He is not pessimistic, but is quite incisive in diagnosing our failure to discharge our mission—a failure stemming from our ignorance of that mission’s true nature and source. When it comes to specific practices, his sensible, balanced observations become too numerous even to list. And the direct, no-nonsense, at times almost colloquial style in which they are cast makes a reviewer want to quote from page after page. While it is regrettable that space allows no sampling, here, of this book’s sparkling prose, it is some consolation to be able to recommend it this way to our readers, as prominently and enthusiastically as possible.

*Fr. Michael D. Mailach, OFM*

*The Human Adventure*. By William McNamara, O.C.D. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1974. Pp. 190, including bibliography. Cloth, \$5.95.

## A Message of Dignity and Humanity

BARRY H. J. PEHRSSON, PH.D.

WHEN A sociologist attempts to assess the social significance of Saint Francis' message for the twentieth century, he immediately finds himself returning to the *Geist* or culture out of which that message emerged. Sociologists, in their quest for the grail of understanding, have dubbed this "research in the sociology of knowledge."<sup>1</sup>

A brief look at the world Francis entered conjures up a number of striking similarities to the social world that you and I share.

Francis was eighteen when the twelfth century came to its close, a century which had throbbled with the thrust and counterthrust of the conflict between church and State, a century preoccupied with Crusades, a growing interest in medicine and the natural sciences, the growth of cities, the development of an urban outlook—in sum, a social climate which contained within itself the undoing of feudalism. European energies were not wholly canalized in warfare, but there was little peace and no organized protection from violence. The urban development gathered momentum precisely because strongly walled-in cities

could offer shelter and a degree of security that was seldom found in the countryside. Religious consciousness was certainly present, but the Church was scourged by many evils—heresy, simony, usury, and concubinage. Abbeys and priories were primarily wealthy landowners. The monastic ideal fostered in Europe by Saint Benedict in the sixth century was all but entombed. The efforts of Saint Romuald, who formed the Order of the Camaldoli in 1018 and Bruno of Cologne who founded the first Carthusian house in 1085 were only relatively successful. At the threshold of the thirteenth century the Western Church stood at the very peak of her power, and never before had she been so threatened from within. Her weakness stemmed from her strength. The enormous organization involved a correspondingly complicated machinery which often became corrupted by the mundane. Nevertheless, the Church still remained the only bulwark against the menace of ubiquitous anarchy and chaos. Although many of her courts were concerted by venality, she alone could offer protection against a lord's injustice and a rob-

ber's rapacity.<sup>2</sup>

In sum, Francis was born into a sharply checkered world, where time and again the thickening clouds suggested that all light stood in danger of being put out. Troubles of one kind or another were shaking the whole of Europe. There were insidious heresies to disturb the faith of simple people, and at least one of them, that of the Cathari, threatened to destroy the whole social structure of the day. Flails of pestilence, famine, and civil war, to say nothing of brigandage, descended mostly on those unregarded folk whose only crime was poverty. The Emperor Otto IV had been excommunicated by the Pope, and Otto's successor was waging war against Innocent III's successor. The enthusiasm of the crusading movement had dimmed, chivalry's face was most ignobly stained. Finally, learned men spent their days and nights wrestling with obscure speculative problems, whose misery of mankind. In sum, Francis' world was colored by rapid social change, insecurity, uncertainty, and an extremely unbalanced stratification system in respect to living conditions.

As we noted earlier the culture of the 1960's and the 1970's seems remarkably similar to the world from which came Francis' message. Sociologists tell us that we are a nation of strangers—a nation of

components who rarely take the time to know our neighbors.<sup>3</sup> The concepts of repression, alienation, anonymity, identity crisis, marginality seem to be the most frequently used by sociologists to describe our common plight. The individual is threatened not only by meaninglessness in the world of his work, but also by the loss of meaning in wide sectors of his relationship with other people. The very complexity and pervasiveness of the technologized economy makes more and more social relations opaque to the individual. The institutional fabric as a whole tends towards incomprehensibility—fewer and fewer of us are willing to admit that we truly understand the nature of our social environment—an environment permeated by the questions of Watergate and gas and inflationary price crises. Even in the individual's everyday experience, other individuals appear as agents of forces and collectivities which he does not understand. Once again the result is tension, frustration, insecurity, a sense of being alienated from others. As a result of the sheer intensification and acceleration of technological and bureaucratic processes, we feel "homeless" and "timeless"—but our "homelessness" and "timelessness" are not the eclectic demeanor of a cosmopolitan; they are rather the characteristic of a person who is lost.<sup>4</sup> A world in which everything

*Dr. Barry H. Pehrsson, Ph.D. (Sociology, Fordham Univ.) gave this paper as part of the week commemorating St. Bonaventure at Siena College in March 1974.*

<sup>1</sup>Werner Stark, *The Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967).

<sup>2</sup>Agostino Gemelli, O.F.M., *The Message of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1963), pp. 1-77.

<sup>3</sup>Vance Packard, *A Nation of Strangers* (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1972).

<sup>4</sup>Peter Berger, *The Homeless Mind* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).

is in constant motion is a world in which certainties are hard to come by. Thus we the people of the 1970's plod through society in an orgy of prestige gratification and conspicuous consumption desperately groping to find ourselves. Social fragmentation and depersonalization have become correlates of our mobile bureaucratic-technological world, and we fight the urge to yield and become functionaries. In sum, the insecurity, fright, uncertainty, the rapid social change which characterized Francis' world has not diminished despite our increased GNP. Add to the above description a host of "community problems": the spread of the urban blight, the lack of adequate housing which people can afford, high delinquency and crime rates, and problem of the aged, alcoholism, and drug addiction, and we can derive a picture of pervasive insecurity and frustration.

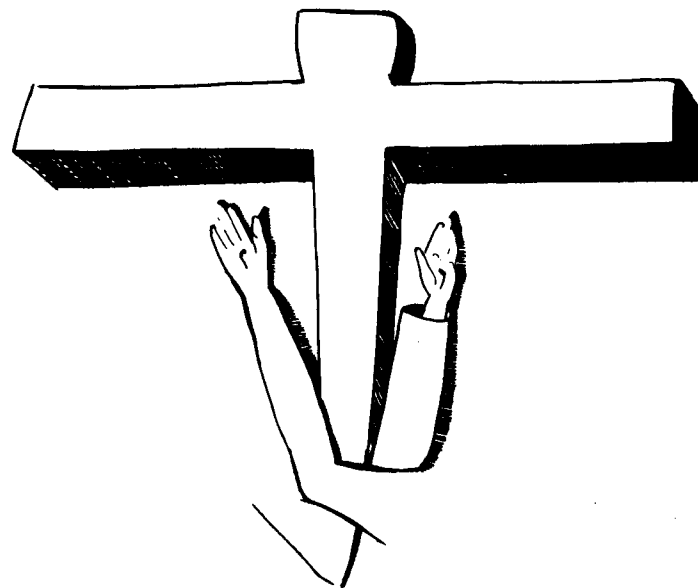
Marx's "alienation" and "false consciousness," Heidegger's "authenticity" and Sartre's "bad faith," and such current sociological notions as David Riesman's "other direction" or Erving Goffman's "impression management" could arise and claim credibility only in a situation in which identity-defining power of institutions has been greatly weakened.

Granted the social milieu of Francis' time was quantitatively and qualitatively different from our *Weltanschauung*; nevertheless the underlying themes of both ages were insecurity and a search for community.

To assess the social implications of Francis' message for our society, let us enter our time capsule and see what his message was for the fragmented society that he called his own.

All during the Septicentennial Celebration honoring Saint Bonaventure, we have heard the terms "poverty," "humility," and "spirituality" linked with Francis' biography. It would be pointless to belabor this theme here. Indeed, what I see as Francis' social message seems to be grounded in his concept of personalism and commitment—this was his message for his society and ours. Saint Francis belonged to the people. His universal brotherhood, his charity toward all, even toward authority, and his profound reverence for the hierarchy clearly set him apart from his peers. The son of a merchant and of a noble lady, despising his heredity as a wealthy bourgeois and as an ambitious nobleman, Francis turned his back on the old aristocracy and the budding bourgeoisie, when in the presence of the bishop he placed his clothes and money at the feet of his father. Meagerly clad in the mantle of a peasant, he then went through the world. With this resolve, Francis gave advance notice to the world that it would never know peace nor justice until it accepted and applied the law of the Gospel.<sup>5</sup>

Francis' message is a message of fundamental human dignity, and he relates that dignity to the intrinsic humanity of each of us, a humanity that is divested of all socially imposed roles, norms, or material pos-



sessions. When one thinks of Francis one thinks of Cervantes' Quixote, the knight errant in an age in which chivalry has become a matter of empty rhetoric. The greatness of Quixote, however, transcends this particular time-bond debunking job.<sup>6</sup> As Don Quixote tells Sancho in one of his innumerable homilies: "Is it possible that in the time you have been with me you have not yet found out that all the adventures of a knight-errant appear to be illusion, follies, and dreams, and turn out to be the reverse? Not because these things are really so, but because in our midst there is a host of enchanters, forever changing, disguising and transforming our affairs as they please, according to whether they wish to favor or destroy us. So what you call a barber's basin is to me

Mambrino's helmet, and to another it will appear to be something else." The enchanters, alas, have not disappeared with the age of chivalry.

Francis' message to modern man is to look closely and note the words of Don Quixote on his deathbed, denuded of the multi-colored banners that previously enveloped the self and revealed to be nothing but a man. "I was mad, but I am now in my senses; I was once Don Quixote of La Mancha, but I am now as I said before, Alonso Quixano the GOOD." Francis' social message was that "man" should be restored to "man-kind"—while deepening and enhancing his communion with the universe. In a fragmented, consumer-oriented society, there are inevitably two kinds of slaves: the prisoners of addiction, and the prisoners of envy.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Maurice Francis Egan, *Everybody's St. Francis* (New York: The Century Co., 1912), pp. 3-71.

<sup>6</sup>Berger, *op. cit.*, chapters 3-6.

<sup>7</sup>Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).



Francis' message is a message of balance and reflection to all of us who suffer from these crippling addictions. He wishes to develop for us an adequate emotional and spiritual diet, and thereby to detoxify us from our cultural addictions.

Francis was no social reformer. He had the grace and power to heal many of the hurts to the soul and the mind caused by existing social conditions. He had neither the gift nor the knowledge required for changing the structural sources of these evils. His gift could be located in the area of personalism; indeed, he reminds one of contemporary social workers—dedicated men who are doomed to band-aid the problems of the lepers they serve.<sup>8</sup> Still less was Francis an administrator, and that should not be imputed as a fault. The small fellowship, so ardently dedicated to the service of "Lady Poverty," should not be seen as the image of the mustard seed—it is doubtful that Francis himself had envisaged the immense numbers of men who would flock to his banner—and that so hurriedly and suddenly.<sup>9</sup>

Both Francis and his companions lacked the most basic necessities of life, and yet no obstacle stood in the way of their resolve. He traveled to distant lands, crossed the sea and the Alps, stood before popes and the sultan. Popes approved his rule, soldiers were comforted by his

words.. Birds listened to him. Wolves grew tame at the sound of his voice.<sup>10</sup> Most everyone came to his aid, and no one had the audacity to harm him, for he owned nothing, desired nothing, and feared nothing. If he were alive today he would probably be looked on as a charismatic leader—although he would most probably have avoided the label. Indeed, he was a man for all seasons!

Francis' social message is a message calling out for *community*—the wish to live in trust and fraternal co-operation with one's fellows: for *engagement*—the wish to come to grips with interpersonal problems and to confront an environment which is not composed of ego-extensions; for *perfectibility*—the belief that it is possible to "perfect" man and bring about a higher order of human life by establishing the right environmental conditions; for *brotherhood*—just as the social world can be brought into harmony with the natural laws of the universe, so can people be brought into harmony with one another.<sup>11</sup>

In our age, an age which cries out for meaningful interpersonal relationships and which seeks these relationships through fashions and fads: group gropes for identity, encounter movements, sensitivity sessions, and communes, certainly the message of Francis has numerous practical applications. Indeed, with a little imagination we can trace the

roots of our ecology movement, human potential movement, and our search for convivial, non-manipulative institutions, directly to Francis' simple message.<sup>12</sup>

In a current all-Black Broady musical, "Don't Bother Me I Can't Cope," one of the singers bursts out into a song called "My Name is Man," and demands that society recognize his fundamental human dignity and humanity. I am sure Francis would have understood perfectly the singer's frustrations and aspirations. Perhaps the *Desiderata* in some small way sums up a portion of Saint Francis' social thought and its implications for our World:

Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant: they too have their story. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter: for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let not this blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love, for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. Do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars, you have a right to be there. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive him to be, and whatever your labors and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful, strive to be happy.

It is this cry for the sensitization and conscientization of our fundamental humanity, personalism, and interdependence that I see as Francis' legacy to those of us who are still homeless.

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<sup>8</sup>Jeffrey Galper, "Social Work as Conservative Politics," *MSS Modular Publication* (Module 55, 1974).

<sup>9</sup>Theodore Maynard, *Richest of the Poor* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1948), pp. 73-109.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Philip Slater, *The Pursuit of Loneliness* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 5.

<sup>12</sup>Orrin E. Klapp, *Collective Search for Identity* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969).

# Mother Marianne— A Sister of Saint Francis

SISTER M. THADDEUS, O.S.F.

## IV. Indeed: "None but Jesus Knows."

THE GIRLS Robert Louis Stevenson had seen on his visit to Molokai, with whom he shared a game of croquet, his friendly spirit, and a real piece of his life, were not the very advanced cases with whom Mother Marianne and her Sisters contended daily. Those girls, although afflicted with the disease, were yet able to enjoy a game, able to laugh and to show appreciation for what was being done for them. There were others "in which scarcely a trace of anything human remained. The dark skin was puffed out and blackened; a kind of moss or mould covered it; the muscles of the mouth having contracted laid bare the blisening teeth." The body decomposed while the child lived. It was for these that Mother and her Sisters had traveled so many miles; it was for these that Mother's gentle care and increased skill attempted to improve and, if possible, to prevent such conditions.

Along with the physical conditions, the spiritual element was severely lacking and, again, it was for this they had come—to raise the spirits of the people there—to strengthen their faith and lead them Home.

Mother Marianne had assuredly been gifted by God for this task. Her talents, her determination, and her love all combined to make many things possible that to someone else would seem futile and foolish. Once she recognized that something, no matter how small, had value in the lives of these poor people, she labored to make it work to encourage them and give them hope. One of these values was color. And so Mother Marianne began to use her "green thumb" to bring an abundance of color into their drab lives. This activity had a twofold value: the grounds were beautified, and the girls had a constructive activity of untold psychological value. To plant a tree or a bush or any living thing means that one looks forward to its growth—forward to a future—forward with hope.

The girls, too, acquired a pride of accomplishment and would often look to Mother for approval in their labors. Mother's praise came spontaneously, lavishly, and gratefully.

But there was a destructive element on the islands which Mother Marianne had not foreseen. The cows, natural roamers to whom the

grass on the other side is always greener, came to scratch themselves on the corners of the houses. The girls were not disturbed by this noise, for they said the cows must "lomilomi" themselves; but when the cows discovered the abundance of ferns, tore them up by the roots, and, finding them distasteful, dropped them at intervals—the girls did not take it kindly. In savage fashion they ran after the cows with screeches and oaths and would probably have injured any cow in their patch, had not the startled cows quickly departed for safer grounds.

Once more Mother had to use her diplomacy and gentleness to calm the disappointed girls and convince them that a second garden could be even nicer—especially with a strong fence.

Clothing was another problem. The climate being so mild; the disease so ravaging; the infected persons so desperate, clothing was a non-essential in desire and in reality in many instances. Mother began her work in this area by using her gift for sewing, cutting, and persuasion. One of the Sisters mentioned her work as a great joy when she was with Mother Marianne: "It seemed like paradise to be with her. She was very busy all the while planning the cutting of dresses for the girls. She, Mother, had great taste and could compete favorably with New York fashions. She excelled in trimming hats as well as making dresses." In their great love and admiration for Mother, the girls gladly adorned themselves with the clothing "Mother" had made just for them.

The adults were another problem.

Mother's ability to study the feelings of others and never cause pain to a sensitive nature was sorely tried one day when a woman who had called for an appointment appeared stark naked for her interview. Mother calmly told her to return home, dress properly, then come back for the interview. The woman promptly obeyed. She returned shortly, wearing a hat. Is it any wonder that Mother Marianne always referred to these people, regardless of age, as her children!

In response to her plea for clothing, many kind and generous people sent boxes of used clothing and materials. Those pieces which could not be used were torn into strips for bandaging the ugly, ulcerous sores of the patients.

Sometimes the stench of putrefying flesh was so overpowering that the Sister who did the dressing would become dizzy and nauseated. Mother attempted to remedy this by having some of the girls sit near her and blow smoke into the Sister's face while she applied the dressing. This did kill the odor to some degree, but it was only a temporary remedy. Often it was only their faith and love which helped them survive many distasteful ordeals.

An incident which took faith, love, and self-control is reported in the following account:

The meals were an experience. The beef was sent to the Home in enormous pieces. Since the Home had no implements to cut these smaller, the cooks were obliged to cook the meat as it came. It was placed on a large platter in the center of the dining room and passed around for the diner to take a good serving. It was prepared by the patients in the Home and many

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*Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F., is Chairman of the English Department at Assumption Catholic Academy, Syracuse, N.Y.*



times the diner was startled to find a portion of someone's finger which had accidentally fallen off into the mixture.

Try to visualize the self-control of Mother Marianne and her Sisters, keeping in mind that their control could never be visible to the patients. They must not show by any slight indication that anything out of the ordinary had occurred; for that would be discourteous and unkind. They were living in the midst of people to whom they had constant spiritual and physical obligations. They must forget themselves—listen, talk, encourage, and listen again. ALL—nuns and patients—turned to Mother Marianne for support and advice. To whom did Mother Marianne turn? Like most valiant women—standing alone—she must seek her aid from Him Who had sent her to this work; there was no human soul, even Mother Bernardina, in whom she confided a great deal.

to whom she could turn. God—and his Mother under the title of Our Lady of Lourdes—must supply all her strength and courage.

It was also at the time of Mother Marianne's sojourn that a doctor from Japan came up with what he thought a possible arrestive treatment for leprosy. He was permitted to go to the Settlement when the Sisters first went there; later, because he would not reveal the herbs he used in his treatment, the government sent him back to Japan. The demands of the Board of Health seemed unreasonable to him, and he refused to give his secret away. The patients whom he had treated did, indeed, receive great benefit—their sores healed and remained healed!

Mother Marianne described the treatment as consisting in hot baths. The baths were made from herbs which were boiled, and the bathtubs were filled with hot water mixed with the liquid from the boiled herbs. They were placed in a closed room where they continued to sweat for some time. All who received the treatment benefited, and the benefit was a lasting one.

Some of the patients, who were able to purchase the medicine and had great faith, continued the treatment after Dr. Goto left, and it is a fact that those who continued the treatment soon found that the disease was dormant in them.

The process of giving the baths was not quite so simple when dealing with people who were superstitious, very ill, and often without a limb. There were two long, high wooden tubs in the bath house which were filled with steaming water to which

the special herbs had been added. Up to twelve patients could be immersed in each tub, standing with the water up to their necks for a period of twenty minutes. This was a time of great anxiety for the Sisters—sometimes the persons being treated became faint and fell under the water.

After the bath, the patients were helped from the tubs, wrapped in blankets, and allowed to cool off very gradually. The treatment seemed to cure many, and many were discharged from the Settlement.

The treatment had stirred up hope in many hearts. Father Damien, whose leprosy had manifested itself only five years after his work on Molokai had begun, also responded to the promise offered by the baths. He was most eager to introduce anything to his people which might help them, and so he wanted to visit Branch Hospital and study the treatment. So it was that he made an unexpected and unauthorized trip to Honolulu.

Mother Marianne prepared the empty gate-house for his stay by arranging one room as a bedroom and the other as a chapel. During his visit to the hospital he and Mother Marianne had many talks concerning the needs of Molokai—Mother's main goal when she had left Syracuse. Though she longed now, even more than ever before, to go directly to Molokai to relieve the suffering there, she knew that they had still to await the approval of the civil authorities. Thus Father Damien re-

turned to his beloved Kalawao with hope in his heart that Mother Marianne and her Sisters would soon join him in his work; but he knew, as well as they, that they must await God's own time.

All of these problems only intensified the life of prayer and devotion which was so evident in Mother Marianne's life. Sometimes a smaller sacrifice might rend her heart more than the great ones. Consider, for example, the incident over a small statue. Mother had great admiration for the picture, "The Vision of Saint Francis," and had treasured for many years a small statue representing the vision of Francis and the Crucified. This statue she kept on a small table in her room. One day one of the Fathers saw it, admired it, and asked her for it. He simply said, "I want that." Mother, of course, was not able to refuse anyone's request; and she parted with it. She was heard to say frequently, "It was a real sacrifice for me to part with that statue."

Her spirit of prayer was unmatched, since she seemed always to be aware of God. There were not great periods of time when she could freely kneel in the chapel without some disturbance or duty to intrude upon her; but she had acquired a habit of making aspirations while doing her work. One of her favorites and one which seems aptly to portray this woman whose soul was so attuned to the work of the hidden Christ is: "NONE BUT JESUS KNOWS."



# Blessed Are You—V

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

## Blessed Are the Merciful, for They Shall Obtain Mercy

ALL OF THE Beatitudes are humbling. And this is scarcely a thing to be marvelled at. For the Beatitudes are Jesus' personally-programmed Christian living. And he has told us the reason that he lived and loved as he did: that is, lived unto death and loved unto the end. "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (Jn. 13:1). It was because he was meek and humble of heart. "Learn of me," he commanded us — if we can call so gently imperious an invitation a command—"because I am meek and humble of heart" (Mt. 11:29). It is at least interesting and at most overwhelming that he really asked us to learn nothing else, implying among other things that it was going to elicit all our powers and exhaust all our resources to learn just that.

As each of us looks into his own proud and devious heart, it hopefully becomes obvious why there is no need to elaborate this truth. Let us just say that it is "significant" that Christ asked us to learn only one thing: to be meek and humble of

heart. And invited us to learn it from him because we are certainly not about to learn it from books, professors, or self-study; and no university is qualified to offer a degree in it. This is the foundation without which there is no true charity, no real grasp of truth, no enduring friendship, and not much of anything else, either. It would definitely, then, be a *non sequitur* if the Beatitudes did not underscore with their very blessedness this characteristic of the Heart of Christ.

Humility and meekness make for the flexibility of the poor in spirit who people the first beatitude. In the second, we encounter meekness face on and spelled out for us. Again, one has to be humbled to be the Christian mourner of the third Beatitude. For you just do not make a right response to penancing truth when you are too blind with pride to recognize truth as having a frequently penitential outline, and far too lethargic with pride's complacency to make that right response which demands energy. Neither does one hunger and thirst after justice, after

the rightness of holiness of the fourth Beatitude, without having breathed the good fresh air of humility. We have just talked about that. But now, as we consider the fifth Beatitude, we see the "surprising reward" perhaps more clearly or at least more immediately than in any other single Beatitude. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt. 5:7). The great good thing that is going to happen to those who show mercy to others is the discovery of how much they need it themselves.

The "mercy lines" of Portia to Shylock in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* are famous enough and loved enough to invite still another quoting here. For the mental therapy administered by the recognition of a literary quotation almost never fails to be positive and even exhilarating. One does like to feel knowledgeable! So, for therapy's sake, let us write the familiar passage out again: "The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the gentle rain from Heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed: it blesseth him who gives and him who takes."<sup>1</sup>

Regaining our gravity after that therapy, we could reflect that most certainly William Shakespeare did not come up with this affirmation except after deep reflection on the fifth Beatitude. It is a quite expert bit of exegesis at the foot of the Mount of the Beatitudes. "It is not strained," Shakespeare avows. No, true mercy is never strained.

To be left unforgiven assuredly creates a more felicitous atmosphere

in which to groan than to be "forgiven" at obtrusively high cost to the pardoner. This merely tends to raise the hackles of our pride yet higher. We shall likely produce in short order even heavier-textured material for mercy. Bluntly put, no normal person (a category in which we all hasten to assume our obviously rightful place) appreciates being forgiven "all over the place," so to speak. So, obtrusive "forgiveness,"—no. But obtrusive is something divergent from "manifest." For the high cost of Christ's pardoning and redeeming was a manifest mercy. Blood streaming out, eyes glazed over with pain, limbs convulsed—manifestations like these cannot be anything but manifest. But there was nothing obtrusive. To this author, one of the most heart-shattering passages in all Scripture is that enshrining Jesus' words to the depressed, distraught, and dense disciples on the Road to Emmaus after the crucifixion. "Ought not Christ to have suffered all these things, and so enter into his glory?" (Lk. 24:26). Ought not . . . ? It is as though our blessed Lord waves aside the whole terrible tragedy, all the humiliation, all the shame and ignominy, all the desertion and betrayal, all the agony of body, mind, and soul—everything. "Ought not I to have done this?" The tone of the passage seems to imply: "these little things?"

And to enter into the glory of the Resurrection—not just his, but ours also—well, "ought not Christ . . . ?" With all the reverence of one's spirit,

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Mother Mary Francis is Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico. Her writings include many contributions of poetry and prose to periodicals, the immensely popular books *Spaces for Silence* and *A Right to Be Merry*, as well as the recently published series of conferences reprinted from our pages: *But I have Called You Friends*.

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<sup>1</sup>William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, as given in *Great Books of the Western World*, ed. R. M. Hutchings (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.), p. 427.

one could dare to say that it is as though Christ said to those poor limited disciples almost as dull and uncomprehending as we are ourselves: "Oh, that?—that was nothing!" That is the way of mercy. It is not strained.

It is piercingly significant that Jesus did not say to the two en route to Emmaus: "Well, look what Christ went through for you! Look at the mercy he showed you! Look at the cost!" Could that ever have broken us to pieces like the love so great it waved away passion and scourging and bitter crowning, spittle and sweat and gore, with that "Ought not . . . ?" We become one with Peter kneeling before Jesus after his manifestation of miraculous power and suggesting the imposition of the most terrible of penances as consonant with the personal history of Peter: "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man" (Lk. 5:8).

The fact that Peter by no means actually wanted Jesus to leave him in no way lessens the truthfulness and sincerity of his self-findings indicative of a parting of the ways for Christ and sinful Peter as being eminently appropriate. It was Peter's understanding that what Jesus could and should appropriately do was to turn his back and walk away that qualified Peter for the remission of the appropriate in favor of the gratuitous. Mercy is never "appropriate." If we feel for ourselves on the receiving end that it is, we are already disqualified to receive it because we do not understand it. So, too, it is only when we realize in our intellect and proclaim in our heart that truly Christ ought not to have suffered for us as he

did, that we are prepared to go quite wiled with gratitude and joy that he did. On our own frequent escapes to our multi-situated Emmaus, we have to be first at variance with Christ in this dialogue of "ought not?" before we can dare to agree with him. One knows him in the breaking of the heart as in the breaking of the bread. One can then venture into the land of mercy where all is given and never deserved.

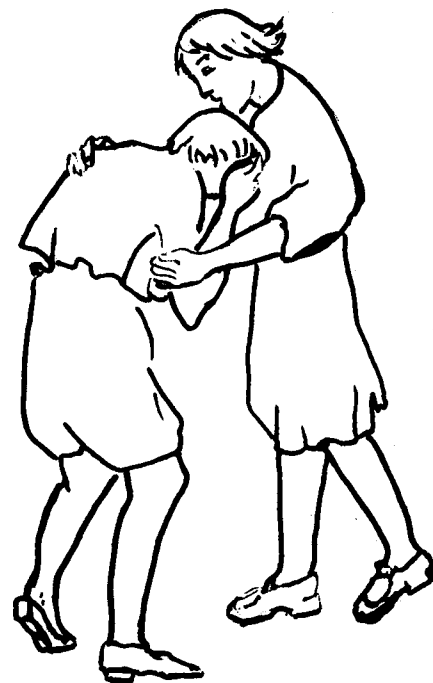
Mercy unstrained, prodigal, modest—this is what fetches up out of our darks and deeps the realization of our need for mercy and how totally unmerited mercy always is, if it really is mercy. "It is not strained," Portia instructed Shylock about mercy. Taught by the Scriptures, we could add: "It is modest." Mercy is never ostentatious, although philanthropy can be. Mercy cannot be delivered with speeches or set to cymbaline accompaniment. "Let not your left hand know what your right hand does," our blessed Lord said of almsgiving (Mt. 6:3). Mercy is the most basic alms of love. Its coins are forged in the heart, silently, almost secretly.

Once we start making considerations about mercy, calculating whether it is deserved, what measure should be given, we have already introduced into our thinking that strainedness which is totally uncharacteristic of true mercy. "It drops like the gentle rain from heaven." We see how the rain drops and where. Upon flower and weed, soil and gravel, hill and valley. Prodigally it falls into the river which may or may not seem to need it, as well as on the parched land cracking for want of it. "He makes his rain to

fall upon the just and the unjust" (Mt. 5:45). It should not require a lengthy consideration of that revelation of God's ways with man for us to conclude that it would scarcely follow that we should do careful sortings-out. Mercy to be mercy has of its nature to stream out all over. We shall never be merciful to one and unmerciful to another. For the reality of the latter act would, among other things, indicate that the former was merely an act of self-gratification or even of self-aggrandizement and vainglory.

"Like the gentle rain . . ." The examples of God's mercy in the Scriptures are multiple. There is the adulteress of whose guilt there was no question (Jn. 8:3-11). There is also no question of her contrition before the face of Christ, for sin can be remitted only from the acknowledged sinner, even though the acknowledgment of sin has variant forms and can also be merely a kind of formless groping, aching, wondering, intuiting. "Go, now, and sin no more" (*ibid.*). Mercy never seeks to impose penalties or to lay on burdens. That is why the intrinsic "penalty" for receiving it is so great and the burden of responsibility assumed in accepting it is so enormous.

The insistence of mercy is in its very lack of insistence as we might understand it. Jesus did not demand of the woman: "How many times? Why? Where? When? Who?" and then impose a suitable penance. (What, just by the way, can be "suitable penance" for having offended God?) It is part of mercy that it evokes in the forgiven one a desire to do penance. A desire also to answer those unasked ques-



tions, though not to linger on the answers as the determinedly self-centered insist on doing. Mercy elicits from within the other rather than adjudicates of itself. Yet, in this very gentleness and prodigality is the sheer sweep of the invitation. "Go, and sin no more." Do we realize what Christ asked of the woman? No more sin. Sin—no! No more. Not ever. None at all. In other words, Jesus said to someone whom we might not consider an outstanding candidate for sanctity: "Go, be a saint."

We shall want to look up this woman in heaven, where we hope through God's mercy to ourselves, to meet her and marvel at what was wrought in her by that same mercy.

Then, there is the exuberantly sinning son of the prodigal father (Lk.

15:11-32). We can never hear the story often enough; nor shall we ever fully comprehend the unstrainedness of the paternal mercy as it waited at the window for the hour when it could release its gentle, saving floods. But there are two points in this incomparable vignette of mercy that we may not sufficiently reflect on or marvel at. One is the mercy to the elder son who tends to annoy us so. He is the toad in the lunch-basket, so to speak, the swarm of gnats on the idyllic scene. It is the least "interesting" and at most highly informative about ourselves that even as we may be blinking back tears at this Gospel parable, we find ourselves reader to be aligned with the wanton younger son than with the elder paragon of perfection. I submit that we have something to learn about ourselves and about mercy from our easy contempt for the righteous older son and our ready *simpatico* for the younger. It is sometimes easier to show mercy toward the uproarious sinner whose roar has run down than toward the narrow-souled who have need to have their banks pushed back by flooding mercy. And so, the father went out to the older son, too.

"My son, you are always with me. Everything I have is yours" (*ibid.*). No annoyance. No scolding. No straining. The same mercy. The same love. We like to hope that the elder son did come into the feast after all, kiss his brother, and dance the whole night long. We shall want to look him up, too, God's mercy having arrived us one day at the heaven where we

shall find all the millions of elder sons saved and made large-souled by mercy.

The other point is, again, about that "intrinsic penalty" and that burden of responsibility that come out of mercy. Maybe I could be permitted to quote myself from a poem written about the Gospel prodigal and the each-of-us prodigal.

The first robe, Christ, has crushed  
me with its awful  
Weight of mercy. How these sandals  
pierce  
With little nails my feet grown great  
with roaming.  
And through what scalding sweetness  
of new tears,  
I see the ring securely on my finger  
Gleaming—gleaming too bright.  
I close my eyes.<sup>3</sup>

There is always the intrinsic penalty of that "awful weight of mercy." If the son had been granted his plea to be a servant, there could have been a solacing and perhaps a gradual diminishing of the sense of sinfulness, though remorse and bitter self-recrimination could likewise have been increased. This is not possible in the restoration of the "first robe" of innocence. True, we can soil it again or sell it again or tear it up again; but this will be a new choice. Innocence returned to us by mercy brings a new and terrible awareness of gratuitous love which closes off multiple options and leaves us only the primary alternatives of holiness or a return to the wallow.

"The bones you have crushed shall rejoice," says the psalmist (Ps. 50). This is what mercy does. It crushes in the manner of an embrace, as the

prodigal father crushed the sinful younger son to his heart and—who can doubt it?—the sulking older son as well. This is a new and different facet of the crushableness we spoke of when reflecting on the fourth Beatitude. But here, again, in a variant modality, one must be crushable in order to be crushed and rejoicing. "I see the ring . . ." It is the bright insistence of my responsibility as the forgiven one. Not everyone is willing to bear this responsibility. And if I can "close my eyes" before the dizzying splendors of newly imposed responsibility as I gather up my God-restored inner strength to bear it, there is another way of closing my eyes which is in order not to see. "If only you would not forgive, / Then I could stand tall" (*ibid.*—same poet!). Tall enough not to see, among other things, the other sinners and strayers and seekers around me.

And there is Zacchaeus, too (Lk. 19:1-10). He may have had some half-smothered conscience rumblings to the effect that he should restore to those he had defrauded the sums that rightly belonged to them. Shown mercy, mercy raining all around and over him, mercy inviting him out to dinner, he restored fourfold the losses of his victims. Let us repeat it: the first mercy which the merciful receive is to realize how much they are themselves in need of mercy. However, the realization is not only of a present need, but also of a pre-existent Sheolic inner state in which light neither probable nor even humanly possible has appeared.

We could put it this way, too: the blessedness of the merciful is not

only to discover that they need mercy, but to be made aware that they have already received it. That we can be merciful at all is possible only because we have already received mercy. It is in fact the proof of it. We remember the Gospel account of that woman who "had a bad name in the town" and how Jesus commended Simon for his intelligent reply that the one who loved more was "the one who was pardoned more" (Lk. 7:42-43) and then went on to remark of the woman that many sins must have been forgiven her "or she could not have shown such great love" (Lk. 7:47). The overflowing love of sincere contrition, like mercy, is possible because one has already been forgiven. "God has first loved us" (1 Jn. 4:10). Yes, that is why it is possible for us to love both him and one another. He has also first been merciful, and that is why we have the blessed power to be merciful.

The blessedness has a kind of cyclic turning. There are vicious circles. This is a vital circle. God has been merciful. Therefore, we are blessed with the ability to show mercy. It has flowed into us from God, and that is the only reason it can flow out of us as a blessing upon others. Then, as it flows out, deepening blessedness is revealed: our own need of mercy. And the crowning blessedness is the assurance of always receiving what we give. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt. 5:7).

We could adjust Shakespeare's classic lines of description into a capsule of theology by simply omitting a word. "It drops as the gentle

<sup>3</sup>Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., *Where Catus Is* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute), p. 35.

rain from heaven" (*op. cit.*). That is what it is like. "It drops, a gentle rain from Heaven." That is what it is. That is what flows out of the blessedly merciful: the mercy God has already given them. And so it can go joyously on, forever and ever. We have received. We give. We recognize our need to receive. We are qualified by this recognition to receive more.

"It is twice blessed: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes" (*op. cit.*). It is not static. You have to take it just as you have to give it. It is quite possible to refuse mercy, just as it is unhappily quite possible to withhold it or, again, not to give it so much as to dole it out. And that takes us back to one of our first points. Mercy can never be doled out. You do not have ration tickets on mercy or for mercy. It is so free, so modest, so gentle. We may also need to recall to ourselves sometimes that we are just only when we are merciful. We say some odd things in our little stutterings about God. Such as that he is merciful while we live, but he is just after we die. As though an unchangeable God, *immutus in se permanens* (hymn of None) had a kind of philosophical or theological wardrobe out of which he dressed for occasions! How could God possibly be "just" to us little fumbling, faltering folk, to us who can so deftly maintain a lifelong ambivalence of greatness and pettiness, high desire and low performance, easy pride and hard humility, to us in our multiplying ignobilities even as we elect nobility—how could God possibly be "just" to us except by being merciful?

Does not his justice demand that he be merciful to us, so puny, so feeble, so frail, so ridiculous? What is his mercy but the expression of his justice once he has decreed to redeem a fallen race that remains fallen even when redeemed? Of course, the truth of it is that he is neither just nor merciful, but is rather justice and mercy. He does not exhibit attributes. We ascribe attributes to him because we do not speak Divinity at all well. We are scarcely educated to express ourselves in the language of Pure Being which has no terms. God is. And not merely as totality of all that is. Just—IS.

However, this is not to say that his IS-ness has not been communicated to us. We are created in his image and likeness (Gen. 1:27). "You shall be like gods." Satan promised our first parents (Gen. 3:5). The thing is, they already were. More, in fact. They were like God himself—his very image, his own likeness. One of very loveliest apparitions of God's IS-ness in us is our mercifulness. "God is in me, here abides" announces the merciful. The proclamation has no trumpet fanfare; it is as silent and as eloquent as a smile.

And so the IS-ness of God which we call mercy—and it is a good enough term since that is what Jesus the Word called it—flows out of us and flows into us more profusely than before because we have allowed ourselves to be enlarged. Blessedness given freely to us, fountaining out, increasing within. A sense of our sinfulness ever increases, not to our despair or even to our despondency. "Jesus Christ came into the world to

save sinners of whom I am the chief," said Saint Paul (1 Tim. 1:15). It was definitely not the expression of melancholia. It was the affirmation of a man happy to be redeemed and to be the stuff of concern for God's

mercy. For it is so blessed a state to be in, this state of knowledgeability that we need mercy and, having responded to others' need for it, shall have our own need filled. And this by God.

(To be continued)

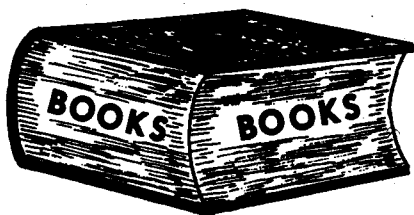


## WHERE SPEECH LEAVES OFF, SONG BEGINS

Described in a subtitle as "insights into the cloistered contemplative life of the Poor Clare Nuns," this short, meditative, poetic pamphlet offers a message to all committed religious, whether cloistered or not. The thoughts on prayer, the Eucharist, penance, work, and silence beckon all who read them to the re-examination of their role in religious life. The sketches illustrating the handy-sized text not only contribute to its fundamental themes, but specify that this is a work by Poor Clares. If this is vocational literature, it is one of the most profound and appealing pieces I have seen. If it is inspirational literature, it succeeds wondrously in being a treatise on the spiritual life in general and the contemplative life in particular. If it is merely the outpouring of hearts who have lived their lives as brides of Christ in contemplative silence and solitude, it evidences for those "who have eyes to see," the richness, peace, and joy of those who, like Mary, have chosen the "better part."

J.A.D.





### **But I Have Called You Friends.**

By Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C.  
Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press,  
1974. Pp. vii-84. Cloth, \$4.95.

*Reviewed by Sister Mary Seraphim,  
P.C.P.A., a regular contributor to our  
pages as well as to The Queen.*

A wealth of wisdom, humor, and common sense fills the pages of this delightfully easy-reading book by Mother Mary Francis, Abbess of the Roswell Poor Clare community and prolific writer of prose and poetry. The book was not intentionally "written to edify a waiting public," but is rather a collection of conferences which Mother Mary Francis delivered to the junior sisters of her own community.

For readers of THE CORD, the collection will not be new, for its chapters were first printed in this magazine during the course of 1973. Happily, the charm with which the spoken word is endowed has been retained in this written collection, and as we read we can almost see the gestures and hear the responses of the sisters to the sometimes colloquial, sometimes humorous, and always sincere words of Mother Mary Francis.

Much has already been written on the subject of friendship; and when

yet another book appears, one wonders what more is left to be said. Yet, Mother Mary Francis has approached the idea and ideals of Christian friendship in such a practical and original way that one immediately senses that this is *not* just another treatise on idyllic love. Quite the opposite! Some of Mother Mary Francis' most droll observations are deftly barbed comments which really make one search deeper into one's own understanding and practice of the art of human friendship.

Although the conferences make direct application to friendship as it is lived in a cloistered community, the author's outlook is so broad that there is no difficulty in making the necessary applications to one's own situation. Perhaps this is part of the charm of the book: that it does not preach but rather implies and leaves the rest up to the reader. Mother Mary Francis treats of what real friendship should be but often is not. She is no stranger to the less beautiful poses of the human heart!

Throughout the conferences there is a refreshing emphasis on the need for patience and time which alone allow human relationships to mature. She treats of the elements which must enter into mature friendship: respect, esteem, and affection. She also expresses how absolutely necessary real human friendship is, if we are to build the kind of world which Christ has commanded us to establish. Without the support of understanding friends, we cannot flower ourselves, nor will others grow to their full beauty without our understanding and warm acceptance. Ul-

timately, it is Christ living in us who will warm our companions into friends and then into the beautiful people they are meant to be. This will happen, not only through words but perhaps even more importantly through a love which can express itself in silence.

I feel anyone can profit by this little book, no matter what his state of life; for the problems and joys of cloistered friendship which Mother Mary Francis treats with such acumen are, in reality, the problems and joys of all human friendships.

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**Man: Believer and Unbeliever.** By  
Francis M. Tyrrell. Staten Island,  
N.Y.: Alba House, 1974. Pp. xi-  
415, incl. index. Paper, \$5.95.

*Reviewed by Father Michael D.  
Meilach, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy,  
Fordham University), Editor of this  
Review.*

Father Tyrrell taught philosophy before becoming a professor of fundamental theology in 1963. The present volume, a systematic fundamental theology course in the form of a theological anthropology, bears eloquent testimony to his expertise and responsible openness to what is best in both disciplines.

"Fundamental theology" is, of course, another name for what was more extensively than now, called "apologetics." And an apologetics in the best sense is what Father Tyrrell wants to furnish: viz., a presentation of Christianity which embodies and up-to-date awareness of contemporary man's self-understanding and shows the Christian faith as, not

merely a respectable alternative in man's quest for fulfillment, but the best and most suitable of all such choices.

The book's first chapter is an assessment of the current "post-Christian" atmosphere in which we must live our faith and carry out our dialogue with other men. There follows, immediately, an expansion of the historical discussion as, in chapter two, the main themes of atheistic humanism, marxist humanism, and secular humanism are considered. The positive insights of all three of these are gathered together in a (perhaps too) brief but very auspicious concluding section.

The third and fourth chapters form the positive prolegomena to the Christian anthropology set forth systematically in chapter five. In the first of these, the important contributions of Gabriel Marcel, Maurice Blondell, and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin are set forth concisely and sympathetically, and a general conclusion is supplied which crystallizes the personalist, optimistic, concrete, and action-oriented philosophy of these three seminal thinkers. The fourth chapter is a well executed, deftly nuanced discussion of transcendental Thomism, in which the groundwork of Marechal and the developments of Coreth and Rahner are considered in detail. Then, in the fifth chapter, Father Tyrrell sets forth his own systematic Christian anthropology which in all candor, is a distillation of Rahner's penetrating vision. The Franciscan reader perhaps more than any other will rejoice and delight in this Christocentric theology of human nature and history.



Next the author draws heavily on Paul Tillich's existentialist analysis (but also on Augustine and Thomas Aquinas) to expose the inevitable vein of doubt present in the faith of the staunchest believer. A theological and metaphysical understanding of this vein of doubt helps us to recognize our own vulnerability to the effect of concupiscence even as we seek in open trust to enter into conversation with our atheistic contemporaries. In his final two chapters, Father Tyrrell synthesizes some widely divergent aspects of this conversation, as he deals with the humanists considered earlier in the book as well as with liberation theology and the theology of hope. It does seem to me that he has done a prodigious job of systematizing and giving coherent expression to many important contemporary themes.

While *Man: Believer and Unbeliever* will probably find its most appropriate use as a college or seminary textbook, it should prove very profitable reading for a wide audience with some theological background.

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**Out of Solitude: Three Meditations on the Christian Life.** By Henri J. M. Nouwen. Photographs by Ron P. van den Bosch; Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1974. Pp. 63. Paper, \$1.75.

*Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., M.A. (Phil.), Director of Residence Living at St. Bonaventure University.*

This small book contains a series of sermons given by the author

while he was a guest of the Chaplain at Yale University. The general theme of the sermons emphasizes the need for personal reflection by the Christian in the midst of the activity of a busy Christian life. Each of the three meditations is based upon a passage from the Gospels.

The first of the meditations begins with the gospel account of Jesus going off to a lonely place to pray: "... long before dawn he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place and prayed there" (Mk. 1:35). This meditation, entitled "Out of Solitude," explains the necessity in the Christian life for a careful "balance between silence and words, withdrawal and involvement, distance and closeness, solitude and community" (p. 15). As this careful balance was found in the life of Jesus, as exemplified in the gospel passage cited, the author concludes: "Let us therefore live our lives to the fullest, but let us not forget to once in a while get up before dawn to leave the house and go to a lonely place" (P. 26).

In his second meditation Father Nouwen presents the feeding of the five thousand through the multiplication of loaves "in a lonely place" as an example of Jesus' care and concern for the people. This meditation, "With Care," shows that this and other examples of Jesus' care for people is evidence that care is a characteristic proper to a truly Christian person. He explains: "... to care means to be present to each other ... to take away the many barriers which prevent us from entering into communion with the other" (pp. 36, 42). He concludes:

"... as long as we are occupied and preoccupied with our desire to do good but are not able to feel the crying need of those who suffer, our help remains hanging somewhere between our minds and our hands and does not descend into the heart where we can care" (p. 45).

The third meditation of the author, "In Expectation," begins with the text from Saint John's Gospel in which Jesus states, "In a short time you will no longer see me, and then a short time later you will see me again" (John 16:16). Father Nouwen understands this statement of our Lord as epitomizing a particular aspect of the Christian life. He writes: "Our life is a short time in expectation, a time in which sadness and joy kiss each other at every moment" (p. 51). He says that our need to wait in expectation of our being brought into the presence of Jesus carries with it some sadness, and requires patience on our part. But, since in faith we are convinced of the fulfillment of His promise of union, our expectation has with it a note of joy. The joys and sorrows of the life of a Christian are joined in the expectation of Jesus' coming.

This reviewer recommends this small book of meditations to every Christian. It can assist the reader in his attempt to appreciate more fully his own spiritual life, and to recognize the need for daily prayerful reflection on the living of a truly Christlike life.

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**St. Francis Yesterday and Today.** By Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., and Margaret Mary Hoffelder,

O.S.F. Pulaski, Wis.: Franciscan Publishers, 1974. Pp. 124. Paper, \$1.25.

*Reviewed by Sister Magdalene Karczek, a Regional Board Member in her Congregation, the Sisters of St. Joseph, Third Order of St. Francis, and a student at the Franciscan Institute who has lectured on the Franciscan vocation.*

In the documents of Vatican II religious have been urged to rediscover the spirit of their founder as the touchstone of any real renewal. The Franciscan family has taken this urging seriously. More research is going on now than ever before with the hope that it will inspire many of the followers of the Poor Man of Assisi to take up an examination of his charism with greater enthusiasm.

One such product of research and reflection is *St. Francis Yesterday and Today*, co-authored by Sergius Wroblewski, a Franciscan friar who has devoted many years to spreading the Franciscan message, and Margaret Mary Hoffelder, O.S.F., who has been inspired by the deeper meaning of the Franciscan heritage.

Their work is a study of God's Word in Francis and the significance it had in shaping his entire view of life. The authors bring out the profound influence that Francis had on the men of his time precisely because he was faithful to that word which changed and filled his own heart. This is not a biographical account of Francis' life; rather it is a deeper reflection on the inner meaning of his charism and what it can say to contemporary man.

The authors make an incisive and insightful study of Francis' prophetic mission in the Church. Unlike self-declared or false prophets, Francis is a man who has first undergone a conversion—has first experienced the grace of *metanoia*, that is, let himself be judged by the Word of God. In turn, he took this Word seriously and proclaimed it with clarity, not by means of human words, but through a life-style which was inspired by God, one that would speak to thousands throughout the centuries.

Through a brief retelling of the early Franciscan classic, the *Sacrum Commercium*, the story of the Franciscan community's covenant with Lady Poverty, the authors reveal the intimate connection between the role of the *anawim* in the Old Testament and that of the Franciscan family. Both groups were taken up with dependence on God, lowliness, and the law of pilgrimage. "The Franciscan mission is to coax the Church to return to the kenotic tradition that she may fulfill her mission of being the Light of all Nations" (p. 63). The early Franciscan community understood its mission as a sharing of Christ's kenotic mission to servanthood. This kind of service, bold and radical in its self-giving, is the perennial need of the Church.

In the second part of the book we are given a penetrating view of contemporary society and the nature of man as affected by that society. From this perspective, the authors demonstrate how Francis' original inspiration speaks to the present-day situation. The writers are not suggesting a mere imitation of a thir-

teenth-century man, but a translation of the universal values he and the early Franciscans embodied.

Perhaps the most insightful section of the book is that which deals with community. After a well developed treatment of the concept of *Eritheia* (selfish ambition with an eye to profit and power) in the early Church and also in American society, we are presented with an in-depth analysis of the kind of community Francis had in mind. He believed in the possibility of community and so was not discouraged by the movements of his day, but sought to build a different kind of community:

A prophetic community committed to speak out for God in an age which spoke against Him; an anawah community committed to enrich the lives of the poor by identifying with them; a diaconal community committed to service without pay; a community of men, indeed, who didn't flee from the world as a source of evil, but immersed themselves in it and looked upon all created things, not as baggage to be burdened with, worried by and competed for, but rather as sacramental drawing men closer and closer to the Reality of their significance.

Francis' charism has universal significance. It made a rich contribution to the Church of his day. If the Church is once again to benefit from this gift of the Spirit which took hold of Francis yesterday, Franciscans will have to rediscover it and live it out enthusiastically today. This book can help them to do so.



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**Other Religions in a World of Change.** By William J. Whalen and Carl J. Pfeifer, S.J. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1974. Pp. 127, incl. index. Paper, \$1.75.

*Reviewed by Father Thomas J. Burns, O.F.M., Assistant Chaplain at Siena College, Loudonville, N.Y.*

*Other Religions* is an attempt by its authors to implement the Second Vatican Council's exhortation to recapture the traditional openness of the Catholic Church to truth and wisdom, wherever they are to be found (p. 8). Grounding itself in the statements of the "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions" and §§9 and 10 of the "Decree on Ecumenism," the book is a thumbnail classroom guide containing an historical-pastoral sketch of the significant world religions and of the major Protestant denominations of the West. The presentation is carefully balanced between the essential doctrines of each religion and the cultural or "lived" experience of that religion; this was accomplished by having the two authors contribute separate sections to each chapter.

Some of the attempts to find truth and wisdom in every facet of religious experience are a bit contrived, most notably an attempt to describe the Mormon concept of ongoing revelation in terms of the "signs of the times" concept used in the Council's "Church in the Modern World." But *Other Religions* does succeed nicely as an initial exposition of world beliefs for young students and those not widely read in ecumenical ventures. Most

commendable is the attitude conveyed: Father Pfeifer's segments are quite successful in revealing the motivations behind the varying styles of religious expression, and without any significant "watering down" of Catholic identity these differing communities of belief are held up as examples for reverence and imitation.

A useful multi-media bibliography is included.

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**What's Happening to the Church?**

By Daniel O'Hanlon, S.J. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1974. Pp. iv-172. Paper, \$1.85.

*Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D., Head of the Philosophy Department at Siena College and Associate Editor of this Review.*

Father O'Hanlon writes from a wide theological teaching experience, and a keen interest in and participation in ecumenical matters; and it is these experiences which flavor his eminently readable account of the conciliar and post-conciliar trends in the Church—trends to which he himself is contributing.

Beginning with the description of the "servant" model of the Church, which he contrasts with the siege mentality of the Reformation era, he moves on to consider faith and worship, legalism, ecumenism, and the Church's relation to the world. Although he does come down hard on the pre-Vatican II Church, he is generally careful to make the distinctions needed to save his popular presentation from being a broad

over-simplification. His treatment of the "pay your own way" spirituality, and his notice of the liberal legalism which has seen changing structures as the answer to Church problems impressed me, as did his general treatment of ecumenism. I wonder, however, if the call to openness is a bit like the semi-pelagianism he condemns, and the interpretation of Church statements on ecumenism a little too like the canonical legalism he disdains.

Each of the six chapters is followed by discussion questions which any group would find helpful. The printing job is attractive, though I did detect one egregious error on p. 133 ("misunderstanding" for "understanding"), and a lesser one on p. 96 ("midset" for "mindset"). The book is generally recommended for the careful reader.

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**The Devil, You Say! Man and His Personal Devils and Angels.** By Andrew M. Greeley. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974. Pp. 192. Cloth, \$5.95.

*Reviewed by Robert Donovan, Ph. D. (Theology, Fordham University), a Franciscan Novice who taught theology at St. Bonaventure University for four years.*

Andrew Greeley—wandering again beyond his field of sociology—has produced, in *The Devil, You Say*, a competent popularization of the more recent studies by philosophers, theologians, and social scientists into demonology. The need for a new look at this area is called for, Greeley claims, by the collapse

of trust in the Enlightenment optimism that all activity can be explained by science and reason. We should no longer be concerned with the "problem" of evil which, according to Greeley, was a rational attempt to reconcile an evil creation with a good Creator. Rather, we should turn our attention to the "mystery of evil," one of the great mysteries of life, the other two being the mystery of being and the mystery of the unity of being. In this age of casting doubt on the safe, secure, rational, and scientific values, modern man has to fall back on the mystery and mythical categories of yore.

Unable to explain by means of science or reason the continued and perhaps patterned existence of both physical evil and moral evil, the man of today asks "whether Tiamat—Chaos—is the ultimate reality" (p. 32). But, of course, we cannot simply go back to the primitive answer to that question and have Marduk destroy Tiamat in the act of creation. Instead, to be true to the collapse of the Enlightenment heralded by Greeley, we should return to those "religious symbols that proclaim in the face of considerable evidence to the contrary that good does triumph over evil, love over hatred, comedy over tragedy" (p. 53).

So instead of speaking about vices and virtues, graced or ungraced human nature, or even proclivities, inclinations, or attitudes, Greeley suggests we speak of "angels of light" and "angels of darkness," or demons. And so Andrew Greeley catalogues from this vantage point many of the specific human weak-

nesses and their corresponding strengths *sub specie mysterii*. In this way envy becomes the Demon of *Ressentiment* ("Ressentiment is not just envy; it is a systematic pathology of the little man who feels the compelling need to tear down and destroy the great man" (p. 35), and generosity becomes the Angel of Nobility (who "leads us to shout 'hosanna' whenever we encounter excellence" (p. 43). Thus disguised or mythologized, shame, pride, self-pity, fear, misuse of wealth or power, fear, enthusiasm, and quietism (among others) receive consideration in analyses that are topical and relevant. The book is easy to read and reminds the reader (painfully at times) that he has not exorcised all of the many and varied demons from his own life.

As a competent popularization of the need to examine our own closets for latent demons or angels, this book is worthwhile, and I recommend it. But as a theologian I find that it lacks precision. Very few of the basic assumptions are as clear as they appear here. For example, Greeley makes the point that the Enlightenment has destroyed or at least quieted any type of mythologization of evil. Indeed it may have shown that a personifying or reifying of evil was no longer appropriate. It surely did not do away with the concept. Rather, the Enlightenment just fitted it into its mythology, which explained its existence as due to chance, poor psychic development, or other reasonable causes. Hopefully Greeley does not want us to go back to a reifying of the evil principle as in Zoroastrianism, that great

dualistic system which solved the problem of evil and removed the mystery by positing the existence of a specifically evil principle, Ahriman, that would war with but not defeat the principle of good, Ahura Mazda. But he does wonder if all the evil in the world is not a plot and, if so, is there a plotter. Such questions as these only lead us back to the "problem of evil" which, despite Greeley's obsequies, is still very much alive. For if there is a plotter, does his plotting come from the good God; and, if it does, how can it be evil?

I would have hoped that Greeley had gone even further and suggested the possibility that both the problem of evil and the mystery of evil be subsumed into the mystery of (for now) planetary living. For it is only when we see ourselves through the prism of evolution, convergence, and mutual need that we begin to "save it." Only then will we become the angels of light who preach a constant message of hope.

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**The Spirit and His Gifts.** By George T. Montague, S.M. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Deus Books, 1974. Pp. v-66. Paper, \$0.95.

*Reviewed by Father Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M., an assistant at St. Francis Chapel, at the Northway Mall, Albany, N.Y., and translator of many books on theology and spirituality.*

This book is an outgrowth of a talk given by Father Montague at an open meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association held at the Im-

maculate Conception Seminary, Douglaston, N.Y., in August of 1973. It was enthusiastically received and was subsequently published in the Winter, 1973 issue of *Theology Digest* (pp. 342-60).

The original talk has now been expanded to include material on prophecy, interpretation, and discernment. Father goes on to say in his preface that it is his "hope that this booklet will provide a much needed bridge between my colleagues in the theological world and those Christians who, like myself, have been involved in the charismatic movement" (p. 1).

The charismatic movement has been accused of being anti-intellectual. As this reviewer sees it, *The Spirit and His Gifts* is one of several scholarly scriptural works that are appearing on the market, slowly but surely in refutation of that possible danger.

Father Montague is a noted New Testament scholar and editor of the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*. The booklet is, therefore, an in-depth biblical appraisal of Spirit-Baptism, Speaking in Tongues, Prophecy, Interpretation, and Discernment. It is not charismatic literature that can be read once and mastered. In fact, the reader would do well to have his Bible within reach as he reads it so that he can refresh his memory of the passages referred to.

There is a growing tide of scholars who bemoan the use of the phrase "baptized in the Spirit." The Pentecostal movement would be better served by some other expression, such as "manifestation of the Spirit." None of the New Testament texts supports the thesis of a genuine

Christian initiation deprived of the Spirit. But "for the early Church, and particularly for Paul, the Holy Spirit was an experience" (p. 14). Father Montague delves into the reasons for the decline of this experiential dimension. (This reader was surprised to learn how this is tied in with the present controversy about deferring Confirmation to adulthood.) The history of this decline alone would make the booklet worthwhile, because one objection voiced against the Pentecostal movement in the Church is its alleged novelty.

"One of the purposes of the liturgical reform promoted by Vatican II was to provide a richer, more accessible worship for the People of God and in so doing to fulfill some of the needs which only para-liturgical rites [such as the Rosary] had been meeting. In no way was the reform intended to suppress all para-liturgical piety or forms" (pp. 46-47).

And this is where the charismatic movement answers today's needs. "It has provided many Christians with a radical experience of the Lordship of Jesus, of praise and of listening to the word" (p. 47). Free praise, speaking in tongues and prophecy "belong to the . . . generic roots of the Christian experience. They have much to say about what the individual and the community need to experience before formal liturgy is meaningful" (p. 49).

The book is highly recommended because of its scholarly insights into many Old Testament and New Testament texts, and not just because it gives a pat on the back to Catholic Pentecostalism.

**The Old Testament and Proclamation of the Gospel.** By Elizabeth Achtemeier. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1973. Pp. 224. Cloth, \$7.50.

*Reviewed by Father David M. Bossman, O.F.M., Ph.D. (St. Louis University). Head of Siena College's Religious Studies Department.*

Elizabeth Achtemeier answers a long-standing need among proclaimers of the Word for a handbook of Christian biblical dynamics. It isn't that preachers have forgotten that the Old Testament is a genuine source for Christian self-understanding, but lack of focus has at times blurred the clarity of God's on-going involvement in human history as first attested in the Hebrew Bible. The author deftly traces the paths of biblical narrative through Israel's history in a way which is both insightful and helpful for understanding the continuity of message from the Old Testament through the New. In this she renders the admirable service of reuniting head with body, Jesus with Israel, and the church with its age-old task of living out the promise of divine blessing uttered in the first breath of creation.

Achtemeier does not exaggerate "the present dilemma of the church" when she deplores the loss of the Bible in the church as the immediate result of Christianity's tendency to divorce its theology from its Semitic origins. This fragmenting of biblical revelation can only distort both the message of Jesus and the mission of the church.

"Past words of Yahweh are constantly recalled and given new interpretations," she argues, "not

arbitrarily but in terms of Israel's new encounters with her Lord" (p. 78). Old Testament faith teaches that Israel is always in flux, always open toward the future which God and his people create in partnership by divine invitation.

The New Testament witnesses the splendid assertion of God's Word in the person of his Son, Jesus the Christ. The church gradually unfolds a consciousness of the Christ's dynamics in saving-history by living out its own mission in direct continuity with God's interactions from the beginning of history to the present moment.

The author projects a programmatic for preaching the integral biblical message which can only be termed an examination of conscience for the Christian preacher. Proclaiming the act of God in history demands more acute reading of the biblical text, more regard for circumstances and conflicts in which Israel wrestles with concrete events and real-life people. The way forward for Israel is never manifest; yet the struggle blends frustration with hope, and trust with determination. Only by faithfully reliving these moments with Israel can the Christian realize who he is and what his past tells him about his future.

The book labors in great detail to convince the reader of the precise nature of biblical dynamics. Perhaps the first part of the study is too detailed for the average reader. But the practical programmatic section of the book is truly helpful in criticising poor homilies and in pointing the way toward better ones. For this alone, the book warrants a large audience.

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## Pressure Politics and Religion

IN THE SUMMER of last year, the National Association of Women Religious passed a resolution calling for the Church to remove the bars to the ordination of women. This year the same group requested of the National Association of Religious Brothers that they adopt a resolution in favor of the permanent diaconate for women (See *Crux of the News*, April 7, 1975 for the brothers' interesting response that there is no need for such a resolution insofar as the ministries of religious women (as of men) flow from their religious consecration). The National Federation of Priests' Councils has annually published various resolutions (demands?) and the organization of male major superiors has recently done the same.

My own reaction to such resolutions varies (from moderate to total opposition usually), but what I do think noticing, and *stopping* is the implicit attempt to use those resolutions and the consequent publicity which they receive as instruments in the change of Catholic belief. I trace the era for resolutions back to 1968 when a barrage of phone calls and personal contacts got a public protest against *Humanae Vitae* into the media, a protest you recall signed by theologians of varying credentials. Since that time, we have all read articles in Catholic publications frequently proposing views on marriage, the moral law, the Church, which are contrary to Catholic teaching. Because it takes time for authority to reaffirm what is Catholic and condemn what isn't, untold harm has been done to faith. Furthermore, we have all suffered from the maverick views of religious life propounded in books, workshops, seminars, etc. views whose power was one of print, not of truth. (And we have all benefitted from workshops, seminars, etc. too). And even the American bishops have been swayed by the power of print, publicized resolutions, e.g. in the dialogue with Rome over the experimental norms for tribunals (clearly the work of the Canon Law Society's efforts) and the various debates over the translation of the Liturgy into English.

It was Pope Pius XII who pointed out the import and value of public opinion in the Church. But public opinion is hardly public *opinion* if it defines doctrine, or tries to. Policies are debatable; principles of faith are not. Passing resolutions telling the Church what to believe (as distinct from passing resolutions telling the members of ones own congregation or constituency what to *do* or urging a particular practical application of Christian belief, as relief of hunger and poverty in the world) is, in my

judgment, a form of pressure politics clearly out of place in the Catholic Church with its well-defined teaching on the nature and role of the magisterium vis a vis Catholic Faith. Recently, I drew some attention to myself at a community meeting when I summed up an undercurrent of thought "We *pray* for peace; we *fight* for justice." The resolution mania now gripping more and more of our organizations, however, seems not a fight for justice, but rather an expression of corporate pushiness of a nature that I that clearly brand as unchristian when I find it in myself.

*J. Julian Davis ofm*

## Gamaliel

Deep-eyed and steeped  
In the learning of the  
Law

You listened intently,  
Keenly to the witness of the  
Way.

"The strength of their defense  
Is that they made  
None,"

You argue, throwing  
Your weight of years and  
Wisdom

Against the foaming fury  
Of your colleagues on the  
Bench.

"Let them alone. If this  
Be but the design of  
Man,

It shall die.

If not . . .

Beware lest we end  
(as we began) wrestling with  
God!"



SISTER MARY SERAPHIM, P.C.P.A.

# Saint Bonaventure—The Teacher

VIANNEY F. VORMWALD, O.F.M.

TO APPROACH A MAN now dead seven hundred years as a model for those of us engaged in the teaching apostolate may at first glance seem preposterous. But we are able to draw inspiration from both the life and the works of Saint Bonaventure. He has not only left us a heritage, but he belongs to the Franciscan tradition. There must be close to eight thousand folio pages of his work, now carefully edited, in which he still speaks to us if we take the trouble to listen. There is also the example of his life. He lived fifty-seven years. He was a Master at the University of Paris when at the age of forty he became the seventh successor of Saint Francis of Assisi. He preached on both sides of the Alps. General of the Order for seventeen years, he was elevated to the Cardinalate, and served at the side of Pope Gregory X planning the Second Council of Lyons. It was at that Council that the Greek and Roman churches were united after a schism which had been brewing nearly a thousand years. It was at that Council that Bonaventure died.

Teacher, preacher, leader. They are synonymous. Bonaventure could not have been a leader had he not

been a teacher. He could not have been a preacher had he not been a teacher. The command of Jesus, "Go and teach," was not given to an elite group, but to you and me—a command to participate in his life, teaching as he taught, here and now. No one knew this better than Bonaventure himself.

Paris must have been exciting in the thirteenth century. It was Berkeley of the late sixties, Concordia of today, mixed with the brilliant academe of the Ivy colleges. There was no ivory tower to reside in. Bonaventure had to cross the Alps to La Verna to find the same quiet place Francis had found.

Bonaventure was creating the Franciscan tradition. He took the reins of the Order only a few years after the death of Francis. The whole spirit of Francis was still alive to him and to the followers of the man from Assisi. When we listen to his words, we must understand that he was speaking out of a spirit that was still inflaming the world. He could still see the footprints Francis had left behind him.

The tradition Bonaventure lived in was rooted in Augustine and Hugh of St. Victor, organized in Peter

Lombard's *Sentences*, and disturbed by the recent discovery of Aristotle. This was the experience of Bonaventure in whose memory was stored the past continually contrasted with his immediate present as preparation, as anticipation, of the future. The past, the present, and the future were integrated by faith, which Bonaventure would never divorce from philosophy from theology. These three vital activities of man: faith, philosophy, and theology, lead to the gift of knowledge and the light of glory.

To be a teacher, a preacher, a leader, Bonaventure had to be a person who was able to identify his own fears and his own anxieties. With that knowledge he was able to see his own potentialities. Once he saw the potential within him, he was able to transform that potential into an actuality, knowing full well that every time man turns a potential into an actuality, there emerges new potential. Today we would call Saint Bonaventure a self-actualized person.

This is the vision every excellent teacher has got to give. He is not simply giving information but is participating in the creative process God began here in mankind. He is not only informing a mind, but creating a new person who comes to understand his own potential, assured that it is possible to bring that potential, in spite of fears and anxieties, to actuality.

The only reason why a person can become self-actualized is a very deep faith, a conviction that is integrated,

that has a unity about it, that comprehends his whole life. Frequently we oversimplify the Franciscan vision of life, basing it on "will" rather than upon "intelligence." Both Francis and Bonaventure tell us that in order to be a self-actualized person, we must be men of desires, as Francis was a man of desires. The only reason man searches for knowledge is that he has the desire to know the sources of things. The only reason that impels man to act is that he has a desire for the good and wishes to avoid evil. And his faith feeds his desires.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights" (Jas. 1:17) might be called the integrating scriptural passage in the mind of Bonaventure. He quotes the passage forty-four times. His faith, his life, and his work were tied to the vision of the unity of all creation and especially created truth. All truth comes from God and returns to God through the incarnate Word who is himself the way, the truth, and the life. This is beautifully summed up in the method of Bonaventure.

A very common scholastic form of teaching, a method of instruction called the *reductio*, is basic to Bonaventure's presentation. It is a retracing back to a principle, back to a source. We are able to trace back all knowledge to theology—to knowledge of God—because within every created truth lies something of the eternal. If we really believe in crea-

Father Vianney F. Vormwald, O.F.M., Chaplain of Siena College, delivered this homily on the occasion of the College's Septicentennial Tribute to the Seraphic Doctor. The First Reading was James 1:17-19: *Every worthwhile gift... comes from above, descending from the Father of heavenly luminaries, who cannot change...*



tion, then everything we see, everything we know, is created and can be retraced to its source, which is God.

This *reductio* is also a resolution, a complete answer to the questions why there is such unity in truth, why there is such unity in peace, and why there is such unity in the desire of men to be united with God. This resolution is the very center of the activity of men. Bonaventure discovered the middle, the medium of all creation in the person of Jesus Christ. But *medium* means not only the center of creation but the *way* of retracing or resolving and, to Bonaventure, the way to the Source is through Jesus Christ.

How does this fit with our laboratories, our theatre, our orchestras, our libraries, and especially with the classroom and the process of education? All belong to created truth, and Bonaventure retraces them all back to God. The teacher, with the vision of Bonaventure, fits his work into his faith, for he is a man of desires. His faith drives him to the pursuit of knowledge, a desire to know the Source of things, and a desire to accomplish the good.

It is painful to maintain a tradition, especially if that tradition demands excellence. It takes strength and dedication and continual recommitment to the tradition that we examine today in light of the present and for speculation about the future. It is painful to maintain a vision, unblinded by prejudice, comprehending the dignity of the vocation that belongs to the creative teacher. All too often we can content ourselves with slipping a slice of the apple rather than with trying to form a rib.

The excellence of the teacher is based on his understanding of the great glory man is, of the almost infinite capacity man has, and of the innumerable potentialities man can be. That understanding can develop only from an open acceptance of the student by the teacher and the teacher by the student. It is in intimate relationship that fear is allayed and learning begun. Bonaventure knew this. While he was a student at the University of Paris, a student in the convent of the friars there, his relationship with his Master, the great Franciscan teacher Alexander of Hales, was so intimate that twice he can call him not only Master, but father. That term, father, has no relationship at all to the ordination of Alexander as a priest.

To teach is a gift from the Father of Lights. To Bonaventure teaching is transmission of truth. Because Jesus Christ is the center and the way of truth, the truth that is taught would have to be whole. And the wholeness of the truth would be measured by the excellence with which it is taught, for the teacher is participating in the very work of God.

Possession of the whole truth would lead men to choose between the good and the bad, to choose between those things which are important and those things which are not so important. Excellent teaching leads men to take sides intelligently, for in Jesus Christ, God, once and for all, took sides. We can do no better. In Bonaventure's words, "such is the fruit of all forms of knowledge: in all of them, faith is built up and God is glorified."

## Blessed Are You—VI

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

### Blessed Are the Clean of Heart: They Shall See God

SINCE THERE IS scarcely anything more purgative to the drossedness of the heart than that humble receiving of mercy which makes possible the giving of mercy with the simultaneous new understanding of our need to receive it, it should not be surprising that our blessed Lord immediately after proclaiming the blessedness of the merciful should speak of the clean of heart. The humility indigenous to true mercy, whether given or received, turns out the pockets of the heart with all their accumulated hoardings, and also scales pettiness off our being with a beautifully relentless blade. A new blessedness is revealed. "Blessed are the clean of heart: they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8).

In a different sense than the immediate present fulfillment of the first Beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven" (Mt. 5:3), we find in the sixth Beatitude, and in a highly specific way, a future reward brought into the present. Certainly we shall all have to be made clean of heart before we can see God. We recall

Yahweh warning Moses that he could not look upon His face and live. "You cannot see my face: for man shall not see me and live" (Exodus, 33:20). And Moses was likely considerably cleaner of heart than many of the other children of Israel then or now. Still, he could be allowed only certain concessions, as it were. "When my glory shall pass, I will set you in a hole in the rock, and protect you with my right hand, till I pass. And I will take away my hand and you shall see my back parts: but my face you cannot see" (Exodus, 33: 22-23). We also recall that after Moses, thus "protected" from the face of God in order to speak with Him, came down to the people, they were unable to support the sight even of such obliquely reflected glory. And perhaps again some of those children of Israel were better equipped to see the filtered radiance of God than we are.

So, yes, there will have to be a totally cleansing process for each of us to suffer before we can see God. Is Christ then saying in this Beatitude, "Blessed are the blessed?"

*Mother Mary Francis is Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico. Her writings include many contributions of poetry and prose to periodicals, the immensely popular books Spaces for Silence and A Right to Be Merry, as well as the recently published series of conferences reprinted from our pages: But I have called You Friends.*

Is He reminding us of what must be before we can endure the unveiling of that eternal Beatitude which is the vision of God? Hardly. It would not need a specific Beatitude to announce that basic generic. So, what did He mean? How is that someday beholding of God's face announced in this Beatitude? How is the future brought into the present? In what manner shall the clean of heart discover God upon earth? How does life practise for eternity? And then, who are the clean of heart anyway? What do we mean by that? Whom did Christ mean?

We shall not want to take a restricted view of this Beatitude in which, surely, much more is meant than mere physical integrity. To describe physical purity as "mere" is by no means to imply that chaste stewardship of one's flesh is not a most precious office, but only to remind ourselves that something much larger and profounder is obviously meant here by our Lord. The keeping pure of one's earthen vessel is a part of the whole. It is a beautiful part of this Beatitude, but it is not all of it. There is a virginity of the mind, a cleanness of the spirit. Surely this is the Beatitude of the unworldly.

We might call it the Beatitude of the transfixing gaze which transfigures tragedies and joys, mountains and traffic lanes, roses and stones, men and situations, all of a sometimes lithe and sometimes lumbering creation into its pure and radiant nakedness wherein is discovered the firstborn of all creation, Christ the Lord. (Col. I: 15) It is really only the clean of heart who can love the world. For them there is nothing to

be puzzled over in Jesus' invitation to be in the world but not of the world. (John 17: 16) No one is so much at the center of the world as the clean of heart who are not of it. For there are two aspects of world. One is worldliness, the other is reverence and compassion. Again, one is total immersion, and one is stewardship. The clean of heart know which is which.

If it is the total reverence possible only to virginity of the spirit which transfigures all things into their true form, it is the responsibility of stewardship which returns substance to otherwise passing phantoms which alternately lure and bedevil the unclean of heart and always ensnare them. One cannot appreciate the world when one is moored in it. You have to run free and eventually float free. The unworldly are the only ones who have ever been able effectively to suffer with and for the world, to be in travail with it until Christ is brought forth in the new creation (Rom. 8: 22). And certainly the unworldly are the only ones who have ever been qualified to enjoy the world.

There is Saint Francis of Assisi. So clean of heart, he sang out the praises of creation without thinking it necessary to consume creation, without needing either to execrate or to worship it. His was the reverential love of the pure. He saw God, and Him he worshipped. Everything that is belongs to the clean of heart. And so he has no need to be avaricious. Francis might be called frugal in his use of creation to fulfill the needs of his own person, but actually it was for him not so much

a matter of fasting from feasting as of feasting on his fasting. A little went a long way for Francis because he possessed the whole way and the goal besides. And this because he was so clean of heart.

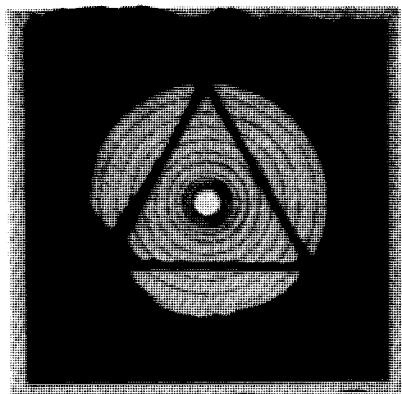
Again, he did not wear a rough tunic because it was all he had but because it was all he wanted. Nor did he go barefoot in order to curse leather but because he knew that he stood on the holy ground of creation and it was fitting to take the shoes from off his feet. As a matter of fact, no one is capable of foregoing leather unless he appreciates leather. Otherwise he would be only despising it or, if sufficiently mean-souled, merely disliking it. One has to have a very fine appreciation of food to be able to feast on fasting.

Rather in the same manner that the meek possess the land, the clean of heart roam royally free, continually discovering God. Cleanness of heart gives us perspective on persons and things and situations so that we not only see them in a new way but we see what is in them: God. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God. Preserving this virginity of the heart (which takes unrelenting effort), having achieved this purity of spirit (and we want to remember here that recovering it after having lost it is a new achieving of it), the unworldly shall have revealed to them the meaning of the world. They shall see God.

We are usually not comfortable while being cleansed, but only afterward. Allowing God to cleanse one's heart so that one sees not events but God in events, not just persons

to like or dislike or puzzle over or dismiss, but God looking out of these persons, — this requires a lifelong striving. Maybe we need to recall more often than we sometimes do that the signs of the times are the signs of eternity expressed in things present. If we simply observe the signs of the times and stop there, we are missing the point; in the deepest sense, we are even missing the signs. For a sign stands for something else. Signs of the times stand for eternity in its present expressions. Anybody can see the signs of the times. The clean of heart see through the signs to the truth the signs proclaim, the direction they give. They see God. The unworldly read Divine directions in the signs of the times.

It can be helpful in laboring to become clean of heart to ponder what is characteristic of the clean of heart. Two primary characteristics stand out rather prominently. One of them is educability. Again we think of the meek, the teachable ones. The Beatitudes are not independent entities. It is a lovely word, that Latin *docibilis* out of which we create our "docile" and "docility." And it is a real pity that so rich a word concept should be in such general disfavor with the world. What is its frequent connotation? Someone who is weak. The supine person, the one with no ideas of his own. "She is docile," we say, often enough meaning that you could lead her along on a leash. All on the contrary, the truly docile person is the teachable person; and the indocile, the unteachable one, is actually the mule concerning whose mental



prowess the psalmist set down an observation. "Be not like the horse and the mule that are without understanding" (Ps. 31: 11). There can be for us on certain occasions at least a bit of amusement over the indocility of the mule, but it is really not at all a winsome quality in an adult biped of the human species.

Becoming very first personal, I could fetch up an incident from my school days having to do with a student who knew very little but who was forever challenging the professor who knew a great deal. What Ms. *Indocibilis* produced in the rest of us in that class was embarrassment, a huge embarrassment. I really think she encouraged us to be teachable and clean enough of intellect to absorb some of the vast erudition of our instructor. Alexander Pope remarked quite some years ago that "a little learning is a dangerous thing." A blink of vision through eyes shuttered by unteachableness is another dangerous thing. We may think we are seeing when we are merely squinting. And it takes more than a squint to recognize truth, to

see God. There was that summer day when Ms. Unteachable said once too often: "Can you prove it?" to the professor at whose feet the rest of us were extremely comfortable. And I shall recall here for the edification of any possible readers the exercise of stern self-discipline by which I managed that day to forego asking my fellow co-ed in clear, resounding tones: "Would you be so kind as to shut up?"

The greatly learned are, of course, the happy converse, — the docile, the *docibiles*, the ever more teachable. Saint Thomas Aquinas described his tomes on which serious scholars through the centuries have fed as being only "a little straw." One has to know a very great deal to know how little one knows. True scholarship makes for humility and cleanness of heart. Where these qualities seem to be rather notably unpresent, one has reason to be reserved about the depth of the supposed scholarship.

Two classes of persons found Christ at the beginning: the shepherds who knew very little of science but were clean enough of heart to recognize and be taught by an angel; and the wisemen who specialized in scientific research and were clean enough of heart to be taught and led by a star. There is no record of the indocile finding Jesus. Those who know very little and think they know a great deal do not seem to be present. There was Herod, of course. Recordedly unclean of heart, he could not see God in a Child, but only a possible threat to his own unregal kingship. We could make a significant pause here to ponder a

present rather widespread contempt of angels and a diminution of interest in fixing one's gaze on starry heights. In that brief pause, it may be recalled that cleanness of heart is not precisely the outstanding trait of our world society.

If we want it to be our personal trait, the first thing we shall want to do is to face ourselves in truth and discover in what areas of our lives we are not very educable. All of us have them. I doubt any of us would want to stand forth and affirm: "I am completely *docibilis*." The docility characteristic of the clean of heart is something for which we all need to strive. And to strive for it is in a measure already to have achieved it. By the mere act of confessing sincerely that in some areas I show myself not teachable, I am already conditioned to become teachable. I have achieved at least the beginnings of what I lack when I confess that I lack it. I open up.

The honest discovery and admission of a certain closedness, for example, is the beginning of openness. This is so far removed from the glib affirmation, — insistence, really, — on one's complete openness which invariably characterizes the impenetrably closed. Thus, in our times we observe the curious phenomenon of certain apostles of openness whose openness appears to be somewhat restricted. Openness only to oneself or one's attitudinal compatriots would actually seem to qualify one for a rather limited apostleship in this area.

The truly open and educable can be taught by anything. They learn

from others, from situations. They can be taught perseverance by the bit of portulaca that comes perseveringly through the gravel. Maybe it doesn't get any water or any care, but it shows you what perseverance can achieve. This kind of educability was so evident in the saints. They were learning, learning all the time. Because they didn't have little stores of false erudition stacked up in their hearts, they were free to be clean of heart and open to God and men. One who knows little can question with acrimony, and another can answer with gentleness because he is so wise in his educability.

When we are clean of heart, we have flushed out, swept out all this clutter of false erudition so that it is possible for the heart to be clean. Even on the secular plane, no scholar would ever say: "I know all about this." The most eminent heart surgeon in the world will be the last to say: "I know everything about heart surgery. Just ask me anything. I have all the answers." We find in the context of daily life that the educable ones are those who are most clean of heart and that even in the secular consideration they always feel that they have so much to learn. It is self-evident that the more we learn about anything the more we realize how much we still have to learn. A little learning is assuredly a dangerous thing. We cannot rest there. We never graduate intellectually, much less spiritually. This in no way implies that the docile and free of heart are not strong in their convictions, that they do now have ideals that never become obscured. It means only that they are open

enough to learn God from others and from situations. The cluttered heart of the little learning is not open to seeing God whose kingdom comes today.

The cleaner of heart we are, the less dark corners do we cherish in our heart for depositing ideas of which we are extremely fond and on which no other ideas shall be allowed to intrude. These are the dark corners to be illumined so that the light and sight of God can come in. If, when I am corrected, I have a stockpile of reasons to show my benefactor how wrong he is, if I am offered a new perspective and have another stockpile of false erudition for rejecting it, I am simply lost in my own clutter. I don't see God. I am dirty of heart in a deeper and much more dangerous way than in the sense of carnal impurity. What are "dirty thoughts?" Are they not less those engendered by the demands of nature or the insistence of men or the television of imagination than the satisfiedness which makes it impossible to see God? Let us repeat it: our blessed Lord certainly meant physical cleanness of the body and mental cleanness of thought when He proclaimed the blessedness of the clean of heart. But He meant more. The Scriptures expand His thought by many parables.

We remember how the thieves and the prostitutes got into the heavenly banquet, according to our Lord's own forecast, and we recall who got thrown into the outer darkness and were left there to gnash their teeth. Look again at that prodigal son. The Scriptures say in very plain language that he had wasted his

whole inheritance on harlots and loose living. Yet, in that exquisite Scriptural vignette which is given us as a symbol of God's forgiveness, the boy was clean of heart. He was so humbled. He was so contrite. He became a penitent whose greatest hope was to be allowed to be a servant in his father's house. And that takes us over into the second shining characteristic of the clean of heart: truthfulness.

The prodigal son was physically unclean. He had been unpure in the physical sense and in just about every other sense as well when he came to his father and said, "I am not fit to be your son; could I be a servant in your house?" At that moment, he was clean of heart. The bedraggled, hungry boy did not condition truthfulness. He did not say: "Well, at least I can be a servant here." He inquired if there was any possibility that he could be a servant. And what did the father who is the figure of God the Father do? He interrupted the self-accusations. You can see the finger of the father on the lips of the son. Really, he stopped the boy with a kiss, and forgave him. And the son was made clean of heart. The proud and complacent are the really dirty of heart, and they do not see God.

There is another familiar Scriptural passage that could be interestingly rewritten in the light of truth. It is the beginning of Genesis. Suppose at the initiation of that sorry tale, the serpent had not lied? The whole story began with untruthfulness. Then, Eve listened to the lie, disobeyed, panicked, and proceeded to do what human nature invariably

seeks to do, — she drew someone else into her predicament. Adam was easily enough drawn. But if the two had been clean of heart in contrition, how would the story run? When Eve said to God, "The serpent deceived me" (Gen. 3: 13), one catches little undertones and overtones of her really blaming God for her whole downfall. Who created the serpent anyhow? Who put him into the garden? "The serpent deceived me." Suppose, instead, she had said: "Oh, God, forgive me! I was ambitious, I was vainglorious, I was so proud. I wanted to be You. I wanted to take over Your role." Suppose she had confessed: "I was so foolish. You gave me everything, and I listened to a snake. Have pity on me." Would Eve then have needed to be cursed?

Then, what of the happy supposition that Adam had said: "Oh, God, forgive me! I was Your first creation in Your own image. I should have been strong to help my mate. Instead of that, in her moment of weakness, I failed her. I am really all at fault. I am the one on whom she should have depended for strength; but I failed her, God, and I failed You." Perhaps the thorns and thistles of Adam's future lot and his bequest to all his progeny would never have appeared. The fallen can always regain cleanness of heart. They need only be truthful and contrite. For all of us, the implication of cleanness of heart is that we have been cleansed. Who shall stand before God and say: "Behold, your unspotted one!"

If educability and truthfulness are two outstanding characteristics of the

clean of heart, there are also two special effects of cleanness of heart. The first is a great lightness of spirit. Like the peace-makers whom we shall next consider, the clean in heart are happy children of God. We see this gaiety very apparent in Francis and Clare of Assisi. They were so light of heart, "always gay" as the nuns testified of Clare at the process of canonization. Gay to be forgiven, light of heart to have met the truth and acknowledged it.

When we are always ready to be taught, are really truthful in confronting ourselves before God, we have a rewarding sense of wonder. We can say to ourselves in Old Testament terms just as Job did, "Yes, you maggot you! you worm, you!" and still know that we are the beloved of God. It is not too attractive a prospect to witness to maggothood or wormdom *per se*, but to be a maggot or worm beloved of God is not uninviting. It is to be a very noble kind of worm. Who could mind being a worm cherished by the Lord? The cleanness of heart that comes of being teachable and truthful brings a reward not of depression or defeatism nor much less of despair, but of joy. In our acknowledged wormliness alone does our butterfly possibility lie.

A second effect of cleanness of heart is freedom. Here again, we see clearly the interlockedness of the Beatitudes in the wholeness of Christ's love. For we have already seen the freedom which is the property of the poor and the meek. When we are not infatuated with our own opinions and judgements, we are prepared to yield them over when

truth shows them up as charlatans. To be sure the yielding up involves pain. Life is full of pain; learning is full of pain. Any learning. There can be a certain drive toward it, a kind of exhilaration; but there is also much labor and perspiration involved, much fatigue for mind and body. If pain is part even of secular learning, we can scarcely be surprised that it is often painful to learn the only thing God told us to learn: to be meek and humble of heart. It should not come as any surprise that there is a lot of work involved in becoming and remaining clean of heart. It is not a snap course.

We have our own opinions, judgments, evaluations. We are ourselves. But we are clean and free when our roots are not in any of these but in God. This seems to be what is meant in the Beatitude, "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." See Him in eternity, yes. But they shall see through to Him right now, too. Of course, let us say it again, this takes more than just a bit of doing. We need to prostrate ourselves before God and ask Him: "Show me where I am unclean of heart. What do You want me to surrender that I may have the great reward of the clean of heart?" And we

have to be prepared to let Him answer, and to realize that the freeing and happy rewards of truth come only to the truthful. The prodigal son doubtless had to work on himself so as not to say, accusing his father instead of himself, "Why did you let me go out, young as I was, into a wicked world? It is really all your fault." Poor Eve did the equivalent of that in a somewhat more subtle mode, but to God. "Why did You put the snake there? Things were going along so well before he came slithering along." The boy, truthful, humbled, educable, was immediately cleansed. Eve, less candid and only humiliated, needed long penancing to become clean of heart. No doubt most of us line up alternately with the contrite wanton son and the self-excusing Eve. For them, to be given the first robe of restored innocence, or to be made mother of the human race, it was necessary to be cleansed and to see God. The unworldliness of the clean of heart is not lightly achieved. That bears repeating. The educability and truthfulness that make freedom and lightness of heart possible are never effortless. But the reward is so great. We see God.

(To be continued)

## Mother Marianne— A Sister of Saint Francis

SISTER M. THADDEUS, O.S.F.

### V. Where the Trumpets Blare You May Not Expect Much Good

**I**N SPITE OF ALL HER concern and personal care for the patients, Mother Marianne discovered that they were not always too honest with her. She called them her children and it was because they *did* very often *do* the things *children do*. Mother herself dispensed the medicine to the lepers, and we are told, she was very careful to place the pill into the mouth of each one. One day, however, she found that after taking the pills into their mouths they had gone out and spit them into the gutter—just like children who did not like their medicine. There, in the gutter, lay all the pills she had dispensed.

Low moral standards, the result of a people in despair of their lives, were a constant battle for Mother and the Sisters. The men tried very hard to get into the girls' Home at night after everyone had retired, everyone that is except Mother Marianne who kept watch. Mother had asked for and received some guards to help the situation, only to find that very often the guards were a worse menace than the would-be intruders. Some of the boys became very angry over the situation and decided to kill Mother

Marianne and gain entrance into the Home. Mother and the Sisters knew nothing of this plot, but somehow the girls heard about it and, likewise, made plans. That particular night each girl was armed with sticks and clubs to defend not their honor but the lives of Mother and the Sisters. No one knows why the boys changed their plans—but no attempt was made that night. It is possible they heard about the armed guard and were not prepared to battle them.

Mother finally decided that the harrassment had gone on long enough and she formulated some drastic tactics. She armed herself with a baseball bat and gave another Sister a huge flashlight. One of the girls who had been particularly disturbed by night-callers was told to encourage them to come in. The three waited in the dark room until, at last, true to form—the plea to enter was heard. To the great surprise of the men as they climbed into the room, a lovely young woman was not the only one awaiting them. A blinding flash into their eyes and a direct hit on the head of one and the back of the other discouraged the men from remaining. Mother had

Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F., is Chairman of the English Department at Assumption Catholic Academy, Syracuse, N.Y.

### ADDENDUM:

In the announcement of *Where Speech Leaves Off, Song Begins*, on page 149 of the May issue of THE CORD, it should have been pointed out that the pamphlet can be obtained by writing to the Monastery of Poor Clares, 3501 Rocky River Drive, Cleveland, Ohio 44111.

made two perfect targets. The men departed hurriedly and bruised. The story quickly went around the island and more than once the men were greeted with "oh, my poor head . . . my poor back." Mother's principles had been firmly established that night. She had once again proved her resourcefulness in an almost impossible situation. Many times she would say, "Caring for the lepers, the part that the world admires, is the least part of the job."

This incident, however, had only increased the reverence in which she was held. Even one of the offenders, when confronted with the situation, was heard to say, "Mother was right, I was wrong." And it was not only under this type of circumstance that she was respected. Once when the King was visiting Manulani Hospital he was asked to sign the visitors' book . . . he placed the book before him . . . took up a pen . . . held it a moment . . . then said, "I am not *worthy* to write my name in your book." Finally he wrote, "Kalakau Rex."

One of Mother's most outstanding qualities was to work solely for God—without fanfare—thus avoiding the empty praises of men. On the occasion of Bishop Libert's visit to Bishop Home, he was taking pictures of the children and asked Mother to join the group. She did not wish to do so because, "It would be in every magazine in the country."

She frequently remarked that the greatest saints wished to remain hidden, not out of false humility, but they had a right perspective about working for God. A common expression of hers was, "Where the

trumpets blare you may not expect much good." This gives a tremendous insight into the direction her life was taking and the value she placed upon her service to the Lord.

Her strong belief in herself as an instrument for good in God's hands allowed her the good sense to defy an order from the highest person in the government if her principles could not permit her to approve of it. Some of the inmates of the Bishop Home wanted to attend the Horse Races, but Mother did not feel this should be permitted and thus did not give her consent. One of the older women went to the Superintendent of the Settlement to get permission, but he would not overrule Mother's decision. Thereupon, she wrote to the President of the Board of Health. He, not knowing Mother's reason for the refusal, wrote her a polite letter stating that he could not see any reason for not allowing them to attend. Mother simply ignored his letter, since he had not inquired about her reasons. The inmates did not attend.

Strangers who came into contact with her were impressed with her quiet poise and dignity of manner. One of the physicians who held her in great esteem stated that he felt like kneeling in her presence—yet—her dignified demeanor and gentle manners did not prevent her from taking part in the roughest and humblest work: washing; digging; planting; bathing, dressing and bandaging the ulcerated wounds of her children; all of these were a part of her daily routine.

From the very beginning of their work among the lepers one of the

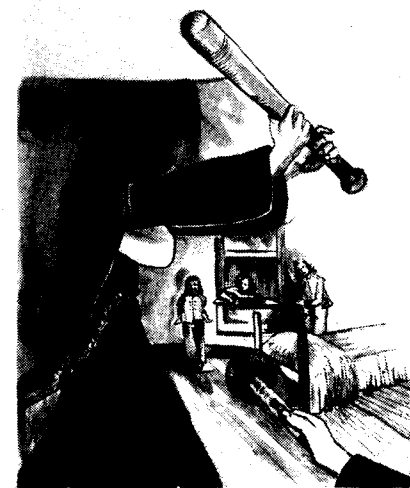
main problems had been provided for them, the patients' quarters were not only *not new* but obviously, had *never* been cleaned. Layers of dirt, years of grease and grime covered the original wood. "The kitchen must come first," Mother remarked. It took real digging to restore some resemblance of a floor and walls. Amazement was the first reaction of the patients to these "clean" (without leprosy) women willingly doing this heavy, filthy work. A few were immediately resentful of the *new regime*. Most of the patients were, however, grateful that someone was showing an interest in them.

Many improvements were needed in thinking and working, but all of these had to be done with tact and finesse. This Mother had. She was fully aware of the sensitive nature of the workers, but she also knew that she must somehow reorganize their methods. One example was clearing the dining room table. The girl whose duty it was, simply dumped a bucket of water over the table, climbed barefoot on top of the table and armed with a broom madly swept dirty water, bread crusts, fish bones, any scraps, into the corners of the room. There the rubbish would lie, a feast for flies, and a boon for any passing rat to carry to his home.

There were many such disheartening visions before the nuns' eyes, but there were also pleasant ones. The gratitude of the patients' having their ulcerous sores dressed properly and the quick response of many of them to the love and compassion in the voices and faces of these dedicated "white fella ladies." And dedication was certainly a requisite in these surroundings.

Mother Marianne had, personally, to battle some of the ills which had crept into the lives of these desperate people. Not all loved and admired her—because she interfered with an "enterprise" labeled gambling, prostitution, and dope, which was permitted by the man who had been in charge before the arrival of these "silly girls"—as he called the Sisters—whom he was determined to be rid of as soon as possible. He feared, in particular, this woman in charge of the others, who seemed to have an indomitable will and a strong determination to make extinct anything which destroyed the spiritual growth of her children.

This man in charge was allowed to remain even after Mother and the Sisters had been officially commissioned by the Board of Health to care for the lepers. It had been his custom to punish unruly patients by placing them in a solitary confinement cell



too small to sit up in. Sister Crescentia tells of the incident of a woman taken in adultery who was placed in this cell much against Sister's wishes—but the man, obviously a follower of the supervisor, was permitted to go free. For this type of injustice the supervisor was beaten by the patients on several occasions, but his retaliation showed no mercy. At last, when his life was threatened, he called upon the Sisters for help, but their ability to control the poor lepers only angered the Supervisor more and he began to plot against the Sisters and to make life extremely difficult for them. One of his favorite tricks was to awaken them after a hard days work, call them to his office, and there discuss some trivial matter that could have waited for morning.

Finally the Sisters were forced to go to the Bishop and the supervisor was removed. This remedied one situation but increased another. The Sisters were now left with two hundred lepers of varied age, sex, temperament, and stage of disease, but no man to care for the men.

The Sisters, however, accepted the situation and increased their labors among the men patients. The patients themselves were grateful and were especially pleased when the Queen, herself visited to see what had been done for her "chil-

dren." The spotless kitchen and well-stocked linen room and the evidence of loving care given to the lepers quite obviously overjoyed the Queen. She asked to be called upon if ever Mother needed anything at all. It was at this point that Mother asked the Queen to name the hospital and she responded, "I name the hospital Manulani, and I wish dear Mother, that you and all the good Sisters, and everyone who may ever come to the sheltering arms of Manulani Hospital may have the sweet protection of Heaven." These two women were to form a strong bond of love and devotion based upon their self-sacrificing desire to help the "poor children."

No longer would these poor afflicted crouch on the floor, nor sleep on boards, nor be cast into a separate room when certain death was near. No longer would uninfected infants remain with their parents to insure contagion, nor would these children grow up ignorant of their own dignity, for Mother Marianne was determined to guide and train them to live useful lives. And the Queen saw a brave counterpart in this woman from so far away—"I love you. You have left your home and country and come to these faraway Islands to help my poor afflicted children. I shall never forget you. You are my sisters and I will always love you."



## A Review Article

# The Christian Nonviolence of Lanza del Vasto

ROBERTO O. GONZALEZ, O.F.M.

One of my ambitions in life is to become old and radical. This desire came to me in the late 1960's, when I was an undergraduate at Siena College and was being initiated into the world of protest. During those years I sought the advice and presence of elderly people in the peace movement. However they seemed then as well as today to prefer church buildings, and this saddens me very much.

This makes me wonder about the ultimate meaning of life, the purpose of the church, and the value of radical forms of protest. I ask myself, "Are my actions like picketing with the United Farm Workers mere expressions of my own idealistic and restless passing youth?" Are my ideals of justice and peace worth holding onto for a lifetime?" I do not want to lose the ideals of my youth along with the brown hairs that fall out of my head each day as I grow older. I thus feel the need to see

with my eyes that it is possible to be old, idealistic and radical.

The presence of an old person in a protest has always filled me with a special excitement and joy. I marvel at the old man or women who can still hope for Paradise in our midst. For me their presence is a powerful symbol of the Love that is here-not yet and of the God of the Unknown Future. Old age, giving and spending itself in the radical pursuit of the gifts of salvation, gives me a reason to live.

If you feel like I do, I think you will love Lanza del Vasto and his inspiring trilogy of peace: *Make Straight The Way of the Lord*, *Gandhi to Vinoba*, and *Warriors of Peace*.

Lanza del Vasto is an old and gentle radical from France. Very much like our own Dorothy Day, he is a radical Christian in the tradition of Jesus the prophet and a radical Ghandian. In 1936 del Vasto travel-

Joseph Jean Lanza del Vasto, *Make Straight the Way of the Lord: An Anthology of the Philosophical Writings*. Trans. Jean Sidgwick; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974. Pp. xii-254. Cloth, \$7.95.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Gandhi to Vinoba: The New Pilgrimage*. Trans. Philip Leon; New York: Schocken Books, 1974. Pp. 231. Cloth, \$7.95.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Warriors of Peace: Writings on the Technique of Nonviolence*. Edited by Michael Random; trans; Jean Sidgwick. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974. Pp. x-226. Paper, \$2.45.

Roberto O. Gonzalez, O.F.M. a second year theologian at Holy Name College, Washington D.C. has been active in peace and social movements since his undergraduate years at Siena College.



led as a pilgrim to the Holy Land and to India to meet Gandhi, and he became one of Mahatma's disciples. Gandhi bestowed upon him the name of Shantidas (Servant of Peace). When he returned to Europe, del Vasto founded in 1948 the first Christian Gandhian Order, the Community of the Ark—"a non sectarian working order of men and women who put nonviolent principles into practice in their lives." Del Vasto has been attempting to do for France what Gandhi tried to do for India: to establish the reign of nonviolence in the hearts of men and women. He has worked constantly for peace in the world and has written twenty-three books of philosophy and related subjects. Today he lives with his wife, Chanterelle, at the Community of the Ark in Southern France.

*Make Straight The Way Of The Lord* is an excellent introduction to the thought of del Vasto, as it is composed of selections from ten of his books published in France. Part One deals with the search of the self for integrity, love and ultimate meaning. He discusses fasting, meditation, human relations, relaxation, self-possession, sickness, silence, and other pertinent topics. There is here a very beautiful chapter on prayer: "The simplest, most fundamental, and most complete of religious acts" (p. 69). According to del Vasto there are five degrees of prayer: obligation, rogation, lyrical prayer, contemplation, and mental orison. I enjoyed especially his treatment of lyrical prayer, that which is "intimate in essence" and "the living link between the lover and be-

loved." Del Vasto believes that "prayer will teach us to submit our lives to the rule of rhythm... to the rhythm imprinted by the Creator on the universe" (p. 63); a very Bonaventurian approach. In Part Two, "God and Nature," del Vasto deals with the factors (knowledge, energy, creation, good and evil, the Bible, time and eternity) that support his Credo:

I believe in Thee, God asleep in the  
stone,  
dreaming in the tree, aspiring in the  
beast,  
loving in man, and dying for that love,  
piercing the sky with Thy head  
and passing beyond the light.

[p. 121]



Del Valsto integrates religious thought and wisdom from the East into his own Western and Christian outlook, illustrating well the syncretistic nature of Christianity. Interviewed last year during a visit to the United States, Richard Deats of the Fellowship of Reconciliation asked del Vasto, "What is the relationship of your life as a Christian to Ghandi's teaching—how do you as a Christian relate your faith to his Hindu faith?" Del Vasto replied, that when he went to India he was not searching for Hindu spirituality.

I was trying to become Christian, which is not easy. I was going there for spiritual research but very paradoxically for the solution of our problems, of war and peace, especially. ... Then I met the Hindu spirituality that I didn't search for and it moved me greatly ... I was struck by the analogies ... You see a common treasure of tradition, and that struck me. The differences, of course, are important and great. But they give the color—they are something that stimulate your curiosity and your sense of poetry. And so I had no difficulty with Hindu religion. I think that Gandhi was more Christian than many of us ... And I remember him speaking of Jesus Christ and saying, "To me he is the truth." [A transcript of this interview with del Vasto on December 2, 1974 can be obtained from Richard Deats, F.O.R., Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960; a film of this very fine interview is also available]

This makes del Vasto's spirituality highly attractive for today. The final section of the book concerns itself with social realities, utopia, and the kingdom of heaven. It is apocalyptic in tone. The book closes with a description of the elements of the Community of the Ark. A difficulty I have with the book is its poor

hermeneutic with regard to certain themes of Christian theology. For instance, Del Vasto's protology is fundamentalistic, and his anthropology is Platonic. He therefore misinterprets profoundly 1 Corinthians 15, which is rooted solidly in Hebrew anthropology, maintaining the immortality of the soul and not the resurrection of the dead into *new creatures!* [See D. Steindl (ed.), *Immortality and Resurrection*; especially the chapter by O. Cullmann on "Immortality of the Soul Or Resurrection of the Dead."] Aside from these problems, this book is recommended highly. It should be read carefully and critically. Moreover, it deserves a meditative and prayerful reading.

*Gandi To Vinoba* is about del Vasto's return to India. He made this journey to meet Vinoba Bhawe: "the most popular hero of India today, the most loved and venerated, the most sung and celebrated, even in the smallest of her seven thousand villages or so of mud and hovels" (p. 13). He is virtually unknown in the West. When del Vasto met him, Vinoba was a frail man in his sixties, who was recognized (notably by Nehru) as Gandhi's successor. Part One considers the life, thought and work of Vinoba that culminated in the Land Gifts Movement, which sought "to answer the spiritual and material needs of Indian peasants by persuading large landholders to surrender voluntarily land for distribution. To this end, Vinoba organized marches through India," and the second part of this book is a fascinating journal of a march in which the author participated. The



final section is a grouping of sayings and short writings of Vinoba. This volume is a moving story of how del Vasto found India: "a land of horror, grandeur and grace." It is a captivating history of the Gandhian movement in India particularly from the time of Gandhi's assassination in 1948 to that of Vinoba's marches in 1954. It is not however a tale of a march but a call to nonviolence and purity of heart. Thus the book seeks for a "social and spiritual revival both in the West and the East" that is based on "the Gandhian doctrine" (p. 203). In 1961 Schocken Books gave us a volume of Gandhi's writings, *Non-Violent Resistance*, which has become a companion to many American pacifists. I am pleased they have published in 1974 this book on Gandhi's successor. In doing so they continue to further the Gandhian movement in the United States and to meet the growing needs of the American pacifist community.

*Warriors of Peace* is a collection of del Vasto's writings on the technique of nonviolence. Part One deals with definitions of nonviolence, which is essentially three things: the solution of conflict, the force of justice, and the lever of conversion. Nonviolence is a style of life. It is radical *metanoia*, *koinonia*, and *agape*, and del Vasto tries to show that these are fundamental human needs; therefore all human beings long in their hearts for the nonviolent life. The second chapter is a helpful discussion on nonviolence and self-defense. During that discussion a war resister tells del Vasto that he finds his notion of nonviolence disap-

pointing. Del Vasto argues wisely,

Nonviolence is simple and primordial, not half-baked and indiscriminating. If things were as clear as you believe them to be, so many great minds, and saints among them, would not have found them so confusing or been so self-contradictory on the subject. The absolute is what we are striving for, but in human affairs 'for' and 'against' are intertwined and we cannot—I regret—make sweeping statements (p. 34).

Part Two considers tactics of nonviolence that have been used by the Community of the Ark: their campaign and del Vasto's twenty day fast against the atrocities of the Algerian War... their efforts against internment camps in 1959-60 for Algerians in France... their struggles for the recognition of conscientious objection... their efforts, during the Second Vatican Council, to have the Church become more committed to world peace. In response to Pope John's encyclical, *Poenttiam Agere*, del Vasto travelled to Rome to fast and pray throughout Lent in 1963. He wrote to Pope John, explaining the reasons for his pilgrimage:

The first is consciousness of sins that make me unfit to address my prayer to heaven.

The second is the prayer itself: that our Pope may be given health, for he has won our affection by trying to change pontifical majesty into fatherly kindness.

The third is our hopeful longing, in the fact of the threat of total war, for the message of peace the world needs today, and bold, absolute, in short, the evangelical word (pp. 165-6).

Pope John responded with *Pacem In Terris* along with some personal gifts. Passages concerning civil disobedience and the arms race (particu-

larly atomic weapons) in *Pacem In Terris* corresponded to sections of del Vasto's letter. During the Council the Community of the Ark also sponsored a ten day total fast of Christian women from Europe, South America, and the United States. Dorothy Day and Eileen Egan went from the U.S. These women made petitions to the Council. In fact sentences and words of their letters to Bishops appear in Chapter V, "The Safeguard of Peace," of *Gaudium et Spes*. The book closes with an extremely interesting but all too brief historical survey of nonviolence in the West. The story of a nonviolent protest in 1857 in Poland is especially moving:

At that time, Poland was groaning under the boot of Russia. In vain did she entreat the Czar to give her a parliament. The uprising which then took place might well be called the Funeral Rebellion. When the funeral procession of a patriot poet appeared to be endless, the police became uneasy. They ordered the mourners to

disperse, but the procession went on. Then the police launched a cavalry attack, but the procession, leaving its dead and wounded on the pavement, formed anew and continued until nightfall. All the dead who had fallen that day were given similar funerals. The whole nation went into mourning for a year. As a result, Poland obtained a parliament from the Czar. Counterproof: three years later, Poland had recourse to armed revolt, and the Russians, who asked for nothing better, crushed it (p. 202).

Alfred A. Knopf has mounted beautifully this book as well as *Make Straight The Way Of The Lord*, and I wish also to praise them for their literary contribution to the cause of Peace.

At the outset of this review, I stated my desire to remain idealistic, despite the ambiguity and complexity of life, when I grow old. To this end Lanza del Vasto has inspired me tremendously. His experience and wisdom have comforted me; his thoughts have challenged me. I hope he does the same for you.

## CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

Louis Massignon: *Christian Ecumenist*

Prophet of Inter-Religious Reconciliation

An insight into the life and writings of a leading Christian expert on Islam whose interests ranged from a magnum opus on al-Hallaj, a 10th century Muslim mystic, to diplomatic tasks in the two world wars, and commentary on the evolving Arab world.

By Giulio Basetti-Sani, O.F.M.

Edited and Translated by Allan Harris Cutler

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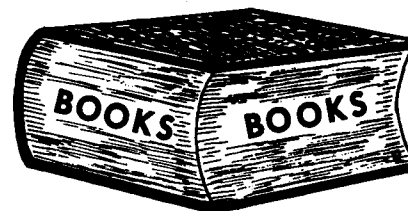
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DAVID BENZSHAWEL



*The Church and I.* By Frank Sheed.  
 Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday,  
 1974. Pp. 384. Cloth, \$7.95.

*Reviewed by Robert Donovan, Ph.D.,  
 (Theology, Fordham University), a  
 Franciscan Novice who taught  
 theology for four years at St. Bona-  
 venture University.*

It really must be great to be able to spend your life in developing a special talent that not only pays the rent but is also enjoyable. Frank Sheed has had the opportunity. He's been a "street corner preacher" for most of his life. As he details in his latest opus, *The Church and I*, his real "life in the Church" began when he encountered the Catholic Evidence Guild (he even met his wife Maisie Ward there). All that he has done in the last fifty-three years since bears the mark of that encounter. If he had not become a "street corner preacher," Frank Sheed would never have become such a knowledgeable and articulate Catholic, nor would he have become a successful publisher.

Indeed, this latest book reads on

the one hand like a handbook for corner preaching. In that hatbox atmosphere, memorized platitudes thoughtlessly spewed forth will not stop the ridicule of the non-believer. Nor would the words of theologians written to attract the attention of other theologians be of any avail. To make the story of Jesus and his Church come alive you had to know your audience, and you had to know your faith. In a word, you had to be honest.

As Christians called to make Jesus present, we could all learn a very good lesson from this. We could come to realize that our work, while not entailing "street corner preaching," is that of bodying forth Jesus and his Church. To do this we need not so much to tell "the story" convincingly as to *be* "the story." For Jesus not only told the story of the Father, he was the story. To do this, of course, is a never ending task and necessitates a continued study of the Faith. As Frank Sheed reiterates from his own experience, we Catholics must—like the converts who have contributed so much to the articulation of the Faith—study "the Faith as grownups" (p. 97). In this he shows not only his expertise but a great deal of wisdom. His honest reaction to the horrors of the Inquisition is the best treatment of that aberration I have ever heard. His description of many of the contemporary ecclesial discontents and

movements, such as the Jesus movement, are quite insightful as well.

On the other hand, this book is also a quasi-autobiography. As such, it is filled with the personalities of the great and near great that crossed paths with this colossus of Catholic publishers. It is interesting to hear some anecdotes about Chesterton, Belloc, Ronald Knox, and C.C. Martindale, to name only a few, but this side tends to become rambling and repetitive. I, for one, had not forgotten, for example, that Sheed was a member of the Catholic Evidence Guild a mere thirty pages after its announcement. But this is only a small flaw in an otherwise topical description of the experience of the Church as seen by one of her better "street corner preachers." And he's at it still!

#### On Taking God out of the Dictionary.

By William Hamilton. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974. Pp. 225. Cloth, \$8.95.

*Reviewed by Johnemery Konecsni, Ph.D. (New York University), a member of the Dominican Third Order Secular, and Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Caldwell College, Caldwell, N.J.*

William Hamilton, of God-is-dead note, has written a book which will not inspire the 1965-model jokes like "If God is dead, why isn't William Hamilton?" That is unfortunate, be-

cause the jokes were the best part of the media non-event of the mid-sixties theology. However, this is not the place to review the joy of *Angst* in modern theology, and this is especially true since the 1965 Hamilton is only partially present in the latest volume.

The major part of Hamilton '65 is contained in a long, *Playboy*-style self-interview which I assume would not interest Hugh Hefner because Hefner is not interested in old copy. Old copy constitutes the bulk of this book: Hamilton is in the pathetic position of trying to baptize the current fads with a bottle of holy Sangria without realizing that the fads are changing faster than he can. In an attempt to overcome this defect he offers a commentary on Norman Mailer, Joseph Heller ('52 model), and a host of others. Future shock defeats his purposes: his observations read as quaintly as a 17th-century commentary on a 14th-century graffiti.

Is there anything to be gained by reading this volume? Of course there is! As the old proverb goes, one can learn from a fool . . . by avoiding his example. Two examples will help: Hamilton's non-commentary chapters are excursions into the realm of fiction: short stories, TV plays, and a chapter of fragments, none of which will inspire fear in literary competitors (amnesia will but I did not see humor in the poems, nor honesty. They just did not

help you to forget *A Man for All Seasons* while you read his chapter about a man named Thomas defending himself by silence against a corrupt establishment; a willing suspension of good taste will help you survive a play about death which confuses thanatology with necrophilia).

A second lesson might be learned by all philosophers and theologians—myself included—who are constantly tempted to go into fields where they are totally inept. One begins to think that the unholy trinity of "meaningfulness, relevance, and significance" can be served only by making these ancient wisdoms into the intellectual beggar which must steal from all because it has nothing of its own.

In short, when you eliminate all that is outdated or obscure in this volume, there remain two questions which this book raised but will not answer. Is Hamilton, by refusing any efficacy to prayer or the Resurrection, aiming at a secular mysticism or a nervous breakdown? What do you do with a book that is too small for a doorstep and too large for non-polluting incineration?

#### Philosophy of God, and Theology.

By Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973. Pp. xi-74, incl. index. Cloth, \$4.50.

*Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy, Fordham University), Editor of this*

*Review and Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Siena College.*

This slim volume contains the three St. Michael's Lectures delivered by Father Lonergan at Gonzaga University in the Fall of 1972. "Philosophy of God" is clarified in the first lecture through a deft and succinct discussion of the differentiations of consciousness, and in the course of that same lecture Lonergan admits candidly that the pressure of his assignments at the time of writing *Insight* resulted in a failure to rework his objectivist, inadequate approach to philosophical theology.

In the second lecture, the author approaches the other term in his main subject: "Theology." With the same skillful economy evident in the first lecture, he touches lightly but illuminatingly on the whole history of "systematics," or "doctrinal theology," both patristic and medieval.

It is toward the end of that second lecture that Lonergan broaches with real earnestness the main points of this series, to which he had often referred briefly in earlier pages: viz., that the philosophical approach to God ought, most emphatically and minimally for the student who studies theology after completing a course in philosophy, to be integrated within the curriculum for systematic theology. From the older viewpoint of "formal" and "material objects" of a science, such a pro-

cedure could lead only to utter confusion and contradiction. But as the reader doubtless knows, Father Lonergan has devoted many years of scholarly effort to the elaboration of a newer view in which dynamic method replaces static logic as the key operational procedure. Logic remains as necessary as ever, but its function is sharply circumscribed, and method becomes the key to a wider and more fruitful unity not only of theology itself, but of all the sciences.

As is also well known, Lonergan proposes that one begin with cognitional theory rather than a naively realistic metaphysics. Reflecting on the data of consciousness inevitably yields the religious question: "We are suffering from an unconditioned, unrestricted love; with whom, then, are we in love?" (p. 53). It is this basic experience of God's gift of his love that both philosophy of God and systematic theology seek to elaborate and build on—to mediate between religion and culture, to facilitate in the individual the various differentiations of consciousness and to bring him to maturity as a person.

I think that Lonergan's outlook is singularly exciting and promising. It may be that these concise lectures, published in attractive form together with the questions and answers that followed the formal lectures, presuppose some knowledge of his basic ideas. But I don't think that too much is, in fact, presupposed—this might very well be a fine way for the

general reader to begin his acquaintance with the thought of one of our most original philosopher-theologians.

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**Forbidden Disappointments.** By James Carroll. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1974. Pp. 60. Cloth, \$6.95; paper, \$2.50.

*Reviewed by Father Bruce Riski, O.F.M.Cap., S.T.L. (Catholic University), a veteran of World War II (U.S. Navy) who has contributed numerous works of poetry and prose to various religious periodicals.*

Father James Carroll is a Paulist, currently playwright in residence with the Berkshire Theatre Festival. Of the twenty-three poems he presents in this volume, I found thirteen excellent as regards conveying a message or driving home a point. I even laughed at the close of one: the "Resurrection Poem." It contained, moreover, an unusual penetration of death. The poems that I liked most were "Pentagon: A Memory" and "Rain Dance."

I was not at all impressed by two poems: "The Captive Speaking" and "Mom in Your Boots," which I considered either too raw or too crude. This could have been Father Carroll's way of bringing out a point; but I did not see humor in the poems, nor honesty. They just did not smack right. Having been in the Navy (World War II), I saw no need to be reminded of those days, even

though such living was unavoidable and necessary. The fact that we can become immune to these things does not imply that we should, at times, for shock purposes or otherwise, indulge in a "poetic fling." I prefer that *every* poem uplift me either by its beauty of imagery or construction, or its message or power of thought-expression. Undoubtedly the poet had a purpose in mind. Such can be a method of "shocking" the reader to an appreciation of the message's value; though it may have its worth, I don't buy the approach. It's a matter of personal preference, like my preference for classical music over jazz.

Nonetheless, what I consider unnecessary boldness in these two isolated instances should not deter one from reading Father James Carroll's poetry. On the tally sheet, the score is high indeed. Even though I do not prefer the "shock method," this is poetry that generates reaction, imparts lessons, and shapes attitudes. On the whole, I'd say it is worthwhile introduction to the poet's creations. I'm almost a fan of his.

---

**Hanging in There with Christ.** By Robert J. Waywood, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974. Pp. vii-130. Cloth, \$4.95.

*Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., M.A. (Phil.), Dean of Residence Living at St. Bonaventure University.*

For the year 1972 Father Robert Waywood, O.F.M., on the English faculty of Siena College, wrote a series of spiritual conferences for THE CORD. These conferences have been put in book form and appear under the title, *Hanging in There with Christ*.

The author has a direct, straightforward approach to the ordinary concerns of those living in religious life. He makes use of his personal experiences to illustrate various principles of the spiritual life affecting the daily responsibilities of those who consecrate themselves to God in religion and/or the priesthood. His background as a college professor of English reveals itself in his clarity and carefulness of expression in his choice of words. Father Waywood states his intention in presenting these conferences to "focus on matters essential, not precious . . . incontrovertible, not tendentious, and . . . timely, not academic" (p. vi). His selection of subject matter shows that he carries out his intention: gratitude, cheerfulness, work, holiness, faith, converting, prayer, chastity, the Holy Eucharist, and "the last things."

A positive treatment of these concerns of religious is presented by the author as can be noted from the titles of the various chapters: "The Greatness of Gratitude," "Four Cheers for Cheerfulness," "The Wonderful World of Work," and so on. A particularly interesting and in-

triguing characteristic of the writer's method of presentation is the poem at the end of each chapter. It would appear that the author has a talent for poetry as well as for prose.

This reviewer finds *Hanging in There with Christ* a very readable book. He believes that the religious who reads it will be challenged time and again to reflect more seriously on the ordinary things of his/her daily life and see them as opportunities for growth toward holiness. He/she will be encouraged to face each day and each challenge with courage and with the greatest optimism to "hang in there" because Christ is always present to us all.

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**Our Friend, Jacques Maritain: A Personal Memoir.** By Julie Kernan. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 192. Cloth, \$7.95. Photographs.

*Reviewed by Father Joseph Vann, O.F.M., retired.*

Miss Kernan writes sympathetically of the professional and family life of her friends the Maritains (Jacques, his wife Raissa, and her sister Vera Oumansoff, their companion for over half a century). She describes the search for absolutes that led Jacques and Raissa, as students at the skeptic Sarbonne, from suicidal despair to certitude and Catholicism in 1906. Urged by Raissa, Jacques read Aquinas and discovered that he was already a Thomist.

He made his home a center of Thomistic studies, which drew friends of great name in many fields. His application of philosophy to modern problems made him an internationally known neo-Thomist. Miss Kernan gives details of controversies in France that swirled around him in the 20s and 30s.

During World War II Jacques lived in New York; after it, in Rome, as ambassador to the Vatican, and in Princeton. After Raissa's death in 1960 he moved to France to the Little Brothers of Jesus. A few years before his death at ninety he took their vows.

The Maritains were loving friends to many people who as warmly returned their friendship. They achieved a unity in their lives of intense intellectuality and religious devotion. Their Thomistic Circles encouraged study, prayer, meditation, and retreats. Conversions and vocations resulted. The maintained a private chapel in their home. Six years after marriage they made vows of chastity.

Summing up Jacques' work, Miss Kernan points to his hidden influence at Vatican II, where Pope Paul, who called himself "a disciple of Maritain," gave Jacques a place of special honor near him at its solemn close. Seven revealing photographs show Jacques from sixteen to ninety years of age. The two of Raissa (at marriage in 1904, and forty years later), and one of Jacques' plain coffin in the loneliness of the

Little Brother' chapel at Toulouse, touch my heart, as does the book.

---

### **The Apostolate and the Church.**

By F. X. Durrwell. Trans. by Edward Quinn. Denville, N.J.: Dimension Books, 1973. Pp. 178. Paper, \$4.95.

*Reviewed by Father Joseph Abramovic, O.F.M., and alumnus of the Graduate Schools of Philosophy at St. Bonaventure University and Lehigh University, and now Pastor at St. Joseph's Church, Bethlehem, Pa.*

F. X. Durrwell's name is not one that you would ordinarily hear during an ecclesiastical preprandial chit-chat. Despite the contrary claim of the publishers of *The Apostolate and the Church*, Durrwell is at best an obscure theological entity to most American readers. Those with retentive memories perhaps remember his book, *The Resurrection*, which was published in English in 1960. It is regrettable, when we look back, that it was not re-issued after Vatican II, for it could have been a guiding light to all those who looked for a convincing summary of the traditional understanding of the subject in the heyday of pop demythologization of the Resurrection.

*The Apostolate and the Church* is a good book for meditation or spiritual reading, even though that is not its author's principal aim. Theology is his aim. Fundamentally,

the theology he provides is kosher in its conclusion—i.e., when judged by the standards of the so-called traditional theology. The author himself seems to hint, in the preface, at the weakness of his product when he says, "Repetitions are inevitable, a risk which has to be taken." In this instance, however, the repetitions indicate a paucity of solid theological argument, despite an extravaganza of footnotes, biblical quotations, and analyses.

The apostolate about which the author writes is mainly that of the priest and the religious. Only by inference and in passing is lay apostolate mentioned. The only kind of authentic apostolate is that which reflects the holiness of Christ. Durrwell makes a strenuous effort to prove that the evangelical counsels are not counsels at all but gospel absolutes. He is aware, of course, that even Vatican II clung to the centuries-old idea of counsels. He juxtaposes Mt. 19:21 and Mt. 16:25-26 and sees that both are expressed in a conditional form. The traditional exegesis contains a dose of arbitrariness: the first text expresses a gospel counsel; the second, a gospel absolute. For Durrwell both texts are gospel absolutes. Such a conclusion, it seems to me, places him in a position from which it is theoretically impossible to distinguish from one another the priesthood, the religious life, and the lay Christian life. The religious life, in particular, is left standing only on juridicism.

Durrwell takes great pains to elucidate the distinction between the priesthood of the laity and the ordained priesthood. The latter is "the bond of unity in the Church; it is fundamental." The ordained priesthood is what the "apostolic group" was in the early Church: in it are concentrated "Church's whole mission and all her powers of evangelization." A priest is "at the head of the community.... More than other Christians and prior to them he has the duty and right of teaching.... He possesses the authority of the gospel. This primacy lies in universal service, placing the priest at the heart of the people of God.... More than the rest in their ministry, the priest as Christian is explicitly, publicly, the man of Christ and of the kingdom in the World.... The priesthood... is meant to be a sacrament of charity" (pp. 58-62, *passim*).

While making these statements, the author was almost painfully aware of 1 Pet. 2:9. As a protective crutch for Petrine theology of the priesthood, he mellows his statements with a "laity too" refrain. The only statement, apparently, that lacks the "laity too" is this one: "Without him [the priest], Eucharist does not come to be" (p. 60).

Concerning hyphenated priesthood Durrwell writes, "For a priest to practice a profession mainly for its own sake would not be normal solution and could be justified only in exceptional circumstances. A profession practiced for its own sake is part of the reality of this world,

while the apostolate is an eschatological reality" (p. 76). The seepage of secularism into clerical minds has led some to think that the priest should have another, "real," profession. For Durrwell, the priestly "consecration" is a supernatural reality which ordinarily needs full-time attention in this world.

Durrwell has quite unashamedly fallen in love with the word "virginization," which he makes to stand for all those things that make a Christian holy. "No one becomes a Christian," he writes, "or lives as a Christian except in the crucible of virginization which is Christ in his glorifying death.... All the Church's sacraments are sacraments of virginity.... Marriage is legitimate for a Christian, because it is also a sacrament of virginization" (p. 86). That may seem as pansexualization in reverse. But if Peter Berger is right in his estimate that our age has made the problem of bigger and more frequent orgasms its most important concern, then Durrwell's "virginization" might be a linguistic therapy for exorcizing the Trojan horse of sex as exterior sign of interior grace that has intruded not only into the life of John Updike's Rev. Thomas Marshfield, but into the minds of a goodly number of psychologizing Catholic celibates, ordained and consecrated. "Virginization" is eschatological.

Durrwell's book is a hymn to the priesthood and the religious life. He has looked at the best in both, and he is overjoyed at what he has seen.

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- Basset, Bernard, S.J., *Guilty, O Lord: Yes, I still Go to Confession*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 118. Cloth, \$5.95.
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# the CORD

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## COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our Summer Issue have been drawn by Sister M. Raphael Fulwider, O.S.F., chairman of the Art Department at Maria Regina College, Syracuse, N.Y. The poem, "Mary Magdalene (p. 232) was illustrated by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., of the Monastery of Sancta Clara, Canton, Ohio.

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## A REVIEW EDITORIAL

### The Roots of Bonaventure's Thought

WITH THE CELEBRATION of the Bonaventure Centennial coming to a formal close this summer here at St. Bonaventure University, it seems more than appropriate to call our readers' attention to a work on Bonaventure which will be a basic source for some time to come: *The Historical Constitution of Saint Bonaventure's Philosophy*, by John F. Quinn of the Medieval Institute in Toronto. The scope of this work is enormous—examination of the textual basis of virtually every Bonaventurian doctrine from exemplarism and illumination to hylomorphism and the form of light; the comparison of St. Thomas's views on all these matters with those of Bonaventure; and—very importantly—an over-all evaluation of the “classical” and “contemporary” assessments of historians of Bonaventure's thought: e.g., De Wulf, Gilson, and Van Steenberghen on the one hand; and Robert, Ratzinger, and Van de Laan, on the other. Quinn concludes that Bonaventure's philosophy is neither a warmed-over Augustinianism, nor a mish-mash of Aristotelianism and Neo-Platonism, but an original synthesis based on the notion of participation and developed in a way that is Bonaventure's own.

The organization of the work is superb. After an introduction which offers a complete review of Bonaventurian studies, Quinn works through the theme of natural knowledge, its foundations, principles, modes, certitude, and illumination, and under that theme treats the aspects of

*The Historical Constitution of Saint Bonaventure's Philosophy*. By John Francis Quinn. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1973. Pp. 981, incl. Bibliography & Index. Leatherette, \$25.00.

Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph. D. (Philosophy, Fordham University), our Associate Editor and the Head of the Siena College Philosophy Department, is teaching a graduate course this summer at St. Bonaventure University, entitled “A Survey of Franciscan Thought.”

Bonaventure's philosophy alluded to above. Each section is followed by a summary, and the final chapter gives an over-view of all that has gone before in the 896 pages of closely printed text. A Bibliography of twenty pages and an extensive index make this work accessible to, and invaluable for, the scholar.

If there are weaknesses in this work, they flow from its strengths: e.g., the inclusion of St. Thomas as vehicle of comparison makes the book another book; the very thoroughness of treatment tends to blur distinctions; the length of the work puts it out of range for the general reader (I feel the gathering of the summaries in one separate book would be a valuable contribution). Yet any serious Bonaventure scholar will have to take note of Quinn's *magnum opus*, and *The Historical Constitution of Saint Bonaventure's Philosophy* is a book which should be in the library of every Franciscan Community in any way involved in education, as well as in every major public library with significant holdings in the medieval area.

*St. Julian Davies ofm*

## Mary

one spends all his energy in work  
and this becomes his master—  
there is no peace

another puts all his hope in studies  
and calls them lord—  
rest is not found

some labor in making Yahweh  
their God—  
they are called happy.

ANTHONY SAVASTA, O.S.F.



## Francis Builds a Home

HAROLD NIEDZWIECKI, O.F.M.

**F**RANCIS OF ASSISI means many things to different people because each one approaches him with a certain perception colored by his own personality and background. Our perception of things is necessarily subjective because we *are* subjects; we are not cameras or tape recorders which might record the very same aspect of reality in every detail. We *receive* different impressions and, consequently, we also *express* ourselves differently. So, our impression of Francis and Franciscanism might be somewhat different and our lifestyle might also reflect these differences. And, as long as we are alive, our perceptions are subject to change. So today, my view of Francis and what he stands for is different from what it was twenty years ago. *He* has not changed, but my perception of him has. Lived experience, reading, reflection, discussion—all these have an effect on a person's outlook on things.

Recently, I have had many opportunities to search for Francis. The College of St. Francis, of which I am a part, is searching for its own identity as a Franciscan center of learning; a Sisters' Commission, with whom I am involved, is also doing the same for its community. In connection with these, I have tried to put together my picture of Francis, and I'm happy to share it with you.

From an objective point of view there are many aspects of Francis that can be discussed because his life was so rich. It was like a beautiful diamond that can be examined from different angles. What especially impresses me at this time, however, is not so much any one aspect, but rather the sense of unity that characterized his life. He was able to achieve a remarkable kind of wholeness and integration and handed down a very coherent and meaningful worldview. There were no contradic-

tions between what he said and what he did; no conflicts between his relationship with God and with man. As a result, a kind of serenity and peace somehow characterize him, and this comes from being able to "put it all together," as we say.

In my reflections on Francis I would like to make use of the theme of "home." What I find useful about this theme is that "home" is not a finished product, but rather a process of achievement. "Home" is not so much a place as a *relation*, and a meaningful relationship is not something that happens by chance; it is the result of conscious personal effort. Conscious personal effort means that we make an attempt to grow in our awareness of reality; we try to expand our vision.

Many people today wear bi-focal or even tri-focal glasses. This enables them to read the newspaper and enjoy a beautiful landscape, too. Well, man's vision as a human being is not limited to his eyesight alone; it refers to his insight as well. There are some people who can see only the immediate surroundings of the physical environment. Others see much farther; they have a good long-distance vision. They

realize that man's "world" is bigger than the material universe, and his vision, therefore, cannot be restricted to the physical. Fullness of life for a human being comes from an awareness of and involvement in a deeper world. Temporal and spatial events in our material environment find their true meaning only in the context of an eternal and infinite horizon.

I have discovered some useful insights on this topic in Josef Pieper's essay on leisure. In his little work he distinguishes between the physical world and the spiritual world. The world of matter he calls "environment," and the world of spirit he calls "world." I want to emphasize this distinction and the terms because I will make use of them throughout this paper.

These two—matter and spirit—are different, but what is important to note is how they differ. They are different not as two parts of a whole—for example, as my left and right legs are different parts of me; but rather as part and whole—for example, the leg being a part of me. So, "environment" represents merely the physical realm of human existence, while "world" stands for my entire existence, physical and

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*Father Harold Niedzwiecki, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy, Innsbruck, 1961), a member of the Assumption Province, is Professor of Philosophy and Chairman of the Philosophy Department at the College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois.*

spiritual. This makes up the whole context of man's existence, and in this context even that which is material can become spiritualized.

I mention this distinction because it is only in what we will now call "world" that we find *spirit*. It is here that we discover a *field of relations* which is the foundation of a home and a family. This is where man belongs.

Recently I read an account of a psychiatrist about the death of his patient. This patient was the famous actress, Marilyn Monroe. About her, Dr. Ralph Greenson says: "She was a good human being. She was a lost and very lonely woman, who has never gotten over being a waif. She needed to belong to a family. It is a tragedy that her artistic achievement as an actress, and all the wealth and fame it brought her, did not give peace. She had a good future ahead of her..." As you may recall, she ended her life by taking an overdose of barbiturates.

What a remarkable contrast between her life and that of Francis! In terms of our above distinction, she had everything: fame, possessions, but no "home," no sense of belonging. Francis, on the other hand, had nothing here—no possessions, no dwelling, no money, but his heart was at peace because he had

found a "home." He had a different vision of life.

One way in which people manifest their near-sightedness is by taking things out of context and equating a part to the whole. For example, people sometimes will single out joy, simplicity, poverty, St. Francis talking to the birds or walking barefoot, as being "Franciscan" traits, but fail to see the reason behind them. To supply the reason, the background, the context in which these things do become meaningful is part of my purpose here.

There is a whole web of relations in every person's life, and seeing the connection between these is often part of the problem we face. We find it hard to see how pieces fit together, to establish priorities. Francis, of course, was no exception; it is, after all, a part of being human. He did, however, finally "put it all together." His conversion meant just that. He turned from a superficial existence which focused on the "environment" to a meaningful way of life in the "world." This was indeed a spiritual change because it meant discovery of the spirit in his life.

Even as I was putting these thoughts together, I heard in the background a song whose title must have been "She Touched Me." I say this because this phrase was used so often. The

line that struck me was something to the effect: she touched me and after that nothing remained the same. I think Francis' conversion was like that. God "touched" him, and Francis was no longer the same. He turned his life around, he converted, which means basically that he discovered God, he established a relationship with Him, he was indeed "at home" with God. After this, everything seemed to fall into place for him.

He realized, above all, his basic relationship with God as that of a *son*. He was no longer alone; he belonged to a family. From then on, everything else was viewed in relationship to the Father. Others are not persons only, but children of God, making Francis a *brother* and a *servant* to them. Nature, too, reflects a relation to God, making creatures out of things and making Francis see himself as a kind of *shepherd*.

These three relations—son, brother-servant, shepherd—are basic, I think, to Francis' vision. They constitute his impression of reality, and his life, then, becomes an expression of his belief. We are now ready to look at each one of these relations.

### Son

THE BEGINNING of human life is normally associated with love. Francis's spiritual rebirth also came about because of love. It occurred when God touched him

and he realized that God loved him and is indeed Father of the family of creation. Francis spent time soul-searching, questioning his existence. His conversion marks the time when his question mark was replaced by an exclamation point. This was indeed *good news*: God loves, God loves *me*. Is not this the basic reason for Francis's joy and optimism? God shared himself with Francis and eventually will share his mission too. This sharing came as a revelation to Francis, a revelation which occurred through Jesus, God's Son, whom Francis was to imitate so closely throughout his life. Francis received this revelation and soon became aware that to be a son of God meant also to be a brother and a servant. His whole apostolate eventually is colored by this attitude. Before seeing Francis in action, though, we ought to see him in contemplation, since his life is but an expression of what he thinks, believes, and feels.

The inspiration for all that he did is found in his primary relationship with God. It was his discovery of God as love that caused him great *joy* in the first place. Another contrast occurs to me here. Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher, wrote these words at one point in his life: "It is so seldom that a friendly voice reaches me. I am now alone, absurdly alone... and for



years no refreshment, not a drop of humanness, not a breath of love has reached me." Small wonder that he is written about as a pessimistic, nihilistic philosopher. He is also an atheistic one, the one who coined the phrase used so much in the recent past: "God is dead." Francis was very much aware of God, his love and goodness, and he was always ready to acknowledge it, to sing His praises, to thank Him. Consequently, his prayers are full of words of praise and thanksgiving.

Francis's *faith* in God was his way of responding to the revelation he received through Jesus. His vision of things was now colored by this faith. Anything that pertained to God or His work became an object of faith and serious concern for Francis; for

example, the Bible as the written word of God, the Eucharist as the sacramental sign of God's presence, priests and theologians as mediators of God's revelation. In all these examples what is the relation they bear to God, His presence, His power?

Having experienced the value and beauty of his relationship with God, that is, feeling very much "at home" with a Father, Francis was a man full of faith and was to remain *faithful* for life; and every aspect of his life would reflect this fidelity, for in God he discovered a value to be held firmly. It was a value worthy of his trust.

Some of the prayers attributed to Francis revealed something of his mind to us. I think, for example, of his prayer, "My God and my All," or what has come to be known as the Peace Prayer, or his Canticle of the Sun.

In the first of these prayers I find a very sound basis for Francis's *simplicity*. He became a simple person because a single thought pervaded his life: God, who is a loving Father. In turn, Francis became a *wholehearted* person when he discovered a value worth his whole attention and all his energy. In this sense he was a singleminded, a simple person.

Another attitude that is firmly rooted in God's being Francis's "All" is *poverty*. If God is

Francis's "All," what need does he have of anything else? Indeed, what else is there to desire? For Francis things can have no real value in themselves; but in relation to a further purpose, they acquire a value, they in fact cease to be things and become creatures. They are meant to enrich our lives; and any time they detract from that and become obstacles, they fail us. And yet, it is really we who fail, because we misunderstand the relationship between them and ourselves. Francis's poverty was based on his understanding of this relationship. He did not so much look *at* things, as *through* them. His "world" included, but always transcended, his "environment," so that Francis was never "at home" with things. They never became so important as to displace God.

In the light of this understanding we can see why Francis often admonished his brothers about possessions and particularly money. He realized the possibility of misplaced priorities, the danger of inverting the relation, that is, man becoming a slave of his possessions. You can see, then, that poverty is not merely a negative notion for Francis; nor is it ever an end in itself, but rather a means to maintaining healthy relationships.

Pursuing further Francis's attitude toward God as his "All,"

we understand why he considered himself a *pilgrim*. God is not situated in a place, he is not confined to an "environment." His "world" is not physical but relational, that is to say, personal and spiritual. No place can contain Him. Our "environment," therefore, cannot be our "home." We do live and operate here and now, but our lives are never entirely confined to physical and temporal limits. Just as I am more than my body, so my "world" is much more than my physical environment. And so, we can never feel completely "at home" or fully satisfied here, if we share Francis's vision. We can see why he did not wish to have dwellings, but rather chose to be an itinerant preacher. Home for him was where God was.

With his heart and mind set on God—His love, goodness, power—Francis could not help thinking of his own lowliness. *Humility* is thus another natural consequence in his thinking; for in relation to God, he is indeed nothing. What claim to fame can he make alone? His greatness lies in his lowliness. It is not he, but God who accomplishes worthwhile things. God does, however, employ instruments in fulfilling His mission, and Francis saw himself as just that—an instrument whose value lies not in itself, but in being faithful to its purpose, that is, channeling God's power of love.

It becomes somewhat clear to me that so many of the so-called "virtues" of Francis are nothing else but different aspects of him, viewed from a different perspective. His life is like a beautiful diamond which can be looked at from many different points of view. Seen from one angle, he appears joyful. From another, he is simple, poor, humble. Or, peaceful . . . . All these make sense only in the light of the entire context.

That context is what I mean by "home" as a process, something to be accomplished. This implies effort on our part. For Francis, being "at home" with God meant a great deal of time, energy, and attention. In practice, this means an attitude of prayerfulness, which means a great deal more than just reciting words. My whole being, not just my lips, must reflect my awareness of being a son. I—my mind and heart, hands and feet—I must seek out God. Discipline and effort are needed, and at times I need to get away from the noisy "environment" and search for solitude. In my "world" I need to look inward and upward in order to see how I may be a useful instrument.

God is not confined to the "environment" but has a "world" which is boundless, unlimited by time and space. That is why in moments of prayer, when we are "at home" in God's world, we

find a source of renewed energy, strength, and freedom—so different from the boring routine and restrictions of our "environment." These become moments of rebirth.

This, I feel, is Francis fundamental secret: his discovery of God as a loving Father. This led Francis to discover himself, enabled him to be himself and become so much for others. His active involvement in the world becomes meaningful only in the light of this background. His relationship with God is fruitful and results in a life of service in behalf of his fellow man.

### Brother-Servant

I REMEMBER READING a story about a king who was so taken up with his greatness that he had nothing but mirrors in his palace in order that he might always see himself and be reminded of his greatness. While he was so turned in on himself his kingdom was suffering, his subjects were starving. He was totally unaware of their plight.

One day, a servant in the palace replaced one of the mirrors with a window, and the king, much to his surprise, saw not himself but his people. This became a turning point not only for him, but also for many other people.

Francis's conversion was a turning point too—not only for

himself, but for many others in his life. The discovery of being a son generated a great deal of love in Francis. His relationship with God proved to be a very fruitful one, so that the love quite naturally poured over. Others now became "brothers and sisters," and in relation to them Francis became a *brother* and a *servant*. His "home" contained thenceforth no mirrors, only windows.

Very early in his new life Francis gained some followers, and it became clear to him that the relationship of brotherhood must find concrete expression. So it is that the notion of *fraternity* becomes a pivotal point in Francis's thinking. The brothers are to go in pairs, live in common, work together, pray in fellowship as a sign of brotherhood and as a means of strengthening the bond.

No one among them is to claim superiority. In fact, each is willingly to serve the other, and together they are to fulfill their communal mission, witnessing to God's love. Francis expressed this desire of serving others by calling his friars "lesser," thus revealing *minority* as another essential ingredient in his worldview.

Serving others might take on many different forms. Above all, for Francis it meant *being available* to others, and living out his

beliefs in their midst would thereby be giving them a concrete *example* of what it means to be loved by God. At other times, service might mean a very specific action, such as his ministering to the lepers. Then again, concern for others took on the form of preaching. In whatever he did, his objective was spreading the good news and extending God's love.

Francis's encounter with God led to joy, peace, and freedom for himself. In turn, he wished to enable others to experience the same; so he set himself the task of helping others overcome whatever obstacle might hinder that experience. He sought to free people from all forms of oppression, any sin that violated man's relationship with God or his fellowman. He would always make attempts at reconciliation, help people put their lives in order, help them feel at ease "at home." Francis sought to be wherever suffering was evident, wherever sinners stood in need of God's saving power. He wished to serve as a channel for that power.

It is clear to me that the form of Francis's apostolate is but a logical expression of his meaningful relationship with God. The "windows" in his life are explained in terms of his being a "mirror" of God's love. What his heart and soul felt in prayer is

now expressed by his hands and feet. Action understood in this way is nothing else but an other face of prayer. Francis was wholehearted both in prayer and in service. In his relationship with God he was passive, but in relation to man he was very active. We can see why it is important to know the context if we wish to understand and appreciate Francis. He proved to be a very effective instrument because he was very much affected by God. Salvation, he realized, occurs when a person enters into a meaningful relationship with God, so that God does indeed become *my* God. Francis tried to facilitate this process, not by forcing people to convert, but simply by witnessing to God's love.

He very much appreciated the fact that man's response to God must be *free*. He learned that God respects man's freedom and "lets him be." To create, after all, means just that: let things *be*. In a way Francis shared this kind of creativity, and thus participated in God's own work, realizing that failure to do so is to fall short of the mark; and that in the biblical sense, is the meaning of sin. So we must come to appreciate this double relationship; namely, our vertical response to God must be totally free, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, on a horizontal level, we

cannot force others to embrace our value no matter how much we personally cherish it.

In this connection, I'm reminded of a very beautiful quote: "If you love something, you must let it go free. If, after it is free, it comes back to you, it is yours forever; if it doesn't it never was." It seems to apply very well to God's approach to man and might apply equally well to our dealings with others. After all, being brother-servant means helping the other person become what he can. It means being of service, being generous, being hospitable, allowing others to feel "at home" with us, whether by sharing bread or by some other aspect of our life.

Jesus was the sacrament which mediated God's message to Francis in the first place. He was the sign of God's love. In turn, God chose Francis to mediate his eternal message of good news to a particular people at a particular time. Mirroring God's love, Francis became a window through which God became visible once again. Francis sought to rid others of disease and put them at ease by healing, reconciling, making them feel at peace, "at home."

### Shepherd

WE ARE NOW in a good position to understand and appreciate the third relationship, that is, Francis and nature. Here I think the term

*shepherd* captures the meaning of this relationship.

Earlier we saw man responding freely to God and allowing freedom for other persons. Well, at this point we might say analogously that man must also allow freedom for creatures. He must "let them be," that is, they are meant to be used, respected, cared for; in a sense, they are to be humanized and spiritualized by being included in the whole context of man's world. To abuse, exploit them, or let them enslave man is to fail in this relationship.

This third relationship completes the cycle of Francis's view of things, but it makes sense only as part of the whole picture. Francis is understandable only in the context of faith, apart from which we have either nonsense or sentimentalism.

He understood the book of nature as another expression of what he read in the book of Scripture. Both have the same Author and carry the same message. There is only one light, one truth, one message, and all of creation is meant to reflect that light, echo that truth, reveal that message. In ecology the term "ecosystem" is used these days to describe a unit of interdependent elements which comprise a whole. For Francis the ecosystem in nature parallels the community of men, which in turn is a reflection of the relations found in the family of the Blessed

Trinity. In terms of our overall discussion here, all three of these—the natural, human, divine—constitute one ecosystem.

In this system man is called upon to mediate between God and nature. We might say he has a pastoral relationship with nature, that is, he is to *shepherd* it. This manifests itself above all through an attitude of reverence, which allows one to see not merely things, but "creatures" in relation to a Creator. In fact, Francis humanizes them and calls them "brother" and "sister." He sacramentalizes them by looking not *at* them but *through* them. They, like him, become a window through which God's light shines. You see how the *relation* makes a world of difference because awareness of it puts us in a different "world," a world of spirit, a context of faith.

This context makes for a remarkable unity for Francis. He was truly whole in his being and living because he recognized



the sacramental principle, namely, that all things in the created order are vehicles and signs of God's grace. This enabled him to see God's face in every flower, Jesus in every person. For Francis all things come from God and all lead back to Him. Creator and creature appear to be two sides of reality. Looking upward, Francis sees nature in God; glancing downward, he beholds God in creation.

In this context it is easy to see that for Francis all things were intended to touch the heart of man and lift him to God. And, on the other hand, any misuse of creation can be viewed as an offense to the Creator. Like a beautiful scene, God and creation constitute a composite whole and are related as background and foreground. God is the eternal horizon ("world") against which historical events ("environment") occur, and apart from which they appear meaningless. In a sense, we might say Francis sees the earth as but a reflection of the stars. For him earth is a suburb of heaven.

Francis is certainly a person who had a capacity to marvel and wonder. He sensed a mystery around him, which captivated him. Life was truly full of awe for him. And much of this he experienced in relation to nature.

How we fail, therefore, when we take things out of context,

when instead of devotion to the divine (the whole world), we make attempts to master and control everything and limit it only to our immediate environment!

The kind of unity and simplicity which Francis showed seems to be conspicuously absent today. Notice how all three relations we discussed are somehow involved. First of all, for many people today "God is dead." With His demise goes our sonship. Then, who is my brother? Am I my brother's keeper? Finally, our problems with ecology reveal a sad state of affairs. Attitudes like "It's not my world," "I don't care," are not uncommon. Does this perhaps show that the two—God and nature—are interrelated and indeed in a sense one? If God is dead—absent from our "world"—our "environment" seems to suffer some serious consequences. And most important perhaps is what happens to man himself. He loses a sense of identity because he has severed important relationships upon which his identity depends. The result is that he often falls apart psychologically, disintegrates socially, and dies spiritually. All this while thriving very much physically! His "home" is a hole in the ground; his vision is as big as the hole.

How different Francis appears! He was a person who discovered

himself in relation to God and then contributed greatly to society, while himself possessing nothing. His heart was set on God; his vision made a neighborhood of the whole world.

Francis wove a beautiful pattern of his life and it has become our inheritance. The thread we have been following in this pattern was that of "home." This includes also the notion of spirit, namely, that which gives meaning to the various relations that make up human existence. And, since spirit is not confined to an "environment," it operates in any place at any time. It was felt by Francis and can become operative in us, too. The spirit can shine through us as windows and can indeed renew the face of the earth. This cannot happen, however, unless man experiences a face-lifting first. This process will begin when man lifts his face beyond his "environment" and discovers a much bigger "world."

Like Francis, we must take life somewhat seriously and examine the quality of our relations. By asking some basic questions about life, values, we can begin to see what remains to be done about making our world a "home." We need to find a value to believe in, commit ourselves to it, and then spend ourselves in living it creatively and responsibly, thus giving witness to something other than ourselves.

Francis found God and agreed

to become a co-creator with Him. Like God, Francis saw that everything was indeed good in the world and that evil comes in only when we rupture the relationships which make life meaningful and beautiful. When we turn our eyes from God, turn our backs on our fellow man, and make a dump of nature, then all we have left is our self—no family, no father, no brother, no world, no "home." This would be the worst of tragedies, a crippling blindness.

It is because man's world is so complex, his web of relations so intricate that he has trouble "seeing"—not just physically, but perceiving, which implies more than just sight. It includes what we might call "insight."

Isn't it interesting that Francis went blind at the end of his life? I see even this physical phenomenon fitting in well into his beautiful world-view. Having discovered true beauty in its fullest sense, he no longer needed to see things which were only a reflection of it.

We, on the other hand, often suffer the opposite kind of blindness. Things get in our way so much, that we fail to see the "beyond" behind them. We get so taken up with mirrors, that we forget that there are windows, too. Our environment becomes so polluted that the spirit is no longer discernible in it.

No one will deny that our

world needs to be renewed. Yet, the only way to do that is to begin with ourselves and then go beyond ourselves. "Today more than ever," Thomas Merton tells us, "We need to recognize that the gift of solitude is not ordered to the acquisition of strange contemplative powers, but first of all to the recovery of one's deep self, and to the renewal of an authenticity which is twisted out of

shape by the pretentious routines of a disordered togetherness. What the world asks of the priest today is that he should be first of all a *person* who can give himself because he has a self to give. And indeed, we cannot give Christ if we have not found him, and we cannot find him if we cannot find ourselves." Francis is surely an example of someone who searched and found himself.

## Incense

Forth they come  
At the first crack of fire new,  
These simple ones, to weep  
To pour themselves out  
Silently  
Into the darksome fire of the tomb.  
They gather everything,  
These women of the first day,  
Born beneath the tree,  
And caring not the price  
They make compassion's way  
Upon the blackest burn of hope  
Into the death of sin  
Into the death of Him who rose  
Into the face of God.

SISTER MADONNA JOSEPH CASEY, O.S.C.

## Mother Marianne— A Sister of Saint Francis

SISTER M. THADDEUS, O.S.F.

### VI. She Gave Them a Reason to Live and a Reason to Die

MOTHER MARIANNE was gone! Skill, affection, and tears went into the building of her last small home. The people of Molokai gave their best in craftsmanship and in love to do this final service for her who had given her life to them.

Mother had been ill for some time, and during her sleepless nights she was often heard to pray aloud, "Sweet Heart of Jesus, pity me!" But never a word of complaint. A novena had been devoutly attended by the girls and the Sisters in hopes that Mother Marianne's condition would improve by July 25—the feast of her patron, St. Anne. As usual great preparation was made to celebrate her feast day—but Mother was still too ill to be brought out on the veranda. The

girls were advised to arrange themselves on the grass outside her window and sing their beautiful songs from there. God has indeed gifted them with lovely voices and a feeling for music, and Mother Marianne had encouraged them to use their gifts. One piece was particularly touching since it was a duet that Mother could visualize; one of the singers accompanying with a guitar while the other, who was fingerless, would play the auto-harp by manipulating sticks tied to her little stumps.

This type of arrangement was not uncommon since Mother Marianne had come to Molokai. One of the first instances of such resourcefulness was in the case of two leprous women who had been great organists until the

*Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F., whose pioneering work on Franciscan Eremiticism has been chronicled in our pages, is Chairman of the English Department at Assumption Catholic Academy, Syracuse, New York.*

disease had affected the legs of one and the hands of the other. Realizing their distress, Mother Marianne had ingeniously convinced them that a cooperative effort could be rewarding. From then on the two were inseparable: one played the foot pedals, the other the keys—with very fine music as a result.

Early in August, Mother was once again able to be wheeled outside to enjoy her lovely grounds. As she surveyed those things which she had labored so hard to beautify, one of the girls who had a camera asked permission to take a picture. Mother was never fond of pictures; so her first response was negative; but Mother was also sensitive to the feelings of others, and she decided to invite the whole group of youngsters and some of the Sisters to join in the picture. In this way the youngster was granted her request and Mother was not the center of attention.

The group of girls gleefully ran off to play. One of the girls remained for a moment, studied Mother's worn face, and then began to cry *Kanikau*, the bereavement chant. Mother knew the child had read the signs of death in her face.

At half past four, on the morning of August 9, Mother asked that her Sisters gather around her bed. A priest was called who anointed her and gave her Holy

Communion. It was now Mass time for the community, and so the Sisters decided they could do more for her by attending Mass, and all but one went to the Church. To their surprise on their return, Mother was fully dressed in her wheel chair and asked to be taken to the refectory for breakfast. Although she could not eat, she went again to the refectory for dinner and supper. Her will, that indomitable force always in her command, and her longing to be with her beloved community, provided her feeble body with strength.

As she lay very quietly in bed that evening, she did not seem to suffer, and though she seemed to be unconscious, every time the Sisters kneeling around her would stop the recitation of prayers, she would raise her hand. The prayers continued for about two hours, and then, at half past ten, with only a slight shudder, she died. There was no preparation needed for a death such as hers.

Brother Joseph Dutton, who had worked so closely with Father Damien and had often joked with Mother Marianne about which of them would be the first to leave this life, hearing of her death made this comment: "We are better men and women for having come in contact with such a lovely character as she was."

News of her death travelled rapidly, and soon endless lines of people came to pay respect to the woman who had spent her lifetime trying to bring them peace, joy, and beauty. The older ones recounted the condition Kalaupapa had been in when

Mother first arrived; others who knew her at Branch Hospital before she had gone to Molokai, recalled the numerous problems she had met and overcome during her stay there. All of these people expressed a sense of loss in the departure of their friend and mother.

The original spot for her body to be laid to rest had to be abandoned because of the rockiness of the place, and she was finally laid on a little hillock near an orange grove she herself had planted and cared for. A monument, representing the vision of St. Francis, was to be erected later on—but her greatest monument could not be erected, for it lived in the hearts and souls of those for whom she had lived and died; in the hearts, souls, and minds of her "children."

She had faced each one as a human being who needed her concern, her love, and her strength. She had helped each one to recognize and accept the disease as a way of life which could be fulfilling and enriching. She had given them the respect which she also expected them to render to her. She had given

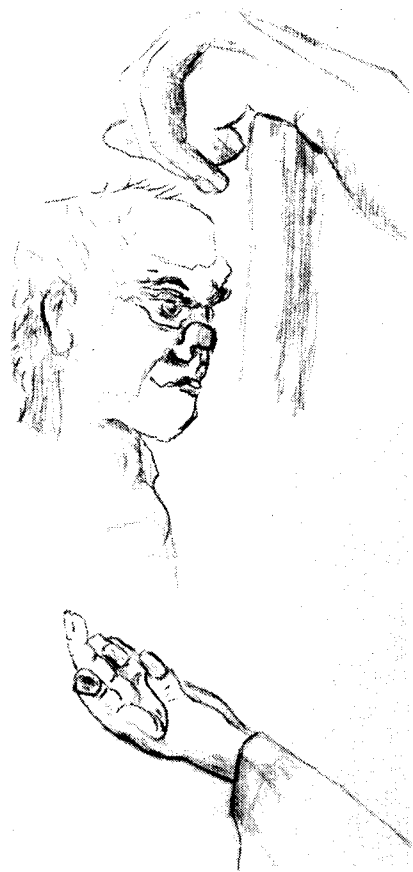
them a reason to live and a reason to die; and both of these, she, herself, did very well.

Since imitation is considered to be the sincerest form of flattery, what the people of Molokai did after her death was certainly in imitation and obviously sincere.

When Mother Marianne's community planned a new convent in Honolulu, the lepers, anxious to keep the good followers of St. Francis among them on the Islands, raised twelve hundred dollars just among themselves for the building fund. Who knows what amount that is in the sight of God—for when one thinks of the personal sacrifice involved in saving and the crippled hands that labored for that money, it is indeed a great sum—a sum total of sacrifice and love they had learned and received from the heart and hands of Mother Marianne, those hands which from the very beginning had planted, scrubbed, bandaged, and buried, that heart which sought only those things which would give pleasure and peace to her "children," those generous hands which had prepared the bed upon which the blessed remains of Father Damien were laid to rest when it was discovered that he had given away his bed long before and had always slept on the floor. Those same hands had found black cloth to cover the rough coffin on the outside and a white satin for the



inside. And, as a finishing touch, they had laid pleats and fastened them with gilt thumbtacks in honor of the man who sacrificed his life for his people. Forty-nine years later her work would still give tribute when Father Damien's remains were brought to Honolulu. The pleats were still as she had laid them, and the



tacks were there—though no longer shining like gold.

It was always a wonder to Mother that after sacrificing his life for his people, Father Damien had had so few at his grave to honor him. One can only imagine how happy Mother Marianne would have been to see his second burial, which is known to all the world.

But Mother Marianne was gone! And her funeral was quite different. Not at all as she would have desired—endless rows wailing and lamenting her passing. The woman who wanted everyone to feel at home with her would not want any recognition. The woman who would be waiting with a refreshing drink for her Sisters after a hard day's work, would not even reflect upon the great labors of her long day—or night. The woman who was so big-hearted in anticipating the wants of others, would not expect anyone to look ahead for her. And yet, on the faces of all who passed by there was a sense of loss, a sense of friendship, that goes beyond the grave. All classes, races, and creeds united in procession to do her honor. Following the services, the lepers knelt around her grave and prayed for her.

Mother Marianne has her reward. But even this, she has extended to others: the optimism to live for another life, greater

than that found here. Her life is proof that the soul does triumph over the body.

Solitude, crime, disease, despair, starvation, desertion, and misery are not pleasant playmates. Yet these were the tools of their trade, constantly sharpened and intensified by general use. Greater than these, however, were the gifts they brought with

them to confront and defeat these destroyers of soul and body. And destroy they did, until hope, friendship, love, gentleness, cleanliness, patience, and good sense wrought by prayer and the strong character of a valiant woman gradually disarmed them and released their victims to a life filled with personal worth, both here and hereafter.

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# The First Pope of Peace

COSMOS J. BACICH

TODAY ALL THE headlines point to the detente between the United States and Russia. They also refer to the relaxation of tensions between America and the People's Republic of China.

Two modern Popes, John XXIII and Paul VI, have lived in a time of strained peace. They both have written encyclicals which stress the need for nations to outlaw war as an instrument of policy and to turn to negotiations and discussions as a non-violent avenue to peace. The overhanging threat of nuclear annihilation which could destroy both combatants has in a negative way made peace more palatable.

In our modern times, the total destruction made possible by a hydrogen bomb has enforced a peace. There was a time, however, when this need for peace was not so overriding. Pope Benedict XV lived in an era when war was accepted as a way of settling disputes. The ultimate weapon then was the "Big Bertha," an artillery piece that

could project a missile the farthest that any cannon could, up to that time, and create the most destruction of any weapon devised up to that time.

Pope Benedict assumed the responsibilities of the Papacy in 1914, succeeding the saintly Pius X. His pontificate would encompass the most tumultuous time in world history, with two major convulsions: the Great War and the Bolshevik Revolution.

To understand the predicament that the Pope was faced with, we have to examine the mentality of those who controlled the foreign policy of the nations that participated in the World War. Germany and Austria wielded the most influence among the central Powers; the other two, not as prominent, were Russia and Serbia. All four were monarchies, and all were beset with massive internal problems. The monarchs in these countries were removed from the daily, mundane problems of the people they ruled. They lived in the past, reminiscing on the past

glories of their empires in the late nineteenth century. They could not comprehend that they were now living in the twentieth century.

In 1914 Archduke Francis Ferdinand was killed; and the two alliances, Germany and Austria on one side and England and France on the other, were locked together in a deadly struggle. The adversaries were dedicated to exterminating each other. They brought over to the twentieth century the idea that had permeated the thinking of Louis Napoleon and Bismarck in the latter part of the nineteenth: that the only way to settle arguments between nations was not to sit down and discuss differences across a table, but to decide the answer to their differences across a battlefield.

None of the leaders of the alliance was willing to settle the differences peaceably. Lloyd George of England, Clemenceau of France, and Orlando of Italy demanded not only total victory over the Central Powers but also complete reparations after the war.

This was the atmosphere into which the Pontificate of Benedict XV found itself cast from its outset. World War I had already started; so Pope Benedict

had inherited this world problem.

Benedict was ahead of his time. He had compassion for people at a compassionless time. He cited certain wrongs which he felt were symptomatic of a troubled world, and which he saw as contributing to the atmosphere of war which he called a "murderous struggle."

The Pope cited the following as the primary causes for the turmoil. There was, first of all, the lack of mutual love among men, with the most obvious instances easily discernible in the architects of the foreign policies of their governments. The animosity and hatred which Clemenceau had for the Kaiser certainly could not be called "love." The use of mustard gas and the bombing, which was a new war technique at that time, was an example of the inhumanity of the conflict. The Holy Father could also point to the fact that entire generation of young French manhood had been wiped out.

Pope Benedict said that there was a disregard for authority. He had throughout the war repeatedly implored the warring factions to cease their belligerent action and to consider the moral and physical damage they were

*Cosmos J. Bacich is a Free Lance Writer residing in Pleasant Hill, California.*

inflicting upon a battered world. Their reaction was swift and clear. They told the Pope not to interfere in matters which did not involve him; that he should be concerned with spiritual problems and with governing the Catholic Church. Because of their myopic vision of the world situation they could not see that the horror of a devastating war was a spiritual matter and that the evil inflicted upon the populations of both Eastern and Western Europe, a great many of them Catholic, was a concern of the Pope. So they told him to mind his own business and leave them alone to conduct their grand and glorious war.

The Pope also observed that there were unjust quarrels between the various classes. When Karl Marx in the mid-nineteenth century and Lenin in the early twentieth called for a socialist revolution, they reiterated that it had to result in a classless society (at that time, there was of course a wide gap between the classes).

A prime example of what the Pontiff meant was the situation in Czarist Russia, where Czar Nicholas and the Czarina lived in opulent splendor in the palace at St. Petersburg while the serfs in Moscow and Kiev lived in abject poverty.

This scene was duplicated in Germany and in the Austro-

Hungarian Empire where there was likewise a wide disparity between rich and poor. In all these countries where these conditions existed, the monarchy and those close to it lived well while the poor, suffering through rampant unemployment and other injustices, were on the brink of revolution. The Pope realized that those secure in their wealth and power had the responsibility to be concerned about those not so fortunate.

During the course of the entire war, Pope Benedict periodically appealed to the world through papal documents, always repeating the same message: that the great crime was the war itself. The Pope on one occasion said, "Ah, may the fratricidal weapons fall to the ground! Already they are too bloodstained—let them at last fall. And may the hands of those who have had to wield them return to the labors of industry and commerce, to the works of civilization and peace."

On January 22, 1915, Benedict said, "The Roman Pontiff, as Vicar of Jesus Christ, who died for men, one and all, must embrace all the combatants in one sentiment of charity, and as the Father of all Catholics he has among the belligerents a great number of children, for whose salvation he must be equally and without distinction solicitous."

Again at another time in

January of 1915, the Holy Father said, "And We do proclaim it without modification, condemning openly every injustice by whatever side it may have been committed." The Pope was attacked mercilessly in the German press because of his neutral appeal for no more war.

Pope Benedict was unceasing in his quest for a peaceful and quick conclusion to the war. Pierre Renouin, the French historian, noted in his work *War and Aftermath, 1914-1929* that the Holy See published a note on August 9, 1917, at the request of the German Catholic Deputy, Erzberger, on behalf of the Austro-Hungarian government. The note, according to Renouin, asked for the restoration of Belgian independence and that "reasonable compromise" be brought in to aid in the settlement of the Alsace-Lorraine and Italian incidental questions.

As has been pointed out above, the Pope's relationship with the leadership of the European nations was severely strained. The Holy Father did, however, have extremely warm relations with the American President Woodrow Wilson. When Wilson proposed his fourteen points at the Peace Conference of Versailles in 1918-1919, he used as his model the forty points that Pope Benedict had enumerated in his encyclical on the war, *Ad Beatissimi*.



Robert Lansing was Woodrow Wilson's Secretary of State during the World War. He was probably his most trusted confidant. Another of President Wilson's close aids was Joseph P. Tumulty, a Catholic of Irish descent. Tumulty chronicled his experiences as a member of the President's staff in a book entitled *Woodrow Wilson as I Knew Him*. He recounts the close relationship and the letters which were exchanged between President Wilson and Benedict XV. Much of the correspondence was done in the name of President Wilson by Robert Lansing. He claims in one communication the Pope recommended that the warring parties return to the

"status quo ante bellum." Later on in his statement, he said that there should be "disarmament, and a concert of nations based upon an acceptance of the principle of arbitration; that by a similar concert freedom of the seas be established; and that the territorial claims of France and Italy, the perplexing problems of the Balkan states, and the restitution of Poland be left to such conciliatory adjustments as may be possible in the new temper of such a peace, due regard being paid to the aspirations of the peoples whose political fortunes and affiliations will be involved." Such was the substance of the note to the emissary of the President of the United States.

Ever since the end of the Wilson Presidency in 1920, there have been arguments pro and con about a President who became involved in the world War after winning a national election on a promise to keep the United States out of the conflict. One

fact cannot be disputed: that of all the world leaders, Woodrow Wilson was the most sympathetic to the appeals of the Pope. He was the only major international leader who shared with the Holy Father his compassion for the masses caught up in the struggle.

The quest for peaceful answers to world problems was loudly proclaimed by modern Popes, but the recognition that Pope Benedict XV should have received was long overdue. In an era when war was a way of life, Benedict's stance against the participants on both sides, unpopular as it was, was the only course that the Pontiff could take. His concern was for all the people—that Christian values and principles survive in an unprincipled time in world history.

Pope Benedict XV, whose Pontificate lasted from the beginning of the World War in 1914 until 1922, when the world returned to "normalcy," was truly a Pope of Peace.



## Blessed Are You—VII

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

Blessed Are the Peacemakers, For They Shall Be Called  
the Children of God

TO BE A peacemaker implies that we have already in some fashion seen God. Turmoil is ours. Peace is God's. It appears both in the Old and the New Testament as God's favorite light to diffuse and gift to bestow. Shalom! Peace be to you! It is also a very favorite cry of our times. Unfortunately, one might say that it is a favorite war-cry. How many veins have stood out on how many heads in the name of "peace"! Sometimes it seems to be spelled out in vitriol. And then, again, it can be and often enough is the shibboleth of the lethargic: "Peace! Peace!" Each to his own. Let every man go his own way, by which seems to be particularly meant that he should keep out of mine.

It is neither the peace-stomper nor the peaceful sleeper of whom Christ proclaims the seventh Beatitude. He is speaking not of

the destructive but of the creative, not of the nihilists but of the builders. This seventh one may qualify as the most active of the Beatitudes, that of the makers. Workers. Doers. Thinkers. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God" (Mt. 5:9).

Maybe we would prefer that Jesus had said: "Blessed are the peaceful." And perhaps that preference is what has led us to pretend that that actually is what he meant. Only it isn't. Christ always said exactly what he meant. And he is identifying as recognizable children of his Father those who make peace and not those who propose to us peace as a sleeping-bag for themselves.

Peace is not always easy to make. We have, in any case, got to have the ingredients. And they are found only in God. We never find peace in things or in circum-

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*Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., well known author of spiritual and dramatic works, is Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Roswell, New Mexico.*

stances or in situations; least of all do we find peace in ourselves. Yet, how often we make the mistake of looking for peace precisely where it will never be found, where even our individual wry experiences have manifested that it is never found. In ourselves we have the deposit of original sin on which we have gathered the considerable dark interest of specific failures and personal blindness, but we do not have peace.

Just as every response to grace has left us a little clearer-visioned, so every refusal of grace has left us a little weaker, a shade less focussed on God, a bit more wanting in the ingredients for peace-making. It is folly to go on rummaging about in our faltering little selves for the strength of peace which is not *ex natura* resident there. It is not by settling down into the cocoon of myself that I shall find that personal peace which allows peace-making to become a proximate possibility, but in emerging from that most wizening form of inbreeding which is self-complacency out into the light and vastness of God. It always comes back to that *kenosis* which Jesus taught us by his own manner of living. "He emptied himself" (Phil. 2:6). There are a number of accumulations of which we need to empty ourselves if we want to allow for the action of God-filling.

One is our own folio of blueprints for our peace. Another is battle strategy to win peace.

It is helpful to be good-humored with ourselves if we are to arrive at an honest assessment of ourselves. Better to be amused at ourselves than angry with everyone else because the edifices of peace which we have striven to erect from dubious blueprints always topple and yet never seem wholly to disenchant us from the desire to build again on exactly those same shaky foundations.

Surely there is no one who would not admit, "I have sought for peace on this or that occasion, perhaps on many occasions, in myself, in what I wanted, in what I was sure was the will of God. And I did not find it." Yet we have to confess that we continue this peace-hunt, always at our own expense as well as others'. It is not in getting our own will accomplished (to say nothing for the moment of our own wilfulness) that peace is achieved. Presuming that we are all healthy of mind, we hopefully have experienced the spiritual enervation and even psychological decline that follow upon the spirited battle to "get our rights, get our wish, get our will" at the expense of others' rights, better wishes, nobler will. What we get is a sort of spiritual multiple sclerosis. It is a sorry spoil we carry off from some of our most

pitched battles. Yet we can so quickly start girding our loins for the next war of aggression or colonization. The fact that we fail and fail does not seem particularly to deter us from the same doomed efforts.

It is humble good humor which will eventually arrive us at the point of making some lasting deductions, the most vital of which is that we shall never find peace in ourselves or in the ideal situations which we have decided are requisite for peace or in the circumstances that we maintain are peace productive. It is the God-situation, if we may call it that, where alone peace is. Or, more simply, God's Will. It is surrender to his blessed Will which alone is peace-productive. And a Franciscan poet pointed that out several centuries ago. "In his Will is our peace," observed Dante Alighieri.

It is pleasant to mouth the words, but difficult indeed to induce the mind to give practical assent. Why is it so difficult? Rather, why should it not be difficult? Jesus said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways" (Is. 55.8). It requires many an ill-fated forage into selfishness and many a wasted study hour with those personal blueprints for peace before we discover that Dante was right. And, more importantly, that Christ was right. "It is hard for

you to kick against the goad," Jesus sympathized with Paul's doughty efforts to do Paul's will (Ac. 26:14). That could be paraphrased into the immediate source of Dante's conclusion. "Doing My will is your peace." And so we see St. Paul being led by the hand, a feat which very probably no one had accomplished since Paul passed his third birthday. And we notice something else: that when Paul stopped kicking against the goad, he began to suffer in peace.

Blind, stunned, covered with the dust of the Damascus road onto which he had so ingloriously and yet gloriously fallen, Paul of Tarsus began that lifelong process of *kenosis* which both gave him peace and allowed the ingredients for peace-making to enter into him, and gave us the Apostle of the Gentiles. He had been centered on serving Yahweh by doing his own will. It is comforting somehow to reflect that great Paul suffered the same delusion we do: that, obviously, our favorite ideas must be God's Will. Our own voice can sound so much like what we consider to be timbre of Yahweh's. Then, too, our own voice has a normal volume of "high," which sometimes likes to overpower the low-pitched voice of God. Only the message gets through; and since it is all I can hear, I conclude that it has to be the sound of God. The sound of me

can suggest strange conclusions simply by way of crescendo alone. These crescendoes lead us away from peacemaking and have nothing at all to do with establishing filial relations to God. They do not make us his children.

That takes us right back to the educability of the clean of heart. One has to be educable if one is to become a peacemaker and be a blessed child of God. Not finding in ourselves any materials for peacemaking, we are happily almost obliged to look into God. That is already to have material for making peace. For the first ingredient of peacemaking is a total God-centeredness and God-givenness. I become someone who relates to God, at once going out of myself and re-entering into the center of myself where he is, where he comes to my self-emptying. I leave off ambitioning to be the sun around which God is to revolve along with the lesser satellites of my planetary system who are my fellow creatures. We are talking now of becoming, of leaving off. It is comforting to know that the saints had also to leave off certain pursuits and abjure certain plans in order to become what God's Will ambitioned them to be. Let us look at St. Francis of Assisi.

Francis's name is almost synonymous with peace, although his earliest ambitions were to make war on the grand scale. That is, he was to be the

greatest knight, winning the loveliest lady, making the most historic forays, leading the noblest cavalries. These were all his own ideas. After God had revealed to Francis some ideas of God's own, the accent shifted to God. And so we find Francis at the very beginning of the Orders which came to bear his name as Franciscan, not only making peace the hallmark of those Orders but making the source of the hallmark very clear: "The Lord has revealed it to me." "The Lord gave me this greeting, that when the brethren meet a man, they are to say: 'May the Lord give you his peace.' " Francis had come to understand that peace was not to be achieved by war and, even more basically, that peace was not his, but God's. "His peace." The Lord's own peace. The only real kind there is.

When the followers of St. Francis increased, he would gather them about him for instructions. (One loves to picture the scene.) It went something like this: "Now here is what you should say when you go out to the people; and listen carefully, because the Lord himself revealed this to me, and it is his idea, not mine—say, 'May the Lord give you his peace.' " History describes for us how out of this instruction came the escutcheon of the Franciscan Order: *Pax et bonum*! This was Francis' great

burning message, his mission, to bring peace and all good to the people, peace and all blessings. And these from God. What this required first of all, of course, is that Francis would first have found them in God. He made peace very notably throughout his short earthly life, and the happy repercussions of his life remain clearly audible after seven centuries. Had Francis not been educable, never learned to discern the voice of God from his own voice, we should not have this irresistible little peacemaker to inspire everyone from Supreme Pontiffs to Leninists. One remembers the famous remark of Lenin that what the world really needed and only needed was ten Francis of Assisi.

When God set about teaching St. Francis how to make peace within himself so that he would be able to make it for others, he showed Francis the tawdriness of the baubles he was chasing after and the smallness of his ambitions. For us, though, it gives pause to note that even Francis's mistakes were on the noble scale as we would grade them. It was not that he wanted to be the richest man in the world, but the most gallant knight in all the world. And if he aspired to win the most beautiful lady in the world, it was going to be just one lady. But Christ showed his poor little one (as Francis would

come to be known the world over —*il poverello*) that even this was nothing beside what He Himself willed for him. "Francis, go and rebuild my Church." Francis got this message all wrong; and yet, he actually got it all right, because he was now looking for the peace of God's Will and it did not matter all that much that he didn't quite assimilate God's idea. The important thing was that he now wanted only to actuate God's ideas.

So, while God was speaking to Francis about rebuilding the swaying spiritual edifice of the thirteenth century Church undermined with war and luxury and carnality, Francis understood the message to concern dilapidated church buildings. What was important was that Francis was trying to understand, and that he set out immediately to do what some of us might quickly have explained to God was impossible. There could have been an instantly assembled brief for the defense: "I am a shopkeeper's son. I know a lot about cloth, but nothing about masonry. I never was strong, and You may recall that I've just been very ill. I am not built for hauling stones, a task quite beyond my muscular abilities. Furthermore, there are wars going on, and fighting is called for. It's no time, if you don't mind my saying so, for spending time pushing stones into the walls of disreputable

little churches like this one in which I have been praying for a different kind of message than I'm hearing, God. And what about a committee? Shouldn't we consider tearing down this church? Have you studied the situation with your advisers?" *Et cetera*. Unlike what we might have said, Francis said nothing. Unlike



what we might have done, Francis went right out to get some stones. He had been told that God willed him to rebuild his church.

He must have had a very difficult time with the stones which, incidentally, he had to beg, being at that time rather short on funds. Or, to be exact, penniless. But he set himself up in his own kind of business which was to "pay" a blessing for one stone given, and two blessings for two stones. In this kind of management, Francis was his own astute businessman, unique among men. There were other matters concerned with this "rebuilding of the church" which could be verified as worthwhile only by that peace which comes of surrendering oneself utterly to God. Again, it is that first ingredient for peacemaking of which we have already spoken, the total God-giveness.

Francis was very happy hauling his begged stones, not because his back hurt or because people were making fun of him, but because he was making the glorious discovery of peace in God's Will. We remember his own brother mocking him: "How much for your sweat, Francesco?" and Francis's at once good-humored, noble reply: "It is already sold to the Lord." The new stone mason was happy because, as he thought, God

had told him to carry stones. He had found peace in God's Will, and it did not matter to Francis if this should prove to be what God wanted him to engage in for the rest of his life. What could we want to do with our lives, any of us, except what God wants us to do with them? They are his gift. One would hope to honor the wish of the donor.

Then, there was the peace that permeated St. Francis's vibrant being because of his total givenness to the Church of God. When the amplitude of Christ's dictum about rebuilding his Church began to open before Francis and when he had attracted a dozen or so men to join him in his newly founded group of mendicants whom he would never have dared to call an "Order," it occurred to the Pope if not to Francis that they would do well to have a Rule of life. One can readily subscribe to the educated conjecture of Father David Temple, O.F.M., who suggested how this was probably done.

Supreme Pontiff to Francis: "You have got to have a Rule."

Francis to his brethren: "The Church says we have got to have a Rule. Somebody bring me a piece of paper, please. I have to write something down."

And from the whole evidence of St. Francis's life and death, we can just as readily conjecture what he would have done had the Church said: "No, you can't

do it that way"; or, "We will put your Order on trial for fifty years and perhaps then approve the Rule." He would certainly have replied, "All right." He would have set about living the fifty years (which actually his short life would not have proved able to accommodate) on trial.

None of this is to suggest that St. Francis was passive, permissive, or servile. He could say to his brothers with splendid simplicity: "The Lord has revealed it to me," just as he had remarked quite casually when imprisoned as a young knight: "One day the whole world will run after me," and as he was later to rebuke his spiritual sons less dedicated to their own first ideal than to innovation: "Do not talk to me of other ways; this is the way God has revealed to me," and just as, toward the end, he was to proclaim with the classicism of a Greek drama: "My Order will endure to the end of time. God has told me." Francis was bold enough and simple enough to declare that God has spoken directly to him; and yet he submitted always, and with grace, to the representatives of God.

Francis had his own problems with the "institutional Church," but he had a very different way of solving them than some others. There he was, with his God-given mission; yet he forbade his brothers to speak in any diocese

without the bishop's permission. There is scarcely a man in all history more manifestly Spirit-led, but we do not find Spirit overriding the hierarchy with loud cries of being led by the Spirit. He definitely did not say: "Listen here, I have this message straight from God. Down with dissenting bishops, down with institutions, down with the establishment." St. Francis was so established in God and in the peace of God that he was able to cope with the glaring defects of the ecclesial establishment of his times and go on busying himself, not with demolishing that establishment but with making peace in it, which is a decidedly more difficult thing to do. What price dynamite? Or the flagellation of the press? And, returning to the hierarchy, Francis had with bishops as with the acquisition of stones, his own way of going about things. When front doors were closed on his intense little face, he hurried around to the back. And, in the end, he got in. He somehow always ended up in that bishop's cathedral, up in the pulpit.

"What will You have me to do?" This was the whole expression of St. Francis's life as of St. Paul's apostolic life before him. That is the question indicative of the total givenness to God and the absolute centeredness on God which allows for peacemaking. It would be helpful to

watch Francis actively engaged in the peacemaking which personal surrender to God equipped him for effecting.

When there was a bit of trouble with the Mohammedans, Francis thought he had better look into the matter. Typically, he called upon the Sultan. And this not to tell that worthy that he was a no-good Sultan and not fit for pious Christians to walk on, but to enthrall the monarch with his simple efforts at peacemaking. Again, when the Bishop of Assisi and the Podesta of Assisi were offering the townsfolk something less than an example of elevated fraternal charity, St. Francis realized that something had to be done without delay. He had a script all written for the occasion, and it did not run as some of ours might. There was no: "You cut a fine picture of a bishop, you do! What a spiritual leader you are—No: Where's the collegiality? You are a menace to the Gospel." Neither was there any: "How did you ever get elected podesta? It must have been rotten politics!"

Francis just did not brood over the bishop's possible disqualifications for showing forth the meekness and humility of Christ or over the podesta's failure to delineate the features of the ideal mayor. He simply set out to make peace where it was wanting. He sent Brother Pacifi-

cus to sing them his new verses about peace. And we do love to picture those two fulminating Italian leaders melting into tears before this kind of approach and embracing each other. For that, as a matter of fact, is what they did. Francis had sent Brother Pacificus because he himself was then ill and suffering. And that brings us to the second ingredient for peacemaking. One has to be willing to suffer.

If we are to make peace we have to know how to put ourselves in the background. In the little incidents of daily living which occur wherever human beings are gathered together, one has to become adept at silencing the voice of personal outrage if one is to make peace. Frankness and openness are excellent attitudes and expressions unless by frankness we mean something in the nature of a tank rolling over human turf or the openness of a cannon mouth. When we are involved in one of those inevitable misunderstandings of life, there is a choice between inflating one's lungs for the predictable: "I said it as plainly as could be. Why don't you listen? You are always misunderstanding me and misquoting me!" or opting for the response of the peacemaker: "I guess I didn't make myself clear." It is such a small example, but an example of large concerns. And who is not disarmed by such a reply? One has to learn to

suffer in small, secret ways before one is equipped for peacemaking.

Again, there is the matter of another kind of personal outrage: my splendid intentions are going unrecognized. How can somebody say thus and so when I have such a shining intention? How can anyone be hurt and sensitive when I mean so well? The more we engage in the peacemaking possible to the secret sufferer, the more we come to appreciate that what is important is that I hurt someone, that I need to see what in my manner of expression does not deliver the goods of all these splendid intentions of mine, that I need to explore my own manners. One doesn't become a peacemaker by meditating on what a great, dedicated person one is, and how unappreciated and misunderstood by the lesser brethren, but by taking on oneself the meekness of Christ. "If I have spoken evil, please tell me what it is. If not, what is the problem?" (Jn. 18:23). That somewhat periphrastic expression of the words of Jesus, who had just been slapped in the face by a servile churl, could well be written into our Handbook for Peacemaking. There is no humility without suffering. Only pride comes painlessly. And there is no peacemaking without suffering. We all want to spread peace, unfurl it like a banner; but "maker" is the



key word, and a very demanding one. Yet, there is another perspective on the suffering and the pain; it is good to remember that pride is painless—until afterwards; and the humility needed for peacemaking is painful—until afterwards. The lasting rewards exchange places with the conditioning elements.

It is a wondrous thing to bear a family likeness to God. And that seems to be just what our dear Lord is talking about in the seventh Beatitude. He himself found his peace in the Garden of Gethsemane in doing the Will

of his Father. There alone we shall find ours. And out of the God-givenness which expresses itself in utter dedication to the divine Will and out of the willingness to put ourselves aside is created the capacity to receive the ingredients for making peace. It can seem more inviting to "feel" peaceful than to make peace. It is easier to recline than to work. But Jesus blessed the workers and makers, and gave them the right to bear the name of their family resemblance. They shall be called the children of God.

*(to be continued)*

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## Transformation

**BRUCE RISKI, O.F.M. CAP.**

**C**HRISTIANITY CAN BE summed up in one single word: transformation. We see this process repeated innumerable times both in the natural and in the supernatural order.

In the natural order, for example, we see it every Springtime. The earth, seemingly dead, is quickly transformed into a welcome luscious green.

We likewise witness this change, through the eyes of faith, in the supernatural order. This is accomplished by the sacramental system of the Church, in the Liturgical Sacrifice, and by dint of our personal efforts.

In the sacramental system it takes place first of all and most importantly of all at Baptism. The waters of Baptism translate the soul an infinite distance, making it a sharer in the divine nature itself. The soul becomes a temple of the living God and an heir to Heaven. It also receives, thereby, the right to receive the other Sacraments.

In the Sacrament of Penance is found another means of transformation. A sinner is transferred back to the supernatural order; the spiritually dead become, in an instant, spiritually alive. Those making a Confession of devotion experience a perfecting of their transformation.

At every reception of Holy Communion we undergo a perfecting of our union and transformation. Indeed, the very purpose of the Sacrament is to effect our transformation into Christ, who is our life. Just as Jesus lives because of the Father, so too do we live because of him. During our thanksgiving, two become ever more joyously one, ever more and more like to Christ the Beloved. For we become like the Food we eat.

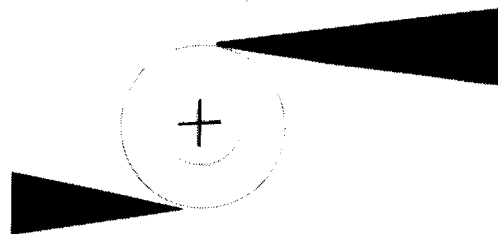
In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we possess still another example of transformation. By means of the words of Consecration pronounced by the celebrant, bread and wine are

*Father Bruce Riski, O.F.M. Cap., S.T.L. (Catholic University of America), has published religious articles and poems in various periodicals. A veteran of World War II, he is a chaplain at Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, only the accidents remaining. Transubstantiation is a supreme example of transformation. It brings God down upon our altars, enabling us to offer perfect worship to God in the continuation of the same Sacrifice of Calvary now renewed in an unbloody manner. It also brings us Christ as the High Priest once more offering his death, now in a mystical manner, to the heavenly Father. The celebrant merely veils Christ, just as the Bread and Wine veil his real Presence in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

Finally, we see transformation take place through our own initiative. This is rendered by our

various acts of virtue, our many good works, and especially through our dying-to-self. The principal means of effecting our death-to-self is the observance of the Ten Commandments and suffering, both physical and mental. "He who would save his life must lose it." The end of death-to-self is not annihilation but life. We are transformed into Christ. It makes possible the amazing pronouncement: "For me to live is Christ; to die is gain!" As life is a growth, so too is our transformation a process of perfecting. As John the Baptist expressed it, "He must be more and more, and I less and less!" Our transformation is perfected gradually, then, and ever more



wonderfully, until the soul can cry out in unspeakable joy and awe: "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that lives within me!"

To make us worthy of receiving the Sacraments, particularly Penance and Holy Communion, to derive the most fruit from our participation in the Mass, to observe the Ten Commandments better, and to suffer in a holy and fruitful manner, we must be guided by rules and regulations. The U.S. Government, the various branches of the military service, every state, city, and town have these to powerfully aid them in establishing order and happiness of their citizens. If this is true in the natural order, it is also true of the supernatural, for the supernatural is based on the natural.

Jesus Christ has given us a charter whereby we are dynamically assisted in utilizing all the means he has established to effect perfect control over all inordinate desires and to give rise to our transformation into himself, thus enabling us to lead an even happier life on earth, acquiring as a result a true foretaste of the perfect joy we will experience in Heaven. This charter is none other than the eightfold Beatitude preached by the Lord on the Mountain. These Beatitudes were preached for the first time in that Sermon on the Mount, one of the most beautiful of all Christ's recorded dis-

courses. It certainly is the most important, since it laid the foundation for all his teachings.

Upon the foundation of that Sermon on the Mount, we are to build our supernatural structure, a structure that is held together and built up by a progressive transformation into Jesus. For this we were born. We were born to die—both spiritually and physically; spiritually, to be changed into Jesus and to live his life; physically, in order to assure the eternal continuation and glorification of our bodies.

Oftentimes, God allows us to fall over and over again—to make a mess of our lives—so that we can all the more willingly and devotedly cast aside the old man, be all the more glad to put on Christ's Personality. Otherwise, we might procrastinate or lag behind considerably in God's timetable. For some, this is the only way God can disintegrate their stubbornness, self-centeredness and pride.

Whether our conviction is brought home to us by purgation or meditation, or both, Christ is all we must ever want to be. Our goal must be transformation into him. In a word, our spiritual life is truly nothing else but our progressive transformation into Christ, the Head of the Mystical Body—no more and no less; for, as St. Paul declared, "We must grow in all things into him, who is the Head."

## Mary Magdalene

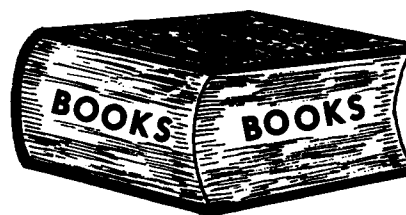
Bring prostitutes' perfume  
for the feet of the Master,  
she burst upon the banquet,  
distressing elegance with tears.

"If He were a prophet, He would know . . .,"  
snide looks inferred.

Fallen locks crept nearer  
hearing no word but  
"Much has been forgiven."

Well He knew  
who and what she was . . . .  
She, who of abject humility  
wove a robe of chastity.

SISTER MARY SERAPHIM, P.C.P.A.



**Those Mysterious Priests: Reflections on the Meaning of the Priesthood.** By Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974. Pp. 333. Cloth, \$7.95.

*Reviewed by Johnemery Konecsni, Ph.D. (N.Y. University), a member of the Dominican Third Order Secular, and Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Caldwell College, Caldwell, New Jersey.*

I am not sure that I possess the words necessary to persuade each and every reader immediately to run out and purchase this book. This is not just another book by "Uncle Fultie." Contrary to what one might expect from the author and the title, this is also not a post-Vatican II recruiting manual for seminary rectors. Rather it is one of the best applications of Christology to the priesthood that has been published in the last twenty years.

While I remain painfully aware that as a lay philosopher I possess no special expertise on the theology of the priesthood, nevertheless as an outsider to the clerical club I hope to possess the critical distance which many of the clergy have lost, self-examinations of conscience being no longer fashionable. That last sentence is the type of thing that this book inspires, because it is anti-clerical in the sense that Dominic and Loyola

were anti-clerical: they possessed deep sympathy for the clergy while presenting their deep antipathy for priestly flaws, foibles, and failings.

Sheen uses the model of Jesus the Victim and Christ the Priest to help the clergy to see how they can pull profit out of their daily neuroses, lonelinesses, fears, and prayers. He will amuse many a pastor and curate when they recognize the neurotic clerical types which were the Apostles. He will infuriate both clergy and religious when he questions the *intention* with which they seek to involve (lose? hide?) themselves in questions of social justice as a way of overcompensating for their personal injustices to their confreres, their parishioners, and their Christ.

When the death of God is laid upon the failure of the clergy to preach the death of Jesus; when the frustration of social change is laid upon the failure of the clergy to preach social conversion, when the witch's liberation movement is laid upon the failure of the clergy to preach the personhood of Mary; when these and other things are encountered, you may be certain that this is no book to be taken lightly.

Given Sheen's blend of surgically sharp scholarship, high and holy humor, and literate style, this book preaches a crucified and resurrected Christ that will be of immense value to good and bad priests and sisters alike, and will help the laity to understand both. While I regret the lack of footnotes in the last half of the book, I earnestly hope that this will be the first book in a new Sheen series for the seventies.

**Models of the Church: A Critical Assessment of the Church in All of Its Aspects.** By Avery Dulles, S.J. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974. Pp. 216. Cloth, \$5.95.

*Reviewed by Sister Marie Clement Edrich, S.F.P., a member of the Community Service Board of the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor, living in Brooklyn, New York.*

"What is the Church?" The answer should be very simple. Any entity can be defined in a few terms. We have learned various definitions of the Church—some classical going back even to St. Robert Bellarmine. But we are familiar with the limitations of his definition of the one, true Church as "the community of men brought together by the profession of the same Christian faith and conjoined in the communion of the same sacraments, under the legitimate pastors and especially the one vicar of Christ on earth, the Roman pontiff" (p. 14).

We are familiar with the images used to describe the Church—some more meaningful, some less so.

Father Dulles has employed "models" to aid in the description, the understanding of the Church. He understands "model" as an image "employed reflectively and critically to deepen one's theoretical understanding of a reality" (p. 21). Models are used frequently in the physical and social sciences and are understood as "realities having a sufficient functional correspondence with the object under study so that they provide conceptual tools and vocabulary; they hold together facts that would otherwise seem unrelated, and they

suggest consequences that may subsequently be verified by experiment" (p. 21).

However, using models in theology is not exactly analogous to their use in the positive sciences. Since they are being applied to the ultimate levels of religious mystery, they are only approximating the object they reflect. The finite cannot encompass the infinite.

The models used in theology can be considered also as explanatory—i.e., serving to synthesize what we already know or at least are inclined to believe; or exploratory, i.e., leading to new theological insights.

History discloses a number of models of the Church that have been accepted with a kind of general approval. One of the most notable was the model of the Church as "institution," a "perfect society" in the sense that it is subordinate to no other, lacking nothing for its institutional completeness. Actually, this was the model that was a standard of Roman Catholic ecclesiology from the late Middle Ages until the middle of the present century. This model tends to highlight the structure of government as the formal element in society.

The model of the Church as mystical communion received quasi-canonical status in 1943 in the encyclical of Pius XII and opened up the Church to a sense of life, constituting it a "we," with all the sympathy and mutual identification that a "we" naturally expresses. It provided for the development of the Church as an interpersonal community.

Since the institutional model seems to deny salvation to anyone who is not a member of the organiza-

tion, while the communion model leaves it problematical why anyone should be required to join the institution at all, another synthesis bringing external and internal aspects together was developed in the model of the Church as sacrament. It associated the divine and the human harmoniously, emphasizing the grace of Christ in the world.

Distinguishing sharply the Church in its terrestrial form and the Kingdom of God considered as an eschatological reality, the model of the Church as herald, as kerygmatic, has been developed. It is an ecclesiology radically centered upon Jesus Christ and on the Bible as the primary witness to him. The Church, in the words of Richard McBrien, "is seen as a kerygmatic community which holds aloft, through the preached Word, the wonderful deeds of God in past history, particularly his mighty act in Christ Jesus" (p. 72).

Vatican II, which actually used various models of the Church, seemed to choose as dominant model that of the People of God, wherein the Church is considered a network of interpersonal relationship.

The model of the Church as Servant or Healer has become more popular, springing much from the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World which has increased considerably the Church's sense of solidarity with the whole human race in its struggle for peace, justice, and prosperity. There is a strong emphasis on a secular-dialogic theology.

In five chapters, the five basic models are very clearly presented

along with something of their basic strengths and weaknesses. Five more chapters follow the diverse positions and the acute problems encountered in contemporary theology when any one of the models is adhered to too rigidly.

Father Dulles concludes with a reflective overview summarizing the values and limitations of the various models. Presented concisely and clearly, various criteria are applied.

In conclusion, it is evident that the Church is mystery and the infinite cannot be encompassed in the finite. *Models of the Church* is a readily understandable presentation of modern ecclesiology, well worth the reading, even though rather technical.

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**Moral Questions.** By James Gaffney. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1975. Pp. v-147. Paper, \$1.65.

*Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Head of the Philosophy Department at Siena College, and Associate Editor of this Review.*

This brief book summarizes and epitomizes in very readable language the prevailing confusion in Catholic circles concerning moral matters. After a delineation of a situation approach to ethics—a sophisticated situationism, but still a situationism—Gaffney applies that method to the areas of premarital sex, divorce and remarriage, homosexuality, and abortion. Less clearly contextualistic are his remarks on drugs, prejudice, the virtue of honesty. In all instances his strong point is the insight he has into the

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psychology of the sinner and the camouflaging of motives that lies beneath much moral argument.

Insightful as Mr. Gaffney is, I find his moral positions untenable to a Catholic. Except for some Scriptural exegesis with regard to the marriage and divorce question, the context in which moral problems are discussed in this work does not include any special input by the Magisterium of the Church as represented by the Pope and bishops in union with him. Undoubtedly the views in *Moral Problems* are those being noised abroad in many publications, and even taught in our seminaries, under the rubric of a plurality of "magisteria" in the Church. Nevertheless, the Hierarchy has claimed special responsibility for the moral area as far back as the Council of Jerusalem when the pagan converts were told to abstain from sexual immorality and to avoid food sacrificed to idols.

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**Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life.** By Henri J.M. Nouwen. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 120. Cloth, \$5.95.

*Reviewed by Father Joseph Vann, O.F.M., S.T.B., retired.*

Father Nouwen writes a book on prayer with a difference. With understanding of modern moods, he gives the fruit of his experience as a teacher of pastoral theology at Yale, a Menninger Foundation fellow, and a full temporary member of a Trappist abbey—the first ever accepted.

He begins with our experience of

loneliness and moves in three stages: first, to creative solitude; secondly, from hostility to acceptance; finally, from illusion about ourselves and the world to experience of God in prayer. He illustrates how to "reach out" for space in our minds, how to lose loneliness, a universal experience, in solitude, an almost un-American one. We find room in our hearts to move from hostility to hospitality toward our fellow man. Creative solitude turns our neighbor, the enemy, into our friend, the guest. It exposes and shames hostility. It opens parent to child, teacher to student, doctor to patient, and *vice versa*. Too often, Nouwen observes, patients leave hospitals cured but cursing both doctor and hospital.

The first two sections speak from man's need; the last is basic because solitude and hospitality are really movements to God in prayer. Prayer is the language of reality perceived in solitude. It builds community and discovers God. It is both gift and acquisition. Nouwen uses the Jesus prayer of Russian orthodoxy as an example of the discipline prayer requires.

The author's use of currently popular referents, such as Anne Lindbergh, Thoreau, K. Gibran, Zen, Merton, and Jesus-prayer discipline, should appeal to readers to whom the traditional is dull. *Reaching Out* is an attractive and biblically based new bottling of old wisdom.

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**Parliamentary Procedure for Parish Councils, Committees, Societies and Clubs.** By Hugo E. Hellman, Ph.D. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974. Pp. 112. Paper, \$2.25.

**Your Parish—Where the Action Is: Parish Leadership in the Modern Church.** By Robert C. Broderick, M.A. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974. Pp. 50. Paper, \$2.25.

*Reviewed by Peter F. Macaluso, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History at Montclair State College, Montclair, N.J., and former member of St. Anne's Parish Council, Fair Lawn, N.J.*

The layperson's involvement in the life of the parish community—more specifically, in the work of the parish council—calls for cooperative effort and planned procedures. Experience has shown that basic knowledge and skills are necessary if a parish council is to maintain stability and make informed judgments. There are fortunately several available guides that provide constructive assistance to the parishioner who may unexpectedly find that he or she is now a leader of a parish council or shares in its responsibility of administering to or advising in the daily operation of the parish. Two of these beneficial guides ought to be mentioned.

In *Parliamentary Procedure for Parish Councils, Committees, Societies, and Clubs*, Dr. Hellman supplies the tools and frame of reference necessary to expedite the business of parish councils. His work provides a fine outline and discussion for the proper deliberation and decisions a council must make. Its strength is in the helpful examples gained from the best teacher—experience.

In fourteen chapters the author discusses such topics as good meetings and what makes them; the

necessity of parliamentary procedure; the agenda, main motions, and resolutions; amending motions; when to refer to a committee; planning, scheduling, and postponing. Dr. Hellman's work is a "how-to" book: how to listen, question, speak up, and shut up; how to eliminate the nonsense; how to wind down the windy ones; how to cope with emergencies; and how to recess and adjourn. He concludes with what every parish council president should know. The reviewer is not afraid to add that what you don't know could hurt—in this case, the technique of good communication.

Good communication is often directed toward persuasion. Another recent work on this topic and more, is Robert Broderick's *Your Parish—Where the Action Is: Parish Leadership in the Modern Church*. The work centers on the role of leadership in the parish council.

While there is abstract consideration of the characteristics of leadership, and the proper training of leaders and workers within the parish, there is also practical advice on how to implement these ideas. The author, for instance, discusses nine common reasons why people do not become involved in the parish.

In his other work, *Your Parish Comes Alive*, Mr. Broderick went into greater detail on the work of various committees: Liturgy, Education, Finance, Maintenance, Social Affairs and Activities. This reviewer thought something more ought to have been said when the author deals with committees in this book; not only because the topic demands more treatment, but because of the

size and price of the book.

While some of the book's content may be common knowledge, the articulation of this is a much needed reinforcement of the common problems and needs of all parish councils and their leaders.

The author underlines motivation as the key element in successful leadership. The focus is that being in Christ means self-motivation, to move in accord with the wishes of Christ and of his Church. One major concern of parish leadership is that at no time should the parish think of itself as a world unto itself. Mr. Broderick stresses that it must establish its own identity in the parish and society, and be flexible in searching out the needs of those out-lying neighbors and separated brothers. Through a spiritual identity it can make God's will be manifest and prevail.

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**Thomas Merton, Monk: A Monastic Tribute.** Edited by Brother Patrick Hart. New York: Sheed & Ward, Inc., 1974. Pp. 230. Cloth, \$8.95.

**Man Before God: Thomas Merton on Social Responsibility.** By Frederic Joseph Kelly, S.J. New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1974. Pp. 287. Cloth, \$7.95.

**A Thomas Merton Reader.** Revised Edition edited by Thomas P. McDonnell. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Image Books, 1974. Pp. 516. Paper, \$2.95.

*Reviewed by Father Vianney M. Devlin, O.F.M., Ph.D. (English, University of London), Associate Professor of English at Siena College.*

Brother Patrick Hart, the late Thomas Merton's private secretary, has gathered together brief articles written by men and women who knew Merton best—articles which pay tribute to him as monk, man of prayer, spiritual writer, Zen master, and ecumenical figure.

The collection establishes the fact that the richness and fullness of Thomas Merton's life and thought escape comprehension without a firm grasp of his role as a monk in the world of the twentieth century. Here collected, among others, are essays by Father James Fox, Merton's Abbot of twenty years, by Sister Therese Lentfoehr, long-time friend and fellow poet, by Father Jean Leclercq, Benedictine monk, scholar, and historian who had suggested inviting Merton to the conference of Asian monastic leaders in Bangkok, Thailand. Taken together, all the essays provide us with a moving, forceful, and honest appraisal of Merton.

"Honest appraisal" . . . Merton abhorred the idea that some people tended to venerate him, to create of him an icon. "He knew very well now little . . . he conformed to the ready-made image of monk, least of all of a "holy" monk. "As an icon I'm not doing so good," he wrote (*Confessions of a Guilty Bystander*) with no indication whatsoever of being repentant for the fact" (p. 41). These essays avoid the pitfall of "iconizing" Merton, of picturing him as a "goody monk." What emerges as a result is a picture of a charmingly witty, usually gentle, often impetuous, very personable monk. "One quality that endeared Fr. Louis

to all the brethren was his outstanding sense of humor. "His sharp and penetrating intellect enabled him to perceive the amusing and the comic, seconds before almost anyone else" (p. 144). But also "...ever since I've known him he has let fly at us with . . . satirical barbs face to face. Having tested some of the brethren's reactions it is now clear that I have not simply become insensitive. They all observed with a laugh: 'That's our Fr. Louis.' One of them was the Abbot" (p. 46). The book includes eleven woodcuts by Brother Lavrans Nielson as well as the famous portrait of Merton by Victor Hammer. This book is well worth reading and pondering.

Throughout his life as a Trappist monk, Merton was deeply concerned with the basic values and realities of human life. Readers familiar with the corpus of his writings are familiar with his progress from a concern for personal spiritual growth to his deep involvement with the burning social issues of the day. Frederic Kelly in his book reveals at length and in some depth Merton's concept of religious man and the shift in his concerns from isolated religious ones to contemporary secular problems such as the threat of nuclear annihilation, war and peace, violence and the nonviolent alternatives for social change, race and racism, modern trends towards dehumanization, Marxism and the threat of collectivism, ecology, Christian renewal and ecumenism, Oriental spirituality, secularism, and the process of secularization.

The author of this splendid study

served for eleven years as a missionary teacher in the Philippine Islands and brings to his examination of Thomas Merton on social responsibility an awareness of and deep appreciation for the interpenetration of a life of prayer with involvement in social issues: "The originality of Merton's views and insights was a direct consequence of his contemplative approach to life . . ." (p. 266). But at the same time, Fr. Kelly doesn't hesitate to point out: "Merton could be characterized as being overenthusiastic on several points, but it was part of his personality that came through in his writings" (p. 269). Having read Patrick Hart's collection of essays one can understand Kelly's statement better. This is a valuable work and will probably lead others to examine at closer range what the author is able to do only broadly here.

Readers unfamiliar with Merton's work or with the man himself will find a handy introduction to him in Doubleday's Image Book revised edition of *A Thomas Merton Reader*, edited by Thomas P. McDonnell. In this collection readers will find large extracts from *The Seven Storey Mountain*, various essays by Merton on literary and political matters, a fine selection from Merton's poetry, as well as "Two Asian Letters" and a "Special Closing Prayer." Readers whose appetite is whetted by selections in this *Reader* may wish to explore more fully the complete works of Merton on their own.

---

**The Priest: Living Instrument and Minister of Christ the Eternal Priest.** By Bonaventure Kloppen-

burg, O.F.M. Trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell; Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974. Pp. xiv-233. Cloth, \$7.95.

education, this book never offers the sensational at the expense of the sensible.

*Reviewed by Father John Marshall, O.F.M., Assistant Pastor at St. Leo's Church, Elmwood Park, New Jersey, and author of four series of conferences for Religious, published by the Franciscan Institute.*

At a time when the person, profession, and performance of the priest are bounced about in print like an errant tennis ball, *The Priest* is a most welcome book. The unsettled scene of the seventies is in dire need of it. Well documented, soundly written, statistically girded, and theologized with a rudder amidship

For the disturbed and distraught priest driven afield by the drivel diet of unresearched critiques and studies on the priesthood, I recommend this book. As an honest and open study on the priesthood, it goes down the road quite a way in appreciating this vocation as it is lived, loved, labored, and belittled in our day. It will remain for some time to come as one of the common sense source books available to those who statistically, scientifically, and spiritually desire to define the experience and nature of the Catholic priesthood.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

- Bailey, Raymond, *Thomas Merton on Mysticism*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 239. Cloth, \$7.95.
- Goergen, Donald, *The Sexual Celibate*. New York: Seabury Press, 1974. Pp. vi-266, incl. index. Cloth, \$8.95.
- Graham, Aelred, *Contemplative Christianity: An Approach to the Realities of Religion*. New York: Seabury Press, 1974. Pp. x-131, incl. index. Cloth, \$6.95.
- Guinan, Michael D., O.F.M., *Covenant in the Old Testament*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975. Pp. 51. Paper, \$0.95.
- Hardon, John A., S.J., *The Catholic Catechism: A Contemporary Catechism of the Teachings of the Catholic Church*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 623, incl. 29-page index. Cloth, \$9.95.
- Perkins, Pheme, *Gospel of St. John*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975. Pp. 98. Paper, \$0.95.
- Stuhlmüller, Carrol, C.P., *Reconciliation: A Biblical Call*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975. Pp. 67. Paper, \$0.95.
- Wifall, Walter, *Israel's Prophets: Envoys of the King*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975. Pp. 72. Paper, \$0.95.



## WE REGRET

that rising costs have made it necessary to raise the price of a subscription to THE CORD to \$4.00 per year, beginning with 1976 subscription.

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Now, the tremendous increase in the cost of both labor and material, about which our readers know only too well, has forced us, once again, to raise our subscription rate. We do hope that the increase will not prove an excessive burden upon our subscribers, and we look forward to continuing to provide you with enlightening and inspiring Franciscan reading material in the future.

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## COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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# the CORD

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## EDITORIAL

### On "Things That Never Existed" (!)

RECENTLY, ON THE TELEVISION GAME-SHOW "\$25,000 Pyramid," a contestant was asked to name several "things that never existed." Included among the items in this category were angels, who were thus classified with elves, gremlins, and the like. The episode was a depressing one to me. Far better, I reflected, to see a serious animated discussion on the existence, nature, and function of angels, than to have them dismissed in this cheap, gratuitous manner.

The truth is, however, that such a discussion is impossible: there is simply no case that can be made for the non-existence of angels. The line of argumentation usually adopted is a proof that other cultural groups of ancient times had similar beliefs in supernatural beings—that this is just one more such cultural phenomenon to be cast off onto the dust heap of outmoded superstitions.

But as scholars continue to explore the fascinating subject of myth, they see with increasing clarity that the mythological status of most religious doctrines, far from implying falsity, is indicative of real truth: truth much deeper and more important than the highly touted dogmas of modern science. No, it is not rational argument or proof that has done away with the traditional belief in angels; it is an out-and-out capitulation to the forces of naturalism and atheism. What can't be seen, touched, tasted, weighed, according to these forces, doesn't exist.

This is not an innocuous, purely theoretical issue. If it were a purely theoretical issue, if it were a purely speculative matter, perhaps it might, in the interest of ecumenism and accommodation with today's

world, be better forgotten. But the case is quite otherwise: it makes a real, practical difference to our faith and to our concrete lives as Christians and religious, that there are angels concerned for our welfare, able to help us, and destined to celebrate forever with us the wedding feast of the Lamb.

The complex questions as to the nature, kinds, and functions of angels obviously cannot be explored here. The reader may, nonetheless, be interested in pursuing this important subject by reading one of the fine treatments still available today. Father Pascal Parente's book, *Beyond Space*, is such a treatment. Originally published by Alba House, the book is now available in a 1973 paperback edition from Tan Books and Publishers, Rockford, Ill. 61105. Reading this book and pondering its exalted message would surely be a fitting way to prepare for the great feast on September 29.

*Fr. Michael D. Mailach, OFM*

## CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

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By Giulio Basetti-Sani, O.F.M.

Edited and Translated by Allan Harris Cutler

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# Blessed Are You—VIII

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

WE ARRIVE AT THE final Beatitude to find ourselves again confronted with immediacy. As in the first of His proclamations of those who are blessed in God's sight and among men, so also in the last, Christ makes his declaration an already present glad urgency. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:3). And now: "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:10).

It requires no great mind-wrenching to understand that our blessed Savior is establishing a special relationship between the poor in spirit and those suffering for their God-given convictions. One really has to be poor in spirit to be equipped for salvific suffering. Jesus himself had to renounce the holdings of his own human will and to disengage his decision-making from the revolt of his human intellect in the Garden of Gethsemane before he was humanly poor enough to suffer for the divine redemption of all men. There is a very de-

finite follow-through from the first Beatitude to the last in which those suffering persecution are joined with the poor as having the kingdom of heaven even now, in time. "The kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17:21). When you are poor. When you are suffering persecution for the principles of life and holiness. In saying that there is a follow-through from the first to the eighth Beatitudes, we are already defining the eighth.

The etymology of the word "persecution" seems rather startling at first consideration. And this is probably because the exposed core of truth is bound to be stunning in a soporific company of half-truths and popular delusions. *Per* and *sequere* (*secutus*) are the Latin words from which devolve our "persecution." Quite literally, "to follow through." To attain to that fullness of moral purity which justice is, one has to suffer the follow-through of everything Christ has set forth in the other Beatitudes, beginning at the first.

We reflected in chapter one

that to be poor in spirit and possess the kingdom of heaven, one must agree to be vulnerable. We recognized that the poor in spirit must deliver over to others the power to hurt them, since without this there is no loving. Could we say it again?—one has to let oneself be exploited and misunderstood, for this belongs to loving. The completely poor in spirit are the utterly hurttable. Christ had no defenses against ingratitude, misunderstanding, denial, desertion, treachery. He was poor enough to love on.

We have also considered at what painful effort the strength specific to the meek of the second Beatitude is gained, and with what taxing practice their reposefulness is achieved. And in reflecting on the mourners whose blessedness is proclaimed in the third beatitude, we saw that mourning is a right response to penancing truth, a response made possible only by suffering freely. But it was in our meditative study of the fourth Beatitude when we investigated justice as actually being what even the dictionary purports it to be: moral purity and uprightness before God; and the just man being the one whose conduct conforms to the principles of right, that it became very clear that we shall not be prepared for the stark blessedness of the eighth Beatitude unless we have fathomed

something of the fourth.

That inner rectitude which is the first and basic justice for which Jesus declares it a blessed thing to hunger, is not achieved without perduring suffering. Manifestly unholy while sincerely aching for holiness, we discover that we are hungry for justice. We can prove it. A deduction we make from being hungry is that we are not full. The body testifies to its hunger for food by producing in us a stomach ache. In the very midst of our inglorious failures to be holy, we still have the testimony of the Spirit that we hunger for justice, for holiness. Who has not suffered a spirit-ache?

Then, for those merciful ones who are declared blessed by the Lord and promised mercy for themselves, there is again the vocation to suffer. Each Beatitude is proclaiming along with the blessedness specific to its own focus of concern, the absolute necessity of suffering in order to achieve any of the goals God ambitions for us: poverty of spirit, meekness, right responding, yearning for justice, mercifulness. There is a "persecution," a follow-through of suffering in all of them as they unfold their mysteries of the spirit and simultaneously invite us to the ultimate discovery of the final Beatitude. One is not truly merciful at no cost to himself.

---

Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., well known author of spiritual and dramatic works, is Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Roswell, New Mexico.

Nor does anyone dispense real mercy after the manner of an enthroned monarch distributing alms to the poor. Mercy is given to the poor only by the likewise poor. Interacting, overlapping, repeating, revealing: this is the way the eight Beatitudes proceed. There is the follow-through of each to the other and on to the culmination of the eighth in its triumphant climax of suffering.

Just so, it is the same for the clean of heart who are made clean only at the price of painful self-un-cluttering. And with the peacemakers who must painfully labor to build and to make. But the full meaning of crowned suffering is revealed at the end. "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." We might do well to alert ourselves with the very literal etymological translation: "Blessed are they who suffer the follow-through. Theirs is, right now, the kingdom of heaven."

We see this possession of the kingdom shine out very brilliantly in the martyrs who went singing to their martyrdoms. We remember St. Thomas More making jests with his executioner on the very scaffold. We recall St. Perpetua arranging her hair becomingly in preparation for being gored by a wild cow. There is Bl. Margaret Clitherow who spent her last days in an Elizabethan prison making herself a

new white dress to wear for her martyrdom. For the lesser lights of sanctity we are, there is also a certain notification given of the possession of the kingdom in the small follow-throughs of daily living in aspiration of sanctity.

We tend to think of persecution as something striking us from without. Often enough it is just that. There is the real persecution suffered by the martyr submitted to torture or sentenced to death for his faith or some doctrine of faith. There are the lesser in vital effect (or maybe we should say vital termination) but not necessarily lesser in intensity persecutions suffered by those who for the sake of their convictions and principles are condemned by the press and other forms of the media. The patient are persecuted by the naggers, the gentle by the aggressive, the weak by the bullies. And then there is the imaginary persecution from without, the technical or amateur paranoid whose imagination creates persecutions out of the blandest normalcies. But there is another persecution. And it comes from within. Everyone aspiring to holiness has got to suffer this follow-through. Let's take a few examples.

"Of courtesy," observes Hilaire Belloc, "It is much less/ than courage of heart or holiness;/ Yet in my walks it seems

to me/ that the grace of God is in courtesy."<sup>1</sup> The flowering of this delicate and so endearing natural virtue is not realized without suffering nature's persecution. It does not "come natural" to be courteous with the bore, the curious, the dull. It is a great fallacy to suppose that the exquisite courtesy of Christ toward just those categories of persons so conspicuous in the Gospels never suffered persecution. That our blessed Lord was like us in all things save sin includes his being like us temptable. It does no honor to the perfect humanity of Christ to suppose that he never felt frustrated, bored, annoyed. The Gospels show him weary in body. "He sat down by the well, weary" (Jn. 4:6). They also show him weary in soul. "So long a time have I been with you, and you have not known me?" (Jn. 14:9). His courtesy suffered the persecution of contradiction, stupidity, coarseness and crudeness, insensitivity and ingratitude.

Then, there is patience. St. Paul, who had a bit of trouble in this area, has some observations to make in his second letter to the Corinthians, chapters 11-12. An unpersecuted patience is less patience than a kind of

psychological bovineness. The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that patience is a victory won out of suffering and endurance. Victory. Yes, it seems, then, that the patient man was on the battlefield. One opts for patience, but one has to suffer the follow-through if the option is to be secured. There must be the persecution of anger, annoyance, disappointment, aggravation.

For the vowed religious, too, there is a very definite follow-through on each vow in order to attain the holiness to which the vow is a specific means. There is the vocation, the call which can come only from God. And there is the human response which can come only from the person called. We are always at liberty to say "No!" to God, but it is a sorry sort of liberty to exercise. The realest liberty is to be so free in God that one can no longer be constrained to refuse any of his summons.

We see the rich young man in the Gospel about whose vocation there is no possible doubt. Christ in his physical human presence stood before the boy, loved him, called him. "If you will be perfect, go and sell all that you have, and come, follow me" (Mt. 19:21). The wealthy young fellow chose not to respond. He measur-

<sup>1</sup>Hilaire Belloc, "Courtesy," in *Stories, Essays and Poems* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons), p. 397.

ed what Jesus asked on his own worldly scales, and the needle pointed to: "Too much." But even for the many who do respond and leave whatever is the equivalent of their fishing nets and boats or their own gold to follow Jesus, there remains a life-long follow-through.

One who makes a vow of virginal chastity has to suffer in some measure or other persecution by the legitimate demands of nature if she is to realize



the fullness of her surrender to Christ. The nun who rises every midnight to pray is not trying to find the most difficult possible time to pray and then set that up as a kind of torturing hazard. No, she breaks her sleep to worship God because this choral worship must be offered by day and by night. So supreme in her life is the call to communal worship of God that the call to sunder her sleep is a clear and obvious one. So, it is a spiritual call to which she responds, not some kind of hazards-course training. Still, she will have to suffer persecution from nature to achieve this fullness of response. Weariness and heaviness are the follow-through to be suffered by one who is pledged to offer worship to God by day and by night.

Again, it would be a strange kind of fasting where legitimate desires never suffered anything at all. Our blessed Lord in his perfect human nature had even so to suffer persecution from his humanness. We see him at the very beginning of his public life suffering the persecution of his own body which would have liked him to work a miracle to satisfy its very legitimate needs. What the devil suggested, "Command that these stones become bread" (Mt. 4:3) could not have been a temptation if it were not inviting. "He was hungry" (Mt.

4:2). Christ's hungering body said, "I want to be satisfied." The suggestion of using his miraculous powers to satisfy this legitimate need had to be suffered as a persecution.

Back, then, to the vow of religious chastity to whose perfection the curtailment of sleep and fasting have something to contribute. The body has to be gently persuaded by a given heart and a virginal mind to what it is not of itself inclined to do. It has to be lovingly educated by the mind and heart to suffer having its quite legitimate demands go unhonored. Unless the mind is virginal, unless the heart is fully pledged, how shall the body ever be persuaded to consecrated virginity? The mind and heart must lead the body to a height beyond its own comprehension, and they achieve this only in the follow-through of suffering.

So, too, one must suffer persecution for obedience's sake. We may want to recall here once again that "justice" in the scriptural sense is holiness. We suffer for holiness's sake. We see Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane suffering the persecution of his own human will which did not want to submit to the Passion, which agonized in its human demand that this should not be, and whose anguish could be superseded only by a greater

willing—submission to the Will of the Father. If Christ in his perfect human nature had to suffer persecution from his own perfect will so that it be brought into alignment with the Will of his Father, it is altogether right and fitting that one vowing obedience should suffer persecution for the alignment of her will with God's. One must suffer the demands of one's own will which often enough militate against the will of God. One has to agonize sometimes under the persecution of one's own willfulness. If we lovingly dismember that word, willfulness, it becomes rather clear that one cannot become full of the Will of God without having suffered the persecution of one's own willfulness. And the stronger the will, and even the willfulness, so much the greater the capacity to be filled with the Will of God once one has suffered the follow-through of pledging oneself forever to God in obedience. No one arrives at the perfect liberty which a vow of obedience is meant to make possible and to equip us to experience without having suffered much from many thraldoms. In fact, it is only by suffering the persecution of one's own demanding will, demands which can be put down only by love, that one can be free.

Again, in the vow of poverty, there is a persecution to be

undergone, a long follow-through. We need to suffer the persecuting demands of our own acquisitiveness not only on the material plane but more especially as regards those far more pressing demands for proprietorship which lie within ourselves. There is the acquisitiveness for excuses, for one thing. There are the demands of our nature for holdings of its own. To surrender all interior acquisitiveness, to give up the last little parcel of land on which our own name is written so that we have nothing at all to stand on except God, and to have no holdings at all except the Beloved, requires the strength achieved only in suffering the follow-through of the vow.

The heart makes demands; the body makes demands; mediocrity makes demands; wandering thoughts make demands. What is needed is to suffer all this persecution gladly. One could make example or take example from any virtue or any vow. Each has its follow-through of suffering to arrive us at holiness.

And so Christ looked at his

audience on that hillside, some enthralled, some doubtless puzzled; the comprehending and half-comprehending and non-comprehending. He was giving the shortest and completest of spiritual seminars, offering a blueprint for living whose accuracy is as astonishingly fresh today in the secret chamber or on the six-lane highway as it was on the Mount of the Beatitudes.

We want to be happy. We ache for blessedness, despite all our unblessed behavior. And still the call at once imperious and free goes out: Be poor, be meek, mourn in a true response to penancing truth, hunger and thirst for the justice which begins with your own inner rectitude, be merciful, be pure of heart, make peace. And suffer willingly persecutions without which none of those states of blessedness can be realized. In the end, learn to suffer them gladly. For this is the culmination of blessedness: to suffer the vital follow-through for justice's sake. And you are established, even now, in the kingdom of Heaven.



## Obedience/Authority in Francis's Writings

DUANE LAPSANSKI, O.F.M.

THE METHODOLOGY which the author employs in this article is excellent and praiseworthy:

1. The Author shows understanding for the problems of trying to reach the "mind of Francis," buried as it is under seven hundred years of interpretations, controversies, and differing historical milieux. He therefore rightly concentrates only on the Writings of St. Francis. It is in these Writings that the author discovers the criterion for judging what is truly the "mind of Francis."

2. The author uses the best available texts of the *Writings*: namely, the forthcoming critical edition. On the basis of these texts he draws some fascinating insights.

3. The author places the entire discussion within the context of faith. This is fundamental. Any other basis would be inadequate.

Being faithful to his chosen methodology, the author, I believe, succeeds in uncovering the authentic "mind of Francis" in regard to the issues of obedience and authority. This primal vision of Francis which the author unearths proves to be very dramatic and, surprisingly enough, relevant to us of the 20th century.

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*Father Duane Lapsanski, O.F.M., a member of the Assumption Province, received his doctorate in theology from the University of Munich. During his studies he was in close contact with Fr. Kajetan Esser. At present, Father Duane is on the staff of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure, New York. The references to "Omnibus" in the text of Father Duane's summary are to St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies—English Omnibus of the Sources for the life of St. Francis, ed. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973). The summary is of a study done by Kajetan Esser and presented at the Plenary Council in Rome last Fall.*

The consequences of Francis's vision are quite stunning. The superior, for example, is viewed not as an authority-figure but as a *facilitator*: i.e., one who by his service aids the individual brother and the community as a whole to listen to and respond to the Word of God which is active in each life-situation.

—DUANE V. LAPSANSKI, O.F.M.

EACH GENERATION of Franciscans has appealed to the "mind of St. Francis" in its interpretation of obedience and authority. What seems to have happened in fact, however, is that each generation has repeatedly borrowed thematic notions for the interpretation of obedience and authority from the ecclesiastical and political life of the contemporary age and then politely labelled it with the slogan "the mind of St. Francis." To avoid this pitfall it is necessary to examine the writings of the saint himself and simply disregard all later interpretations.

It is questionable whether the notion of authority as such even occurs in the writings of St. Francis. What Francis emphasizes is Christ's demand that among his disciples there should exist neither *domination* nor *power*, but rather the fundamental attitude of serving one another. What constitutes Francis's new community, emphatically called

a *brotherhood*, is the law of mutual washing of feet according to the mandate of the Lord in John 13:14-17. In this community no one at all has any special privileges or claims of dominating. Even the terms used to describe offices within the fraternity (*minister et servus, custos et servus, custos, guardianus*) express the idea of serving the brothers.

But neither does Francis want a fatherless or leaderless society, for he clearly states in his Testament: "I want to be a captive in his hands . . . because he is my Master . . . And all other brothers, too, are bound to obey their guardians in the same way . . ." (*Omnibus*, 69).

St. Francis thus seems to view the superior simultaneously as servant and master of the brothers. Is this not a contradiction? Francis's solution is radically Christian. It is Christ the Lord, he says, who is the center of the community of Lesser Brothers. It



is in Christ that all are united as brothers and through him with the Father, who *alone* possesses *authority* in the community! "All you are brothers. And call no one on earth your father; for one is your Father, who is in heaven. Neither be called masters; for one only is your Master, the Christ who is in heaven" (*Reg. non bul.*, 22; *Omnibus*, 49). What Francis wants his brothers to do above all else is to "serve,

God" and make for him a "dwelling-place within ourselves where he can stay . . ." (*Omnibus*, 48-49). Everyone, says Francis, should unclutter himself of egoism (*the impurity*), which hinders the coming of God into man's life. And not only must the individual do this, but the whole *fraternity* as well, so that the Lord and he alone can be the center, the only *auctoritas*, which animates the community. This vibrant consciousness of God as Father

leads Francis to say that every good in the brothers' lives is accomplished by God. The brothers' very living together is formed and springs from this fact that they receive all from God (cf. Admonitions 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, etc.).

"All the friars without exception are forbidden to wield power or authority, particularly over one another," says Francis, so that the Lord God can be before all, so that the coming of his kingdom may become visible in the *fraternity*. This authority of God, however, is capable of being experienced only by the *man of faith*, who hears the Word of God in the Sacred Scriptures here and now. Thus the life of the Friars minor consists in a lasting, ready dialogue of obedience with God, who speaks to us in his word. But God speaks to Francis also through the Church; the "Lordship" of God, his *auctoritas*, met Francis concretely in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. For Francis, therefore, obedience to God flowed over into obedience to the Church.

Furthermore, the Lord God demands the obedience of the Lesser Brothers also through their fellow men (Salutation of the Virtues; *Omnibus*, 36). This obedience is, in the final analysis, sensitivity to the will of God

and a readiness to recognize this will in all situations of life. From this attitude of sensitivity to God flows the brothers' readiness to serve each other and indeed all men ("propter Deum"). In this mutual obedience and service the love of the Spirit becomes real.

The specific obedience of the Friar Minor is not an isolated aspect of life, but must be seen within the wider framework: namely, obedience to God's Word, obedience to the Church, and the readiness to serve the brothers "propter Deum."

Within the Brotherhood Francis presumed obedience to the superiors, but he apparently did not reflect on this aspect very intensely. In the "Letter to the Faithful" (*Omnibus*, 95), the execution of obedience is entrusted to the superior. He has to be alert "propter Deum" that obedience is rightly demanded and rightly fulfilled. Here again the superior has no domineering function but rather one of service: that of seeing himself in the context of God's will and facilitating the accomplishment of this will. This burden of the superior becomes especially evident when Francis speaks of the limits of obedience which naturally flow from fidelity to the will of God:

The first limit: "A friar is not bound to obey if a minister commands anything that is contrary to our life or his own conscience, because there can be no obligation to obey if it means committing sin" (*Reg. non bul.*, 5; *Omnibus*, 35). The correct exercise of *obedience* must always deal with the saving will and the saving action of God.

The second limit: The exercise of obedience can take place only within the promise by the brother and the community to obey the Church.

The third limit: The *Brotherhood* as such is responsible for

seeing that the superior lives "according to the spirit and not according to the flesh." Obedience means that the Lord God and the brothers seek to create the right manner of living together with the superior.

*Conclusion:* The question we are dealing with here is, in the final analysis, always a matter of the authority of God and the obedience which is given to him, the Lord. Consequently, this question of obedience and authority is not primarily a sociological or a pedagogical problem, but is first and foremost a question of Christian faith.

The fact that St. Francis lived more than 100 years before the first jubilee in 1300 and five centuries before American independence might suggest a relevancy gap of monumental proportions to modern man. Yet among people familiar with his aspirations and his life-style there is a strong and widespread feeling that the "Poverello" is as relevant today as he was in the 13th century when he helped renew the Church. His uncompromising idealism and spirit of universal love have led many to regard him as a saint for the seventies.

—DANIEL M. MADDEN  
Columbia, June 1975



## Transitus

The dark wounds, wrapped in dusk, are passing away  
I see the moon and sun with different eyes, they  
No longer are my brother and sister, they have  
Become themselves, they have become me.  
I am all creation and creation is my cowl.

Friends, loosen this brown-grey habit and lay me on dirt.  
I want to feel again the ground tremble in the wind,  
I want to smell the orange in the air.  
Do not remember best my late blindness;  
One blind poet wrote down for all days—Rosy-finger

I am not a poet, I love the earth too much,  
The real warmth of seasoned wood and sparks  
As much as the fire and light in my soul.  
I love to watch real swallows hold crosses in the sky  
Without my words limiting their flight.

The world does not need poets to be lovely.  
Listen, and a million angels sing the night.  
Wait, and the rain will rhyme purple from color into quiet  
Through the evening and the still hours of morning,  
The passing to day, like the drift of seasons,

Like the liturgy of years, like the lives of saints.  
I am not a saint, I am only the ground I lie on.  
Now, I must change, like the years, like the seasons  
Like night into day. Look, soon death, dawn  
Will break over that mountain. Rejoice with me!

I finger a new life, a rose for October.

*John Malo*



## Christ in the Psalms

SISTER GABRIEL ZWIENER, O.S.C.

THE BIBLE is an intensely human document. Not only is the Word of God the work of man in composition and style; more important, it is a record of the lives of men, of flesh and blood. One of the greatest paradoxes of the Bible is the fact that it is soaked in humanity. But not only is the Hebrew Bible centered on man; it is also referred to as the pre-Incarnation of the Word Incarnate. The full impact of this statement will be developed through the course of this article (mainly on images of *Jesus*) and a subsequent treatment to appear in November (concentrating on images of *the Church*).

For many the Bible is a closed book, for the depths of God's message are clothed in imagery familiar only to the Semitic mind. The Semite mentality is much different from that of 20th-century occidental man. The Semite does not try to express what is in his mind, a good deal of

the time, but instead tries to evoke it. He transmits by suggestion. His aim is not to compel but to give feeling to life and reality. He refuses to analyze or abstract. He throws "cold water" on the conclusions of logic and forces the mind to penetrate the intuitive. His thought proceeds in concentric circles. Every repetition adds another stroke to the picture. What is said in the very beginning is constantly enriched. The progression of thought is ever more compelling.<sup>1</sup>

St. Augustine was so steeped in Scripture that he expressed himself in the fashion of a Semite. His commentaries on the psalms very quickly give one the basic tenets of the Christian faith, but as one continues to read, masterful strokes of insight are added to give the reader ever enriching insights into the truth hidden in God's word. Augustine clarifies through imagery his

vision of God, of Christ, and of the Church. The fullness of revelation is too vast to be taken in at a glance. At every turn Augustine leads his hearers to the sublime truths of Christianity.

The Bishop of Hippo had a real intuition of the truth contained in Scripture, as well as a passion for Truth itself. The great truth, the over-all message of Augustine's *Expositions on the Psalms*, is that the Psalter is the prayer of the Mystical Christ, Head and Body. Sometimes we hear the outpourings of the Head, at other times those of the Body, and sometimes within the Psalms we find a dialogue between the two. To grasp this fundamental principle is to grasp the key to the Psalms.

The temporal meaning of the Psalms is insignificant. Every reference is to salvation and is thus a disclosure of the Christ. If we wish to catch the living Spirit that animates the Psalms, let us learn from Augustine that a greater than David, a "greater than Solomon is here." One must call Augustine's *Expositions on the Psalms* a commentary on the New Testament as well, so closely has he interwoven the two. Augustine hangs gospel associations on every stem and twig

that come from the Root of Jesse.<sup>2</sup>

We must keep in mind that St. Augustine based his commentary on the old African Psalter, which was a very poor and inaccurate translation of the Psalms. Another organizational point is that the expositions fall into four classes: brief exegetical notes, more detailed commentaries, dictations in sermon form, and sermons proper. The commentaries were composed at different times and places, and later compiled. The sermons bear the stamp of free improvisation and are thought to allude to Psalms and scriptural readings used in the divine service. Freedom, forcefulness, and penetrating simplicity characterize these sermons. Augustine's concern for those confided to his care reveals his humanness and down-to-earth manner of speaking. He seems almost to be in agony trying to give spiritual birth to his listeners. "Sing like reasonable beings and not like birds," he tells them. "To sing with intelligence is a God-given endowment of human nature . . . to know jubilation, grasp the message . . . therefore, dearly beloved, we ought to study and examine with calm of

<sup>1</sup>Dom Celestine Charlier, "The Human Element," *The Christian Approach to the Bible* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1973), pp. 129-59.

Sister Gabriel Zwiener, O.S.C., is a contemplative nun at the Monastery of St. Clare in Omaha, Nebraska.

<sup>2</sup>Philip Schaff, ed., *St. Augustine: Expositions on the book of Psalms*, from the series *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), p. vi.



heart what we have been singing with unison of voice.”<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere he mourns that the Psalms sometimes fall upon deaf ears. He cries out: “Are they made of stone that they cannot hear? What could be said more clearly even to the deaf?”<sup>4</sup>

Augustine’s forthright approach with his congregations sometimes sparkles with wit and sometimes strikes notes of pathos in our hearts as we read; in his commentary on Psalm 21, e.g.,

we read: “You were chatting with your neighbor while it was being read. Wake up and listen . . .” And about heretics: “I am so agitated, so shocked, that I marvel at this astonishing deafness and hardness of their hearts.”

In a discourse on Psalm 36 Augustine apologizes for the length of the sermon and for tiring his congregation, but justifies so doing lest the message be left incomplete. He tells them, “I owe you another sermon to-

morrow again; pray for me that I may be able to provide it, and come with burning thirst and fervent hearts.”<sup>5</sup> Scholars note that Augustine passed over easy passages and spoke on the more obscure ones. At times he invited his listeners to assist him in interpreting by thought and prayer. These difficult passages have yet to find a better interpretation than Augustine gave them so many centuries ago.

St. Augustine’s defense of the Church in his sermons is not a defense of the institution, but of the very heart of Church dogma concerning God and his Christ.<sup>6</sup> For Augustine theology centered on the Incarnation and the Mystical Body. Neither he nor other Fathers of the Church recognize a human being in isolation. For Augustine the Psalms were a revelation of Christ—of the whole Christ. He wrote: “If the mystical Christ has really been living since the beginning of the human race, then the Old Testament and the Psalms in particular can be nothing else but the first phase of his Revelation, still veiled under carnal types which point forward to the future.”<sup>7</sup>

Augustine leads his audience to the deepest insights of allegorical interpretation of

Scripture. His allegorical methods serve as an indispensable balancing factor in modern historical and literal exegesis. Pope Pius XII pointed out in *Divino Afflante Spiritu* that the Fathers of the Church, though they did not have present-day methods of studying Scripture, still excelled in perception of the divine mysteries with marvelous understanding.<sup>8</sup> The Pope pointed out that the Fathers penetrated the depths of God’s Word to explain Christ’s teachings and the sanctity of life, both of which are major reasons for us to study their writings today.

Augustine, himself deeply steeped in the Scriptures, encouraged the faithful to do the same in a simple yet moving exhortation:

When life moves serenely it is time for a man to harvest God’s word and store it away in his inmost heart, just as the ant buries in the furthest recesses the produce of her summer toil. There is clearly time to do this throughout the summer, but when winter draws near: tribulation, in other words, supervenes, and unless he can find something within himself to live on, the man must die of hunger.<sup>9</sup>

The Christian who prays the Psalms must not only make the

<sup>3</sup>Dame Scholastica Hebgin and Dame Felicitas Corrigan, trans., *St. Augustine on the Psalms*, vol. 1, from the series *Ancient Christian Writers*, vol. 29 (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1960), p. 182.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>5</sup>Hebgin and Corrigan, vol. 2 (series vol. 30), p. 248.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 12.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 278.

prayer his own but also realize that Christ is praying through him. On this point Augustine had this to say:

Thus each statement is true, both that the words are ours, and that they are not ours, that they are and are not the words of God's Spirit. They are the words of God's Spirit because they fall from our lips solely by his inspiration. They are not his in that he feels neither misery nor fatigue, whereas these are cries of sorrow and toil. Again they are ours because they reveal our misery, and yet not ours, since it is through his grace that we are able to lament.<sup>10</sup>

Augustine penetrates, as few after him have been able to do, the riches of imagery found in Scripture. He reaches to mystic heights, and yet he knew only too well the limits of finite man and humbly tells him in a discourse on Psalm 17: "Let no one imagine that a deep understanding of the Scriptures will put him in possession here and now of that light which will be ours when faith passes into vision."

IN PSALM 1, Augustine ponders the meaning of the images in the verse "And he shall be like a tree which is planted near the running waters." The faithful are

the tree planted near the life-giving water, that is Wisdom in Person. Another possible interpretation Augustine sees is that the running stream represents fallen man running to his ruin and Christ is the tree absorbing the water into his very self. While this particular image is not repeated, every other image explaining Christ carries the same beautiful message. Here is a forerunner of all to follow.

A favorite theme recurring again and again is the image of Christ as the divine Physician.<sup>11</sup> Christ is the one who comes to heal sick and sinful man, for sin is a disease. Christ is a majestic Physician who does not hesitate to purge and cause suffering but only in order to heal. The sinner's hope is in this compassionate Physician who does not hesitate to bear insult or even blasphemy if necessary to help his flock. It is not the strong and innocent man who needs the divine Physician but the sinner. In one of his sermons, Augustine gives us this beautiful passage:

Who shall boast that he is clear of sin? He had sins then, but in his perversity he forgot where he was standing; he was so to speak, in the doctor's consulting room for treatment—and he exhibited his

sound members but hid his wound! Let God, not yourself, cover your sores. For if you insist on hiding them for shame, the physician will not cure them. Let the physician cover them and cure them; for he will cover them with a dressing. Under the physician's covering the wound heals; under the patient's covering it is merely hidden. From whom are you hiding it? From one who knows all things.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, in another place Augustine advises, "If you want to flee from God, run to Christ." The Bishop of Hippo brings home in so many instances the place of suffering in the life of a Christian. In reality, suffering is not an evil but causes the anguish that leads one to the divine Physician. Commenting on "O my God I shall cry to thee by day and thou wilt not hear; and by night and it shall not be reputed as folly in me," he wrote, "He [Christ] was speaking of me, of you, of the other man; for he was bearing with him his Body the Church; . . . When Paul cried for relief God answered, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' " St. Augustine explains: "So he went unheard, not to manifest his folly but to increase his wisdom, that man may understand that God is a physician, and trouble a saving remedy, not a

doom and a penalty."<sup>13</sup>

In many places Christ is identified with his attributes. Augustine preached on one occasion: "Christ himself we find to be both mercy and truth; mercy in suffering with us, and truth in requiting us."<sup>14</sup> The Saint had a horror of error, or illusion as the Psalmist calls it. Augustine pleads with his listeners not to seek Christ among heretics but to seek him in truth. Psalm 37 contains this verse: "For my soul is filled with illusions and there is no health in my flesh." Commenting, Augustine says:

The Psalmist, then, has been punished with illusions; he has lost sight of the truth. Just as illusion is the soul's punishment, so is truth its reward. But while we were plunged in a world of unrealities, Truth came to us, and finding us wrapped up in empty illusions, took upon himself our flesh, or rather took it from us, that is to say, from the human race. He appeared to our eyes of flesh to heal through faith those to whom he intended to set forth the truth, so that our eye once restored to health might see his resplendent truth. For he himself is that truth which he promised us when he was seen in the flesh, in order to initiate us into the faith whose reward is truth. It was not his essence, but only his flesh, that Christ manifested on earth.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., vol. 1, p. 261.

<sup>11</sup>In the first sixty Psalms, references to the divine Physician are found in the commentaries on Psalms 9, 30, 31, 34, 36, 37, 40, 48, 50, 51, 54, and 59.

<sup>12</sup>Hebgin and Corrigan, vol. 2, p. 80.

<sup>14</sup>Schaff, p. 227.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., vol. 1, p. 211.

<sup>15</sup>Hebgin and Corrigan, vol. 2, p. 341.

The majesty and greatness of Christ, man united with the second Person of the Trinity, is shown forth in this passage:

For God hath not limbs like ours to delineate his stature, since he is wholly everywhere and contained in no place. Thus what he made by his Word, he made by his Wisdom, and what he made by his hand he made by his power. But Christ is the power of God and the Wisdom; all things were made by him, and without him nothing was made. The heavens have shown forth, do show forth and will show forth the glory of God.<sup>16</sup>

The humanness of Christ is focused on in many places. The passage, "Thou hast granted him his soul's desire" is interpreted to be Jesus desiring to eat the Passover and to lay down his life. In another passage of direct prayer to God, Augustine points out that Christ in his human nature had every right to pray. As man, Christ was weak; and as weak, he prayed. If we think of Christ only as God, it is no wonder we are puzzled over God praying. Christ's great prayer is that of a mediator.<sup>17</sup> Speaking of the humanness of Christ, Augustine offers this imagery:

What did Christ hunger and thirst for but our good works? And because he had found no good works

among the persecutors who crucified him, he was hungry, since they repaid his soul with barrenness. How rigorous must have been his fast when he found barely one thief to refresh him upon the cross!<sup>18</sup>

Augustine sees with a faith perspective rather than viewing all with his natural eyes. He tells his congregation that it was those physically near to Christ that crucified him, while those who stood afar off were closest to him.

The images of Christ in the Psalms are far too numerous to comment on at length here, but an overview is helpful. Christ is the just man slandered in the Psalms. He is our helper when we strive after him, our protector in the face of the foe. Christ is the angel of counsel encamping around those who fear the Lord. He is the judge, all the more for having himself submitted to judgment with great humility. Christ is the Second Adam bringing the life-giving Spirit, the fountain of life itself, the hope of the abandoned, image of the Father, crown in which the Apostles are set as precious stones. Christ is seen to be our keeper, or the Good Samaritan as seen in New Testament imagery. A Samaritan is interpret-

ed to mean a watchman. Christ is the Samaritan who takes pity on the human race. He is the leader, the provider of nourishment, the exemplar in handling temptation. David is seen to be a prototype of Christ. When David flees from the face of his son Absalom, it is Christ who flees. Christ is our rock, the foundation stone upon whom our building of

faith is raised. Augustine pleads, "Never let this foundation vanish from your hearts." The humanity of Christ conceals the majesty of God and is imaged by the cloud concealing the divine presence. Christ is our light: "... apart from him, then, we are simply darkness and weakness.... In him we possess a hope that is sure, fixed, and true."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., vol. 1, p. 263.



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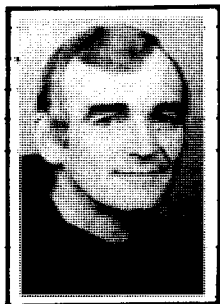
<sup>16</sup>Ibid., vol. 1, P. 185.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 292-93.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., vol. 2, p. 212.

*Prayer for a Dead Friar:*

**In Memoriam: Noel A. Fitzpatrick, O.F.M.**



I kiss a flower in your honor  
A Rose  
The color of your heart

And with its bright petals  
I crown my torn heart

With your ineffable memory

You shall live in my heart  
that vessel of SPIRIT  
Earthenware of ETERNITY

With it I bless you  
And carry your name  
For all posterity.

Live!  
Holy Futurity!  
Resurrection from Death!

Where is heaven to be found?  
When will my restless heart  
come to rest?

Will it ever?  
for ever?

The loneliness of Golgotha  
The blood of Gethsemane  
Curse the path of my  
restlessness

strident fears  
of no infinity

Tell me!  
Where is consolation  
in such pure desolation?  
What is the heart to do?

The touch of Death  
Erodes my young heart  
Eating my flesh away.

So, I come to YOU  
My Most Holy Mystery  
Intimate Center of my life  
POWER OVER ALL  
YOU who give breath  
To my life  
Tell me . . . Fill me  
With your heavenly life

Come to my aid!  
Where is heaven to be found?  
Teach the meaning  
Of this pain

Puddles of tears  
Stain my pillow  
At night  
As I think of YOU  
And you,  
and you . . .

O Nameless One  
Gentle Kindness  
Origin of Compassion

You who took his dear life  
With one Swiftburning Kiss  
From YOUR dark eternity

Place them in the hands  
Of his heavenly life

Give him NEW LIFE!  
This dearest friend  
Flood him  
With YOUR harmony

Then return him to us  
In our own frail red cups  
Washing our sorrows away

EXALT HIM IN YOUR GLORY!  
A BRIGHT RED STAR!  
IN YOUR HAPPY ETERNITY!

O Purest Passion!  
YOU charged Noel!

Moving Green Mountain  
Tree of Life  
Root of Noel

Time and Eternity

beatific concurrence!  
of the best moments  
of our visionary lives

History of our bones  
Mystery of our hearts

YOU filled up his RED CUP  
Too quickly!  
Fill us now  
With his burning Truth  
Drink our cups away

May HE live on in us  
His laughter—pure and wild  
His mercy—full of gut  
His love—YOUR gentle touch

Remember not his failures, LORD,  
But remember this his faith.

CHRIST . . . lived  
In his heart  
HE lives in ALL  
Human Hearts

To light up the night  
And to have us bite  
Of HIS life in ETERNITY

So let us raise up!  
Our soft red cups  
Shaking mortality  
And drink from HIS CUP  
The burning blood  
Sweet wine of Gethsemane

Given  
Shared  
Broken

I tell you, most solemnly, unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life (John 12:24-25).

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In his resurrection!  
From death!  
Forever and ever . . .

ALLELUIA

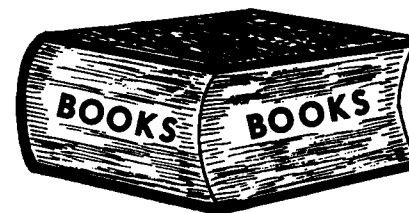
I kiss a flower in your honor  
A Rose  
The color of your heart

And with its bright petals  
I crown my torn heart  
With your eternal memory  
May we meet in eternity  
Come, . . . . ., Come

    bless and touch  
    put to still  
    rest our hearts

IN YOU

**Roberto O. Gonzalez, O.F.M.**



**Inner Healing: Ministering to the Human Spirit through the Power of Prayer.** By Michael Scanlan. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1974. Pp. vi-85. Paper, \$2.25.

*Reviewed by Father Thomas J. Burns, O.F.M., Assistant Chaplain at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.*

The Pentecostal movement in the United States, though barely a decade old, has spawned a number of liturgical practices arising from the charismatic fervor of the local prayer communities. Although the phenomenon of *glossalalia* (speaking in tongues) has attracted the most outside attention, the most fruitful contribution of this movement in terms of universal Church renewal may very well be the ministry of healing, a process described and explained by Father Michael Scanlan in his book *Inner Healing*.

The title itself sets the parameters of what a believer may and may not expect from this experience of Pentecostal ministry. Healing involves a restoration to health or equilibrium, the correction of a physical or emotional disorder. Scanlan does not close the door to the possibility of a community's possessing such power in prayer and ministry that it can liturgically restore a sick person to full physical health, but he prefers to stress the process of emotional healing. By this he means that in a time span of prayer meetings and intense communal support, a person may eventually come to a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as an immanent personal Lord and Savior. Once having made this decision, the subject is freed from the excessive burdens of guilt, selfishness, loneliness and pain. In the case of physical disease, he is in a better frame of mind to cope with the infirmity.

It is clear that Scanlan is aware of both the abuses of this power that exist within the Pentecostal movement and the theological criticisms leveled at this understanding of the power of prayer. For he warns that

the ministers themselves (i.e., the praying/supporting community) must be healed from all possible self-seeking and regard themselves as trusted servants of the Lord, fulfilling *his* mission. Moreover, he anchors this ministry to New Testament sources in a way that does not seem overly fundamentalist, avoiding a perennial pitfall of this movement.

The ultimate judgment upon this work will rest in part upon one's judgment of the Pentecostalist movement itself. The above mentioned danger of fundamentalism is not dispelled by *Inner Healing*. Scanlan's theological perspective is not shared by the majority of the grassroots believers, who still attempt healings, prophesying, and tongues as if they can effect the Holy Spirit's presence at will. The jargon of healing, being in some respects "other-worldly," implies a short-cutting of the professional, time-tested, and disciplined processes of scientific medicine and therapy. Whether one believes in supernatural intervention or not, it is highly questionable whether the occasional miracle should be permitted to vindicate the existence of a ritual which may not be able to effect for believers what it sets out to do. It is the pastoral experience of this reviewer that thousands of people come to the Pentecostalist communities in a state of loneliness, despair, or boredom, in need of a long-range sense of belonging, support, and hope. To discuss healing as a liturgical drama, without a developed notion of community support, smacks of some of the more regrettable pastoral at-

titudes towards sacraments, which conceives them as isolated acts of divine intervention without corresponding community responsibilities. It would be very interesting to see Scanlan's assessment of healing in ten years, to judge whether the mainstream of Pentecostal communities have the emotional stamina to provide a long-range therapeutic atmosphere for its believers.

**Together in Peace.** By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1975. **Penitent's Edition:** Pp. 102; paper, \$1.35. **Priest's Edition:** Pp. 270; paper, \$3.95.

*Reviewed by Father Vincent B. Grogan, O.F.M., J.C.D. (Catholic University of America), a member of the faculty at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, New York.*

These are two separate booklets, one for the use of the penitent, the other for the confessor, based on the revised Rite of Penance.

In the penitent's edition, the author describes the sacrament of Penance briefly as a meeting, in faith, with the Lord who forgives. Peace is seen as the gift accompanying this forgiveness and reconciliation. Five elements or steps are then indicated as preparatory to and accompanying this fruitful encounter with the merciful Christ.

The first stage is a calling on God for enlightenment; here the author offers as aids to personal prayer three appropriate psalms. The second phase, entitled "God's Good Words about Forgiveness," contains scriptural passages, from both Testa-

ments, on the forgiveness of sin. The third element is the examination of conscience. Father Champlin stresses the value of confessing lesser sins or faults, balancing this with an exhortation to avoid an excessive amount of time on self-examination. He then lists the major areas of man's life and conduct in which sin may be found. This technique of the author should be most helpful, because with each area, an appropriate scriptural passage is also given, along with a brief application by Father Champlin. This represents an improvement over the previous examinations of conscience which simply asked direct questions of the penitent, without any scriptural or theological background. This third segment concludes with the examination of conscience found in the revised Rite of Penance, divided according to man's three-fold relationship: to God, to neighbor, and to himself.

The fourth element is the actual confession of sin. The chief aspects of sin—what, why, how can I improve?—are highlighted, as is the importance of the penitent's sorrow and change of heart, rather than adherence to any one set formula of contrition. Properly, the author advises the penitent of his liberty to choose the manner of confessing with which he feels most comfortable: anonymously or face-to-face. At this point, the author includes the rite of confessing as revised in 1974, with its dialogic components between confessor and penitent.

The penitent's guide concludes with the fifth stage: the penance to be performed. A brief rationale behind confessional penance is offered,

and some scriptural readings are again given as possible penances which a confessor might impose.

The priest's edition includes the entire contents of the penitent's guide, as well as the complete text of the revised Rite of Penance. The initial section outlines briefly the manner in which the confessor will administer the sacrament in the new rite, with both priest and penitent utilizing this ritual aid.

Then the author proceeds to discuss at some length three factors most significant in the administration of Penance. First, there is the question of the physical setting for the sacrament. As with the celebration of all other rites, the environment in which this sacrament is administered can go a long way either to reveal or to obfuscate the meaning of penance/reconciliation. Here, Father Champlin treats the so-called confession room as a viable alternative to the confessional box. He offers options drawn from his own personal experience, illustrated by photographs: a room converted into an attractive setting for confession with three choices for the penitent—kneeling behind a large screen, sitting behind the screen, or a face-to-face confession across a table on which a crucifix stands.

The question of providing suitable penances is treated next. Since the new rite places emphasis on the conversion or renewal of the penitent (in addition to the traditional notion of reparation), penances should be, in a sense, highly personalized; i.e., adapted to the penitent's failings and his spiritual condition. Whatever



form the penance assumes, it should be, according to the author, clear, concrete, and of short term duration. This segment ends with suggested penances for particular sins (e.g., for uncharitable speech about a person: speaking positively to him or praying for him). Such penances seek to go to the root of the fault to counteract it by the practice of its opposite virtue, a traditional element of Christian spirituality.

Father Champlin then directs his attention to the pivotal issue of an effective confessor, drawing a comparison with the key role of the celebrant and his effect on the overall celebration of any liturgical rite. Some twenty characteristics of a good confessor are delineated, all of them centering on the unique role of the priest as one to whom other men reveal their innermost selves. Under the title "A Man of Faith," the author stresses a point that perhaps needs to be made today: faith in Christ's presence in and through the sacrament of Penance should prompt priests themselves frequently to receive this sacrament as well as administer it. Champlin quotes Karl Rahner to the effect that monthly reception of Penance could constitute the suitable norm for a person seriously interested in following Christ. That a confessor should be prayerful is another principle reiterated by Father Cahmplin, suggesting that a priest spend some moments in prayer to the Lord before hearing confessions.

In these two booklets, Father Champlin has once again provided effective and helpful guides to the celebration of the Liturgy, for which

American Catholics should be grateful. If intelligently used (and not allowed to become too stylized or mechanical), these should prevent the sacrament of Penance from further deterioration as a "Saturday night quickie" sacramental encounter, and should provide a deeper understanding of this sacrament, rendering it a genuine celebration of God's mercy and forgiveness. Hopefully, copies of the penitent's guide will be made available in parish churches in much the same way as missalettes or other Mass participation aids are provided. Both booklets are adaptable for use at communal celebrations of penance and at penance services without sacramental absolution.

One might, however, have preferred that the penitent's booklet contain a lengthier treatment of the contemporary theological meaning of the sacrament (e.g., its relationship to Baptism, its significance in the continuous conversion to God, the ecclesial dimension of sin and forgiveness); perhaps, this could have been adequately supplied by inserting the introduction to the new Rite of Penance.

In brief, these recent publications should assist both confessor and penitent in fulfilling the wish of the Second Vatican Council, expressed in its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, that the sacrament of Penance be revised so as to give clearer expression to the nature and effect of the sacrament, which Father Champlin in the titles to his booklets so aptly refers to as the sacrament of peace.

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- Bosler, Raymond T., *What They Ask About Marriage*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1975. Pp. 285. Paper \$3.50.
- Foley, Leonard, O.F.M., ed., *Saint of the Day: July-December*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1975. Pp. vi-198. Paper, \$1.95.
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## WE REGRET

that rising costs have made it necessary to raise the price of a subscription to THE CORD to \$4.00 per year, beginning with 1976 subscription.

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Now, the tremendous increase in the cost of both labor and material, about which our readers know only too well, has forced us, once again, to raise our subscription rate. We do hope that the increase will not prove an excessive burden upon our subscribers, and we look forward to continuing to provide you with enlightening and inspiring Franciscan reading material in the future.

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## COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our October issue were drawn by Brother John Lennon, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province at Holy Name College, Washington, D.C. The editorial has been illustrated by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., of Sancta Clara Monastery, Canton, Ohio.

# the CORD

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## Mary: Woman of Reconciliation

**R**ECENTLY FATHER AUGUSTINE HENNESSY, C.P., editor of *The Sign* magazine, gave an address at St. John's University, Jamaica, N.Y. His topic was "Woman—the Way to Reconciliation." The theme applies in a special way to the Blessed Virgin Mary, for if all the holy women of the Old and New Testaments and all the Christian women of history were special agents of peace, harmony, and love, our Lady is pre-eminently so.

The purpose of the Holy Year of 1975 is renewal and reconciliation. This same year is also called the Year of the Woman. It is very fitting, though not in the way that its promoters have suggested. The Woman of the Year, as of every year, is the all-holy Mother of God and Mother of men.

Mary is our model of reconciliation because of her union with Christ. She shared in his work of salvation; she played a part in the whole plan of reconciliation during the incarnate life of the Son of God even as now she plays a role in the work of the Church in bringing his precious gift into the lives of nations and of men.

Centuries ago St. Anselm of Canterbury wrote of Mary: "Mother of justification and of the justified,/ Mother of the Reconciler and of the reconciled,/ Mother of salvation and of the saved,/ Mother of the Saviour and our Mother."

Such conviction was expressed by Fr. Paul James Francis, S.A., founder of the Society of the Atonement at Graymoor, Garrison, N.Y. He is known especially as a prophet and apostle of Christian Unity and for untiring labors in this field. But an integral part of his preaching, writing, and way of life was a profound veneration for the Mother of God. He loved to honor her as Our Lady of the Atonement, and he established a feast day with this title for July 9. He said that under the Atonement name Mary is our Lady of Reconciliation, of Unity. She will have a prominent part in ecumenism.

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*Father Titus Cranny, S.A., has been active for many years in the promotion of prayer and activity for the unity of all men under the headship of Christ.*

And so we should consider our Lady. She shared in God's merciful plan of bringing man back to divine friendship and love through the Incarnation and Redemption. She knew the heart of Jesus as no other, his compassion, his forgiveness, his longing for man's holiness. She was so totally united to Jesus in his mission that she stands forth as the perfect image of his love which made peace through the "blood on the cross," praying with him for the unity of all his followers: "that they all may be one as you, Father are in me and I in you . . . that the world may believe that you sent me."

Cardinal Newman pointed out the relationship between Jesus and Mary in these words:

It is customary with those who are not Catholics to fancy that the honors we pay to Mary interfere with the supreme worship we pay to him, that in Catholic teaching she eclipses him. But this is the very reverse of the truth. For if Mary's glory is so very great, how can not his be greater still who is the Lord and God of Mary? He is infinitely above his Mother and all the graces that filled her are the overflowings and superfluities of his incomprehensible sanctity."

Thus we say that Mary helps to bring men closer to Jesus by her prayer and her love. How could it be otherwise? She surely is no obstacle to the love and service of Christ. She is the perfect model of ardent love, sharing in the divine plan of salvation and reconciliation. Even now united with her Son and sharing in the mission of the Church, she

desires nothing more than to see all men attain that salvation which Christ won for them through suffering and sacrifice.

Mary is the pattern of man's relationship with God, but not just a model far distant from the rest of humanity. She lived by faith even as we are called to do. She is a member of the Church, far holier than any other, but still a member of that Body founded and formed by her Son. She prays for her children that they may be worthy to receive the graces of reconciliation and give themselves totally to the love of Christ.

It is most evident that ecumenism and our Lady are closely related. Love of Mary is needed for a proper understanding of Christ, of the Church, of grace, of salvation, of man's purpose in life and of his final destiny in the Communion of Saints. This is why Mary is crucial to progress towards Christian Unity. It also seems that the slow and stumbling efforts of the past ten years are due in large measure to the failure to grasp the importance of Mary in the life of all Christians. This does not mean any one form of devotion, necessarily, but it does mean an awareness and recognition of the role of Mary in the plan of salvation and reconciliation.

Mary does not compare with Jesus. She is a creature, he is God. She depends upon him for everything; she came into existence because of him. She owes everything to him. But she is his mother, and into the fabric of the mystery

of Jesus is woven the texture of the mystery of Mary. If anyone doubts the priority of love for Mary let him ask the question: How much did God love her?

While we honor God during the Holy Year of Reconciliation and thank him for all his grace, we should be mindful of the person of our Blessed Lady. Pope Paul has written of her:

We implore the Blessed Virgin Mary, the holy Mother of the Redeemer and of the Church, Mother of grace and of mercy, servant of reconciliation and shining example of the new life, to ask her Son to grant to all our brethren and to all our sons and daughters, the grace of this Holy Year, to renew

and to preserve them. To her hands and to her maternal heart we commend the beginning, the development, and the conclusion of this important matter.

And so we pray to the Virgin Mary, Mother of Reconciliation, to show us the way to a deeper union with God and with each other. She points out the way, she leads all men along the road that infallibly leads to Christ. She is the great Woman of reconciliation who by her consent to the Angel united heaven and earth, God and man. She shared her Son's work of reconciliation in his preaching and suffering. She continues that holy task of uniting men with God as the Mother of the Church.

*Titus Cranny, S.A.*

## What Could I Say Concerning Mary?

What could I say concerning Mary  
That has not been expressed at length?  
I'll sing in praises said already  
But with my own devoted strength!

How this will please the Queen of Heaven,  
Whom I can never laud as sure  
As God himself—for he has chosen  
To be his Mother . . . Mary pure!

*BRUCE RISKI, O.F.M. CAP.*

## Shorter Book Notices

### **What's Cooking in the Priesthood?**

By John C. Tormey. Canfield, Ohio: Alba Books, 1975. Pp. 128. Paper, \$1.25.

This is a book for priests by a priest. Its catchy title is a clue to its informal, readable style. Enriched by a host of hilarious cartoons, this brief work points out the postures into which we priests fall with regard to matters like parish councils, team ministry, money, the institutional Church, leisure. Though at times a bit too trenchant, it does make its valuable points. Would that correcting our faults were as easy as discovering them.

—*Julian A. Davies, O.F.M.*

**Now Is the Time: Christian Reflections.** By Edward Carter, S.J. Canfield, Ohio: Alba Books, 1975. Pp. 127. Paper, \$1.45.

This small paperback offers fifty "reflections" of two to three pages each for background reading and proximate preparation for mental prayer. It is a very compact treatise on the spiritual life, treating topics like the call to holiness, the place of prayer, suffering, the various virtues. A very readable, though at times rather cerebral book.

—*Julian A. Davies, O.F.M.*

**Saint of the Day: Vol. II: July-December.** Edited by Leonard Foley, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1975. Pp. vi-198, incl. index to both volumes. Paper, 1.95.

The second of the series of brief biographies and reflections upon the saints in the Roman Calendar is as well done as the first (see *THE CORD*, April, 1975), and will serve the same audience well: people whose life includes daily Mass, and priests and religious looking for homily-meditation material. Hopefully in a future edition the two small works can be put under one cover, though having the two separate volumes instead of one medium-sized work is no great inconvenience.

—*Julian A. Davies, O.F.M.*

**A Rebel from Riches: The Autobiography of Rev. Bede Reynolds, O.S.B.** Canfield, Ohio: Alba Books, 1975. Pp. 150. Paper, \$1.65.

This book presents fast-paced vignettes of eighty-six year old Father Bede's first half-century as a wealthy California oil man and militant Protestant, married to a Catholic wife for thirty years. God's plan for his life brought him into the Catholic Church, religious life, and priesthood. Easy reading.

—*Joseph H. Vann, O.F.M.*

## The Routinization of the Franciscan Charisma

NEIL J. O'CONNELL, O.F.M.

THOMAS O'DEA, in his work on the Mormons,<sup>1</sup> has presented a well defined record of the progress of a religious body from its charismatic foundation to its final form as a bureaucratic institution. In his study, O'Dea applied the Weberian theory for the development of religious movements to a concrete case. Weber's theory proposed that religious movements evolve from an initial stage of charismatic leadership through the imposition of tradition and discipline to a final stage of bureaucracy and the routinization of the original charisma. The application of this theory to the concrete case of the Mormons has opened up vistas for similar application to other religious movements in history.

Within the Catholic tradition, one of the most outstanding charismatic religious movements has been the Franciscan movement of the thirteenth century. Max Weber himself cited Francis of Assisi, the Founder

of this movement, and the early years of the Franciscans as examples of the charismatic period in religious movements.<sup>2</sup> This article intends to apply the Weberian theory to the Franciscan movement and in doing so to test further the validity of the theory.

Max Weber has envisaged the charismatic leader as one possessed of specific gifts of mind and body, believed to be supernatural, who meets a distress which cannot be confronted through the mere exercise of daily routine.<sup>3</sup> Eric Hoffer in his essay on fanaticism and mass movements has made intense discontent with existing institutions one of the conditions for the formation of a mass movement.<sup>4</sup> In short, in the light of Weber and Hoffer, the charismatic leader is able to meet a social crisis by fulfilling the frustration of people incapable by themselves of surmounting the crisis. A brief look at the milieu of the early thirteenth century is therefore necessary to

ascertain what needs Francis of Assisi met and satisfied.

The prayer for the old Catholic liturgy celebrating the stigmata experience of Francis described the world in which Francis lived as one which "was growing cold."<sup>5</sup> This was a very apt appraisal of the religious attitude of the early thirteenth century. Christianity at that time had become a settled ecclesiastical structure, quite cold and perfunctory in its ministry. The great mass of Christians did not feel "at home" in "mother Church." Preaching, when and if exercised, failed to touch the great majority of common people. The infrequent sermons were more often long drawn out excursions in intellectual gymnastics. The liturgical service itself, greatly influenced by the monastic practice of the great abbeys, discouraged the people by its complexity and length. The recent rise of vernacular languages further divorced the common people from the liturgical service, which was rendered in the dying Latin language.

Most of all, the Arian conflict of one thousand years before, coupled with the eleventh century investiture strife, had developed an awesome and unappealing Christology. The Arian denial of Christ's divine nature engendered a trend in the opposite direction to overemphasize the divinity of Christ. A majestic view of Christ as an unapproachable deity gradually developed and found

its expression in altar rails, rood screens, and the great sanctuary mosaics and frescos of a staring Christ surrounded by the trappings of the Byzantine court. This imperial vision of Christ found reinforcement through the investiture strife. To offset the encroachments of the Holy Roman Emperors and to embody the legalism of the canonists who had won the investiture controversy for the Church, there emerged a forbidding picture of Christ as royal judge.

In secular affairs, Italy was experiencing a revival of urban life. The largest cities of Europe were situated in the Italian peninsula.<sup>6</sup> A new urban proletariat was on the rise as a result of this urbanization. Many of this new social group were former serfs who, liberated from the security of their serfdom, faced the urban insecurities of unemployment and grinding poverty. Such a class of people, in the eyes of Eric Hoffer, were ripe for a mass movement; for mass movements thrive on individuals afraid to assume the responsibilities of freedom, especially when communal ties of a rural sort have been disrupted by changing social structure.<sup>7</sup>

At the outset of the thirteenth century, the monetary system was beginning to replace barter, but a scarce coinage remained in the hands of the few. The new urban proletariat on this account had a strong aversion for the wealthy. They also had an

<sup>1</sup>Thomas O'Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

<sup>2</sup>Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Günther Roth and Claus Wittich (New York: Bedminster, 1968—3 volumes), vol. 3, pp. 1113-14; Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," *From Max Weber*, ed. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford-Galaxy, 1964), pp. 119, 126.

<sup>3</sup>Weber, "The Sociology of Charismatic Authority," *From Max Weber*, p. 245.

<sup>4</sup>Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer* (New York: Mentor Books, 1964), p. 20.

Father Neil J. O'Connell, a member of Holy Name Province, is Assistant Professor of History at Fisk University, and Campus Minister at Fisk University and Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee.

<sup>5</sup>English-Latin *Roman-Seraphic Missal* (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1968), p. 1300.

<sup>6</sup>Jean Comhaire and Werner J. Cahnman, *How Cities Grew* (Madison, N.J.: Florham Park Press, 1965), pp. 60-64.

<sup>7</sup>Hoffer, pp. 35-36, 45-46.

aversion for the Church, especially the monasteries, for these latter, though designed to be retreats from the world, had succumbed to the wealth the world is wont to shower on those who flee it. Moreover, even if some monasteries remained spiritually vital, their physical remoteness from the cities diminished their influence on the urban populace.

Finally, the Crusades were unlocking a provincial Europe. A new era of exploration and discovery was dawning. With a whole new, wide world opening up, the current otherworldly "City of God" spirituality was hardly attractive.

The times, then, were ready for any movement which would meet their religious and social frustrations. Already an expectation for a new pentecostal age was thrilling through Europe and manifested itself in the teachings of Joachim of Flora who heralded the "age of the Holy Spirit." The literature of the times often bore an open attack on the avarice and corruption of the clergy. Other movements sprang up to proclaim a return to the purity of primitive Christianity and a rejection of wealth. Among such movements were Peter Waldo and his Poor Men of Lyons, Robert d'Abriessell and his Poor Men of Christ, and the Poor Men of Grammont. Finally, Manichacism, long dormant for several centuries, erupted in the Cathari sect of southern France and northern Italy. The Cathari sect neatly solved the whole problem

of wealth by declaring all matter evil and thus esteemed the accumulation of material goods as the worst of evils. By the time of Francis, these movements had imbued men with a longing for the restoration of the inwardness of religion and an expectation for the Kingdom of God. Moreover, many of these movements had emphasized the scriptural message as the basis of their teachings and so had prepared the people for further communication on evangelical terms. All these movements, however, failed to draw significant followings and for the most part ended outside the ecclesiastical structure. The genius of Francis of Assisi was that he successfully met the religious and social demands of his time while remaining within the pale of the established Church. Nonetheless, these pre-Franciscan movements had sufficiently broken ground for the Franciscan seed to be planted and take root.<sup>8</sup>

The paramount factor for success in the approach of Francis to contemporary problems was his Christology. Like most charismatic leaders, Francis failed to make a rationalized formulation of this central element of his movement. Yet one can easily be deduced from his actions and attitudes. The Christ of Francis was the Christ of the crib and the cross. For Francis, Christ was a flesh-and-blood person whom he could see, hear, touch, and even love with the intensity of human emotion. To a people starved for a



familial relationship with Christ, Francis presented a warm and humanistic devotion to Christ which often became emotionally exuberant. This devotion found its manifestation in Francis's special devotion for the Christ Child, the crucified Christ, and the shrines of the Holy Land which were bound up with the flesh-and-blood existence of the Son of God on earth.<sup>9</sup> The biblical Scriptures, the Eucharist, and the priest-

hood which administered both items received the highest reverence from Francis, since they were the only channels he possessed for contacting Christ.<sup>10</sup>

Francis's humanistic attitude toward Christ determined his attitude toward material creation. If God had united himself so intimately to matter in the Incarnation, then all material creation must be essentially good and worthy of praise. The

<sup>9</sup>An example of this devotion is "The Office of the Passion," in *The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi*, trans. Benen Fahy, O.F.M., with introduction and notes by Placid Hermann, O.F.M. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1964), pp. 141-55.

<sup>10</sup>"The Testament of St. Francis," "Letter to All the Faithful," "Letter to All Clerics," "Letter to a General Chapter," "Letter to All Superiors of the Friars Minor," *Writings*, pp. 67-68, 95, 101, 102-07, 113.

<sup>8</sup>Ellen Scott Davison, *Forerunners of Saint Francis and Other Studies*, ed. Gertrude R. B. Richards, with foreword by James T. Shotwell (London: Jonathan Cape, 1928).

famous *Canticle of the Sun* was an expression of Francis's high regard for the material universe.<sup>11</sup> By this attitude Francis avoided the extreme of the Cathari and provided a Christian impetus for investigation of the material world. One could now pioneer in the expanding new world and yet be compatible with Christian ideals. Francis's special emphasis on missionary activity went hand in hand with the notion of an expanding world and loomed as a more successful alternative to the Crusades. Following Francis's lead, the followers of Francis have been noted for their adventure and exploration as is witnessed in the lives of John of Montecorvino, the first Archbishop of Peking (fourteenth century); Louis Hennepin, reputedly the first European to view Niagara Falls (seventeenth century); and Junipero Serra, the founder of organized colonization in California (eighteenth century).<sup>12</sup>

Paradoxically, Francis seemed to flee the world, especially in regard to his radical profession of absolute poverty. His profession of poverty, however, was his means of escaping the false economic world established by men and embracing the real world of material goodness created by God and irrevocably joined to God

in the Incarnation. Francis did not condemn material abundance and prosperity as long as they were not obstacles to seeing Christ in the material universe. In this vein, he exhorted his followers "not to condemn or look down upon people whom they see wearing soft or gaudy clothes and enjoying luxuries in food and drink."<sup>13</sup> Indeed, Francis numbered among his friends several wealthy personages such as Cardinal Hugolino, Duke Orlando dei Cattani, and Giacoma or Jacopa de Settisoli, the wife of the Roman nobleman Gratiano Frangipanis.<sup>14</sup> Honest labor and industry were respected and praised by Francis.<sup>15</sup> In this way he identified himself and his movement with the laboring classes. The very habit Francis chose for himself and his followers was basically that of the common day laborer of the fields.<sup>16</sup>

Francis's life of voluntary poverty thus spoke eloquently to the urban proletariat about their own position in the world. Their poverty was to be conceived as a honorable lot assumed by the very incarnate Son of God. By their willing acceptance of poverty, these laboring people would conform themselves closely to Christ and free themselves from all avarice which perverts the good material world created by God.

Thus esteeming the material world through the humanity of Christ, Francis favored a more material form of worship accommodated to the material as well as the spiritual nature of man. Appealing sight and sound flavored Francis's worship. His use of the Christmas crib was one example of the sensual appeal he promoted in devotion. The son of a Provençal mother, Francis was well acquainted with the popular romantic vernacular ballads and courtly love ideal of the Provençal troubadors. Francis adapted the tune styles of these ballads, coupled them with religious lyrics in the vernacular for devotional purposes, and promoted their use in the churches.<sup>17</sup> These first vernacular hymns with their catchy tunes and comprehensible lyrics aptly filled the common people's need for a meaningful and appealing worship. Everywhere the Franciscan movement spread through Europe it became noted for the architecture of its churches which were warm with light and color. Artistically the movement found expression in a new humanistic art style which reached its zenith in the famous Giotto frescos adorning many Franciscan churches of Italy.

For a time, Francis faced a strong temptation to lead a monastic life. Upon reflection, however, he saw such a course as out of step with the evangelical life he wished to lead. As Christ and the Apostles went out

to the cities and towns, so Francis and his followers would do also. Francis therefore rejected all monastic trappings which would tie him down in this work. To facilitate this purpose, he chose the liturgy of the papal court for his followers.<sup>18</sup> Since the papal court of that time was moving frequently about the papal domains, it was necessary that its services be short enough to be contained in a compact, single-volume service book. The papal liturgy was thus one of the shortest forms of the Catholic liturgy at that time and ideal for the mobility Francis sought for his movement. As the Franciscan movement spread through Europe, so did this more practical and popular form of the liturgy.<sup>19</sup> Francis also reduced the lengthy monastic fasts and obliged his followers to fast only on Fridays, during Lent, and from All Saints exclusive (November 1) to Christmas exclusive (December 25). These fasts for the most part were identical with the then prevailing customs or laws of fast obliging ordinary Christians of that period.<sup>20</sup> After Francis's death the Popes granted further privileges to the Franciscans to ensure their mobility. They could celebrate Mass anytime between midnight and three in the afternoon and at portable altars which could be set up outside church walls. They were also excused from wearing the surplice and stole in administering Penance and therefore could exercise this sacrament any-

<sup>11</sup>The Canticle of Brother Sun," *Writings*, 130-31.

<sup>12</sup>*New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967—15 vols.), vol. 6, pp. 1016-17; vol. 7, pp. 1061-62; vol. 13, pp. 124-25.

<sup>13</sup>"The Rule of 1223," chapters 2 and 3, *Writings*, pp. 59-61. This admonition reflected a similar admonition in "The Rule of 1221," chapters 1, 8, and 9, *Writings*, pp. 31-32, 38-39.

<sup>14</sup>Johannes Jörgensen, *St. Francis of Assisi*, trans. T. O'Connor Sloane (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942).

<sup>15</sup>"Rule of 1221," chapter 7; "Rule of 1223," chapter 5, *Writings*, pp. 37-38, 61.

<sup>16</sup>"Rule of 1221," chapter 2; "Rule of 1223," chapter 2, *Writings*, pp. 32-33, 58-59.

<sup>17</sup>Jörgensen.

<sup>18</sup>"Rule of 1221," chapter 3; "Rule of 1223," Chapter 3, *Writings*, pp. 33-34, 59.

<sup>19</sup>Stephen C. Doyle, O.F.M., "The Franciscans and the Liturgy," *Interest* 1, n. 4 (Winter, 1962), pp. 3-9.

<sup>20</sup>"Rule of 1223," chapter 3, *Writings*, p. 59.

time and anywhere anyone had need of it.<sup>21</sup>

In a further reversal of traditional monasticism, Francis did not retire to the countryside to found well established monasteries. Instead he founded at the city wall, or within walking distance of the city, a new institution called a "convent" which was to be a modest residence where the brothers could gather (*convenire*) after the day's work for spiritual and physical refreshment. Francis wanted no monastic enclosure to inhibit the work of his followers, and he told them that their cells were their own bodies.<sup>22</sup> The cities and the marketplace were the scenes of his labors and not the remote countryside. In this way, Francis effectively accommodated the proclamation of the Gospel to the emerging cities.

Finally, Francis faced up to the pressing problems of the day by championing popular preaching. Realizing the people's need for adequate yet simple instruction, Francis instructed his followers "that in their preaching, their words should be examined and chaste. They should aim only at the advantage and spiritual good of their listeners, telling them briefly about vice and virtue, punishment and glory, because our Lord himself kept

his words short on earth."<sup>23</sup>

In these ways Francis of Assisi filled the first Weberian criterion for a charismatic leader by meeting the felt need of people who have been frustrated in meeting the need on their own.

As a second criterion for a charismatic leader Weber has proposed that the leader ascribe his mode of action to some supernatural source or power.<sup>24</sup> If Francis of Assisi was convinced of one thing it was that his way of life was based on a supernatural revelation. Shortly before his death Francis declared: "When God gave me some friars, there was no one to tell me what I should do; but the Most High himself made it clear to me that I must live the life of the Gospel."<sup>25</sup> The popular account of his vocation at the summons of the crucifix at St. Damian's chapel to "build up my house for it is falling down,"<sup>26</sup> further bolstered the crediting of his manner of life to divine intervention. When his first two followers came to him, Francis sought to ascertain God's will by consulting the Scriptures three times at random. Such a procedure was a common medieval practice for determining the divine decree for one's manner of action. Without reserve Francis accepted the resulting three scriptural passages as God's plan for his life.<sup>27</sup> Apart from the popular

"Sermon to the Birds" story and the "Wolf of Gubbio" incident, there has been, strangely for a charismatic leader, small appeal to miraculous intervention as a proof of Francis's divine commission. The unique claim in this regard is the account of Francis's reception of the stigmata or wounds of Christ's crucifixion on his body. Two factors, however, militate against the complete conjunction of this spectacular phenomenon as a support to Francis's charismatic claims. First, the time to which this event is ascribed (1124) was after the success of the movement had been secured. Some, however, have pointed out that this event was contemporaneous with the crisis over the Rule and supported Francis's insistence on a literal interpretation of his rule, especially in regard to poverty. Secondly, Francis was reluctant to exhibit the phenomenon and even took pains to conceal it. In fact, the accounts of the event have recorded that even his closest followers were not aware of the phenomenon until one of the brothers went to wash Francis's undertunic and found it soaked with blood.<sup>28</sup> If Francis claimed this phenomenon as the seal of approval on his mission, he certainly seems to have been a bit reluctant in doing so.

Though Francis claimed divine authority for his mission, he none-

theless sought confirmation for his way of life from legitimate ecclesiastical authorities. On April 16, 1209, he sought and received verbal approval for his manner of life from Pope Innocent III.<sup>29</sup> On November 29, 1223, he received definitive approval of his final Rule from Pope Honorius III. Francis openly submitted himself and his followers to the authority of the Pope.<sup>30</sup> He forbade his followers to preach wherever the local bishop refused them permission to do so.<sup>31</sup> He declared an especial reverence for the priesthood.<sup>32</sup> By such attitudes, Francis did not seem to consider his charisma as an exclusive affair. Indeed, he seems to have recognized the institutionalized and rationalized charisma of the ecclesiastical authority as superior to his own. This fact would seem to mitigate the claim made for Francis of Assisi as a pure type of charismatic authority. Francis, however, claimed divine intervention as the source of his respect for ecclesiastical authority. As he expressed it: "God inspired me, too, and still inspires me with great faith in priests who live according to the laws of the holy Church of Rome, because of their dignity, that if they persecuted me, I should be ready to turn to them for aid."<sup>33</sup>

A third criterion of charismatic leadership according to Weber was its spontaneity and irrationality.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Examples of various concessions in the area of Penance are in Marcellus A. McCartney, O.F.M., *Faculties of Regular Confessors: A Historical Synopsis and a Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1949), *passim*.

<sup>22</sup>*The Words of St. Francis*, ed. James Meyer, O.F.M. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1952), p. 113.

<sup>23</sup>"Rule of 1221," chapter 17; "Rule of 1223," chapter 9, *Writings*, pp. 44-45, 63.

<sup>24</sup>Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, p. 1112.

<sup>25</sup>"Testament," *Writings*, p. 68.

<sup>26</sup>Jørgensen, p. 38.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 64. The passages were Mt. 19:21; Mt. 16:24; & Mk. 6:8.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 300.

<sup>29</sup>"Rule of 1221," Introductory Commentary, *Writings*, p. 28.

<sup>30</sup>"Rule of 1221," Preamble; Rule of 1223, chapter 1, *Writings*, pp. 31, 57.

<sup>31</sup>"Rule of 1223," chapter 9, *Writings*, p. 63.

<sup>32</sup>See note 10, above.

<sup>33</sup>"Testament," *Writings*, p. 67.

<sup>34</sup>Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, pp. 1112-13.



The leader himself has gone through no formal process or period of training to become a leader. His following, furthermore, knows no permanent institutions which compartmentalize the manner of life irrespective of persons. In this area Francis of Assisi conformed well with this criterion. There has been no evidence in his life of formal training for the task Francis assumed. His early life was not unusually religious. The son of a wealthy merchant, Francis was a mere layman without any theological education. He never became a priest. He did receive ordination as a deacon, however, sometime between 1209 and 1216; but this was a practical move encouraged by the ecclesiastical authorities to immunize him from the civil authorities and to enable him to confer the faculties for preaching on his followers.<sup>35</sup>

There was a spontaneity about the beginnings of Francis's new manner of life. After a double crisis of a year of imprisonment and a serious illness, Francis gradually changed his life in a trial and error fashion. At first, he naively interpreted his experience of a divine command to build up the falling house of Christ in a very literal sense and went about repairing chapels in the vicinity of Assisi. Next he expanded his labors to include the care of lepers. The final separation from his former life came with Francis's dramatic rejection of his father who had opposed

his manner of life. From then on, Francis lived a day-to-day experimentation in his way of life.

The Franciscan movement itself was quite spontaneous. There was probably no one more surprised than Francis to discover that men wished to follow him. There has been no evidence that Francis deliberately sought followers. On the contrary, he was somewhat befuddled concerning the future course of his actions when a band of men gathered about him. The organization of this initial following was quite informal. There was no provision for a formal process of admission to the brotherhood. To join the group one merely had to attach oneself to the community, and every follower was empowered to receive new members.

The authority of Francis was of a fraternal variety with no recognition of offices or chain of command. Distinctions of rank were totally absent. Priest, laybrother, high or low social origin merged and became indistinguishable.

When ecclesiastical authorities pressured Francis into formulating a rule of life, Francis found himself forced between 1212 and 1216 to make the first rationalization of his manner of living. This First Rule, however, was quite informal in nature. It was a rambling document consisting of a series of loosely connected scriptural passages and pious exhortations to which admonitions were added over the years to meet

new conditions as the movement grew.<sup>36</sup> Even the more precise final and now official Rule of 1223 was quite broad. Its directives were few in number and were contained in twelve short chapters of only a paragraph or two in length. The only officials this Rule recognized were the general minister, the provincial ministers, and the "custos" or regional minister; yet the Rule did not explicitly define the functions of these officers.<sup>37</sup> Francis's very choice of the word "minister" to designate these officers, his provision for a process of removing the general minister if he proved incompetent, his injunction against the ministers in ordering anything contrary to a brother's conscience, and his advice that the brothers should approach their ministers like masters with their servants: all these bore witness to Francis's particular aversion to formalizing his movement into a monolithic structure like the ancient monastic orders.

Weber's fourth criterion for charismatic leadership was that it rejected methodical and rational economic gain for its performance.<sup>38</sup> Here Weber explicitly cited Francis and his insistence upon radical poverty.<sup>39</sup> Francis commanded his

followers not even to handle coin or money.<sup>40</sup> To obtain the necessities of life, the friars were to apply themselves to honest labor.<sup>41</sup> Only when labor failed to provide the necessities of life would the friars be able to have recourse "to God's table" by begging.<sup>42</sup> They were not to receive support from their preaching nor from their administration of the Sacraments. Daily manual labor as field hands or house servants with payment in kind was to be the sole support of the friars.

The final Weberian criterion for charismatic leadership was that such leadership stood outside the ties of the world.<sup>43</sup> As an example of this, Weber cited Francis's denial of not only individual property but community property as well. Beyond this, Francis severed all other ties with the world, especially those of a familial nature. This was epitomized in the vivid scene of the bishop's court as Francis, stark naked, confronted his hostile father, cast his wealthy clothing at the man's feet, and declared: "Hitherto I have called Peter Bernadone father . . . hereafter I shall not say: Father Peter Bernadone, but Our Father who art in heaven."<sup>44</sup>

(To be continued)

<sup>36</sup>The most successful of various attempts to reconstruct this early Rule is that of Domic Mandic, O.F.M., *De Legislatione Antiquae O.F.M. 1210-1221* (Mostar: Pobjesno društvo za proučavanje prošlosti jugoslavenskih franjevaca, 1924), pp. 122-23.

<sup>37</sup>"Rule of 1223," chapter 8, *Writings*, p. 62.

<sup>38</sup>Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, pp. 1113-15.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup>"Rule of 1221," chapter 8; "Rule of 1223," chapter 4, *Writings*, pp. 38, 60-61.

<sup>41</sup>See note 15, above.

<sup>42</sup>"Testament," *Writings*, p. 67.

<sup>43</sup>Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, pp. 1113-14.

<sup>44</sup>Jörgensen, p. 46.

<sup>35</sup>André Callebaut, O.F.M., "Saint François lévite," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 20 (1927), 193-96.

# Poverty and Minority in the Early Sources of the Franciscan Order

DUANE V. LAPSANSKI,, O.F.M.

**M**Y PURPOSE in the following pages is to show that the vision presented in the documents, "Vocation of the Order Today" and "As I See the Order" is, far from being an arbitrary one, a vision based solidly on the Franciscan heritage.

To do this I will examine the meaning of poverty and minority found in the earliest sources of the Order. Particular emphasis will be placed on how St. Francis himself understood these basic ideals and wrote about them.

## Clarification of Terms

THE EARLIEST sources most often used the term "poverty" to express both its outer dimension (i.e., "external" poverty, use of things, etc.), as well as its inner dimension (i.e., poverty as an attitude of heart, poverty of "spirit"). In the latter sense the term "poverty" was thus often interchangeable and synonymous with the term "humility" or "minority." In this study I use the term "poverty" in this same way, that is, as including both the outer and the inner dimensions. By using the term in this very broad sense I am able to

treat "poverty" and "minority" as a single reality.

In the writings of St. Francis life "in poverty," life "sine proprio," is an ideal which consists of a three-fold relationship: viz., a relationship to material goods, to immaterial values, and to spiritual values. To put it another way, the first level of poverty regulates man's relationship to things. The second level concerns his relationship with persons: i.e., with his neighbor but also with his very self. The third level speaks of man's relationship to God.

## Poverty as Relationship to Things

ST. FRANCIS certainly wanted his brothers to live in material poverty. Upon entering the Order, for example, the brothers were to sell all their possessions and give the pro-

ceeds to the poor. Henceforth they were to wear only rough clothing and simple sandals instead of shoes. They were to "give up" their rights to all material possessions, whether

houses, places, or things. They were not to receive or handle money; indeed, if any brother had or collected money he was to be considered a thief and false brother (*Reg. bul.*, 5; *Reg. non bul.*, 8, *Omnibus*, pp. 60, 38). Having thus "emptied" their hearts of all earthly goods, the brothers were to go about the world like pilgrims and strangers, serving the Lord in "poverty and humility."

Material poverty, Francis was convinced, has a very definite spiritual value, for—especially when it is accompanied by joy—it frees man's heart from unruly cupidity and avarice (*Adm.* 27, *Omnibus*, p. 86). This is so because poverty, when properly motivated and rightly observed, "unclutters" man's heart

and separates it from the worries and cares of this world. By so doing, poverty frees man from his most important work: viz., that of serving God. Thus poverty truly leads its followers to life, for it makes them "heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven" (*Reg. bul.*, 6, *Omnibus*, p. 61). The evil spirit, states Francis, is fully aware of this functional value of poverty. He therefore seeks to "clutter" man's heart with cares, worries, and worldly concerns, in order thereby to suffocate the Word of God in it (*Reg. non bul.*, 22, *Omnibus*, p. 48). What better example of this "cluttering" with the consequence of "suffocating" the Word of God, than in the life of Pietro Bernadone, Francis's own father?

## Poverty as Relationship to One's Inner Self and to Other Persons

FRANCIS ALSO wanted his brothers to "empty" their hearts of all immaterial goods as well—that is, of all values of which a man can be inwardly proud. One such immaterial value specifically mentioned by Thomas of Celano was learning (2 *Cel.* 194; *Omnibus*, p. 517): "Francis once said that a great cleric must in some way give up even his learning when he comes to the order, so that having renounced such a *possession*, he may offer himself naked to the arms of the Crucified." In the mind of Francis, functions and offices within the brotherhood also come within the pale of poverty; that is, friars must not "appropriate" or be attached to any office or service (*Reg. non bul.*, 17, *Omnibus*, p. 44): "The ministers

and preachers must remember that *they do not have a right* [*nullus . . . appropriet*] to the office of serving the friars or of preaching, and so they must *be prepared to lay it aside* without objection the moment they are told to do so." The same message of not "claiming" [*nemo appropriet*] an office as one's own is found even more poignantly in the fourth Admonition (*Omnibus*, p. 8): "Those who are put in charge of others should be no prouder of their office than if they had been appointed to wash the feet of their confreres. They should be no more upset at the loss of their authority than they would be if they were deprived of the task of washing feet. The more they are upset, the greater the risk they

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Father Duane V. Lapsanski, a member of the Assumption Province, holds a doctorate in theology from the University of Munich, where he was in close contact with Father Kajetan Esser. At present, Father Duane is on the staff of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure, New York.

incur to their souls."

What Francis wanted was that his brothers surrender, let go of, all selfishness and self-will, to die to the old man and to live as true friars *minor*, as men of poverty and humility. In these piercing words he begged all his brothers, the preachers, the ministers, and those who work manually, "to do their best to humble themselves *at every opportunity*; not to boast or be self-satisfied, or take pride in any good which God says or does or accomplishes in them or by them" (*Reg. non bul.*, 17, *Omnibus*, p. 44). Each friar was to wash the feet of the others, for this befits true "lesser brothers." When they lived and worked among other Christians, they were to perform only the lowly jobs and to be truly "minor" and subject to everyone in that house (*Reg. non bul.*, 7, *Omnibus*, p. 37).

The humble friar, the friar who is "poor in spirit," is one who has "emptied himself" to such an extent that he bears accusations and accepts rebuffs without being quick to make excuses on his own behalf. He does not become upset by harmful words or even deeds to which

others subject him. "There are many people who spend all their time at their prayers and other religious exercises and mortify themselves by long fasts and so on. But if anyone says as much as a word that implies a reflection on their *self-esteem* or takes something from them, they are immediately up in arms and annoyed. *These people are not really poor in spirit*" (Adm. 14, *Omnibus*, p. 83).

The man who is poor in spirit realizes with all his heart that "what a man is before God, that he is and no more" (Adm. 20, *Omnibus*, p. 84). He therefore does not exalt himself when others heap praises on him, but neither does he get upset when others despise him, for anger in this case would be an expression of self-will and thus a sign of "appropriation." The man of poverty and humility is thus necessarily also a man of peace; he is a man who is calm and serene. "Nothing should upset a religious except sin, says Francis. "A religious lives a good life and *sine proprio* when he is never angry or disturbed at anything" (Adm. 11, *Omnibus*, p. 82).

### Poverty as Relationship to God

FRANCIS INVITED his brothers to "empty" their hearts of material goods and to embrace immaterial values. But he went even further, for he also invited his brothers to surrender all claim to spiritual goods and security as well. He wanted his brothers to stand before God, to face his greatness and brilliance and to experience their own nothingness. He wanted his brothers to stand before

God with outstretched arms, in complete nakedness and openness of spirit, shorn of all claims to personal merit or virtue and convinced that "we have nothing of our own except our vices and sins" (*Reg. non bul.*, 17, *Omnibus*, p. 45).

Because they are invited to this highest poverty, the friars minor acknowledge freely and with joy that whatever good is done through them

is to be credited to God alone. We must refer every good to the most high supreme God," writes Francis (*ibid.*), "acknowledging that all good belongs to him; and we must thank him for it all, because all good comes from him." And in Admonition 19

(*Omnibus*, p. 84). Francis paints this vivid image: "Blessed the religious who refers all the good he has to his Lord and God. He who attributes anything to himself *hides his master's money* (Mt. 25:18) in himself..." (cf. also Adm. 17, 8).

### The Challenge of Poverty

I WOULD LIKE to summarize what I have said thus far. Poverty as envisaged by St. Francis consists in the renunciation of earthly possessions; that is, in the renunciation of everything that in any way can give man security and shelter. The man who is wholly poor ought to go about the world as a pilgrim and stranger: without permanence, without rights and protection, without possessions and security, even in his relationship to God (adapted from K. Esser).

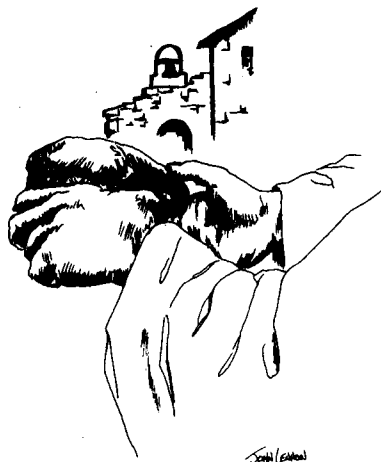
The early Franciscan classic, *Sacrum Commercium*, points out why such total poverty—that is, why such a radical renunciation of self and worldly values—is necessary. As long as a man "possesses" something (this could be money, learning, concern for a good name, plans to get ahead, or a treasury of merits), he makes that possession his "refuge" and in effect his "god." But once a man renounces everything, outwardly and inwardly, he no longer has a refuge, a place to hide, and must of necessity come face to face with God, come to terms with him as absolute Lord, and hopefully live for him alone (*S.C.*, 3, *Omnibus*, p. 1550).

Because the friars are dedicated to this ideal of poverty, they can afford to be *joyful*. They have nothing to make them sad. They are men free of the work-ethic and of the con-

sumer mentality, for they have only one absolute priority in their lives, namely God. And it is poverty that—by eliminating pride from their hearts and making them conscious of their dependence—keeps reminding them that they are creatures. By so doing poverty leads the friars to realize and acknowledge their truthful and right relationship to God, the Creator of all.

The first man, Adam, appropriated something that was not his own and brought sin into the world; the friars, by living as poor men, by adopting the attitude of the *anawim*, restore the relationship between God and man which existed in paradise. And because the friars are one with God and his sons, they can be true brothers to each other, but also brothers to all men, especially the wretched, the poor, the sickly, and the downtrodden (*Reg. non bul.*, 9, *Omnibus*, p. 39): "They should be glad to live among social outcasts, among the poor and helpless, the sick and the lepers, and those who beg by the wayside."

The motive which impelled St. Francis to take up a life of such radical poverty was the example of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who "emptied himself" of eternal riches and became man (Phil. 2:6; Letter to all the Faithful, *Omnibus*, p. 93), who



lived like a stranger and poor guest on this earth, who depended on alms for his sustenance (*Reg. non bul.* 9, *Omnibus*, p. 39), who surrendered his will to the Father so lovingly and so completely (Letter to All the Faithful, *Omnibus*, p. 93), and who laid down his very life for man (Adm. 6, *Omnibus*, p. 81). Such was the poverty of Jesus Christ. But Jesus continues to "empty himself" daily in the Eucharist, Francis exclaims with wonder (Adm. 1, *Omnibus*, p. 78). "Every day he *humbles* himself just as he did when he came from his heavenly throne into the Virgin's womb; every day he comes to us and lets us see him in *abjection*, when he descends from the bosom of the Father into the hands of the priest at the altar" (cf. also Letter to the General Chapter, *Omnibus*, p. 105).

It was to such perfect following of Christ in poverty and minority that St. Francis openly dedicated his entire life with the words: "I, little Brother Francis, wish to live according to the life and poverty of our most high Lord Jesus Christ and his

most holy Mother and to persevere in this to the last (Last Will, *Omnibus*, p. 76). It was to this same high ideal that he called Brother Leo, as well as St. Clare. It is to this same ideal that Francis invites us.

St. Francis, of course, fully realized that such a complete following of Christ, such a death to the old man, is beyond man's capability. It is rather the work of God in man's life. Francis therefore humbly begged the Lord to do this mighty work in him and all his brothers (Letter to a General Chapter, *Omnibus*, p. 108): "Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God, grant us in our misery that we may do for your sake alone what we know you want us to do, and always want what pleases you; so that, cleansed and enlightened interiorly and fired with the ardor of the Holy Spirit, we may be able to follow in the footsteps of your son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and so make our way to you, Most High, by your grace alone, you who live and reign in perfect Trinity and simple Unity, and are glorified, God all-powerful, for ever and ever. Amen."

## The Body of Saint Francis and Its Seminal Virtue

DAVID KOCKA, O.F.M. CONV.

IN THIS AGE of technological barbarism, Franciscans as a body may find themselves slumping into a spiritual complacency. Considering the Order of Friars Minor, one notes that it is not a society but a functioning, living body—the body of Saint Francis. This organism has a permanent function and place within the Church. Many diverse elements (friars) are drawn together to compose this unique body. Some friars cultivate the poverty of Francis while others make use of his simplicity. One may have a great spiritual insight, and another becomes a beautiful fool. None of the members of the body will ever become Saint Francis, nor should they. Each member should become that version of Christ that he has been called to become. The Franciscan life is not a field to be crossed but a destiny to be experienced. Francis's body involves pain and pleasure, prose and poetry, work and play, doctrine and insight, contemplation and activity, sorrow and joy. All these elements collectively re-present Saint Francis to the world.

Collectively also, the body seems to inherit the ills to which flesh

is heir. There is difficulty in breathing; ears are assaulted by decibels of noise; our vision is barraged by banality. All this infects members of the whole body. Its symptoms are expressed in spiritual undernourishment and physical overexertion.

Francis was ill before he fell ill, and on his sick bed he writhed. Then with a transformed heart, he felt his health gradually restored. So also the body of Saint Francis must undergo a spiritual writhing and conversion in its constant effort for renewal. In taking the pulse of the body each member must ask himself the question, "Why have I come here?" By asking such a question we must find the foundations of our vocation apparently shaken; but not to ask it will surely result in death. If this question is considered long enough it turns into the question that Jesus asked in the garden of his agony: "Whom do you seek?" (Jn. 18:4). Our answer should be, "We seek Jesus the Nazarene" (Jn. 18:5). We seek to grow in union with the risen Lord and live more fully and deeply the life of his body, the Church. In other words, we seek to have God seek us and recognize

Friar David Kocka, O.F.M. Conv., is a candidate for the priesthood at St. Anthony Center, Auburn, Indiana. He has served as a member of the retreat team at Prior Lake, Minnesota and has pursued formal studies in fine art (figurative sculpture).

himself in us. He has promised us a new name (Rev. 2:17).

All the members of the body of Saint Francis, and indeed all humankind, is called to receive a new name by living the mystical life. This life is not a rare gift that is given to a select few; it only appears that way because man's faith is so weak and his life so petty and trifling. The lack of the mystical life and contemplation is due, not to the lack of God's grace, but to man's reluctant disposition of openness to God and the fact that modern man does not live in a mystical climate.

Despite these rattles of death and disease, the body of Francis still seeks its renewal. This renewal will come about only in the rattles of the dark night. As Father William McNamara, O.C.D., once stated, the only significant feature of our age is that it has catapulted the Church into a dark night. This seems true enough and should be looked at as something good because it has brought this groaning age to the threshold of its spiritual liberation. The body of Francis is called to participate in the regeneration and genesis of the new spiritual age.

This brings me to the special need and function of one element of the body of Francis: the itinerant Franciscan hermit. Franciscan hermits are kissing cousins of the tenth-century hermits who preceded the Franciscan movement. They were pilgrims and gyro-vagues living in the forest with outcasts and outlaws. There is no explanation for the Franciscan solitary life, nor is there any real justification, because the life of any solitary is a lawless life.

The hermit, then, is an outlaw. The solitary life is without law; and so, to live such a life, one must be like Paul and live outside the law, beyond the law: "Christ has freed us and he intends us to remain free" (Gal. 5:1).

The itinerant hermits are always open to the world and must work with the whole body in a climate of fraternal love to deliver the message of great joy: the Lord is present in the world! But how can any body with some of its members suffering from disease and the real need of a joyous regeneration themselves, act with a cunning, ruthless, and determined attitude to burst the spiritual shackles which imprison its abilities to discover its true identity? How can a man on a sinking ship help all those on it, if first he does not realize the ship's condition? When he realizes his own sinking condition, he escapes to save himself—but not *just* to save himself. He escapes to get a strong foothold and better vision of the desperate situation. Finding a solid ground, he has the power and the obligation to pull the ship to safety after himself.

The hermit "community" is intrinsic to the body. Together with contemplation and other value-forming activities, the eremitical life of a Franciscan can serve as basic genetic material for the potency of the Franciscan body, thereby assisting the regeneration of the anatomy of society. In other words, the hermit may be seen as part of the sexuality of the body. The Franciscan hermit must not cut himself off from the rest of the body, but should serve as a life-giving force for the whole



body so that the body in turn may engender new spiritual life and bring into being a new spiritual generation. This can be done only by an unabashed act of love. Marxism is telling the world that the unworldly man, the man of faith, is kidding himself. Marx says that when nature is replaced by technology then man is fully human. The hermit, as every Christian, must have contempt for this type of world. There is need for contempt—contempt for what he world lacks, not for what it contains. The world is ours because it has been redeemed. Our message to the world, then, must be the cross, which is the greatest Christian answer to the need for liberation from illusion.

Franciscan contemplation must bear fruit in preaching. Francis saw this quite clearly as he gazed on Jesus crucified, alone and abandoned in the height of mystical union with

his Father. Jesus, the hermit preacher, finds stability in nails upon the lonely cross. This wooden tower is his ground and foothold, his rostrum, where preaching by example he draws all creation towards himself, to safety. The hermit is not the man who considers himself aloof or alien to other men. On the contrary, he is an outlaw, and his lawlessness allows him the freedom to find that he doesn't measure up. His intuition tells him he is no good—only God is good—and he finds he must depend utterly upon God:

And there was one that wrestled with him until daybreak who, seeing that he could not master him, struck him in the socket of his hip, and Jacob's hip was dislocated as he wrestled with him. He said, "Let me go, for day is breaking." But Jacob answered, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." He then asked, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he replied. He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob but Israel," and he blessed him there (Gen. 32:26-28).

When man is left alone with God he cries aloud with the psalmist, saying: "Let me hide in the shelter of your wings and dwell in your tent forever" (Ps. 61:4). But the wings and tent of God are at once his shelter and his contention. As he grapples with God in the confines of his solitude he is wounded and blessed. Like Jacob and Saint Francis, the lone man must emerge wounded with a scourge of joy and blessed with a new name, his true identity. The hermit should not, therefore, be thought of as a drone, one who lives on the labors of others, but rather should be perceived as a Jacob: one who like Jesus flees to the desert to fight the power of error (security,

reputation, power). He is a lone warrior who fights on a spiritual front and writhes with the needs, interests, problems, joys, and sorrows of all humankind. He shares our nature, assuming like Jesus the universal disease of our frail human condition, and perhaps, being more keenly aware of those sufferings. In fighting he captures his true identity and brings about an awareness for all men: the ability and capacity of finding their true self.

The solitary life has been a constant throughout the history of Christianity. The Franciscan solitary celebrates his solitude with other friars in a climate of fraternal love. Like all solitaries, he cannot survive unless he is able to love everyone—even those who will not understand and will consider him a renegade. It is the solitary, then, whether in a grove or a ghetto, in the woods or in the warehouse, in the desert or a den, who mirrors to the world, in a special way, its own ability to recapture liberty and peace.

Religious life today is experiencing a crisis much like that which monasticism experienced in the tenth century. The lay hermit movement threatened the monastic machine with a life of poverty and labor in small communities. There is a desire among religious today for smaller, simpler communities with a more sensitive celebration of poverty, repentance, and the cross. We see this desire expressed in the sprouting up of houses of prayer and thirty-day retreats. God's glory is man fully alive, and therefore the task at hand is keeping ourselves alive to God by contact with him. Words like

contemplation and mysticism, however, are being bandied about today, and the use of such words should be carefully read and examined. Using such jargon might be conceived as a sign of the rifting of our spiritual threshold. On the other hand, it may be diagnosed as a spiritual misconception. Contemplation is for everyone, true: it is the center and central human act that puts us into contact with our hidden self, Jesus the Lord:

May he give you the power through his spirit for your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith and then, planted in love and built on love, you will with all the saints have strength to grasp the breadth and length, the height and depth; until knowing the love of Christ which is beyond all knowledge you are filled with the utter fullness of God" (Eph. 3:16-19).

The mystic, however, is the person who attains to felt union with God—he is not the person who merely talks, writes, or even cloisters himself. Father Malatesta, preaching a conference recently in Rome for a group of priests, warned that some of today's contemplative vocations can and indeed may become just a fad, whether in the form of a hermitage, a house of prayer, a monastery, a friary, or a thirty-day retreat. If a man flees to the desert to be different, out of the ordinary, admiring the lofty gulf between himself and the rest of humankind, then this man has already failed. He has towed behind him the world he thought he left behind, and he uses this in his cellar as a unit of measure. The result of his contemplation will be only self-contemplation. This we should fear.

If a man flees the world and does not realize he is the world, and escapes to cut himself off from the anatomy of the world, he will find that the only fruit of his running is rotting in the basket that he weaves in his madness. The contemplative faddist will only hinder the body rather than give it nourishment. We must enter solitude as our common selves. As we leave home, factory, and stampeding cars, we hope to find our most common self, and in that finding, we see truth. Confusion and evil were not in the home, factory, cities, or stampeding cars, but in ourselves. We go to the desert to become celebrants, not celebrities.

These comments in a mosaic of

metaphor might whet the appetites of those whose hearts hunger for solitude and its integral place in all religious traditions and all forms of apostolic life. Franciscan solitude is not a romantically isolated element or decoration to be admired like rouge, beads, and pompadours, but it is rather a pulsating rush of life that is unmistakably celebration and resurrection.

Our age is a favorable time for solitaries, and as we enter our interior cellar we must enter to know ourselves and find all men in God. Our spiritual survival is urgent. I believe our time to be fertile for renewal, and I believe fleeing to dry places can be an act of love.

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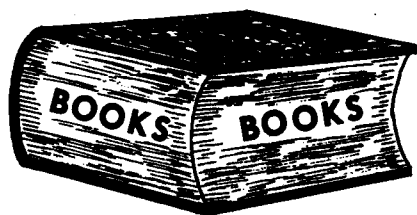
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**A Religion for Our Time: On Christian Faith and How to Live It.** By Louis Evelyn. Trans. Brian and Marie-Claude Thompson. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Image Books, 1974. Pp. 106. Paper, \$1.45.

**Our Prayer: A New Approach to Everyday Prayer.** By Louis Evelyn. Trans. Paul Burns. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Image Books, 1974. Pp. 112. Paper, \$1.45.

*Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D., Associate Editor of this Review and Head of the Philosophy Department at Siena College.*

These two works are of different merits, though they do cover the same ground to some extent: man's need for God, finding God in the experience of daily living, the centrality of the Gospel precept of love. *A Religion for Our Time* zeroes in on the concept of poverty and of self as the gateway to the experience of God. Particularly fine here are the author's observations on "perfectitis," the desire to be perfect, to excel, which can close the door to God's working in us, by making us unintelligent in our actions and placing us in search of Self rather than God.

*Our Prayer* offers some insight into the dangers that people who pray can encounter. Excessive petitioning, e.g., is really an effort to get God to

correct the mistakes He has made. Separation from life leads us to address a God of the past rather than of the present who reveals himself in the angels of business suits as well as in white coats. Sometimes Evelyn carries things a bit too far, as when he brands as "unimportant" beliefs in dogma if they are not lived (the truth about God is never unimportant). And his view of prayer of petition as fundamentally pagan is a suggestion that the law of Liturgy has been leading the faithful astray for centuries rather than teaching them, as is axiomatic in theology. It would seem that Evelyn is guilty of a kind of "perfectitis" himself—that he has forgotten that one who acknowledges himself as poor and needy must needs be a beggar.

**Thomas Merton on Mysticism.** By Raymond Bailey. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 239. Cloth, \$7.95.

*Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy, Fordham University), Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Siena College and editor of this Review.*

This is a superb biographical study tracing the odyssey of Thomas Merton from his not exactly disciplined youth, through the comparatively pietistic and dogmatic stage of his early monastic years, on to the mature, world-embracing life he eventually came to lead in the Spirit.

Dr. Bailey is a Baptist (now a Pastor), who has served as Chairman of Communication Arts, Director of the Thomas Merton Studies Center, and Associate Professor of Theology

at Bellarmine College, Louisville. This fine study is his doctoral dissertation submitted to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, also in Louisville. It is extremely satisfying to see so magisterial, insightful, and sympathetic an investigation come from the pen of a scholar who, one would at first be inclined to suspect, does not share all of Merton's religious views.

The biographical genre was chosen deliberately because mysticism is a quite personal matter, scarcely describable or intelligible apart from the individual mystic's own testimony, and somewhat less than wholly meaningful when divorced from the mystic's concrete life and development.

In his first chapter, Dr. Bailey covers the basics needed for an understanding of what follows: he defines mysticism, names his sources clearly, and sets forth his biographical methodology. The remaining chapters follow a more or less strict chronological order, but without any sacrifice of the needed theoretical discussion of the positions Merton came to adopt as the years passed.

If there is any one theme that emerges from this thorough discussion of Merton's life, it is that of doubt as an integral, necessary part of genuine faith. As is well enough known, Merton felt at every stage of his development, torn between the contemplative and the active ideals. At one level—perhaps it might be called that of the *apex mentis*—the tension does seem to have been resolved; yet it never failed to re-emerge on the more superficial, psychological level.

Merton's life conformed strikingly to the pattern set forth by his most influential mentor, St. John of the Cross. Dr. Bailey does not seem to be stretching a point at all as he identifies the dark nights in his subject's life, with their consequent emergence onto higher plateaux of daylight. All the important factors which have made Thomas Merton almost a household word in our troubled age receive due recognition here: his social and anti-war activities, his attraction to the spiritualities of the East, and above all his poetic contribution to American literature. All these are well integrated into the basic scheme tracing his spiritual maturation.

The author has availed himself well of Merton's works, teaching notes, and journals. He has used all his sources to good advantage; but for one in particular the reader should be most grateful: viz., the unpublished essay, "The Inner Experience." Merton stipulated that this was not to be published in full; and yet his executors have happily allowed Dr. Bailey to cite abundantly from it. As Merton's veritable compendium of mystical theology the essay has much to tell us, both in the realm of theory and, as well, about the subject himself.

The book has a good, flowing style, its only consistent flaw being the repeated use of "infern" for "implies." It will serve you well, whether you prefer to read it as biography, as spiritual reading, or as a treatise on the mystical life.

**Guilty, O Lord: Yes, I Still Go to Confession.** By Bernard Basset, S.J.



Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 118. Cloth, \$5.95.

*Reviewed by Dr. Johnemery Konecsni, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Caldwell College and a member of the Dominican Third Order.*

There are some who consider Basset-hounds shy, unassuming, and, yes, humorous in a vague sort of way. This Basset uses those qualities to ensnare the reader, for this is one of the *Domini canes* (if you will forgive an old Dominican pun being applied to a Jesuit). He retains a style which has carried him through a whole series of books, a kind of charming Christianity which seems to be a peculiar gift of the Anglo-Roman tradition.

This book carries a family tree which is at least rooted in Father Basset's ancestor, St. Thomas More. The man for all seasons appears in these pages, as does C.S. Lewis, Dorothy L. Sayers, Ronald Knox, and G. K. Chesterton. It is the gift of Father Basset that he can make use of all these happy literary warriors and never lose the light touch, never get mired in his own footnotes (these footnotes, by the way, would make a fabulous starting point for a library on lay spirituality in one's own home).

The subject of this little volume is confession in all its various forms. "At a pentecostal meeting recently, I listened to a young priest in Boston urged, apparently by the Spirit, to stand up and pout about his sins. Though such a performance seemed to me slightly artificial, I stuffed my handkerchief into my mouth to discourage the Holy Ghost." While

Father Basset does not believe that sacred cows make great hamburger, he does believe that a heavy subject need not be ponderous in its treatment. The treatment of the three levels of man (somatic, rational, and mystical) is the finest blend of theological and psychiatric sources I've ever seen in such a style.

The author's emphasis on uncoerced confession may strike the American reader strangely, especially if one has first-hand experience of being marched (or otherwise pressured) toward confession or communion. Since those memories of a Catholic childhood are (almost) now only memories, Father Basset's book comes at a time when both confessors and penitents can use guidance at making confession more fruitful. (His passing comments on confessors makes this good reading for both lay and clerical or religious persons.)

The only drawback to the volume (aside from a typo on p. 12 where "potential" might mean penitential) is the price. It is decidedly worth the money, especially if you think Basset deserving of more than paperback permanence on your shelf. If it doesn't fit into your budget, despair not: Doubleday has brought out all his other books in Image paperback, and they will probably do the same to this book. They should.

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**Dimensions of Love: East and West.**

By James A. Mohler, S.J. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. xvi-392. Cloth, \$9.95.

*Reviewed by Dr. Johnemery Konecsni, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Caldwell College and a*

*member of the Dominican Third Order.*

Father Mohler is one of those many-faceted Jesuits who seem to be omniscient in a wide variety of fields. While primarily a professor of religious history (John Carroll University, Cleveland), he evinces in his publications not a progressive narrowing of academic interest (the perpetual academic disease of overspecialization), but a continual widening of interest: his books range from Thomas Aquinas, Biblical Faith, and Monasticism, to an Overview of Christian Education and, in the present volume, Oriental studies.

This is a survey volume which ranges from Master Kung (Kung-futsze, Confucius) to Master Siegmund (Freud); and, as in all surveys, it is impressive in areas with which you are not familiar and superficial in areas you know well. I missed St. Francis, St. Bonaventure, and the 17th and 18th Century altruism-egoism debates, but I can see omitting them in favor of Augustine, Aquinas and Freud. Selection is the right of the selector. What he does with his selection is another question.

Father Mohler's opening chapters on the Orient have the same "naturalistic" (pre-Christian) quality for the unknowing Westerner today that I suspect Aristotle had for the Medievals in the 13th century: going from the Orient to the Greek was almost like coming home, so much have we assimilated the Greek way. It may surprise some to find notes on and quotes from the *Kama sutra*; but after C.S. Lewis's *The Four Loves* (1963) and Andrew Greeley's *Sexual*

*Intimacy* (1973) and *Love and Play* (1975), this presentation is mild, even though effective in its concreteness.

The Western chapters include Plato, Deuteronomy, St. John's first Letter, Ovid, Augustine, Sufism, the Kabbala, and Courtly Love, along with Luther, John of the Cross, and Freud. If the constellation of names begins to bewilder, and you start to feel confused as to the direction in which Father Mohler is heading, flip to the epilogue. The epilogue doesn't tie it all together; but it does sketch the possible applications of the selections to our situation today. A book like this, which can be of value to the not-yet-married, the too-long-married, the busy pastor and busy (busier?) sister, is definitely worth the price.

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**God Is Like: Three Parables for Little Children.** By Julie Walters. Illustrations by Barbara De Leu. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1974. Pp. 96. Paper, \$1.65.

**Liturgies for Children.** By Andrew Jamison, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1975. Pp. viii-120, incl. 4 appendices. Paper, \$2.45.

**Penance: God's Gift for Forgiveness** (an illustrated book for children of 7 or 8). Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1974. Pp. 47. Paper, \$0.95.

**Touching God: A Book about Children's Liturgies.** By W. Thomas Faucher and Ione C. Nieland. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1975. Pp. 157. Paper \$3.50.



Reviewed by Mrs. Margaret E. Clarke, Founder and Director of the Religious Education and Liturgical Music Programs at St. Edward the Confessor Church, Elnora, N.Y. Mrs. Clarke holds a B.S. Degree in Music Education from SUNY, Potsdam, and has done graduate work at Syracuse University, SUNY Oswego, and SUNY Potsdam; she has taught for several years in public schools.

*God Is Like*, designed for pre-school and primary aged children, is an attempt to relate the mystery of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in "realities" of the young mind's world.

Part I makes an analogy of God to an unchanging "Rock," while all life and everything around it changes. Part II refers to Jesus as a "Spark of Light" in the darkness, while the third part makes reference to the Holy Spirit as a "Breath of Wind."

In my estimation, the illustrations and messages would be both whimsical and appealing to a young child's mind.

The material in *Liturgies for Children* is taken almost exclusively from personal experiences of the priest-author in his parish in Emporia, Kansas. Its introduction is convincing on its point that making Liturgy meaningful to children is of prime importance. This is substantiated with quotations from the recently published *Directory for Masses with Children*.

The book's section devoted to themes for various kinds of Masses focuses most of the attention on adapted Penitential Rites, Prayers of the Faithful, and homilies styled primarily in "dialogue" or "skit" form. The selections for readings and

music are liturgically suitable in my judgment, and since the book is well categorized, it could be a good source or creative ideas for teachers and/or liturgists. I would, however, respectfully suggest that anyone using these adaptations become familiarized with the above mentioned *Directory* in its entirety.

*Penance* is a small paperback geared to the psychological age of seven and eight year olds. This gentle approach to the Sacrament of Penance is encouraging in that efforts are being made to comply with the guidelines issued from Rome in 1973, stating that experimentations should cease and that the order of First Confession preceding First Holy Communion be maintained or resumed.

The first section of the book is a positive approach to simple, everyday experiences which a young child might judge to be right or wrong, pleasing or displeasing; thereby, beginning to develop a conscience. Following this segment are simple adaptations of scriptural parables dealing with forgiveness, followed by a relating family experience. The remainder of the book intended for parental use is quite explicit in directions and suggestions of instruction.

I found most disconcerting the notable omission of any references to Original Sin, God's Commandments, the Redemptive powers of Jesus, or even the Sacrament of Baptism. In my judgment, these basic doctrines, presented in the simplest and most basic language, are necessary for the young child to develop any concept of sin and to make the Sacrament of

Penance meaningful. Otherwise, a young child could easily be confused as to what is an "unloving act" and what is actually an offense to God's Love.

*Touching God* deals with children's Liturgies for grades one through six, including seventeen model Liturgies. This could be a most useful teaching and reference aid for those in the position of planning children's Masses, as well as for teachers who include liturgical instructions in their curriculums.

I was impressed to find the *Directory for Masses with Children* printed in its entirety in the back of the book. Preceding this, there is a section by the authors expressing their comments on the *Directory*—in particular, references to parts of the Mass which may be adapted for children's use for better understanding and meaning.

The remainder of the book is composed of a Preface and six chapters. The first three of these are of general instructive nature, and the remaining three contain a variety of liturgical examples. These are sufficiently detailed to be used in their entirety with discretion.

#### *The Shape of the Church to Come.*

By Karl Rahner. Trans. and introd. by Edward Quinn. New York: Seabury Press Crossroad Books, 1974. Pp. 136. Cloth, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Robert W. O'Keefe, O.F.M., M.A., Assistant Chaplain at Siena College, Loudonville, N.Y.

"Many perhaps will feel that it is too 'progressive' and (ecclesiastical-

ly) too much to the "left," but others may consider it altogether too conservative." Rahner prefaces his book with these words knowing full well that whatever he says about the Church is certain to cause controversy. In *The Shape of the Church to Come*, he sets out to present to his readers his understanding of where the Church presently stands and where it should be going. This course of action leaves him open to criticism and, of course, disagreement. For any man's assessment of the Church's current situation is at best subjective, colored by his theological stance and outlook. And any attempt to plot a course for the future Church, a future that remains hidden, can degenerate into mere speculation or a brand of ecclesial science-fiction.

Although Rahner writes about the Church in Germany now and in the years ahead, his remarks have a universal bearing on the entire Church. When he presents his understanding of where we stand as a Church, it is in reality more precisely where we should not be but unfortunately happen to find ourselves.

Rahner's theological analysis of the current situation sets the tone and direction he will follow throughout the book. He presents us with two contrasting worlds: that of the Churchmen and that of the wider world, with the implication that the former is narrow and should not be. Since the dissolution of the medieval synthesis that existed between the Church and the culture of its time, we have lived in a pluralistic society. And for one reason or another, the Church has been uncomfortable with that situation and

has attempted to create its own world apart from broader society and activities of men. Accordingly Rahner calls this traditional Christianity a remnant of the past. The Church is no longer the dominant social factor it once was. And while many look on this as a serious blow to the Church's power, Rahner views the import of this for the faith of modern man.

The modern Catholic man and woman, through the advent of pluralism, has been challenged to come out of the ghetto in which he/she has been living and face the world. His faith can no longer be that of the "follow the crowd" variety fostered by the Catholic ghetto, but rather must be the individual's own free decision for God. What Rahner is after is simply Catholics of quality, not quantity. Only a person with a faith like this, personal, dynamic, will be capable of moving the Church ahead into the future, rather than becoming a caretaker of the status quo.

The implications of the present situation and its challenges to the faith of every man and woman dictate the course of action to be followed in facing the future. Norms must be found to help us move constructively ahead. Rahner emphatically rules out compromise. Definite steps must be taken; the Church has been limping for too long. Facing the future requires the "courage of an ultimately charismatically inspired, creative imagination." Stock answers, tired idioms are no longer viable. And in all this some toes will be stepped on, outdated beliefs threatened, and a great many people indignantly

disturbed. To the obstinate Rahner takes a strong, perhaps a seemingly harsh, stand asking "whether it is always possible to take on this march with us into the future all the fine fellows whose out of date mentality is opposed to a march into the unknown future."

Rahner has drawn the line; the question is, now, who will cross it? As he says, this position will "estrangle, scandalize, shock not a few who feel at home only in the Church as they have been accustomed to see it in the past." For those who cry, "This is the way we've always done it," Rahner simply waves farewell and moves along the road to the future. If they choose to remain behind, that is their decision; but those who wish to move on cannot be hindered in their efforts to progress. As Rahner puts it, "To win one new man of tomorrow for the faith is more important for the Church than to keep the faith of two men of yesterday."

With his guidelines formulated and his direction charted, Rahner sets about shaping a Church that can realistically, courageously, and faithfully move into a hidden future. The Church of the future is conceived as open, ecumenical, from the roots democratized and socio-critical. Once the Church begins to shape itself along these lines, Rahner sees a great future ahead. We will have a Church that is no longer an antique from a bygone age, but a dynamic, living community of men and women who have a direction, who have something to say to the wider world, and who fear no challenge because they have great faith.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

Hinnebusch, Paul, O.P., *Community in the Lord*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1975. Pp. 240. Paper, \$3.50.

## WE REGRET

that rising costs have made it necessary to raise the price of a subscription to THE CORD to \$4.00 per year, beginning with 1976 subscription.

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The Cover and Illustrations for our November issue have been drawn by Sister Marie Monica, O.S.F., of Pope John XXIII School, Portland, Oregon.

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## EDITORIAL

### Christ the King

IT MAY BE ASKING TOO MUCH, in an age when even Roman Catholic scholars are boldly denying the very divinity of Christ, to expect many Christians to profess devotion to Jesus as King of the Universe. Indeed, to hear some professors, some theologians, and some divines talk, the time has come to realize that Jesus is no more than a very special human person called by God to fulfill a redemptive mission on mankind's behalf.

But this insidious dilution of the faith cannot be accepted by anyone concerned for the truth of Christian doctrine and its import for the Christian's practical day-to-day living. When a theologian like Dr. Patrick Fannon claims that "it is questionable . . . whether Chalcedon was investigating the make-up of Christ, and not rather Christian *language* about him" (*Theology Digest* 23 (1975), p. 21), he should be greeted, not with bored silence, but with concerned if charitable opposition. It is absurd to conjecture that the Fathers at that Council were dealing with questions of linguistic analysis. Of course they meant to say something about the Lord's reality, and what they meant to say is precisely what Dr. Fannon wants to deny.

Only an overweening pride, it seems, can explain the scarcely challenged assumption under which some contemporary theologians work, that no one before them knew anything about logic, about reason, and about mystery. Do such scholars as Dr. Fannon really think that the Fathers at Nicaea, Ephesus, and Chalcedon felt no affront to their human powers of reason as they labored to frame doctrinal expositions in unequivocal terms carefully chosen to convey exact meanings demanding assent in every age? The Lord himself was fully aware of his own status as a sign of contradiction; and Paul practically revelled in the paradoxical character of his gospel.

It is precisely because of his divinity, at any rate, that Jesus cannot be reduced to the dimensions of other human beings. His humanity enjoys a union with the Godhead different not only in degree but also in kind from that enjoyed by every mere creature, human or angelic. And it is on this account that he must be seen as king, not just brother and "man-for-others."

The eleventh day of next month marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the solemn proclamation of Christ's kingship by Pope Pius XI. And on the twenty-third of this month we shall be celebrating the annual commemoration of that kingship. It is eminently fitting, then, that we devote some sober, careful attention to the reality we commemorate. The Lord's is not a kingship of arbitrary, despotic rule. It is a rule of love: one of intimate presence, exercised by Jesus dwelling with his Father and the Spirit in our inmost being; one in which our hearts, minds, and wills are voluntarily subjected to the One who has purchased them at an unspeakable price, that he might make of us "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart" for everlasting citizenship in the kingdom of heaven.

*Fr. Michael D. Mailach, OFM*



### Song of the Spirit

Who is this that comes walking, walking, more beautiful  
and comely than all the children of the land?  
Is it I who see him and no one else, see his  
lovely smile and calling glances?  
And when he speaks, O when he speaks, my whole being  
leaps with Joy at his word; I succumb to it and  
carry out his every desire.  
He rewards me with silver and gold apparel not ever  
seen by people born.  
When I ask, Sir, what is your name?  
He replies:  
I am your Prince, Lord, and King.

*Anthony Savasta, O.S.F.*

## An Augustinian Approach:

# The Church in the Psalms

SISTER GABRIEL ZWIENER, O.S.C.

**I**N ADDITION TO his rich applications of psalter texts to the person of Christ, some of which we explored in an earlier article (September of this year), Augustine has also given us a wealth of eccle-

siological applications. In this second study, we shall examine two major types of such applications: images of the Church as such, and images that build up the Church.

### Images of the Church

IN HIS COMMENTARY on Psalm 9, Augustine interprets the moon as a symbol of the Church. The light of the moon is the spiritual radiance of the Church. The dark side of the moon/Church is the human element. Augustine warns that when men concentrate on the human aspects of the Church, its spiritual radiance becomes hidden to them. The Church, like the moon, has no light of its own, but derives its light from the Son of God. The moon waxes and wanes. But the moon wanes only to rise again, an image of the Resurrection.<sup>1</sup>

Augustine sees the Church as drawn out of the womb of the Jewish race, that womb which still envelops in darkness all those unborn as yet to the light of Christ. The Church is the Lord's tabernacle set in the sun, that is, in the full view of all men. The

tabernacle is also the image of the faithful. Elsewhere the Church is called the temple of the king made up of living stones, meaning the faithful. They are held together by the cement of charity. After developing the idea of the Church as the faithful Augustine writes: "For it is there, in the sanctuary of God, in the house of God, is the fountain of understanding. There he [the psalmist] understood the last things and solved the question concerning the prosperity of the unrighteous and the suffering of the righteous." This is a beautiful image of the Spirit pervading and enlightening through the whole Church.

Reflecting on the verse of Psalm 21, "My heart has become like wax melting in the midst of my bowels," Augustine writes;

His bowels symbolize the weak ones in his Church. How has his heart become like wax? His heart is his Scripture, or rather his Wisdom enclosed in the Scriptures. The Scriptures were a closed book which no one understood; our Lord was crucified and then the Scriptures melted like wax, so that even the weakest might penetrate their meaning.<sup>2</sup>

Augustine found other images of the Church in Psalm 21. On the passage, "They parted my garments amongst them," we find this comment:

His garments are his sacraments. Notice, brethren: his garments, his sacraments, could be parted through heresies, but there was a vesture there that nobody divided.... Heretics have been able to divide the sacraments among themselves, but charity they have not divided. And being unable to divide it they withdrew; but it remains entire.<sup>3</sup>

"I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast upheld me." Augustine asks how this can be the prayer of Christ, when he was not upheld but betrayed and condemned. "Possibly the voice which speaks is not that of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of mankind itself, of the whole Church, of the entire Christian people, because in Christ all men form but a single man, and all Christians unite to form but one man." Here is a prayer for the unity of Christendom. From the many beautiful passages to be found on this theme of the inseparable bond between Christ and his Body, the following may demonstrate the spirit of Augustine's work:

It is Christ, therefore, who here speaks in the prophet; yes, I dare to affirm, Christ is speaking. The prophet will utter certain things in this Psalm (30) which may seem impossible of application to Christ, to that excellence of our Head, above all to that Word which in the beginning was God abiding with God. Sometimes, too, certain other things will be said which seem scarcely relevant to him who has taken the form of a servant, the form he took from the Virgin. And yet it is Christ speaking, because in Christ's members Christ himself speaks. And that you may understand that Christ the Head together with his Body form but One, he himself, when speaking of marriage, declares: "They two shall be in one flesh. Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh" But does he say this, perhaps, of any marriage? Listen to the Apostle Paul: "And they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament: but I speak in Christ and in the Church." Whereas there are two, there issues but one indubitable person, from Head and Body, from bridegroom and bride. Now the marvelous surpassing unity of this person the prophet Isaiah also acclaims; for Christ, prophesying likewise through his lips says: "As a bridegroom he has bound me with a crown, and as a bride he has adorned me with ornaments." He terms himself both bridegroom and bride. Why bridegroom and why bride, unless because they shall be two in one flesh? If two in one flesh, why not two in one voice? Allow that Christ is speaking, therefore, because in Christ the Church speaks, and in the Church Christ speaks: the Body in the Head, the Head in the Body.<sup>4</sup>

The image of Christ as the tree assimilating the water/faithful, mentioned earlier in this article,

<sup>1</sup>Dame Scholastica Hebgin and Dame Felicitas Corrigan, trans., *St. Augustine on the Psalms*, vol. 1, from the series *Ancient Christian Writers*, vol. 29 (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1960), p. 139.

Sister Gabriel Zwiener, O.S.C., is a contemplative nun at the Monastery of St. Clare in Omaha, Nebraska. The first part of this study appeared in our September issue.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., vol. 2 (series volume 30), p. 14.

finds its equal in a discourse on Psalm 30: "She [the Church] hungers for those she desires to gain, and those she has gained in any way she in a certain way consumes." The Church is to make all peoples her food and convert them into her body. Augustine points out the worst enemies of the Church are the bad Christians, for they are stumbling blocks for others:

My brethren, when evil of any sort was decreed against the early Christians, at the very moment this Body was thrust through, the whole Body received the thrust. Hence the Psalm declared: "As a heap of sand I was shaken that I might fall; but the Lord supported me." And when those persecutions, which were hurled at the whole Body to overthrow it, had run their course, then trial arose in its separate parts. The Body of Christ is constantly being assailed; if one part of the Church is not undergoing persecution, then another is. If it is not enduring violence from the head of the state, then it is enduring violence from a wicked populace. What great devastation is wrought by the common people! How much harm has been dealt to the Church by bad Christians, by those men who were enclosed in the net, who were so increased in number that the ships were overloaded during that catch our Lord took before his Passion? There is never any lack, indeed, of the pressure of trial. Let no man say to himself: "This is not a time of trial." Whoever tells himself this, is promising himself a quiet time; the man who promises himself a quiet time is taken off his guard. Therefore let the whole Body of Christ cry out: "Thou wilt bring me out of this trap which they have hidden for me."<sup>5</sup>

The reader becomes almost overwhelmed by the many passages

describing the close bond between Christ and his Church. Augustine wanted this doctrine to permeate every Christian:

Nevertheless because he deigned to take the form of a servant and by this means clothe us with himself, he who did not disdain to take us up into himself has not disdained to transfigure us in himself, nor to use our language so that we might appropriate his. For this wondrous partnership has been set up, this divine bargain has been concluded, this mutual traffic has been solemnly agreed upon in this world by the heavenly Merchant. He came to receive outrages, to bestow dignities; he came to drain the cup of suffering, to bestow salvation; he came to undergo death, to bestow life. When he was faced with death, therefore, in that which he took of ours, he was fear-stricken, not in his own Person, but in us. For he said that his soul was sorrowful even unto death; and undoubtedly every single one of us spoke together with him. For without him we are nothing; in him, Christ as well as ourselves. Why? Because the whole Christ consists of Head and Body: the Head, the Savior of the Body, he who has already ascended into heaven; and the Body, the Church toiling here on earth. Now unless this Body was united to its Head by the bond of charity, so that Head and Body constituted but one Person, he would not, when reproving a certain persecutor, say from heaven: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The Head was crying out on behalf of the members, and the Head was transforming the members into himself.<sup>6</sup>

Suffering is seen to be an inherent part of the Christian calling. It is the experience of the whole Church. Augustine uses unforgettable imagery to bring home this

truth:

Held in a winepress is his Body, that is, his Church. What is in a winepress? In pressings, but in a winepress fruitful is the pressing. A grape on the vine sustaineth no pressing, whole it seemeth, but nothing thence floweth: it is thrown into a winepress, is trodden, is pressed; harm seemeth to be done to the grape, but this harm is not barren: nay, if no harm had been applied, barren it would have re-

mained.<sup>7</sup>

Augustine points out that the prophets speak more clearly about the Church than about Christ. Men would accept Christ, but there will be many factions in the Church! This he holds is the secret of the Church's strength: "Whoever would understand the might of this city, let him understand the force of love."

## Images that Build up the Church

THE MULTIPLE THEMES of the Psalter run through St. Augustine's commentaries. Good and evil, sin and suffering, justice and mercy, poverty and prayer, faith and love, all are interwoven to help form the Christian into the full stature of Christ. The following portions have been chosen for their forceful insights and the richness they can add in our praying of the Psalms.

Augustine tells us that there are two forms of confession: one of praise, the other a confession of sin. His books of *Confessions* abound in this twofold acknowledgment before the Lord. Psalm 29 speaks of confessing before the Lord, and Augustine observes: "Confess today what you have done against God, and you will confess tomorrow what God has done in return for you." Psalm 30 is a song of hope. In his commentary on the Psalm, Augustine points out that to feel dread is natural, to experience hope is the gift of God within you: "It is better to recognize your own self

in your dread so that your deliverance may make you glorify him who created you."

A believer's just anger at the sight of crimes against God and the Church, Augustine calls the very anger of God. Yet he sounds a note of caution lest anger turn into hatred. "To hate him who hates you makes two bad men . . . Love the evil-doer, and he remains alone in his evil ways." The faithful are told to trust the Lord completely and depend on him totally. "Scripture has called the soul of the just God's Sword; again it calls the soul of the just God's seat; the soul of the just is the seat of Wisdom. He makes of our soul whatever suits his purpose. When it is in his hand, let him use it as he wills."<sup>8</sup>

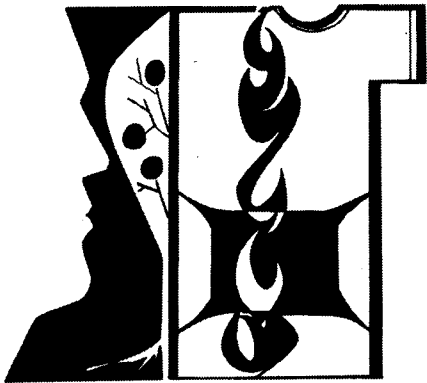
Preaching on Psalm 4, Augustine says in regard to the verse, "The light of your countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us": "Just as you repay your coinage to Caesar, so return your soul to God, shining and stamped with the light of his countenance."

<sup>7</sup>Philip Schaff, ed., *St. Augustine: Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, from the series *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), p. 219.

<sup>8</sup>Hebgin and Corrigan, vol. 1, p. 181.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., vol. 2, p. 22.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., vol. 2, Pp. 11-12.



Psalm 36 puts this message on the lips of the faithful: "I have never seen the just man forsaken, nor his seed seeking bread." Augustine cries out: "If you understand the meaning of bread, you will understand who he is. Now bread is the Word of God, which never fails the just man's lips."

Exhorting to conversion, Augustine gives us these gems: evil must pass away before the morning can dawn in which God will reveal himself. God is ready as the dawn to help the soul desiring to return to him. Where, Augustine asks, are the limits of God's mercy? "Where is the word of the Lord silent? Where are the limits of salvation?" He answers: "All you have to do is to be ready to receive it; the barns are full."<sup>9</sup>

Augustine gives us a delightful passage on festivity in the house of God. One cannot but be charmed by the message:

And when these are heard [the sound of celebration], what do we passers-by say? "What is going on

here?" And we are told in answer, that it is some festival. "It is a birthday that is being celebrated." . . . In the "house of God" there is a never-ending festival; for there it is not an occasion celebrated once, and then to pass away. The angelic choir makes an eternal "holiday" of such a kind, as neither to be opened by any dawn, nor terminated by any evening. From that everlasting perpetual festivity, a certain sweet and melodious strain strikes on the ears of the heart, provided only the world do not drown the sounds. As he walks in this tabernacle, and contemplates God's wonderful works for the redemption of the faithful, the sound of that festivity charms his ears, and bears the "hart" away to "the water brooks."<sup>10</sup>

The disciple of the Bishop of Hippo had no misgivings about the true nature of peace if he heard this comment: "A man does not return to the depths of peace, where the most profound silence dwells, unless amid turmoil he has waged war upon his vices." Uniting justice and faith, Augustine states: "But when you enter upon the vision of what you have believed, your justice will be brought forth into light, because your justice was your faith."

Again and again suffering and misfortune are shown to be spiritual riches in reality; and spiritual misfortune, the great tragedy. Psalm 9 states that "God is not before his eyes"; Augustine responds that if blindness is an evil, how much greater a calamity it would be to lose sight of God!

The commentaries are filled with insights on the meaning of poverty in the life of the Christian. These gems must not be ignored in our age.

"Cry out as one in need, and the Lord will hear you . . . Rely not on your own strength; you must understand you are in want; understand that you are poor just inasmuch as you are without him who enriches you."<sup>11</sup> Augustine sees as the real poor those who are willing to obey and are leaderless. The poor man is one who avoids ostentation, frivolous pomp, the one turned toward good.

Preaching on Job's statement, "Naked I was born and naked I shall return," etc., Augustine asks:

Whence have these jewels of God's praise their being? Behold a man outwardly poor but inwardly rich. Could those jewels of God's praise fall from his lips unless he had a treasure stored up in his heart? If any of you would be rich, covet riches such as these, which can suffer no loss even by shipwreck. So when such men as these are brought low, do not consider them wretched. You are mistaken, ignorant as you are of their inward possession. You lovers of the world are judging others by yourselves; when you lose your worldly goods you are in a state of misery. From now onwards give up this way of thinking; they possess an inward source of joy. They have an inward ruler, an inward shepherd and comforter. The men who fall miserably are those who place their hope in this present life.<sup>12</sup>

Who, then, is really poor; and who is rich? It depends where your treasure is. Augustine defines his terms:

The expression "rich" refers to the "earthborn"; but the word "poor" to the "sons of men." By the "rich" understand the proud, by the "poor" the humble . . . He saith in another

Psalm, "The poor shall eat and be satisfied." How hath he commended the poor? "The poor shall eat and be satisfied." What eat they? That Food which the faithful know. How shall they be satisfied? By imitating the Passion of their Lord, and not without cause receiving their recompense. "The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and they shall praise the Lord who seek him." What of the rich? Even they eat. But how eat they? "All the rich upon the earth have eaten and worshipped." He said not, "have eaten and are satisfied," but "have eaten and have worshipped." They worship God indeed, but they will not display brotherly humanness.<sup>13</sup>

Augustine will not have us cling to material poverty as the key to salvation in itself. He tells his congregation that Lazarus was carried into Abraham's bosom, and Abraham was a rich man. Lazarus was not saved because he was poor, but because he was a godly man. The believer is never poor, and Augustine tells us to judge with the eyes of faith:

Why do you feel pleased with him who shows you fidelity, and praise him for qualities which are seen only by the eye of the heart? When you are filled with spiritual riches, can you be poor? So and so was rich because he possessed an ivory bed; the dwelling place of your heart is jeweled with all these great virtues: justice, truthfulness, faith, patience, endurance—and you forsooth are poor! Spread out your riches, if such as these belong to you, and compare them with rich men's wealth. But such and such a man, you say, found some high-priced mules on the market and bought them up. If you could find faith for sale, how much would you be

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., vol. 2, p. 119.

<sup>10</sup>Schaff, p. 134.

<sup>11</sup>Hebgin and Corrigan, vol. 2, p. 170.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 58-59.

<sup>13</sup>Schaff, p. 169.

ready to pay for it? Ungrateful as you are, God would give it you for nothing.<sup>14</sup>

The greatest poverty, the greatest penalty a sinner can suffer is not to receive the chastisement that corrects. Not to know the Lord spells death, to know him is life. Augustine describes the fullest measure of poverty as giving unreservedly of oneself. The fruit of poverty is described in this last quote on the topic:

"And they shall praise the Lord that seek him." The rich praise themselves, the poor praise the Lord. Why are they poor? Because they praise the Lord and seek the Lord. The Lord is the wealth of the poor; therefore their home is empty, while their hearts are full of wealth. Let the rich aim at filling their coffers; the poor aim at filling their hearts; and when they have filled them, they that seek him praise the Lord.<sup>15</sup>

WHEREVER WE TURN, there is the face of Christ. To study St. Augustine's commentaries is to find images of the Lord's presence on every page he wrote. Truly the deepest, most authentic spirit of Augustine is found in his reflections on Scripture. The Bishop of Hippo explored the depths of the divine mysteries. His work still finds a response in the depths of man's heart.

Augustine's writings contain countless treasures. Here we have only touched the reservoir waiting to be tapped by those who thirst. The saint apologized for his lengthy sermons yet felt justified in preaching at such length in order to spread God's truth.

Yet truth is meaningless unless man take it and build upon it as upon a rock. We make no apology for quoting Augustine at length. To summarize in many instances would have been to destroy the spirit of this Father of the Church.

The overwhelming truth gained from this study has been the profound depth contained in the simple statement: the Psalms are the prayer of Christ. No longer can we separate his name from that of his body in any instance. The Bible is soaked in humanity, and humanity is absorbed into Christ. In turning to Christ for life, nourishment, help in every need, the Christian becomes aware of his total dependence upon the Lord. A joyful acceptance of this relationship of dependency results in a union so deep that it can be described only as "oneness." We may call it poverty of spirit or describe it in another way as a response of faith to the challenge, "Where is Reality?"

Joy, suffering, dependence upon the Lord and upon one another, man's sinfulness, but also man's ability to turn wholeheartedly to Christ, are all part of the plan of salvation: the building up of the whole Christ. Where all this culminates can best be summarized in Augustine's commentary on Psalm 37:

Both the prophets, then, and the apostles, the martyrs, we ourselves and those who will come after us to the very end of the world, all in that final settlement will receive everlasting salvation; then contemplating the glory of God and beholding his face, we shall praise him forever more,

without intermission, free from penalty of sin, free from sinful perversity, praising God, and no longer sighing, but united to him whom we have ever made the object of our desires and the joy of our hope. We will be God, our light will be God! All that constitutes our blessedness, from which we are separated in our present toil, we shall find in him.

In him will be that tranquillity of which we cannot think at present without grief. For that is the sabbath we call to remembrance, in whose recollection so much has been said, and so much remains for us to say, and speaking never to grow weary, at heart, if not with mouth; for the silence of our lips only enables our hearts to cry out the more eloquently.

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<sup>14</sup>Hebgin and Corrigan, vol. 2, p. 174.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., vol. 1, p. 221.



# The Meaning of Fraternity in the Writings of Saint Francis of Assisi

DUANE V. LAPSANSKI, O.F.M.

I THINK the following working principle sheds much light on St. Francis's view of his brotherhood: fraternity is a reciprocity. That is, fraternity or brotherhood is constituted by relationship.

Fraternity is thus in effect more than a community. To be a "brother" is not merely to belong to a group. Nor does fraternity consist of the relationships of each individual to the community as a whole (e.g., "I love the Order," "I love the Province"). In the mind of Francis, the friars' life together is imprinted with the stamp of mutuality (*invicem*). To put it another way, fraternity is constituted by the reciprocal relationship of individual to individual, of brother to brother (*alter alteri*).

In this connection it is interesting to point out that Francis did not

readily speak of *fraternity* as such, that is, the abstract universal. He speaks rather of the concrete *friars*, *brothers*. A striking case in point is the way he instructs ministers to go about the process of visitation. The ministers are told to visit not communities, nor residences, nor even places. They are told to visit the *brothers*. To put it another way: fraternity is lived in the second person (you, thou) and should not be considered in the third person (he, it).

To gain an insight into the mind of Francis concerning his view of life in religion, I find it helpful to look at the number of times he used certain terms in his writings. This approach, of course, is not meant to be any kind of proof. But rather it is an indication of how intensely certain ideas kept buzzing in Francis's mind.

Father Duane V. Lapsanski, a member of the Assumption Province, holds a doctorate in theology from the University of Munich. He is presently on the staff of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University.

There are the terms and the number of times Francis uses them:

order (religious) .....	7
religion (religious life) .....	11
religious (noun) .....	15
monk .....	not used
hermit .....	not used
rule (religious) .....	24
life (religious) .....	48
servant .....	54
subject .....	11
fraternity .....	10
friend .....	10
brother (friar) .....	232

It is immediately striking that Francis used the term *brother* with very great frequency. Indeed, "to be a brother" was an idea uppermost in his mind, and indicates what he and his followers were after. Striking, too, is his stress of the term *servant*. One might capture Francis's orientation to religious life in this way: Francis

felt deeply that he was accepted by God, that God was his loving Father. Because he considered himself and his followers to be *sons* of the Father in heaven, he went one step further and considered himself and his followers to be *brothers* to one another, and indeed brothers to all men but also brothers even to the creature world (recall, e.g., the "Canticle of Brother Sun"). And because Francis and his followers saw themselves as *brothers*, they wished to be available to each other and to all mankind, to be of service, to be *servants*.

It is interesting, too, to recall that the term *brother* is essentially a term of relation. Of its very nature it implies a relationship. One cannot be a brother alone. Without the other I can be an individual, a Lone Ranger

## My God I Breathe

My God I breathe, inhale;  
My God I breathe, exhale!

His Life; His Love I breathe in joy;  
His very Being I enjoy!

His Life I breathe, inhale;  
His Love exhale and hail!

Bruce Riski, O.F.M. Cap.

(though even he had his Tonto), a monk, a religious, but I cannot be a friar, a brother, a Franciscan.

The Brotherhood, this living organism which is built up and constituted by the reciprocal relationship of individual to individual, finds its exercise or expression in *mutual service*. Francis does not base his brotherhood on the will to power, as is so frequently the case in secular life and institutions, but rather on the will to serve. Each one, i.e., each brother, is to seek to place himself at the service of the other, instead of seeking to have the other serve him.

The norm of this brotherly service is twofold: (1) a brother, because he is such, should not be afraid of asking another brother for help in time of need; (2) nor should a brother be afraid of offering himself spontaneously to another brother in his time of need. This is the meaning of fraternity.

It is significant, too, that Francis did not think of his fraternity as an organism based on offices and functions, or in which each member would exercise a very definite function. The foundation-stone of the fraternity was simply that each member was a brother to the others and was thus ready to carry out the basic "office," namely that of service (Francis called it the "office of washing feet"). The fraternity is thus first and above all a living together. Out of this life together flow any and all ministries, functions, jobs, etc., which the brothers exercise.

What Francis did in effect was to establish his fraternity very concretely on the Golden Rule of the Gospel: each brother is to do for the

other that which he would wish to be done for him in the same necessity (see Mt. 7:12). Because this simple yet very challenging principle was of such importance to Francis, he did not place very great emphasis on formulating laws or establishing structures or building up the institution. He was more concerned to form, to "build," brothers.

This process of "building" brothers can take place only in the context of a living faith and a loving relationship to God, as K. Esser beautifully points out:

Once a man undertakes in all earnestness to imitate the life of Christ by living the "manner of life of the Holy Gospel" (*forma sancti evangelii*), the spirit of the Lord and the workings of his grace will gradually overcome in him the spirit of self and the love of self. Such a man will then be able to draw near to God in holy, unaffected love, and in that love find anew all things and all creatures. He becomes truly, as Francis says, the child of the Eternal Father, the brother of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his whole life and activity is united with that of Christ. But where such union with Christ our Brother is practiced by many together, we have the beginnings of a true brotherhood. Not by mere chance, then, does Francis constantly call his followers a *fraternitas*, for it is a *brotherhood* in the original and deepest sense of the word.

But if the followers of St. Francis are a community of brothers in and through Christ, a brotherhood in which each member is called to imitate the life of Christ in his own person and each is likewise personally responsible for the good of the whole, it follows that each individual as brother of Christ is possessed of great personal worth. Here is the reason why deep respect and reverence for the God-given personality and talents of the individual has marked the Order

from its very beginning; the reason also why it has such high regard for the originality of each of its members and throughout its history has permitted the utmost liberty for the development of the individuality of its members.

There is thus a note of knightly freedom and personal responsibility about the Franciscan type of brotherhood. It relies far more on the inner ideals of members formed by the spirit of Christ than on external forms and practices.<sup>1</sup>

The brotherhood sprang up because Francis attracted men to himself and formed these brothers the Lord gave him. And with these brothers who were responsible and response-able one to another, Francis set out to renew the Church by living the Gospel.

To make the above study (which is based on an article by Francis de Beer<sup>2</sup>) somewhat more concrete and applicable, I would like to quote the latter section of chapter six of the Rule of 1223:

Wherever the brothers meet one another, they should show that they are members of the same family. And they should have no hesitation in making known their needs to one another. For it a mother loves and cares for her child in the flesh, a brother should certainly love and care for his spiritual brother all the more tenderly.

The themes of brotherhood, service, and the Golden Rule ring out clearly in the above text, as Kajetan Esser points out in his insightful commentary on this passage of the Rule:

<sup>1</sup>Kajetan Esser, *The Order of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1959), pp. 33-34.

<sup>2</sup>Francis de Beer, in *Franziskanische Studien* 49 (1967), pp. 351ff.

<sup>3</sup>Kajetan Esser, *The Definitive Rule of the Friars Minor in the Light of the Latest Research*, Sentence 24, p. 21.



Here Francis once more turns his gaze to the wandering groups of friars, the pilgrims and strangers, who are at home no place on this earth. Wherever they might be or wherever they might meet one another on the road, they are to act as "members of the same family"—a very touching expression. They are to be at home in their mutual love. Brotherly love is to be their substitute for house, homeland and monastery, everywhere and at all times. The mention of a mother's love for her child, which the friars are to surpass with their love for one another, emphatically underlines what is said. In this more than motherly love of the friars, the individual friar minor, without home and homeland is to feel himself secure and cared for.<sup>3</sup>

## From Francis to Order of Friars Minor:

# The Routinization of the Franciscan Charisma

NEIL J. O'CONNELL, O.F.M.

ERIC HOFFER, in discussing mass movements, has gone beyond the Weberian criteria to note that many a mass movement has attempted to root itself in the past.<sup>1</sup> In this way, the movement draws concentration away from the present which it is attempting to change, demonstrates the legitimacy of the movement as opposed to the current state of affairs, and holds out the hope of restoration of this "golden" past. Francis of Assisi succinctly described his way of life as the observance of "the Holys Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup> His life was to be a return to the purity of the Gospel life, a re-creation of the spontaneity and intimacy of the Apostolic era. In a sense Francis was revolting against the formalities and legalism of the bureaucratic Church of the thirteenth century. Francis, in his zeal, often interpreted the Gospel quite literally. If the disciples of Christ

went two by two, then Francis would send out his followers two by two. If Christ commanded his disciples to go without sandals, or staff, or wallet, then Francis would command the same. So perfectly did Francis attempt to conform his life to that of the Gospel that the popular legends completed this conformity by rendering an account of his birth in a stable and citing a traitor among his first twelve followers.<sup>3</sup>

The success and growth of charismatic leadership and its following automatically bear the seeds of destruction for the charismatic period in the movement. As the membership increases in size, the personal, direct relationship to the leader, so necessary for the success of the charismatic leader, gradually breaks down. The mere realities of life demand organization and discipline to provide for the necessities of a large, mass following. At the same time, as

Victor A. Thompson has pointed out, the immediate staff of the charismatic leader finds it necessary to secure firmer legislation of their prerogatives which they realize are insecurely based on the fleeting reality of the leader's charisma.<sup>4</sup> The immediacy of action in this direction is especially pertinent with the crisis of succession when the charismatic dies or apparently loses his charisma. As Weber pointed out, charisma of itself is instable, and a process of its routinization is inevitable if it is to survive.<sup>5</sup>

Even within the lifetime of Francis the trend toward organization and discipline was already afoot. When in 1221 over three thousand friars from all over Europe convened in Assisi for the famed Chapter of Mats, Francis realistically conceded that his charismatic leadership was no longer sufficient to manage such a throng of followers. No doubt prodced by the practical Cardinal Hugoline, later Pope Gregory IX, and the rising group of young, intellectual leaders, Francis transferred most of his authority to a Vicar, Elias of Cortona.<sup>6</sup> The struggle between charisma and organization now came into the open. On one hand was the

old guard of the original followers who recalled the first enthusiastic days of the movement. On the other, was a new breed of young men who wished to institutionalize and monasticize the movement. The latter group had already made a move in this direction in 1219 under Gregory of Naples and Matthew of Narni, the two vicars Francis had placed in command while he made his mission tour to Palestine. These two men, in the absence of Francis, imposed upon the Order all manner of extra fasts, religious exercises, and formalities. This first step toward formalizing the movement was short lived, as Francis quickly returned to Italy when an old, faithful friar went to Palestine to inform him of the innovations.<sup>7</sup>

Once Francis was officially relieved of leadership, however, this organizational tendency had free reign to develop. Under Elias of Cortona, who has endured a bad reputation in Franciscan history especially at the hands of the clericalists, the movement turned toward institutionalism. Permanent residences of a monastic sort were built or accepted. New rituals became part of the routine. The strife was especial-

<sup>1</sup>Hoffer, p. 69. [For full data on sources already cited, see the first part of this article in our October, 1975, issue—ed.]

<sup>2</sup>"Rule of 1223," chapter 1, *Writings*, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup>Jörgensen, pp. 9-10.

Father Neil J. O'Connell, O.F.M., Ph.D., is Assistant Professor of History at Fisk University, and Campus Minister at Fisk University and Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee.

<sup>4</sup>Victor A. Thompson, *Modern Organization* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 10.

<sup>5</sup>Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, pp. 1114-15; 1121-23.

<sup>6</sup>"The Chronicle of Brother Jordan of Giano," chapters 16-18, *XIIIth Century Chronicles*, trans. Placid Hermann, O.F.M., with Introduction & Notes by Marie-Therese Laureilhe (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1961), pp. 30-36; Rosalind B. Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government—Elias to Bonaventure* (Cambridge: University Press, 1959), pp. 112, 118.

<sup>7</sup>"Jordan of Giano," chapters 11-15, *XIIIth Century Chronicles*, pp. 26-30.

ly noticeable as Francis prepared a draft of a final Rule. This was Francis's last chance to impose his conception of what direction the movement should take. Elias, it is reported, conveniently "lost" Francis's first draft of this Rule. As Francis set about to make a second draft, Elias and the other ministers remonstrated with him on the impossibility of living the life Francis was proposing in this rule. Francis watched all this activity with a sinking heart, and shortly before he died, he declared his aversion for innovators.<sup>8</sup>

With the death of Francis, the whole conflict deepened. At first, this conflict remained covert during the administration of the first general minister, John of Parenti, from 1227 to 1232. Yet, an early Franciscan chronicler has ascribed the very termination of Parenti's office to the growing tension within the Order.<sup>9</sup>

As second general minister, from 1232 to 1239, Elias of Cortona set about curbing the enthusiastic elements of the movement and establishing an air of respectability for the Order. Elias has been described as having a passion for organization. The chain of command arranged by Francis with a view to a wide distribution of power was in a chaotic state when Elias became the general minister. To correct this, Elias instituted an elaborate pyramid of officials including custodes, wardens, vicars, and ministers.

Elias curtailed legislation to the provincial ministers alone by withdrawing it from the brotherhood at large. He made the office of general minister responsible to no one except a general chapter. Increasing the number of the provinces to seventy-five and placing his own men in the positions of provincial ministers, he created an army of functionaries dependent on him. Elias rapidly phased out the modest and ephemeral refuges for the brothers by establishing dignified and substantial monastic style buildings. He also encouraged the missions as a means of draining off the more enthusiastic and restless elements of the movement.

At its outset, the Franciscan movement was a lay movement. Francis and the majority of his first followers were laymen. They were lay preachers delivering a simple Gospel message. During the last years of Francis's life, however, the lay character of the movement gradually diminished as greater numbers of clergy entered the movement. Of a more scholarly bent, these new clerical recruits were demanding facilities for learning, which Francis loathed as destructive of the simplicity of Franciscan life. These men rightly claimed the need of education for the successful completion of their apostolic work as preachers and confessors, activities which the ecclesiastical authorities were increasingly urging and expecting from

the Franciscan movement. Learning, however, required competent libraries and a security which could be provided only by substantial residences. Elias promoted all of this in regard to studies, and soon Franciscans were on the faculties of Paris and Oxford. The very jealousies which Francis had seen as stemming from too much learning proved the undoing of Elias. Indeed, Elias fell victim of the very educational trend he had unleashed. At the instigation of the Parisian scholars and the clerical faction, Elias, the layman, was deposed by the Chapter of 1239. Before disbanding, this Chapter sanctioned a set of constitutions which formalized the movement into an institutional structure. Previous to these constitutions, Pope Gregory IX had in 1230 exempted the friars from literal fulfillment of the Gospel and Francis's Testament and permitted lay agents to care for the friars' funds.<sup>10</sup>

Haymo of Faversham (1240-1244), who followed Elias's short-lived successor, Albert of Pisa (1239-1240), the first priest to be a general minister, further intensified the spirit of learning among the Franciscans. According to Vita Sudder, Haymo "put the seal of the transformation of the family of Francis from a

spontaneous lay fellowship into an Order of clerks and priests."<sup>11</sup> Haymo imposed such stringent requirements for entrance that the recruiting of laymen almost ceased. At the same time, he prohibited lay brothers from holding office. This latter action gave a somewhat professional cast to the Franciscan movement.<sup>12</sup> Weber has noted the tensions which have existed between the hierocratic Church and the pneumatic autonomy of the charismatic leader or movement.<sup>13</sup> The very clericalization of the Franciscan movement at this point was thus highly indicative of the institutional road the Franciscan movement had taken. Haymo himself was from the English province, which had been highly clericalized from its inception.<sup>14</sup>

The elderly follower of Haymo, Crescentius of the Marches (1244-1248) was incapable of wedding the conflicting elements within the movement become Order, and under him the clericalists and institutionalists gained the day. The old guard, who promoted the strictest and most radical poverty resented the bureaucratic restrictions imposed on their enthusiastic spontaneity. They were critical of the new trends in the movement, especially the emphasis

<sup>10</sup>"Jordan of Giano," chapters 61-66, Eccleston, "Coming of the Friars," pp. 64-67; 152-56; Vita Dutton Scudder, *The Franciscan Adventure* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1931), p. 92.

<sup>11</sup>Scudder, p. 102.

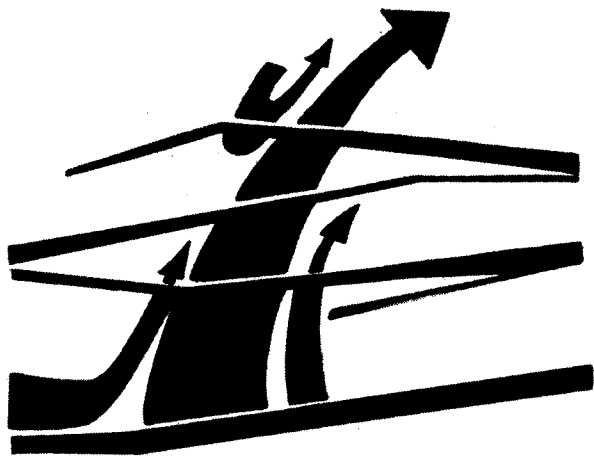
<sup>12</sup>"Jordan of Giano," chapters 70-73, Eccleston, "Coming of the Friars," pp. 68-69, 157-58; Brooke, pp. 193-95; 209; Moorman, pp. 105-08.

<sup>13</sup>Weber, "The Social Psychology of the World Religions," *From Max Weber*, pp. 288-89.

<sup>14</sup>Laurence C. Landini, O.F.M., *The Causes of the Clericalization of the Order of Friars Minor 1209-1260 in the Light of Early Franciscan Sources* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1968), see especially p. 134.

<sup>8</sup>"Testament," *Writings*, p. 69.

<sup>9</sup>"Jordan of Giano," chapters 51-61, Thomas of Eccleston, "The Coming of the Friars Minor to England," *XIIIth Century Chronicles*, pp. 58-64, 152; Brooke, pp. 118, 143-45; John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from Its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 83-95.



on learning. Their attitude was summed up in the remark of Brother Giles, one of Francis's first twelve companions: "Paris, Paris, why are you ruining the Order of St. Francis?"<sup>15</sup> But how could these zealots prevail when even Pope Innocent IV had declared: "It is not fitting to admit anyone who presents himself, but only those recommended by their knowledge of letters or by other praiseworthy qualities."<sup>16</sup>

In 1248 Crescentius resigned his office to accept a bishopric. Before resigning office he had suppressed a zealot protest to the Pope by devious means. John of Parma (1248-1257) was the next to take the helm of the Order. John favored the trend toward scholarship current in the Order; yet he gained favor with the zealots because of his exact observance of the

Rule. Bureaucracy had progressed to such an extent that John had to reprimand distinctions in seating order in friary dining rooms. He applied the Rule with literal firmness, and in contradiction to Pope Gregory IX asserted the authority of Francis's "Testament." John also inveighed against further enlargements of the constitutions on the grounds that those who imposed the burden of these additional laws were unable to keep them all themselves. Weary with the growing laxity and contention within the Order, John of Parma resigned his office at the Chapter of 1257.<sup>17</sup>

In the place of John, the Chapter elected the thirty-five year old Bonaventure of Bagnorea as general minister. With the leadership of Bonaventure, the Franciscan move-

ment came to full term as an institutional, bureaucratic structure. Bonaventure gave rationalization to the spirit of the Franciscan movement. Before assuming the office of general minister, Bonaventure had been a philosopher and theologian at the University of Paris. His *Breviloquium*, *Journey of the Mind to God*, *Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, and *The Six Wings of the Seraphim*<sup>18</sup> were orderly philosophical and theological expressions of the Franciscan experience. Even today these are often the first works presented to the young Franciscan as he enters the Order. As the philosopher Gilson remarked of Bonaventure: "What St. Francis had simply felt and lived, St. Bonaventure was to think; thanks to the organizing power of his genius, the interior effusions of the Poverello were to be given shape as thought"<sup>19</sup> Indeed, Bonaventure's work of physical organization and philosophical crystalization of the Franciscan ideal was so great that he has been commonly called the "Second Founder" of the Franciscan Order.

At the beginning of his term of office Bonaventure was faced with the still disorderly nature of the Franciscan movement. Walking a middle path, he sharply corrected

flagrant abuses while recognizing papal interpretations, privileges, and exemptions. In a general, no-holds-barred letter issued shortly after his election as general minister, Bonaventure condemned the following abuses among the friars: gainful businesses, laziness, vagrancy, importunate begging, grand and extravagant architecture, intimate associations, thoughtless assigning of offices, greedy grasping after legacies, restlessness, and uninhibited spending.<sup>20</sup> Correction of these abuses demanded strong legislation endowed with specific sanctions. As noted above, constitutions pointed in this direction were adopted after the deposition of Elias in 1239, but these had proven quite ineffective. Bonaventure once more attempted to achieve a constitutional Franciscanism by causing his Constitutions of Narbonne to be passed in 1260.<sup>21</sup> These first effective Franciscan Constitutions embodied Bonaventure's practical programme for the Order. Composed of twelve chapters corresponding to the twelve chapters of the final Rule, these Constitutions became the norm for all future constitutions of the Order. They were so successful that for many years no new constitutions were formulated, and new cir-

<sup>15</sup>As quoted in Anne MacDonell, *Sons of Francis* (London: J.M. Dent, 1902), p. 64. See also Raphael Brown, *Franciscan Mystic: The Life of Brother Giles of Assisi, Companion of St. Francis* (Garden City, N.Y.: Hanover House, 1962), p. 165.

<sup>16</sup>"Jordan of Giano," chapters 73-76, Eccleston, "Coming of the Friars," pp. 69-71; 159-60.

<sup>17</sup>"Jordan of Giano," chapters 76-77, Eccleston, "Coming of the Friars," pp. 71, 160-62; Brooke, pp. 248-56; 270-71; Moorman, pp. 108; 111-16, 120-21.

<sup>18</sup>Bonaventure, "Breviloquium," "Itinerarium mentis in Deum," *Opusculum de reductione artium ad theologiam*, "Opusculum de sex alis Seraphim," *Opera Omnia* (Quaracchi: ex Typographica Collegi Sancti Bonaventurae, 1882-1902—11 vols.), vol. 5, pp. 201-91, 296-313, 319-25; vol. 8, pp. 131-51.

<sup>19</sup>Etienne Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, trans. Dom Illyd Trethowan and Frank J. Sheed (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1965), p. 60.

<sup>20</sup>Bonaventure, "S. Bonaventura, electus Minister generalis, ad omnes Ministros provinciales et Custodes Ordinis Fratrum Minorum," *Opera Omnia*, vol. 8, pp. 468-69.

<sup>21</sup>"Constitutiones generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum editae et confirmatae in Capitulo generali apud Narbonam a. D. 1260, decima iunii, tempore Rev. P. Fr. Bonaventurae," *Archivum Franciscanum* 34 (1941), pp. 37-97; 284-337.

## The Franciscan movement had made a compromise between the ideals of Francis and the realities of human nature.

cumstances were met by adding by-laws. The portrait of the manner of life culled from the norms of these Constitutions would be that of a conventional but very austere monastery. The regulations of life were ample and detailed. They established a formal year of admission or noviceship which was to be performed in houses especially designated for this purpose.<sup>22</sup> Clerical novices had to know Latin grammar and logic.<sup>23</sup> Even the personages depicted in the stained glass window over the high altar of the friary were designated by these Constitutions.<sup>24</sup> The Franciscan movement had made a compromise between the ideals of Francis and the realities of human nature. The Franciscan experience thus became a respectable monastic revival.

Bonaventure's work was enduring and has persisted until the present day. The fanatical elements gradually became more radical, refused allegiance to their legitimate ministers on the basis of conscience, seceded from the Order, and finally lapsed into various forms of theological deviation. Charismatic Franciscanism could no longer

survive. Occasionally a charismatic leader like Bernardine of Siena, John Capistran, Peter of Alcantara, or the Capuchin revivalists arose in the later history of the Order to restore the original fervor and observance of Francis's time. The present threefold division of the Order is a witness to the partial success of the charisma of these men. But even the enthusiasm of these revival movements became petrified in legalistic constitutions and bureaucratic structures.

Today, authority within Franciscanism is exercised in a clearly defined hierarchy from a general minister with his general definitorium or council, through territorial or language jurisdictions of provincial ministers with their provincial definitoriums, to local guardians or ministers with their house discretorium or chapter.<sup>25</sup> In addition to the General Constitutions which apply to the whole Order, additional schedules have been enacted by each province for itself, and statutes are framed for various specialized activities of the Order such as foreign missions, home missions, studies, and parishes. As late as the General

Constitutions of 1953, the constitutions met various infractions with specific sanctions ranging from the denial of priestly functions to dining on bread and water.<sup>26</sup> These constitutions demanded permission of specified authorities for activities such as leaving the friary or removing trees from the friary property.<sup>27</sup> Minute rules governed every aspect of admission to and dismissal from the Order as well as the procedures for elections.<sup>28</sup> As Thompson has indicated for organized authority, certain symbols of office have as recently as 1967 surrounded those in authority within the Franciscan Order. These have included such items as distinctions in seating during meals and chapters and special liturgical dignities.<sup>29</sup> While attempting to reduce much of the institutional encrustation of previous constitutions, the current set adopted in 1967 on an experimental basis still spend half of their attention on institutional and structural affairs.<sup>30</sup>

At present the view of the Franciscan movement is that of a strictly hierarchical, bureaucratic structure, even though greater localism and shared responsibility have received greater emphasis since the Second Vatican Council. Authority administers itself through clearly defined channels, and the recent

emphasis on shared responsibility has tended to multiply bureaucratic functions through committees, commissions, and directorates rather than decrease them. Membership in the Order is in itself a career whereby one, in performing the duties of the life, receives his sustenance—a far cry from Francis's original notion of support through manual labor.

We may conclude from this brief study of the evolution of Franciscan authority that the Weberian theory on the evolution of religious authority from charismatic leadership to bureaucratic structure applies in this case. Further studies in the application of the Weberian theory to the development of other Catholic religious orders or congregations might reveal a similar phenomenon. The Weberian theory is, however, an abstraction. In concrete application the theory experiences mitigation, as this study indicates. The Weberian stages of evolution are not clearly defined in the concrete. They have a tendency to overlap. When charismatic leadership was at its height in the Franciscan movement the first stirrings after bureaucratic organization and rationalization were in action. On the other side of the coin, charismatic elements continued to exercise themselves even after Bona-

<sup>22</sup>*General Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor*, in *Rule and Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor* (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1958), chapter 7, titles 3-4, pp. 127-8j.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, chapter 3, title 2, article 191; chapter 8, title 1, article 345, no. 2—pp. 83-84, 145.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, chapter 2, titles 1 and 7; chapter 8, titles 7 and 17—pp. 14-20, 55-67, 186-94, 160-67.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, chapter 8, title 35, pp. 213-15; *Ceremoniale Romano-Seraphicum* (Quaracchi: ex Typographica Collegi Sancti Bonaventurae, 1927), articles 247, 405; pp. 162, 275.

<sup>30</sup>*General Constitutions* (1969), chapters 8 & 9, pp. 64-98.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, chapter 1, articles 1-11, pp. 38-40.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, chapter 1, article 3, p. 39.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, chapter 3, article 18, p. 48.

<sup>25</sup>*General Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor* (Pulaski, Wis.: Franciscan Publishers, 1969), chapters 8 and 9, pp. 64-98.

venture had cast the movement into a bureaucratic structure. That the Weberian theory modifies itself in the concrete is true in the case of Francis himself. As we have seen, he does not emerge as a pure type of charismatic leader. We might ask, however, what charismatic leader is ever of the pure variety? The very nature of charismatic leadership would militate against casting it into a reproducible mold.

In this study there is evidence to indicate that most frequently the success and increase in size of a charismatic movement leads to the necessity of rationalizing it into a bureaucratic form. A tendency here is to look upon the routinization or bureaucratization of a charismatic movement as something undesirable. Today, one is often inclined to view an authority structure, especially in religious matters, as something which contaminates or withers religious vitality. True, there are dysfunctional aspects to bureaucracy and its authoritarian structure; yet there are functional attributes which should be considered. Even the charismatic leader possesses his own dysfunctional qualities. Development into a bureaucratic, dis-

ciplined, authoritarian structure is a necessity for any charismatic movement if it is to continue functioning and consolidate its gains. Had Bonaventure not rationalized and routinized the Franciscan movement, Franciscanism would have been in grave danger of exhausting itself in irresponsible and poorly managed endeavors. At times the authoritarian structure has been a source of reform and revitalization within the Franciscan Order.

Finally, this study has also shown the existence of a charismatically led movement within the Catholic tradition which is often cited as the foremost example of a religious bureaucracy. This would, at first glance, appear impossible; yet it might give a partial clue to the success of the Catholic tradition in remaining a long-term, vital religious bureaucracy. The ability of the Catholic tradition from time to time to allow and encourage a charismatic movement within its ranks has probably been one of the greatest sources of replenishing its vitality. The current interest in, and even positive support of, recent Catholic pentecostal and charismatic experience by notable members of the

Catholic hierarchy might be a contemporary manifestation of this too little investigated ability. Recent reports have indicated that the most enduring of Catholic pentecostal or charismatic groups have been those which like Francis have balanced their scriptural emphasis with a sacramental focus and have allowed their charisma to recognize the institutionalized charisma of the hierarchical offices.

<sup>31</sup>Hoffer, p. 151.

At the conclusion of his book, *The True Believer*, Eric Hoffer has envisaged fanaticism as "a miraculous instrument for raising societies and nations from the dead—an instrument of resurrection."<sup>31</sup> Charismatic movements such as that of Francis of Assisi have often performed a similar service for the Catholic tradition: the resurrection of Catholic vitality when it was about to gasp its last breath.

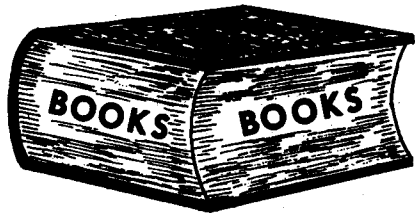
## Woman According to St. Bonaventure

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**Language, Truth, and Meaning: Papers from the International Lonergan Congress 1970.** Edited by Philip McShane. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973. Pp. 343. Cloth, \$12.50.

*Reviewed by the Reverend Leland J. White, Ph.D., Chairman, Religious Studies Department, Nazareth College, Nazareth, Michigan.*

Organized by former students of Bernard Lonergan to extend the influence of his pioneering theological and philosophical thought, the Lonergan Congress attracted scholars from a number of disciplines, backgrounds, and countries for a collaboration that newsmen recognized as extraordinary. *Language, Truth, and Meaning* is the second volume of papers from the Congress.

Lonergan invites the collaboration in inquiry that these papers document. A handful of books published during a long teaching

career have made Lonergan a legend in academic circles; yet his books are often felt to have an incomplete character curiously concealed by their encyclopedic style. The incompleteness stems from the view that Lonergan takes of himself as an author. He is a teacher-author. He describes his *Insight*, which appears to be an exhaustive account of the processes of understanding, as a five-finger exercise, a workbook for his reader-students. He opens up matters for investigation; but he does so from the premise that his readers have not so much merely to see the facts of the case as to recognize and then to engage their own inner resources for a further penetration of the facts. His readers come away from him feeling that there is much more implied than directly stated. Above all, what he implies is that the scholar is engaged in a collaborative enterprise, that like the teacher the writer gives the first word and perhaps some of the guidelines for an inquiry that requires the voices and the energies of many others.

Quite rightly, then, Lonergan's students did not try to honor their mentor in a *Festschrift* explaining his thought. Rather they invited representative contemporary voices to enter into a conversation with each

other and with Lonergan over common problems. In this volume, whose title stands in contrast to A.J. Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic*, contributors wrestle with the crucial issue of the truth of language. What makes the expression one person makes of himself to another truthful? In the specialized society in which the experience of one person may be so different from another, what is the measure of truth? Those who have emphasized logic, as Ayer does, have made a significant contribution by drawing out in great detail the different logics that guide speech, the different steps that people take in thinking things through and speaking about them. They have heightened awareness of the games people play with words. On the negative side, this awareness of the multiplicity of logics that guide the relationship of language to truth has tended to reinforce specialization, to make the possibility of a conversation that transcends the barriers erected by different experiences and disciplines appear remote.

A prime example of how different experiences have been filtered through different disciplines occurs when one asks what subjectivity is. The physicist or mathematician will

speak of purifying their work of subjective elements (if they will admit their presence), while the psychologist systematizes a subjectivity he wishes to keep focal. The philosopher who would raise the question of the truth of theology, political science, economics or history, must himself take a stand with respect to subjectivity and deal with the various ways that it enters into the areas of his inquiry. Lonergan, his students, and these contributors recognize the different logics that have produced the varied statements of these disciplines. Without minimizing the obvious problems that an issue such as subjectivity poses, they have however insisted on a step beyond logic. They have raised the question of *meaning*.

When these collaborators refer language and truth to meaning rather than to logic they move beyond the methods of this or that discipline, beyond the processes of this or that person's experience, to the more comprehensive frameworks of life and experience. They insist on a commonality of experience that embraces different modalities, that will make one intelligible to another; they would situate even subjectivity within a range of common experience capable of some common meaning.



To make a case for such a comprehensive meaning is not at all unusual for philosophers and theologians. What is relatively rare is for philosophers and theologians to avoid an occupational hazard of prejudging the nature of that comprehensive meaning, of settling in advance how different lines of thought and speech are to relate to one another. Too often they have forced the conversation between other disciplines to fit a framework that does not fit the concerns of the other spokesmen. Such philosophers and theologians wrote very complete books that scarcely required, if they even permitted, the further collaborative inquiry of readers from other circles with different logics. This hazard is overcome in this volume to a remarkable degree.

Even if they admit that such a hazard is overcome in this instance, some might object that as a theologian Lonergan has scarcely begun. It would be charged that faith and the content of things believed have hardly begun to be discussed. It is true that Lonergan on the whole leaves such concrete details of religious faith as conclusion that may be drawn by those who follow him in his inquiry. But it is no less true that he begins with a very basic faith that the realities he knows in faith, far from being so private as to require his insistent presentation of them to others, are indeed so real that they are accessible to others. Others are to be trusted to join in the inquiry after them with him. Indeed, others will bring their own unique resources to that inquiry; these enrich his own inquiry and ex-

perience. The contributors to this volume are in conversation with, listening and speaking to scientists and philosophers with whom the average christian may not enter direct conversation. Yet the spirit of their inquiry is precisely the spirit of faith in God productive of faith in others that is at the heart of all Christian living. To know what the meaning of one's life includes the varies logics of others' lives flows directly from the Christian effort to live with and for the others.

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**The Sexual Celibate.** By Donald Goergen. New York: Seabury Press, 1974. Pp. vi-266. Cloth, \$8.95.

*Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D., Head of the Philosophy Department at Siena College and Associate Editor of this Review.*

In this day and age, a book I agree with about 85% of the time can't be too bad. Father Goergen brings together both theological and psychological views of sexuality, in both instances giving the various viewpoints and evaluating each.

Beginning with the exposition of the biblical views of sex in Genesis, Song of Songs, Paul's and Augustine's theological (too suspicious view), Father Goergen goes on to describe briefly the Freudian, Adlerian, and Franklian approach to personality, and himself to opt for a Maslovian approach in terms of self-actualization. He makes the important distinction between the genital and the affective (the celibate has given up

for God only the former) and stresses the point that chastity is not opposed to tactility, as American culture (until recent years, anyway) has inculcated. He points out that myths surround celibacy as well as matrimony, e.g., that all will be perfect after vows, one will never suffer alone, that one can't have close friends. With regard to mythical problems of celibacy, the author's point is worth quoting: "Many of the problems of celibate living are not a result of the fact that it is celibate but that it is simply living" (p. 122).

Particularly valuable is the chapter on intimacy and friendship, even if one opts for a more cautious view than the one the author espouses. The chapter on the spiritual life of the celibate is all too short, as the author himself remarks. The weakest chapters were those on virginity and the sexual life of the celibate. In the former he regrettably suggests that Mary's physical virginity was not important in contrast to her surrender to God; and in the latter his own judgment on some sexual sins is too lenient. There is a real sense in which all sin is imperfection and immaturity, but that doesn't mean it is *only* that and not to be taken seriously.

These reservations aside, *The Sexual Celibate* is a helpful book, but one that requires slow and careful reading.

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**The Sacraments Today.** By Juan Luis Segundo, S.J. (Vol. 4 of *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*). Trans. John Drury.

Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1974. Pp. vi-154. Cloth, \$6.95.

*Reviewed by Father Raphael Bonanno, O.F.M., OF Pires do Rio, Goiás, Brazil, where he is a member of the Parish Team Ministry and the Vocational Team for the Franciscans in Goiás.*

Reviews of vols. 1, 2, and 3 of Father Segundo's series have already been published in these pages. Now we have this review of volume 4 on the Sacraments, with the review of volume 5 (*Evolution and Guilt*) forthcoming.

Sacramentology, like all theology nowadays, is undergoing a great intellectual ferment of new ideas and new approaches to age-old truths. Father Segundo as a modern theologian is well within this spirit of theological renovation. As a Latin-American theologian he contributes to a different aspect of the sacraments, one where they are seen through the prism of "liberation theology." The result is very interesting, to say the least. His sacramentology confronts problems and answers, emphases and trends, truths and superstitions.

Segundo's ideas are clear and well expressed. He is a born teacher, besides being a good theologian. There is little chance of mistaking his meaning. Although the printer's office forgot footnotes 6 and 7 on page 114, the book cites many Latin-American pastoral documents and thereby links concrete reality and life to Segundo's theologizing.

How does his vision fit in with sacramentology today? After Vatican II much emphasis has been placed

on community and the sacraments. As Segundo writes, "it is the sacraments that fashion human beings into a Church" (p. 44). The sacraments are for men, moreover, and not men for the sacraments. An inversion of values in this area creates magical procedures. The sacraments do have an air of mystery about them, but not one of magic. They open out the human being to the Infinite, not only as an individual but also as a member of a saving community. They are celebrated in time and space but pass beyond these categories. If the sacraments are viewed too concretely, they become simply rites and ceremonies. If they are viewed too spiritually, they become disincarnate, super-mysterious, and magical.

It seems that the same balance one must maintain between the humanity and divinity of Christ applies equally to his sacraments, his personal gestures in our everyday world. The sacraments are historical realities in our lives. They occur at certain "strong" moments of our contact with the presence of God in the modern world. They are not merely frequented or administered but celebrated, experienced, and *lived*. (Happily there has been a marked change in our language about "using" or "receiving" the sacraments.) The sacraments are religious experiences, personally and socially. Segundo says: "Sacraments divorced from historical reality and community become magical procedures.... Sacraments are not man-thing relationship but man-men relationship or men-men relationship." The man-thing relationship is often unconsciously voiced in the

parishioner's innocent question: "How much does a baptism cost?" As if one could put a price on a lived experience!

The crisis in sacramentology comes from renewal. Concrete examples are the Corpus Christi procession, infant baptism, Sunday Mass, etc. What is the original meaning of these sacramental practices? What do they mean in our daily lives? A poll of university students and Catholic Action people showed that they were lost by the sacred-profane dichotomy, unable to see God in the texture of their lives. Sacraments were unreal to them; therefore, some youths simply would not celebrate or live them. Parish priests have a tremendous and arduous task to help the laity re-think their sacramental life. Formation in one mentality must cede to a new, richer, more profound appreciation of the sacraments in real life. Segundo shows that from "sober, insistent, creative preaching will come the motivation capable of transforming people into a real community and an authentic sacramental Church" (p. 113). Therefore courses in baptism, confirmation or matrimonial theology and preparation have flourished after Vatican II. The Church is trying to re-define its sacramental life. Theologians like Segundo help the process considerably. They don't provide the last word, but they certainly start people thinking about many things we take for granted—in this case, the sacraments. Sacraments demand reflection and action. They should be conscious, human acts insofar as this is possible or necessary. The more reflection, the more profound the im-

pact of the act on the individual.

Here, I think we must be careful not to exaggerate the human dispositions of the Christian to the detriment of the divine intervention in each sacrament. Up to now, the over-emphasis was on the divine side of the sacramental mystery, the *ex opere operato* theology; undoubtedly true but too greatly stressed after Trent. Nowadays there is a tendency to swing to the opposite extreme, the *ex opere operato* theology, as if the total effect of the sacrament depended solely on the human side. In this connection, confer some recent thinking against infant baptism. The middle ground is always preferable. But the problem really seems to be how to live this middle ground in practice, or as someone wrote: "How to keep your balance in the modern church."

Some of Segundo's reflections on liberation theology also merit mention here. For example, he views celibacy in a theology of liberation as an expression of total love for the community, its justice and liberation. The celibate can preach freely the kingdom of justice to the powers that be, without fear of retribution or oppression against his wife and children. If he must suffer for justice's sake, only *he* suffers. If he must die, as the prophets of old, only he dies, in total dedication to his people. Segundo also acknowledges his debt to the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, for his pedagogy of liberation. The Sacraments can conscientize the people to their true liberty as the children of God.

This fourth volume of Segundo's series carries forward his contemporary theologizing to the sa-

ramental area. Next we will review his *Evolution and Guilt*, the fifth and apparently the last in his series, *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*. Considering the quality of Segundo's work, we can only hope that he doesn't stop there.

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Jesus: A Life of Christ. By Lord Longford. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1975. Pp. 185. Cloth, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard Leo Heppler, O.F.M., Chaplain to the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in West Paterson, New Jersey.

This is an attempt to give a very compact biography and an evaluation of the life of Christ. The author is aware that theologians disagree on many points about Christ's life, and he knows that the Gospels are not biographies. Yet he constructs a sparse biography that leaves him open to criticism both in what he includes by way of occasional editorializing and in what he fails to include.

The final chapter, the evaluation of the "facts" of Christ's life, comes off much better. Jesus is presented as the teacher of the highest ethical system of all times and as the God-Man.

The book may appeal to those who lack familiarity with the life of Christ. It strikes me as being something like a professor's outlines for a series of lectures, each chapter designed to provoke further discussion. If I am guilty of presuming that most Christians have a workable knowledge of our Lord's life which

they do not have, then the book may have a wider reading public than I am giving it credit for.

**Your Confession: Using the New Ritual.** By Leonard Foley, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1975. Pp. 105. Paper, \$1.50.

*Reviewed by Father Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M., an Assistant at St. Francis Chapel, the Northway Mall, Albany, N.Y., and translator of many books on theology and spirituality.*

Here is a delightful, much-needed informative paperback on the Sacrament of Confession that both priests and the laity can read with great profit. In the course of reading it for review purposes, the thought spontaneously came to mind: Every Catholic should read this book.

He should read it for many reasons. Chapter III, e.g., is entitled "Who Is the God We Reject?" Many of these potential readers will discover that the God of their imagination is not the God Jesus has revealed to us. Father Foley does a masterful job of tearing down all our false concepts about an emotionless, overwhelming, remote and angry God. He leads the reader to the conclusion that "God's forgiveness is his constant reaching out to us to enfold us again to himself, like the father of the prodigal son" (p. 38).

One aspect of sin that is too little known is its social repercussions. Everyone admits that my sin damages me, but not many have come to the realization that my sin "makes me less able to give you the love to

which you have a right. "Sin... diminishes my ability to pull my weight in the community" (p. 57).

Speaking of the new Ritual, Father Foley says: "Those who expected something radically new or different will be disappointed. Yet the revision is significant because there are new and positive emphases which, *if they become part of our understanding and experience*, will restore this sacrament to its rightful place in the life of the church" (p. 2).

The author then proceeds to a consideration of four basic Christian needs that will ready us for the new ritual. The first need is to *experience community*. This brings up the question many Catholics voice: "Why not go straight to God? Why go to a priest?" (p. 7). The other three needs are *the need for leadership, the need for prayer, and the need for wholeness*. The book analyzes "the fundamental ideas and attitudes which are presupposed for any meaningful celebration of the sacrament and without which any ritual, new or old, is useless" (p. 11).

On finishing the book, the reader might be tempted to lay it down and say: "The author doesn't have very much to say about the new ritual." But he will, I believe, have to agree with the author that some much needed ground work has to be laid before the new and positive emphases are rightly appreciated.

The book was written not only for priests, but for the enlightenment of all lay Catholics as well. Would that every one of them would read it for the enrichment and deepening of their relationship with Jesus.

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in wishing you*

A VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS

*and every grace and blessing for*

A HAPPY AND FRUITFUL  
NEW YEAR

#### COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our December issue have been drawn by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., of the Monastery of Sancta Clara, Canton, Ohio.

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## Contemplative Christianity

THE TONE OF THIS, Dom Aelred Graham's latest book, is set immediately by the epigraph borrowed from Dietrich Bonhoeffer and printed on its title page: "I am constantly moved by the question what Christianity really is, or who Christ really is, for us today." The author thus intentionally exploits a double meaning for the word "contemplation." First, throughout the book he and the reader will be engaged in a critical "contemplation" of the current situation of the Church. And secondly, the author wants to call as earnestly as possible for a rekindling of the contemplative ideal, not only for "professional" contemplatives, but as a balancing element in the life of every Christian, over against today's stress on historicism and activism.

Dom Graham is exceptionally well qualified to issue such a call. Not only has he been with us for a few decades now as a renowned master of the spiritual life; but in addition, he shares with Thomas Merton and William Johnston a wealth of experience in the field of Eastern Religions, to which we have to look for light in many areas of the contemplative life.

Little wonder, given his rich background of teaching theology in Asia, America, and England, that the author appeals to receptivity on the part of Western Christians to the message from the East. This is, in fact, the heart of his present essay: The life of contemplation is accessible to every serious Christian—not merely accessible, but urgently necessary for anyone who would enjoy a mature, full Christian life.

The seven short chapters comprising this book are the outgrowth of an article in the London *Times* (included here in its original form as an ap-

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*Contemplative Christianity: An Approach to the Realities of Religion.* By Dom Aelred Graham. New York: Seabury Press. 1974. Pp. x-131, incl. index. Cloth, \$6.95.

pendix). The author begins with a historical sketch of the Church's life from the beginning to the present, in which he highlights the various influences—juridical, philosophical, and theological, leading to today's over-emphasis on the juridical and historical. His second chapter appeals for a certain balance needed today between conformity and innovation.

Next comes a discussion of Eastern spirituality in which the author rightly rejects the simplistic epithets usually applied to Eastern religion: atheism, pantheism, etc. Such descriptions may indeed apply to this or that individual or minor school in the East as in the West; but neither Buddhism nor Hinduism is aptly described, or done justice to if the matter is left there. On the contrary, as every genuine mystic has insisted, it is the popular, positive characterizations of God that are least appropriate; such descriptions are naive, simplistic, and inadequate. "We can infer from a philosophical analysis," Graham rightly states, "that an infinite Creator plus finite creation do not make two realities; the latter is contained within the former in some indefinable way. We exist more really in God than in ourselves" (p. 70; emphasis added).

*Contemplative Christianity* is explicitly addressed to "the reflective general reader, particularly among the rising generation and those who feel some responsibility for them" (p. viii). Given this intention, we can easily understand that a whole chapter is given over to a discussion of the work of a "young" theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. While acknowledging candidly the errors as well as the inadequacies of Bonhoeffer's theology, Dom Graham rightly insists that we have something to learn from the "young theologians" who has been so influential in the secularization movement.

It all comes down, eventually, to what the author calls (in the title of his final chapter) "Arranging What We Have always Known." The difficulty in accomplishing such an "arrangement" is that some of our knowledge has been very implicit indeed. It is from the East that we can and must learn to restore some emphasis to the present moment, in which alone eternity meets time.

Dom Aelred Graham has not done this work for us, of course; but we may be deeply grateful to him for calling our attention so attractively and so eloquently to the many treatments already available on this theme as well as to the challenge facing us as we forge ahead in the direction indicated by him and the other writers in this field.

*Fr. Michael D. Mailhot, OFM*

## Seeds of the Pioneers

SISTER MARY SERAPHIM KARPER, P.C.P.A.

“THEY ARE THE SEED dropped by the hand of God in the field, breaking through its sod and waving its sapling leaves before the face of the sun.” This phrase of Kahlil Gibran poetically describes the role of the contemplative person in the apostolate of the Good News. In the parable of the sower and the field, Christ speaks of himself as the sower of the good seed, of the seed which will spring up and bear fruit, “some a hundred-fold.” Today, when there seems to be so much barren activity, so much exciting emptiness, perhaps it would be well to consider the quality of the seed we are striving to implant.

Can contemplation make a positive contribution to the culture and needs of the 1970's? Can a contemplative person meet man on a level he can grasp? Can he offer the world of today what it is really looking for? The answers to these questions are pertinent, not only to the religious, but perhaps even more so to the active lay apostle. The seed he sows is primarily himself and what he stands for. If this seed

does not bear within itself the life-giving germ of holiness, there is not much reason to look for a fruitful harvest. This may seem a hard fact, but a fact nevertheless it is, as a glance at Church history will clearly show. All of the above questions can be answered with an enigmatic “yes and no.”

### Relevance of Contemplation

FIRST OF ALL, the problem of contemplation itself. Is it relevant? We can say “no” if we consider contemplation as something that transcends all categories of “relevance,” as something which deals in the eternal “Nowness” of God who always is. The contemplative person deals with a Reality that underlies and sustains all moments of time. To classify it as *merely* relevant is a resounding understatement. God is simply and solely the reason for everything. Whatever is, springs up from the ever-flowing stream of the thought of God; remains totally within this ambit, and courses incessantly back to this fountainhead. Contemplation enters this river of life and is

caught up in the current that flows forever forward yet never leaves its source of changes. It partakes of the still, peaceful being that is at rest because ecstatically complete, and yet which is dynamically alive because totally in act. This inexpressible phenomenon of rest and life charges all that is created with its own Life and grandeur.

Where this Life is not complete (and it is never so in our temporal world), there is the restlessness of unsatiated desire and a straining forward to fullness. Throughout the material universe this pain of growing to maturity is felt. Even the sainted contemplative who has attained to transforming union is not quite at rest. From this phenomenon of restlessness, we can deduce that contemplation is an active factor influencing our now-time.

In this sense, we can answer “yes” to the question of the relevance of contemplation, for the act of entering into the mainstream of the universe is highly contemporaneous. It contributes to the fulfillment of the great desire of creation. All creation is made *in* one image, and that Image is the Son of God. We are made, not only “like to” but actually within Him who is the one perfect expression of the Father's Love. Nothing exists that does not bear engraven in its inmost fibers a trace of the power, wisdom, and loveliness of the

living God. In our universe, we know that we derive this participation in the Godhead through Christ Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God. We were spoken in him.

However, so much of creation has not ears with which to hear this resounding voice; has no eyes with which to see this ravishing Image. Even man, who bears the potential equipment to hear and see these realities, rarely does so with consciousness, and too often does not do so at all. During the long centuries preceding Bethlehem, mankind as a whole was like a man without a mirror. He vaguely guessed that he carried a divine stamp on his face but did not know how to recognize it. Only when man looked upon the Face of Jesus did it exclaim in joyous recognition: “Ah, that is Who we are!” The contemplative person probes the deep splendor in the secret of that Face, the Face which is both the reflection of the Father and most unbelievably also the reflection of our face. Our name and destiny are etched upon those features, and unless we learn the truth as it is revealed there, we are without the means of learning any other truths at all.

How often today we witness the disorientation of individuals. They look at one with a helpless, “I don't know who I am. How can I know where I am going?” Isn't this reminiscent of Thom-

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*Sister Mary Seraphim Karper, P.C.P.A., whose perceptive discussions of the religious life and spirituality have appeared in various Catholic periodicals, is a contemplative nun at the Monastery of Sancta Clara, Canton, Ohio.*

as's "Master, we do not know where you are going, how are we to know the way"? Thomas was fortunate in that he addressed his question to the one Man who could give him the answer. Many people today are looking for just this sort of man. They have rejected many of the traditional sources for finding the answers to their painfully deep questions because the answers they received from these sources were clothed in a language which had no meaning for them. Where are they to find the men who will help them discover right answers to their problems, unless it be the modern contemplative apostle?

The contemplative apostle—this almost sounds like a contradiction in terms. Yet contemplation can be the most modern thing to hit the Seventies. Certainly it is a most appealing thing, for most of the rebelliousness of youth stems from the fact that they sense the superficiality of all the answers they are being handed. They question everything because they are suspicious of its lack of depth. Too many times have they held out their hands to grasp delights which paled and turned thin. Will they recognize the everlasting richness of the answers of the contemplative? There is reason to think they will. The difficulty lies in translating what is in itself unspeakable into spoken language.

This does not mean watering down ineffable realities by wrapping them in catchy slogans or banal clichés. The simple, unadorned truth has a tremendous appeal of its own. It does not need human genius to dress it up in flashy finery. All that is needed are persons who not only know the truth but who have *experienced* it. Anything less is bound to be slightly artificial. Most people can detect when a person is speaking from conviction and experience or only handing on something he has heard.

### Cultural Need

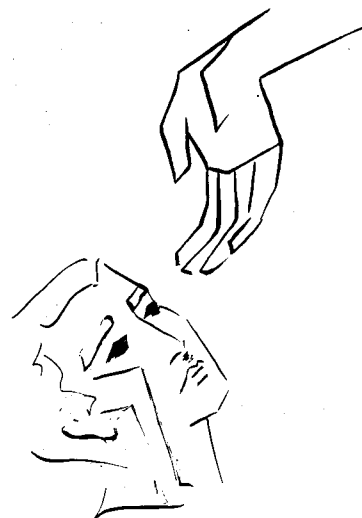
OUR CULTURE abounds with scientific richness and is witness to social striving for greater humanity. If these positive values are not to be scattered and wasted in myriad vain endeavors, they must be accompanied by a corresponding increase in contemplative contributions. But these offerings will take a different form than the usual cultural enrichments. One of the great gifts of the contemplative apostle is an appreciation for silence. Man is fragmented interiorly because his attention is torn in myriad directions at once. Sounds solicit his attention from all directions. Every attempt to solve personal problems is accompanied by "background music." Soon the attention wanders, and the solu-

tions to pressing questions seem too difficult to search for.

A contemplative has learned to make of silence a positive good wherein he moves at ease and with freedom. This habituation to silence is something we must all learn. Today's person will accept with enthusiasm only what appears to him as a positive good. Silence is more than the absence of distracting noise. It is the atmosphere for re-collecting and orienting man's vital faculties. But silence is more even than that. It is the holy ground on which man walks to an encounter with his God. This is the message of the contemplative apostle. It is one he speaks without direct mention. He, if he is genuine, carries the atmosphere of silence wherever he goes. His glance, his movements, his attitude of

listening and receptivity, all bespeak a stillness within. He has met God in a face-to-face confrontation and has been seared into silence before the soundless Vision. Wherever he goes, he goes scarred with the memory of never to be forgotten moments. He need never speak of these. They speak for themselves, and men instinctively recognize the man who has known them. When this man does speak, he speaks with an authority which transcends the usual levels of authenticity. His sincerity and conviction are transparent.

Vitally needed today are these contemplative apostles who touch Divinity and bring it into the realm of humanity; that is, men who are Christed. Such men as these will not need to search for the right words or the meaningful way to present their age-old yet ever relevant message. From the depths of their personal confrontation will flow the words, the gestures, the suggestions of more-than-here-and-now possibilities. The message will shape its own vehicle. Absorbed as every man is in his contemporary milieu, the contemplative apostle will be the mouthpiece not only of God but also of his peculiar age, country, and social situation. By being so much a man, he will be a perfect transmitter of ageless answers in contemporary words. Only he must be a person of profound



fidelity, both to himself and to his neighbor, as well as to his God.

He must be able to stand up under the keen, searching eyes of youth, of the apathetic, disillusioned eyes of the middle-aged and of the frightened, clinging eyes of those on the brink of eternity. No man can do this without feeling the terrible inadequacy of his humanity. If he is really willing to give to others what they so sorely need, he will have to become holy! Otherwise, the striving to meet needs as huge as the human race will shatter him. Even fortified with the strength of God, he will shudder and grow pale as others turn to him with that terrible, perennial, "Why? Tell me *why!*" What answer will he give them? Even he will now know in advance. Anything learned from books will be so painfully inadequate that it would be like offering a lollipop to a child who has just seen his family wiped out in an auto accident. The contemplative apostle will be forced to turn within and step aside so that the God who has taken possession of him will be able to speak. The words may seem to the apostle banal or commonplace, but arising as they do from the pregnant life of God, they will be charged with hidden unctions and tremendous power for healing and comfort. One such word is worth more than hours of

merely human, compassionate speeches.

### On Which Level?

DO CONTEMPLATIVES meet the world on its own level? The answer again can be yes or no. No, if by its own level you mean the plane to which man has permitted himself to degenerate. Men who have left their ancestral home of human dignity to join the animals will not be able to grasp the message of the contemplative apostle. It will be foolishness to them . . . but it may sting them with a vague memory of what they could have been. It is on the level of what man is *destined* to be that the contemplative speaks with the assurance of being heard.

To look up and to scale heights are natural to every person in whom a spark of humanity smoulders. Who will not be lured by the promise of the better and the best? Here the contemplative speaks by his very being. He is ascending the heights for which all men are destined. He is a message of hope that such an ascent is not only possible but proximate. Here and now man can enter into profound union with his highest Good. Here and now he can permit the highest faculties of his nature to be perfected by the supernatural engrafting of divine habits of thought and action. Lovely are the heights and beautiful the

steps of the one ascending them.

Let us admit that the world is bored with the pleasant, the comfortable, the labor-saving or the pain-avoiding. Youth desires challenge. So does middle-age and grey-hairs. All look for the worthwhile. The contemplative alone can offer them the eternally worthwhile. He will offer it not with apologies, with an attempt to dissimulate difficulties, but with the gleam of joy and challenge in his eyes. His whole being will radiate the "Come, follow me" of Christ Jesus. And people *will* follow this pioneer even to the world's frontier and beyond.

The California gold-rush will pale into insignificance in face of the resolute "pioneers of the absolute." Something more than gold is luring them. It is the light shining on the face of Christ as it has been glimpsed on the countenance of one of his members. Contemplatives today have a great and important role to play. They must track their way through uncharted lands and do so with so much joy, grace, and peace that the fragrance of their passing will stir all who meet them. Where will the contemplative apostle take his stand? He will never do so. He will always be on the move, with distances in his eyes and with lips shaped to words which will ring as clarion bells down the valleys to those behind. With

staff in hand, he will press forward to a literally unspeakable goal.

### Wordless Renewal

VERY LITTLE has been written of this mountain trail, and the signposts are few. The contemplative has only the light of a great love to guide him and the buoyant hope that his dangerous mission will not be in vain. He will find his Grail, and what is more, he will help others to find it also. Out of the enclosed valley of commonplace realities he will walk, climbing into the unexplored mountains. He will send back the message of what he has found and still hopes to find. Through his words will ring the siren song of hopes fulfilled and joy attained. All who hear them will be stirred and will recognize in them their own secret yearnings.

Thomas Merton, in one of his poems, describes contemplatives as sentinels of the world's frontier, listening for the first faint drums of Christ the Conqueror. With the eschatological element being stressed today, this concept adds bold strokes to the picture of the relevance of contemplation. Jesus *is* coming, and he is to be welcomed when his time arrives. Yet his time is already here. Even today he is stepping into the world with the gifts of the end-time. Already judgment and salvation have



taken place. It remains only for the final revelation to manifest what is already an accomplished fact in our midst.

The contemplative person discerns the imminence of salvation in all moments, happenings, and people. He beholds Christ coming to fruition in many souls and longs with anguish to assist his burgeoning to fullness in all these areas of human life and development where his glory is yet buried. Standing with watchful eyes and listening heart, the contemplative rejoices like John the Baptist that the Bridegroom is at hand and that the wedding feast has begun. This sure knowledge is the source of his profound peace and pervasive joyousness. Spreading the Good News abroad will consist in proclaiming what he sees and knows. For him faith has become luminous, and the promise of the future a fact so certain that he can already partake in its realization.

Christ the Conqueror stands at the entrance of all human activity. He rises up like a demigod from the depths of the sea and springs from the heart of the

earth with every fresh, green blade of wheat. All beauty is his garment and all goodness, a breath of his sweetness. He passes swiftly in the night, setting all the stars to singing, and then returns in loveliness with the dawn, hushing heavenly spheres to silence. Of this mystery, which is the very secret of creation, the contemplative apostle sings in a mysterious prose that is the poetry of the universe. His words will be impregnated with vitality and freshness. The seed which drops from the hand of this pioneer will germinate into a harvest of eternal life for all who accept it. But the pioneer will not be standing there to see the harvest, for he will have traveled on.

Buried in the Heart of the living God, the contemplative has allowed himself to die in the death of Christ, a death which culminates in vivific life. Breaking through the hard crust of human indifference, he will wave new green leaves before the shining face of human hope renewed.

## Sin, Forgiveness, and Saint Francis

ROBERT E. DONOVAN, O.F.M.

IN THIS AGE of personalism, openness, and "love," most Christians would rather speak of forgiveness, i.e., God's overwhelming love for man, than of sin, i.e., man's selfishness as a response to God's love. The day of Hester Prynne's public display of her sin by means of the scarlet letter is over. This type of hard condemnation did not help to stop a Christian nation from committing the sin of genocide.

So it seems strange to hear St. Francis, with whom many today can identify (from the new "mendicants," i.e., the hippies, to the new "mystics," i.e., the Pentecostals or charismatics; as well as the ecologists, those who are concerned about man's relationship to nature), fuss and fume like the "fire and brimstone" preacher of old. To read a part of Francis's Letter to all the Faithful<sup>1</sup> might remind one of

the old "scare-um" sermons delivered on high school retreats right before the call to general confession. "We should all realize," Francis admonishes us, "that no matter where or how a man dies, if he is in the state of mortal sin and does not repent, when he could have done so and did not, the devil tears his soul from his body with such anguish and distress that only a person who has experienced it can appreciate it." Those around such a man, St. Francis continues, should say: "A curse on his soul" and "the worms feast on his body."<sup>1</sup>

It is even stranger to hear this truly compassionate man order that any friar who refuses "to say the Office according to the Rule and wants to change it" be kept as "a prisoner day and night" until delivered to the Bishop of Ostia.<sup>2</sup> Rather, one ex-

<sup>1</sup>Letter to All the Faithful, in Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi, Writings and Early Biographies: English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973), p. 98. Hereafter to be referred to as *Omnibus*.

<sup>2</sup>The Testament of Francis, in *Omnibus*, p. 69.

Brother Robert E. Donovan, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Theology, Fordham University), has taught theology for four years at St. Bonaventure University. He is a novice preparing for first vows in the Franciscan Brotherhood.

pects always to hear the words Francis addressed to one of his ministers regarding the forgiveness a sinner should receive.

There should be no friar in the whole world who has fallen into sin, no matter how far he has fallen, who will ever fail to find your forgiveness for the asking, if he will only look into your eyes. And if he does not ask forgiveness, you should ask him if he wants it. And should he appear before you a thousand times, you should love him more than you love me, so that you may draw him to God; you should always have pity on such friars.<sup>3</sup>

Or again in the Rule 1223 Francis urges his ministers to "be careful not to be angry or upset because a friar has fallen into sin, because anger or annoyance in themselves or in others make it difficult to be charitable."<sup>4</sup> How can one begin to account for such a divergence of views?

The simple answer, of course, is that the views are not so divergent. In the first instance Francis is speaking of sin itself. It is always to be avoided because if allowed to endure it can inflict a mortal blow to a man's spirit. Someone who has closed himself up in his selfishness is, indeed, no longer a brother. To prevent that from happening, St. Francis as a loving



father overemphasizes the danger to his sons. But to a son who has sinned, Francis is the loving father standing beside him, showing him the love God had shown to Francis. One of the instances in Francis's life illustrates this point vividly.

The incident appears both in 2 Celano, 154 (*Omnibus*, p. 486) and in the *Legenda Maior* of St. Bonaventure (ch. 6, n. 11—*Omnibus*, p. 679). The latter's interpretation of the incident seems to bear out what was said above. Bonaventure prefaces his account of the incident by pointing out Francis's loathing of sin. "The Saint," he says, "had a horror of pride, which is the cause of all evil, and of disobedience, which is its worst offspring." So when a friar "who had sinned against obedience" was brought to him, Francis, while seeing his contrition and determined to "be easy

on him," also is "anxious to avoid encouraging other to revolt." So he has the sinner's capuche thrown in the fire so that all would see "the kind of punishment which disobedience deserved." But after it is in the fire a while, Francis has the capuche removed from the flames unharmed. Thus we can see at once the Saint's horror of sin and his love of a repentant sinner.<sup>5</sup>

This horror of sin stems in great part from Francis's experience of his own life. Looking back on his life before God had inspired him, Francis describes it as living "in sin." He had not yet been called to "embark upon a life of penance."<sup>6</sup> Before his *metanoia* (conversion, repentance), he was unable to love and serve his brothers, the lepers. Afterwards what had previously nauseated him became a source of spiritual and physical consolation.

Through the mercy and forgiveness of God, Francis was enabled gradually to see himself as he was: selfish. In cooperation with God's grace he changed and became selfless. What at first had appeared sweet (serving self) now appeared sour; and what had

seemed sour (serving others), sweet. As Thomas of Celano indicates, "From then on he began to despise himself more and more, until, by the mercy of the Redeemer, he came to perfect victory over himself."<sup>7</sup>

He usually spoke of himself deprecatingly, i.e., selflessly. He always signs himself, "your poor worthless servant,"<sup>8</sup> or "Brother Francis, the least of your servants, worthless and sinful."<sup>9</sup> In this instance "sinful" does not connote one who performs malicious acts of selfishness. Such acts are always to be condemned in the "highest height." As Francis says in Admonition 3:

There are many religious who under the pretext of doing something more perfect than what their superior commands look behind and go back to their own will that they have given up. People like this are murderers, and by their bad example they cause the loss of many souls.<sup>10</sup>

Over the long haul, however, one can see himself only as a sinner (i.e., less than fully selfless, less than fully emptied of self), as one considers the forgiveness of God. For Francis God's forgiveness of him through

<sup>3</sup>Letter to a Minister, in *Omnibus*, p. 110.

<sup>4</sup>Rule of 1223, chapter 7, in *Omnibus*, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup>*Legenda Maior*, chapter 6, n. 11, in *Omnibus*, p. 679.

<sup>6</sup>The Testament of Francis, in *Omnibus*, p. 67.

<sup>7</sup>1 Celano, 17, in *Omnibus*, p. 243.

<sup>8</sup>The Testament of Francis, in *Omnibus*, p. 70.

<sup>9</sup>Letter to a General Chapter, in *Omnibus*, p. 103.

<sup>10</sup>The Admonitions, in *Omnibus*, p. 80.

Christ's passion and death (the Cross) can never be offset by any amount of doing good. Francis's words as reported by Bonaventure illustrate this point very well:

"It seems to me," Francis replied, "that I must be the greatest of all sinners." When his companion reproached him, declaring that he could not possibly say that with a good conscience, or really believe it, Francis continued, "If Christ had shown such mercy towards the greatest criminal in the world, I am convinced that he would be much more grateful to God than I am."<sup>11</sup>

Francis, then, remains a sinner able to boast only of his sins and able to subsist spiritually only in the Cross of Jesus—"in him who redeemed and cleansed us in his Precious Blood." This forgiveness is so undeserved and unmerited that all should, Francis claims, "fall to the ground and adore him with fear and reverence."<sup>12</sup> Those who cannot see this and refuse to accept the forgiveness of Christ especially present in the Eucharist, Francis claims are "blind, because they cannot see the true light, Our Lord, Jesus Christ."<sup>13</sup>

Those who persevere in their obstinacy and selfishness are just "slaves of the devil . . . they lack spiritual insight because the Son of God does not dwell in them . . . They are fully conscious of the fact that they are doing evil, and knowingly lose their souls."<sup>14</sup> This is to be regretted and denounced. But it is not to be seen as a failing on God's part—rather it is to be attributed to the human agent. Those who have sinned in this way and are repentant, however, are to be given a share in the forgiveness of Christ. As was indicated above, Francis instructs his ministers to be kind and gentle with repentant sinners, because to show anger and annoyance over the sin makes it difficult to be charitable to the repentant sinner.<sup>15</sup>

Conscious of the ineffable self-giving of God in Christ's passion, Francis urges all Christians—indeed, all creatures, to "give God praise and glory and honor and blessing" because "he has borne so much for us and has done and will do so much good to us."<sup>16</sup> The best way to praise God, and in a sense pay him back, is, according to Francis, to be charitable and humble and

give alms, because they wash the stains of sin from our souls."<sup>17</sup>

An important lesson for today in this brief analysis of Francis's thought on sin and forgiveness is his notion of the need for repentance (*metanoia*) as a constant motif in the life of a Christian. In this call to continual repentance Francis is only echoing the call of his Master, Jesus Christ. This message of Jesus is summed up well in Mark 1:15; "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel." What does this repentance mean? A mere negative "giving up things"? Surely Francis indicates that this is a way of showing repentance when he cautions his followers, according to the spirituality of the time, to "renounce self and bring our lower nature into subjection under the yoke of obedience."<sup>18</sup>

But more than this, true repentance must be what is involved in a real *metanoia*, a real change of the entire man. Placing this change in a world-view that is dynamic and evolutionary rather than static, we see that the process becomes a never-ending task: a call to follow Christ as he

wishes to be followed, in a radical way. The positive statement of this type of repentance is clearly expressed in Francis's own words—it is his own summary of the task he assigns to himself and to his followers: "The Rule and life of the Friars Minor is this, namely, to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ . . ."<sup>19</sup>

The radical character of this Gospel can be found quite simply in an examination of the "Sermon on the Mount." There, followers of the Gospel are urged to "turn the other cheek" after being slapped in the face, never to be angry with those we know by calling them "silly" or "foolish," to give not only our overcoat and shirt-coat but also the very shirt off our backs, and finally (the hardest to understand) to love our enemies. Christians are, in brief, "to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 5:21-48).

Faced with the prospect of this kind of repentance one might long for the simpler task of "giving-up things." Or one might be tempted to water down the demands. Doing so would be following the Gospel according

<sup>11</sup>*Legenda Maior*, chapter 6, n. 6, p. 676.

<sup>12</sup>Letter to a General Chapter, in *Omnibus*, pp. 103-04.

<sup>13</sup>Letter to All the Faithful, in *Omnibus*, p. 97.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>See footnote 4, above.

<sup>16</sup>Letter to All the Faithful, in *Omnibus*, p. 97.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.* See also Francis's privations worked on his own body which he calls "Brother Ass," 2 Celano, 116, in *Omnibus*, pp. 458-59; *Legenda Maior* chapter 5, n. 6, pp. 666-67.

<sup>19</sup>The Rule of 1223, chapter 1, in *Omnibus*, p. 57.

to self rather than the Gospel of Jesus.

This does not mean, of course, that in the imperfections and sinfulness that characterize the present times we might not fall short of the goal described by Jesus; we have done so, and we shall do so again. (Francis himself bemoans his inability to suffer martyrdom.<sup>20</sup>) But upon each failure we should attempt to gear ourselves up to try harder to grasp the meaning for our lives of our radical turning toward Christ. In doing this we must realize, as well, that we can never rest content because of what *we* have done. For, if we are true followers of Christ, we will have been emptied of self and all our accomplishments will have been his. As Francis puts it:

If you were the most handsome and the richest man in the world, and could work wonders and drive out devils, that would be some-

thing extrinsic to you; it would not belong to you, and you could not boast of it. But there is one thing of which we can all boast; we can boast of our humiliation and in taking up daily the holy Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>21</sup>

In sum, then, Francis saw and attempted to put into practice the command of Jesus to repent—to do penance. As St. Bonaventure maintains, “Carried away by the force of his preaching, great numbers of people adopted the new rule of penance according to the form instituted by St. Francis.”<sup>22</sup> This penance, though it included a great deal of “giving-up things,” also included a positive commitment to follow more perfectly with each passing day the radical demands of the Gospel of Jesus. We, too, should go out and do likewise, realizing that we may fail, but that we must go on, for Jesus (and Francis) is with us.

<sup>20</sup>The Admonitions, 6, in *Omnibus*, p. 81.

<sup>21</sup>The Admonitions, 5, in *Omnibus*, p. 81.

<sup>22</sup>*Legenda Maior*, chapter 4, n. 6, in *Omnibus*, p. 657.

*But when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads because your redemption is at hand (Lk. 21:28).*

## Come to Pass

Home  
cradle bed of birth and imperceptible growth  
thirty-three years he is with us  
and his spirit fills our hearts  
as though from the bottom upwards  
unquestioned calm and plenty  
paints stream on our windows  
fills stockings and trims trees  
and places his star over our doorway—  
a family gathers at table  
midst an excess of food and ornaments  
like the colored candles  
reflecting their flame in daylight  
against the tinselate face  
of would-be junk everywhere  
saved only by the love  
that placed it there:  
in the form of glazed turkey  
a father stands his love  
in the living room  
as conspicuous as a tree.



II

Departure  
 opens the mind  
 musical tangent  
 of the merry-go-round horse  
 broke loose  
 propulsion for the first time  
 his own  
 gallop no longer simulated animation  
 trailing a tail alight  
 and new pastures unroll  
 like the gift-wrappings  
 from a mound of presents—  
 tourists forging with binoculars  
 charting with camera—  
 questions are foreign-born hucksters  
 that hold shoppers browsing by the hour  
 through Christmas displays—  
 then hours wear on  
 legs grow sore, wallets empty  
 and there are too many questions to  
 answer  
 so shoppers fill the out-of-town subway  
 tourist find the post-office  
 addressing cards to those left behind  
 and the tired wooden pony  
 plods more like a donkey  
 at rocking-horse pace  
 to his place of birth.

III

Return  
 comet dragging a host  
 of brilliance  
 in gigantic orbit  
 promises return  
 ever advancing the course  
 it has been  
 promises return  
 impatient thrust tearing itself apart

yet pulling up from behind  
 return promises  
 of God to Earth and Earth to God  
 as the rumble of jets'  
 take off and landing  
 (departure time finished)  
 in all the airports of the world  
 though waiting for baggage and immigration  
 arms too heavy-laden for an embrace  
 nevertheless return  
 to all parts of the globe  
 where arms await them uplifted  
 well-come; well-come

IV

All  
 the lost seconds are returned new  
 that "once a year" is now  
 the fragments are gathered  
 into the baskets  
 exceeding all our past years  
 by his invisible presence—  
 even though armies may camp  
 around Jerusalem  
 there is peace on earth  
 for men of good will  
 what if a falling star  
 should plunge into our planet  
 purging half the earth  
 we stand as of old  
 inquiring of kings and governors  
 and trying every road  
 arms outgrown in expectation  
 for we have seen his star  
 in the East  
 and have come to worship him

HUGOLINE SABATINO, O.F.M.

## Franciscan Abundance

EDWARD J. DILLON, O.F.M.

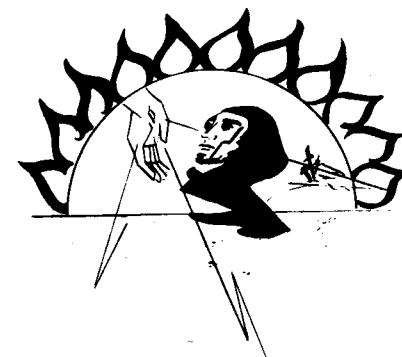
**J**OHN 10:10 RECORDS Jesus as saying, "I have come that they might have life, and might have it abundantly." Francis of Assisi lived this abundant life to the full. He joyfully pursued his life style of exterior poverty, seeing in it the kind of paradox spoken of by St. Paul in First Corinthians, one and two. It might have been nonsense to those who subscribed to the principles of the world system—as indeed it still is—but it freed Francis to live and to share his new kind of abundance with as many as would listen.

The notion of poverty for himself was the farthest thing from Francis's mind, until he tasted the abundant life in Christ. Let's see what that means.

We needn't dwell on demonstrating the fact that many people

today, religious and lay, are living in doubt, depression, and defeat. One of the primary reasons for this is that they simply do not know their rights before God (as stated by Him) or how to collect on them. Many of these people are "good" religious—"good" Catholics—who do all the "right" things. While perhaps knowing a lot about "religion," they nevertheless know remarkably little about God's love, God's plan, and God's will. And so many wind up by very piously concluding that most of the bad things that happen are "God's will" and "the Cross." Others end up getting angry with God and quitting. In all events, the problem is that many simply don't know their full rights to the abundant life now, because they just don't know what the Lord himself has

*Father Edward J. Dillon, O.F.M., is Southern Regional Moderator for the Third Order (Holy Name Province), at Holy Name College, Washington, D.C.*



taught and promised about it. It's awfully good news, but a lot of people haven't heard it.

When Francis of Assisi lived in comfort, had lots of money, and threw lots of parties, he had one good time after another. But he wasn't happy. He was restless and empty inside.

He wanted everybody to *think* he was happy; but he was faking it.

Why? Because he thought it was all up to him. He did not know the Good News. He did not know his rights before God.

Then one night after a big party he had thrown, he just stopped in the street and talked to God. He told God he was fed up, and he agreed out loud with God about what was wrong inside. (We call these two procedures *repentance* and *confession*.)

He acknowledged that he could not save himself from all that, for he had already tried and failed. So he called out to Jesus and asked him to take over his life, inside and out.

The Lord said he would, and he did. And Francis knew it. He knew it because it was all different inside now. The darkness, the doubt, the phony self-assurance, the loud make-believe happiness, the resentments, the guilt, the defeat, were all gone. A new, loving, liberating presence was there instead. It was Jesus.

There was still plenty of breaking down and cleaning up to be done, he knew that. Still he thanked God that he'd never be the same again.

Francis was only twenty-three when this happened. He began spending a lot of time on the words of Jesus. He was now no longer just one of the multitude who milled around Jesus but never really touched him (Lk 8:45-46). He was now a disciple learning about the abundant victorious life; and the truth was setting him free (Jn. 8:32). In fact such was his hunger for the liberating truth of the Word of God, that he seems to have learned the New Testament by

heart (and he was only forty-four when he died). He began to appreciate just what man's rights are before God; and it struck him as such good news that he just had to tell everyone about it.

And that is what the Franciscan movement is all about. It means to be simply and truly Christian, as Francis himself says in the opening lines of the friars' Rule. Anyone can do it.

But with the attempt at making "Franciscan" mean something separate and special, Franciscanism (a term that would appall Francis) started becoming one of the quaint varieties of historical hold-overs, preoccupied with past glories and customs, present image, and future success. As a result, many again—even among those who are supposed to be bearers of the Good News—are

living lives of defeat, depression, and doubt. It's because they conceive of the Gospel Life as something we ought to be doing for God and/or man, instead of what God wants to be doing for us.

Once anyone confesses that he is needy within, however—which is what it means to be *poor in spirit*, that other ways have failed him ("I am the way . . . no one gets to the Father but by me"—Jn. 14:6); and turns to Jesus with his heart, not thinking about worthiness ("No one who comes to me will I ever reject"—Jn. 6:37); and asks Jesus to take over his life (If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in"—Rev. 3:20), that person will soon find out what the abundant, victorious life is all about.

It works.

## The Immaculate Conception

There was a wedding feast in Galilee:  
The waiting was over;  
The water pots filled to the brim  
According to the Law of Jewish purifying  
And all the guests were garmented  
In the hour's cup  
And prodigality.  
Then the Lord said to my lord,  
"Let us make Mary."

Sister Madonna Joseph Casey, O.S.C.

## Symphony of Praise

RONALD MROZINSKI, O.F.M. CONV.

**L**ORD, MAKE ME an *instrument* of your peace. So did Francis of Assisi choose to begin his prayer to the One who "brings all things in the heavens and on earth into *one* under Christ's headship" (Eph. 1:10). Of all the words Saint Francis could have selected to express what he wanted to be in God's plan for mediating peace, he wished most of all to be an "instrument."

If one wishes to be instrumental in some endeavor, then one must study the behavior of instruments and act accordingly.

Where there was doubt, Francis wanted to be the instrument through which a person could be brought to faith; where darkness, Francis wished to be instrumental in bringing about light; where despair, he wished to be the means through which hope could once more find place in the despairing heart. In other words, before Francis could have prayed thus, he would have had to know and have meditated upon *instruments*.

Consider a symphony orchestra. Unless the violinist applies his

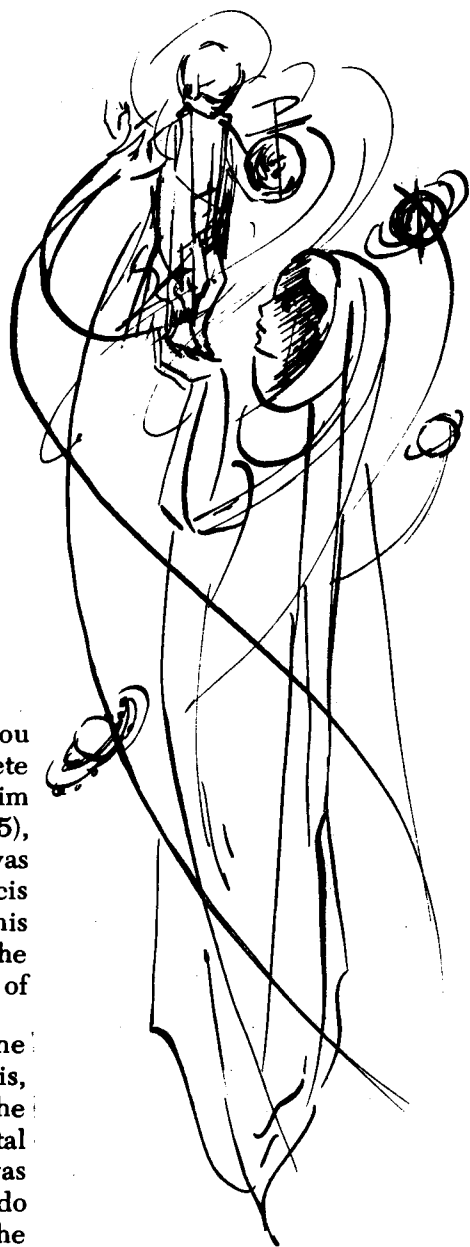
fingers and bow to the strings, the instrument remains mute—music remains only a potentiality of the violin. An instrument has a very passive existence unless it is willingly used by one who can produce something out of mere potentiality. This is to say that the necessary spiritual qualities of docility and receptivity were present within the spirit of Francis. He allowed himself to be used, even used up, by the One who made the instrument and the

One who knew best how to produce and bring forth harmony from that which His hands had fashioned; the Creator, the heavenly Father. God plied the strings of Francis's heart with the resin of love and allowed the saint to mediate the intention, the Will, of the One who made the instrument. That which brought forth the music of peace, faith, hope, light, joy from within Francis was the One "whose power now at work in us can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20). Hence, putting aside a stubborn will and allowing grace to rule one's life,

Father Ronald Mrozinski, O.F.M. Conv., is a doctoral student in theology at the Antonianum in Rome.

i.e., telling the Lord that you need him, you are not complete without him, that apart from him "you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5), letting oneself be used, was something which Francis realized and made a part of his spirituality before uttering the words of his famed "Prayer of Peace."

Being a passive recipient to the skilled hands of the Master is, however, not the goal of the instrument but the fundamental disposition. Francis of Assisi was not one to sit idly by and do nothing, simply allowing the radiance of God's grace to beam from his tonsured pate! An



instrument, such as Francis, once tuned by the Master, needs to keep in tune lest the "works" wrought upon and within and through the instrument would be misshapen distortions of the will of the Master. This is the active dimension of instrumentality.

This is "active compassion"! If "passive acceptance" does not yield fruit in "active compassion," then we, as the instruments of the orchestra, are no more than Paul's "noisy gong" or "clanging cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1). There must be a distinctiveness to the quality of the "Christed" instrument—the instrument which bears the name of its maker—"Christian." Saint Paul asks: "Even in the case of lifeless things which produce a sound, such as a flute or a harp, how will anyone know what is being played if there is no distinction among the notes?" (1 Cor. 14:7). Passive acceptance demands *active* compliance and cooperation with that quality of "fine tuning"—*grace*.

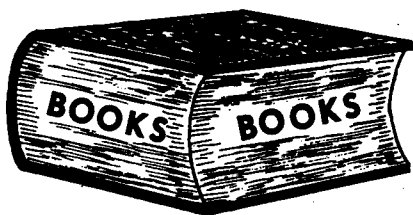
Saint Francis' "Prayer for Peace" pivots upon the word "instrument."

Saint Francis' "Prayer for Peace" pivots upon the word "instrument." It could have been uttered only after the active/contemplative synthesis had already been reached in the saint's own life by the operation of and co-operation with grace.

This entire concept of Saint Francis as "instrument" is entirely compatible with the whole of his spirituality. Francis had an "incarnational" spirituality which enabled him to see the whole of creation as a symphony of praise to its Creator, and each little particle of creation was important to every other particle of creation if one wants to understand the creator. Every part of creation, every creature was, in the eyes of Francis "graced" (gifted) with its own particular and peculiar sound. The Creator was the conductor of that great symphony. All one had to do was listen to each instrumental solo, then attempt to harmonize one's own unique sound with every other melody in the cosmic orchestra.

Listening: a passive element a contemplative disposition. Harmonizing: an active element, presupposing contemplation and demanding fruitful cooperation with Another. This is the heart of Franciscan spirituality: contemplation yielding potentiality, and activity which is potentiality actualized. Having realized this in his lifetime, only then does the Christian see this prayer take on a Franciscan character—when the Christian who has integrated the life of contemplation and active compassion can say with Francis: "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace."





**Go to the Mountain: An Insight into Charismatic Renewal.** By Robert J. Voigt. St. Meinrad, Ind.: Abbey Press, 1975. Pp. xi-143. Paper, \$2.95.

*Reviewed by Father Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M., an Assistant at St. Francis Chapel, at the Northway Mall, Albany, N.Y., and translator of many books on theology and spirituality.*

If someone is really yearning to know what the Charismatic Movement is all about, a very good and most reliable answer will be found in *Go to the Mountain*. The author, a Roman Catholic priest, provides background and perspective for understanding the fastest spreading renewal movement in the Church today.

Chapter I, "The Charismatic and the Hierarchy," will put the reader at ease from the very start. If more Catholics read just this one chapter there would be less blind resistance to the Catholic Pentecostal Movement. It is refreshing to read Pope John's prayer to the Holy Spirit as Vatican II was about to open. In this chapter the reader will learn just how supportive the Catholic Bishops of the United States are of the Charismatic renewal. He or she will find it encouraging to learn what such men as Pope Paul, Archbishop Leo C. Byrne, Bishop Joseph McNaney,

and Cardinal Suenens have to say about the renewal of spiritual life.

The reviewer would like to single out Chapter VI for special comment. It is entitled "The Fruit of the Spirit." The author prefers to develop the ninefold fruit, and not the nine fruits, mentioned by Saint Paul. The reviewer makes no claim to having read all the available literature on the Charismatic Movement, but admits that he has never seen this subject treated in any other book. This chapter will be most helpful even to the person who already considers himself or herself a charismatic. "By this fruit a person knows the Spirit is present. The absence of this fruit is a sign that the Holy Spirit is absent and that the human spirit or evil spirit is at work" within (p. 91).

The last two chapters (VIII and IX) are given over to very moving testimonies to the fact that God is still very much alive and active in the world today.

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**A Second Collection.** By Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J. Edited by William F.J. Ryan, S.J., and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974. Pp. xii-302. Cloth, \$12.00.

*Reviewed by the Reverend Leland J. White, Ph.D., Chairman, Religion Department, Nazareth College, Nazareth, Michigan.*

Serious Christians acknowledge a need to ground their faith in reality, to relate faith to real life. They are often less clear on what real life is because it is too easy to identify reality with one's own limited exper-

ience. Many theologians and preachers have helped us to extend reality so that it includes the experience of others. It is, however, less common for a theologian to ask how much of our own experience we have taken into account, whether we have imposed unreal limits on ourselves. Lonergan is that less common theologian.

Lonergan reminds us of "the very simple and evident fact that infants do not speak while most adults do speak." The real life of the infant is a world of immediate experience of objects, of persons, of life itself. What can be learned in this world of direct experience is remarkable, so remarkable that we are likely to overlook the advance that takes place when the infant first learns, for example, to label one of those experiences "Daddy." From then on speech will intervene between direct experience and the understanding of experience. What is known will be enriched and also limited by what is said about it. Fatherhood becomes measured not only by the experience we have of it but by the word we have learned for it. The child loves his father for what he is, but also for the fact that he embodies this symbolic reality. Meaning has been added to experience, interpreting experience. Meaning makes the worlds of those who speak and those who do not different.

Meaning brings commitments that mere experience does not. The child experiences love from many people, but restricts "Daddy" to one. Some symbols are less restrictive; but all symbols mean something. What we call holy or lovable is

definite. Its limits can be stretched so that the holy and lovable include all that God has created. But saying that, we are forced to ask what it is that God has created. We go beyond the experience we have of profit or hurt to ask if the hurtful neighbor is part of that creation, also holy and loveable. We question the speech that calls him enemy. We question the theological speech that so dramatically made "God" a "God for us" a "God of Christians" that we could imagine him pouring his wrath on others usually with our help. When we look at the world our speech has created we begin to relate our faith commitments to a life far richer and more complicated than mere experience.

*A Second Collection*, essays Lonergan wrote between 1966 and 1972, is not like the unplanned contributions nervous worshippers deposit at the second round of the basket on Sundays. Lonergan has assembled essays that together sustain a call for realism in faith. He has demonstrated that adult realism calls for not only an understanding of the real world but and understanding of what we have said and say about the world. He has made it clear that being a responsible Christian requires critical reflection on our theological positions. Moreover, he has given us a good example of how such reflection can be undertaken.

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**Retreat Resources: Designs and Strategies for Spiritual Growth.** 1: *Retreats for Clergy and Religious.* Edited by Maury Smith, O.F.M. et al. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1975. Pp. x-181. Paper, \$9.50.

*Reviewed by Father Paul Francis Roberts, O.F.M., Vicar Provincial of the Chicago-St. Louis Province, long active in the preaching apostolate and presently liaison to that Apostolate for the Province.*

*Retreat Resources* is exactly what it says it is: a plethora of ideas to enhance a retreat. No matter how good a retreat is, or how excellent the technique, it could be improved (it seems to me) by the use of one or several of the techniques explained and exemplified in this resource material. The books might be entitled "Deus ex machina" for the novice retreat master, but it will also be a tremendous aid to those experienced retreat masters who desire to add a modern touch to their excellent traditional work. Most traditional retreat masters have other apostolates as well and would never find the time or the opportunity to search out and experiment with many of these ideas and methods. *Retreat Resources* has done all of this work for us by gathering and presenting the collective discoveries of many seasoned experts. The volume is really a handy workbook and restores order to preliminary preparation and planning.

Part I of this valuable volume treats of content-choosing procedures; follow-up; and a bibliography on preaching. Parts II and III contain four retreats and a prayer clarification day. The four retreats are as follows: modified traditional retreat for religious women; modern retreat for religious women; a CommunityBuilding Spiritual Renewal Worship for Religious Women's Community; and a Community

Growth Weekend for Religious Communities.

By everyone's norm, the better you enable the retreatant to participate and become active and enthusiastic, the more successful the retreat. *Retreat Resources* presents and explains many ways for this to happen without weakening the classical retreat lecture. Pre-planning, feedback, evaluation, and follow-up cannot be neglected if we are going to speak of success. Most of us old-time retreat masters have heard of or tried some of these new procedures or innovations, but now we have many more tried and tested ones at our disposal, presented in a professional way with properly prepared instruments, designed and tested to give accurate, meaningful feedback and evaluation to the retreatants and to the retreat master or retreat team. New goals are possible and realistic spiritual growth and maturity can be measured and hopefully guaranteed.

This is Volume 1 of an envisaged three-volume set, and it certainly whets the appetite for the volumes to come. (Vol. 2 will contain retreats for adults and married couples; and Vol. 3 will have retreats for teenagers and young adults.) A wider variety of models and more instruments of evaluation will certainly be welcome. No one, I'm sure, likes to or ever does copy a retreat, but all of us are humble enough to express great delight for the sharing of ideas and approaches put down for us by this group of contributing editors. We are grateful to Maury Smith and his associates.

**The Ecclesiology of Vatican II.** By Bonaventure Kloppenburg, O.F.M. Trans. by Matthew O'Connell. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974. Pp. xv-373. Cloth, \$8.95.

*Reviewed by Father Dominic V. Monti, O.F.M., S.T.M. (Union Theological Seminary), a doctoral student at the Catholic Theological Union at Chicago.*

The very fact that a book bearing this title could even be published some ten years after the promulgation of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church is perhaps more instructive than is anything its author has to say. The message of the Council has obviously not yet sunk into the Church's consciousness—at least in many quarters. As Father Kloppenburg states, "All are agreed that at Vatican Council II the Church reached a clearer and more accurate self-understanding. But that understanding must influence the human structures of the Church and the behavior of the persons who make it up, especially those persons who provide the services most needful for the well-being of the Catholic Communion. Yet precisely here the expected changes have not taken place; everything has gone on as before, as though Vatican II had never happened" (p. xiv). The result has been a serious crisis of faith in the "institutional church," a situation that demands that "churchmen meditate in the Lord on the nature and mission of the Church" as presented by the Council documents. To this end Kloppenburg has offered the present book (published in his homeland, Brazil, in 1971). The author is

exceptionally well-qualified for this task, being a respected *peritus* at the Council, but the result is not as exciting as might have been expected.

First of all, to the American reader familiar with the studies of Schillebeeckx, Congar, Küng, and McBrien—especially as these have filtered down to the level of popular religious education—few if any new insights are offered in this book. Kloppenburg presents not so much a constructive or systematic theology of the Church, as an exposition of the Council documents, a lavish collage of texts organized around some basic themes: mystery, sacrament, brotherhood, mission, and service. Secondly, although Kloppenburg admits that "our attitude to the teaching authority of the Church, even when it takes supreme form in an ecumenical Council, cannot and ought not always be one of pure and simple acceptance, repetition, and fixation upon what it has said" (p. 291), his own work is largely simply a restatement of what Vatican II said, chiefly in its own words. Since this book was originally written in Portuguese some five years ago, the "liberation theology" of Latin American theologians like Gutierrez has moved beyond some of the ideas of Vatican II, e.g., its sharp differentiation of the roles of priests and layman within the Church. This is only one point which illustrates the fact that a great deal of water has flown under the theological bridge since the Council. These are currents which must be dealt with creatively, not by simply repeating what Vatican II said.

If the reader is looking simply

for what the title states, however: "the ecclesiology of Vatican II"—then he has come to a good source. To the extent that it provides a solid presentation of what the Council did in fact say, and what those statements imply concretely for the life of the Church, this book serves a useful (though expensive) service. The best chapter, for my money, is the one on "The New Theological Portrait of the Bishop." If only a few of them I know would read it....

**Suenens: A Portrait.** By Elizabeth Hamilton, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 283. Cloth, \$7.95.

*Reviewed by Father Joseph Vann, O.F.M., S.T.B., Retired.*

Cardinal Suenens, now seventy-one, is an oriflamme to followers, a scarlet scandal to opponents. This Portrait, for which he sat, paints him, a protege of Mercier, as a crusading product of Flemish ancestry, French culture, and Roman training. After a decade of seminary teaching and a World War II administration of Louvain, he became Auxiliary in 1945 and in 1962 Cardinal Archbishop of Malines-Brussels, just in time to enter the world stage, front and center, at Vatican II.

In the Council and later Synods at Rome, in lectures and press, he fought for reform of the Curia, the power of the laity and bishops, greater openness in the Church, ecumenism, permanent deacons, and where needed, married priests, whom bishops have a duty to ordain

and laity a right to accept. Opposition was high-level, vocal, and worldwide. So was support.

Suenens has lectured on three continents, cultivated wide ecumenical contacts, especially in England, and made friends as different as John XXIII and Archbishop Helder Camara. His publications promote a wide range of causes.

Miss Hamilton presents the argument of the Cardinal's many books and controversies sympathetically. Suenens emerges as a courageous, somewhat reserved but attractive and energetic prelate, battling *In Spiritu Sancto*, his armorial motto. Pope Paul has publicly called friendly attention to the Cardinal's latest book, *A New Pentecost*.

Miss Hamilton's sensitivity to place and consequent genre and mood descriptions—a method she used in previous books—obscure more than they explain the Cardinal. She develops a great deal of welcome information; but the clearest picture of the Cardinal is the photo on the jacket, which shows him clear-eyed, alert, and smiling. This is an interesting and useful Portrait without warts for *The Wanderer* to deplore or *The National Catholic Reporter* to applaud.

**Alert to God's Word: Ready-to-Read Scripture Guides for Weekday Masses.** By Cassian A. Miles, O.F.M. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1971. Pp. xii-303, incl. index. Paper, \$5.85.

*Reviewed by Father Vianney F. Vormwald, O.F.M., B. Ed. (State*

*Teachers College, Cortland, N.Y.), M.A. (Notre Dame University) Chaplain of Siena College, Loudonville, N.Y.*

When Cassian Miles' introductions to the daily scriptures were first published in the looseleaf Collegeville lectionary, I found myself saving the outdated pages. I did not want to discard Father Miles' introductions! Now they are collected in his book, *Alert to God's Word*.

The author wrote these introductions in a very practical pastoral situation. They were written for, and tried and tested at St. Francis of Assisi, a busy service church in midtown Manhattan. There the people of God come from their offices, their holidays and their shopping trips to participate in daily liturgies. Father Miles saw the need of assisting these people to be alert to God's word by reminding them of its continuity in the liturgy and relating the chosen pericopes for the day.

The need to be alert to God's Word touches all of us, and the author's insights are of real creative assistance. Low-keyed, they remind us of the scriptural author and his relationship to the early Christian community: of the hopes and fears of the Israelites and the fulfillment in the Gospel. The exegesis of familiar passages is touched but only to open the mind of the hearer to the words of Scripture. Father Miles has deep respect for the neglected responsorial psalm, reminding us that this too is God's Word and relating the psalm to the liturgy of praise and thanksgiving.

The book is valuable for celebration and for preparation. For celebra-

tion the 150 words can be used as an introduction to the liturgy or as a prologue to the readings. For preparation, Father Miles' book assists a liturgy committee as well as the celebrant in choosing the theme and developing the liturgy. The laity can prepare with this book as a guide as well as the clergy. Now, we have the author's introductions to the daily scripture readings in a welcome, usable form of the new lectionary.

**Invitation to Greatness.** By Frank J. McNulty. Denville, N.J.: Dimension Books, 1974. Pp. 94. Paper, \$1.95.

*Reviewed by Mrs. Kim Eyler, M.S. (Religious Education, Fordham University), CCD Coordinator, St. Elizabeth's Parish, Wyckoff, N.J.*

What an aptly named book! My reflections on it may be somewhat subjective since I number Father McNulty among my friends and favorite professors, but I will try. The title suggests the whole message of the book (and of the author himself): that we (you and I just the way we are) are invited to greatness—a greatness which lies in each of us and which Christ invites us to bring to fruition. This is not a book for scholars who delight in deep theological arguments; rather, it is written simply and beautifully for all of us who are the "nobodies" living in a world, struggling, hoping, dreaming, and loving.

Father McNulty begins with "come as you are" and interesting commentary on what we are—not all of us together—just me (or you).

His ability to use stories to drive home a point makes this book extremely readable. And he reminds us throughout that God really does invite us to come as we are.

In the second chapter our invitation is given. We are invited to follow Christ. The rest of the book is devoted to working out the ramifications of saying Yes to the Lord. "If Jesus is Lord of our life, that should mean something when it comes to figuring out how to live it."

Fundamental option is beautifully and again simply explained in chapter three with good examples. Man is issued the most important invitation of his life—and some say "Yes!" Father McNulty shows what that means. My favorite example is from Fiddler on the Roof. "Do you love me?" is Tevya's persistent question, and Golde's answer after some prodding: I suppose I do.

The book, while easy reading, is nonetheless serious, dealing with affirmation and rejection, sin and conscience, for when Christ invites, some say "No." Sin, saying no, is not glossed over as so often we like to do today, but reflected on with some good new terminology and emphasis on conversion. Some new light is shed on our conception of sin and our ideas of what it does to a man are

sharpened. Father's approach makes the homework of our life more positive than negative, more yes than no, and a whole lot holier than we think. He has a talent for putting flesh on the oft told parables of Jesus as well as stories of Him that we know so well we hardly listen. He also has a talent for humanizing the Sacrament of Penance (the comeback as he calls it), and one senses the beauty, the joy, and the celebration of this sacrament. It makes me want to nod my head and say "Yes, that's what I've been trying to say. That's the way it should be." He has an appreciation of where we were and where we are going.

"Calling the tough ones," Father's chapter on conscience, gives good contemporary insight into what remains a sticky question for many adults today. Conscience is thoughtfully presented as not just intellect but as involving one's entire being.

Our moral decisions reflect on others and thus should be "founded on truth, built on justice, and animated by love." A conscience must be informed on the basis of natural law, scripture, and the Church.

I guess I would have to say what best describes this book is that it is readable, uplifting, and practical. Do yourself a favor: read it this year.

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