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CONTENTS

MARY, HOPE OF CHRISTIAN UNITY	2
<i>Guest Editorial by Titus Cranny, S.A.</i>	
FRANCISCAN POVERTY: DEFENSELESSNESS?	4
<i>Sister Mary Seraphim, P.C.P.A.</i>	
GOD'S SMILE	10
<i>Sister M. Paula Brennan, O.S.F.</i>	
ROGER BACON AND THE FUTURE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION	11
<i>Robert B. Nordberg</i>	
THE WANDERING JEW	19
<i>Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.</i>	
VATICAN II, CHARISMS, AND THE LAITY	20
<i>Robert E. Donovan, O.F.M.</i>	
I NEED OTHERS—OTHERS NEED ME	28
<i>Bruce Riski, O.F.M.Cap.</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	29



COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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A GUEST EDITORIAL

Mary, Hope of Christian Unity

THE WEEK OF PRAYER for Christian Unity will again take place during January 18-25, 1977, to remind all Christians of the scandal of religious disunity and to ask God to heal the breach among all followers of Christ. The theme for this year is the phrase "Enduring Together in Hope." This is an adaptation rather than a quotation from scripture, taken from the words of Saint Paul to the Romans, chapter 5, verse 5. There are several references to hope in a few lines of this passage.

Hope is suggestive of many variations: longing, desire, expectation, trust. It also brings to mind a title for the Mother of God. Mary is honored in some places as Our Lady of Hope, or Mary my Hope. The idea of hope surely applies to her in regard to Christian Unity. The goal of unity is far off, as much as we know; much hope as well as faith and love is required of all Christians to attain the goal. Hope never gives up; it looks forward to the help of God always in gaining the ideal. Abraham was a man of faith, hoping against hope, as scripture puts it, for the fulfillment of the Lord's promises. Christians hope for the ideal of Christian Unity and pray for it sincerely.

But even more than Abraham Mary is the model of our hope. Her prayers and her love are inseparably bound up with the life and mission of Christ and with that of the Church. She is the mother and patroness of Christian Unity; she facilitates and promotes it; she inspires and directs it. She cannot impede it or hold it back. She is totally dedicated to her Son in his teaching and his mission. As Vatican II reminds us, she is inseparable from Christ: "... the Church honors with special love the Blessed Mary Mother of God, who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son" (Constitution on the Liturgy, 103).

This is of course nothing new. In the fifth century Saint Augustine had used the title "Mother of Unity." Saint Germanus of Constantinople invoked Mary in these terms: "... by your most acceptable prayers, strong with the authority of motherhood, to our Lord and God, creator of all, your Son who was born of you without a father, steer the ship which is the Church, and bring it to a quiet harbor."

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Medievalists honored Mary for her role in standing by the cross of her Son and Savior, interceding for all men and dispensing the graces to her sons and daughters. Pope Leo XIII wrote many encyclicals on Mary and on the rosary. He was deeply interested in and committed to the cause of unity, and he referred to Mary as "the zealous guardian of unity" and did much to promote reunion among Eastern Christians. He said that the rosary is by far the best prayer to plead before Mary the cause of unity: "The rosary is the bond uniting men to Christ and bringing men to Christ."

When Cardinal Newman preached his famous sermon "The Second Spring" in 1852 at St. Mary's in Oscott, he recalled the glories of the Church in England in the past. He then asked that Our Lady come again upon this land so that a new springtime of faith and love would flourish. It would be the time of Our Lady's visitation. "Arise and go forth into that north country which once was thine own and take possession of a land that knows thee not. From thy sweet eyes, from thy pure smile, from thy majestic brow, let ten thousand influences rain down, not to confuse or overwhelm, but to persuade, to win over thine enemies. O Mary my hope, O Mother undefiled, fulfill unto us the promise of this spring."

Mary is the hope of Christian Unity because no one is beyond the orbit of her prayers. Her deepest concert is to bring all men to her Son. The problems are many and time-encrusted, but the love of a mother can surmount all difficulties because that is her role in the life of men and of the Church. We should pray to her for unity daily so that we may be drawn ever closer to Christ and that we too may faithfully help our Brothers and sisters to grow in the same noble task. For in all matters, and especially in Christian Unity, Mary is "our life, our sweetness, and our hope."

Titus Cranny, S.A.

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Franciscan Poverty:

Defenselessness?

SISTER MARY SERAPHIM, P.C.P.A.

WE "SHOULD BE delighted to follow the lowliness and poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ, remembering that of the whole world we must own nothing; but having food and sufficient clothing, with these let us be content!" (I Rule, 9).

A Franciscan of the First, Second, or Third Order who does not wonder about the place and practice of poverty in his or her life is a rare individual these days. The mere proliferation of writings on this subject by Franciscans themselves, as well as by many other Christian and even non-Christian thinkers, leads one to conclude that poverty is a "hot" subject at present. Certainly it is a difficult one. If poverty were to be considered only as being "poor in spirit," it might not be so unsettling. But we Franciscans know well enough that it cannot be *just* that, although that is the heart of the matter and what gives meaning to all the rest. But a spirit without a body to manifest its presence is simply invisible—

and, as such, not a very convincing witness to the truth that humanity is redeemed by an incarnate God. Spirit must act through visible, fleshy forms. Poverty must move from a humble spirit to a lowly servant of men.

Pondering over what Franciscan poverty should mean has brought us many important insights by Spirit-guided men and women of our day. Perhaps it is temerity to suggest yet another possible avenue of understanding, but I wish to share some thoughts with my Franciscan brothers and sisters in this matter so that praying together we all may move closer to the ideal that our Father Francis so cherished for his followers. I am musing over the thought that perhaps one could equate Franciscan poverty with the ideal of defenselessness.

Jesus as Defenseless

DEFENSELESSNESS characterized the attitude of Jesus during his life among us. He walked through

our land with a disconcerting freedom and lack of care for his personal well-being. Whatever else may be said about his form of life, we can say that it had no defenses built into it. From the viewpoint of material poverty, Jesus owned neither house nor place that he could call exclusively his or from which he could bar entrance to unwelcome or merely tiresome persons. He appears to us as living almost in the open fields—nothing to hide behind. Nor would he let his disciples shield him: witness the scene with the children.

Jesus did not try to save his reputation from the slander of the Pharisees, or from the troubled disbelief of the common people. He very carefully did not let himself be taken for what he was *not*, but when people would not accept him on his own terms, he let them continue on in their puzzlement. Among his own, he served. As Son of Man, he chose to complete his scriptural role of the Suffering Servant. We have only to read Isaiah's Servant Songs to see a portrait of Jesus written many centuries before his birth. The remarkable element in these verses is the apparent defenselessness of the mysterious Servant of Yahweh. "He opens not his mouth, he does not turn his face away from blows, he does not cry out; harshly

treated, he submitted and . . . the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all" (cf. Is. 50-53). The terse accounts of the Passion in the Gospels leave us no doubt that Jesus lived out this terrifying prophecy to the limit. Before men and before his Father, he was defenseless.

Francis and Clare drew their ideal of Gospel poverty from what they saw in Jesus. If Francis chose to be poor like Jesus, it was not just so that he would be free from the cares that riches bring. I believe he was challenged by the utter defenselessness of the God-man and wanted to take the same risks that he saw his King had dared. A knight could not do less than travel the way his liege-lord went, though it be through enemy terrain. The whole world is, in a sense, an enemy camp for a man who carries no weapons. With no way to protect himself from exploitation and derision, Francis kept his eyes fixed on Jesus, and like him "embraced the cross, despising the shame." And for the same reason: "for the sake of the joy set before him" (Heb. 12:2).

From Jesus Francis learned that the truly poor man is non-violent, as a sheep among wolves. He doesn't worry what good will come of his being weak and powerless. He knows that some-

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how "power is made perfectly manifest in weakness" even though all that is manifest to *him* is the weakness and apparent uselessness of this course of action—or often more searchingly, inaction. A poor man waits . . . and waits. He must, for often he has no choice. A follower of Francis must risk the accusation of lack of initiative (a damning accusation to our American mentality), and he must risk it without making any explanation. It is so much harder to await the Lord's time than to engage in action, even futile action. Francis must have seen much in his day to rage against, and his popularity would have won him a rabid following of "reformers." But instead of concentrating on the weaknesses in his society, he threw all of his own weakness into the amazing work of magnifying its few strengths! We know what marvels flowed from this essentially defenseless strategy.

Defenselessness and Forgiveness

CATHERINE DOHERTY, in her profoundly inspiring book *Poustinia*, links defenselessness with forgiveness. In fact she states that one should be ready to forgive even *before* an action is taken against one. Such was Francis' attitude toward all men. "The Lord give you peace!" he intended as a blessing for all men, especially for those whose lack of

inner peace was manifested in opposition to himself or his friars. When he or his men were working for others, he urged them: "When you receive no recompense for your work, turn to God's table and beg alms" (cf. Testament, 5). Clearly, the friars were not to claim anything from those they served as if it were their right. And they should be glad when they were refused what might have been considered their due. And for the persons who did them this favor, they were to have a heart of gratitude and a prayer for their peace.

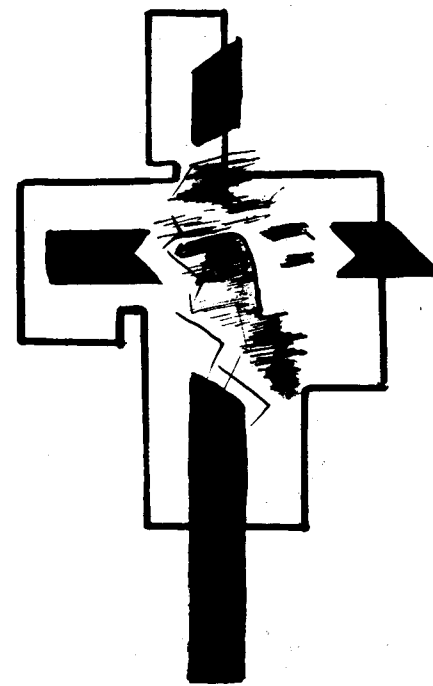
The genuine follower of Saint Francis should be glad when he is classed with the socially despised. If he is really pursuing the goal of his vocation, he is likely to be unpopular in certain places—and possibly in many. Although he has the right to feel himself to be following the path laid out for him by the Lord, he does not necessarily have the duty to expound this to others for their enlightenment and/or edification! Francis spoke some very frank words about the members of his Order who are "in the service of lay people." They are "forbidden to accept positions of authority in the houses of their employers, or to take on any job which would give scandal or make them lose their own souls. They should be the

least and subordinate to everyone in the house" (I Rule, 7). Such a statement gives all of us a lot to think about, even Poor Clares.

Francis also went on to speak of something which was one of his great joys. "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" (I Rule, 9). These were the little folk of the land, for whom Francis cherished a preferential love. To be accepted among them as one of them was his great desire. Theirs was the society he cultivated and whose friendship he considered priceless. In fact, they seemed to him to be very close models of the poor and humble Lord he followed.

Defenselessness and Freedom

IN THIS defenseless position in society, Francis found the perfection of poverty for which he eagerly sought. Here, where one could go no lower, he was happiest. He would not wantonly step on a worm, but we can imagine that he would allow the little creature to crawl across him if that served to help it on its way. We must admit, however, that he was not so tolerant of the rats which he met in the haven of poverty at San Damiano! But it was also here that he discovered the fullness of joy welling up in his heart like an overflowing tor-



rent. The Canticle of Brother Sun burst forth from that well-spring, and how enriched the world has been because of it.

The secret of the freedom and ability to be wholly defenseless is recorded in Celano's First Legend: "Followers of most holy poverty, because they have nothing, loved nothing, they feared in no way to lose anything. They were content with one tunic, patched at times within and without; in it was seen no refinement but rather cheapness, so that they might seem to be completely crucified to the world (1 Celano 39). "If we want to define our poverty as Franciscans, we need to "have

nothing, love nothing, and fear to lose nothing" in a most radical sense. The "love nothing" in this upsetting sentence means, if I understand Francis' mind alright, to be attached to nothing. He obviously and joyously cherished everything and everyone. But just as clearly, he was free from any attraction to them as things to be owned or possessed for themselves.

What Thomas of Celano said of Clare is pertinent here: "Then having thus left the world without, though enriched in mind within, she ran after Christ unburdened by any possessions. So strict was the pact she thus entered with holy poverty, and so great the love she had for it, that she would have naught else but the Lord Jesus!" (Celano, Legend of St. Clare, 13). A poverty like this is wholly positive and inestimably rich. To quote our Father Francis, "Do you think that evangelical poverty has nothing about it to be envied? It has Christ and through him it has all things in all" (2 Celano 84). To possess Jesus Christ most fully was Francis' and Clare's leading motive in embracing poverty. And the Jesus to whom they were so powerfully attracted was the Servant of Yahweh who said, "I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and

spitting" (Is. 50:6). There is a terrible fascination in a Lord who freely yielded himself to such defenseless suffering.

Our Defenseless Vocation

SUCH A VAST and far-reaching poverty challenged Francis to the limits. It should, I believe, be a flaming challenge for us also. I don't think anyone would blatantly state that being a Franciscan is meant to be easy. It is always an uncomfortable vocation, for we can never say that we have fully understood or fully begun to live all that is implied in the example of Francis and Jesus. Always our ideals outstrip our attainments. This has been the history of our Order through the centuries and the reason for the constant reform movements which are always arising. The very fact that these movements to renew and recover our pristine ideals exist is a happy proof of the vitality of our Franciscan charism.

Today, after some of the hassle over revising Constitutions and customs is beginning to abate, we come to the (renewed) recognition that the vigor of our Order does not depend on the rules but on the brothers and sisters who compose it. Are the ideals of Francis and Clare real and compelling to us? Are we serious about putting their spirit

into practice? It is a most radical spirit—scarcely one to embrace unless we are serious about living in a defenseless attitude among a belligerent and violent age; that is, serious about dying in a multitude of ways. Our exterior poverty which we personally regulate within the framework of our Rule must be real and at times place apparent limitations on our "apostolic works." Yet we know that our one apostolate as Franciscans is simply to live the Gospel—and poverty does not prevent us from doing that.

Deeper than the privations of material poverty drives the spiritual littleness of heart which will prevent us from demanding anything from others except the right to love and serve them. To be so defenseless includes the refusal to engage in law-suits or carry weapons as has been the tradition of the Tertiaries since Francis founded them. It means much more than this. In our everyday relations with each other within our communities, it implies a gentleness and compassion that never fails to yield to

others not only their due, but the superabundance of caring service.

With those outside our fraternities and sisterhoods, we must be people of peace—those who bring and promote peace because of a tranquillity within our own persons and communities enabling us to offer freely our persons and services in whatever capacities these may be needed. We may even be asked to withdraw our proffered services—an act which is more difficult but one which can, perhaps, promote more peace than digging in and insisting on our contribution.

And, finally, we needn't be too concerned about the "witness" we are giving to the world. That will take care of itself if we are true to our charism of evangelical poverty. We may be misunderstood—it won't be the first time, nor, likely, the last! We follow a fiery little man who was consumed with one ideal. He kept his eyes fixed on Jesus and "for the sake of the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. 12:2).

Remember how generous the Lord Jesus was: he was rich, but he became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of his poverty.

—2 Cor. 8:9

God's Smile

God's smile's in the sunrise,
at daylight's first break.
His smile's on the ocean,
the river, the lake.

His smile scales the mountain,
His smile scans the plain.
It nestles in valleys—
Oh, blest be its reign!

The rain drops, the snow flakes,
The birds, flowers and trees;
Most surely you've seen
how God's smile is in these.

From sunrise to sunset,
then 'round back again,
His smile is revolving,
and always has been.

For in the creation,
the work of His hands,
His smile was engrafted,
and forever it stands.

You say you've not seen it—
how sad you must be.
For truly His smile
is for you and for me.

You ask me to tell you
how I learned God's art.
Ah, gladly I'll tell you—
His smile's in my heart.

Sister M. Paula Brennan, O.S.F.

Roger Bacon and the Future of Catholic Education

ROBERT B. NORDBERG

OF THE MANY great Catholic thinkers, the one most shelved and unregarded in our time is the one who holds the most relevance for it: Roger Bacon. Rather strained efforts have been made to show some basis for a Thomistic philosophy of science, in order to demonstrate that medieval scholastics were not totally lacking in the modern experimental orientation. Ample was the genius of Saint Thomas Aquinas, but he was not much of a scientist, even relative to the science of his own age. For example, he wrote: "...it is not possible for there to be another earth than this one, since every earth would naturally be carried to this central one, wherever it was."¹ The modern mind smiles at this attempt to deal deductively with a problem that requires observation and open-ended induction. It was exactly this kind of circular reasoning that Roger Bacon protested,

as did his 16th-century namesake, Sir Francis.

Those who want to show a scientific strain in medieval Catholic thought should turn to the one-time lecturer on Aristotle at the University of Paris. Around 1247, something happened to the mind of this hitherto typical medieval scholar. He not only abandoned interest in metaphysical disputes, but came to speak of them with high scorn. He spent vast sums of money in experimental research, in constructing instruments and tables, in training assistants, and the like. No hints of such leanings are to be found in his earlier works. Probably, the transformation was brought about by Bacon's return to Oxford and the combined influence on him of Robert Grosseteste, Adam de Marisco, and Thomas the Welshman. Bacon's age was then about 27. For about ten years, he devoted himself ardently to the

¹Anton C. Pegis, ed. & trans., *Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Random House, 1945), p. 463. (From *Summa Theologica*, I, 47.3)

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cultivation of languages, mathematics, alchemy, and astronomy.

In 1257, another important change took place. Bacon had not lost his interest in science but he had joined the Order of Friars Minor. The outspoken Roger was soon on a collision course with his ecclesiastical superiors. They criticized him alike for his credulity in some areas and for his castigations of their rationalistic and authoritarian methodologies. Despite these mutual antagonisms, Bacon considered the ultimate goal of science to be service to the Church. He felt that Christendom would be protected by its power over nature. The specific event of 1257 was that he was transferred to Paris, where a closer eye could be kept on him. While there, he appealed to Pope Clement IV, trying to persuade him to change the teaching in Christian schools so as to include more observation and experimentation. The Pope wrote to Bacon, asking him to send his work, "that you may declare to us through your writing what remedies seem to you fitting for dealing with those matters which you recently intimated to be of such moment; and do this secretly as far as you are able and with as little delay as possible."²

The Pontiff apparently thought



that Bacon's work was already essentially complete, but it was only a plan. Accordingly, he set to work immediately on his *Opus majus* and produced the *Opus minus* in case the Holy Father did not have time to read the larger work. Both works (handwritten, of course) were on their way within a year. The *Opus majus* established Roger Bacon as one of the most profound and creative thinkers of his time. It contained seven parts: causes of error (curiously reminiscent of the later Bacon's treatment of the

same subject), philosophy versus theology, study of languages, importance of mathematics, optics, experimental science, and moral philosophy.

Returning to Oxford, Bacon hoped to write an encyclopedic work on all the sciences, but this was not to be. He did produce the manuscripts, *Communia Mathematicae*, *Communia Naturalium*, and *De Coelestibus*. In 1277, the plain-spoken and sometimes arrogant Roger again found himself in trouble with the authorities. Jerome of Ascoli, Minister General of the Friars Minor, "condemned and reprobated the teaching of Friar Roger Bacon as containing some suspected novelties," and the friar found himself in prison. His imprisonment is believed to have lasted for almost fifteen years, until Jerome, who had become Pope Nicholas IV, died.

What did Bacon accomplish? Many things. He is credited with inspiring the voyage of Columbus, 200 years after his death, by indicating that the Indies could be reached by sailing westward from Spain. In the 13th century, this English cleric wrote speculatively of machines that would navigate without rowers, wagons which would move at great speed without being pulled by animals, and flying machines. He wrote also of the explosive property of gun-

powder and of improving people's eyesight by lenses. He conceived of the microscope, and his specific suggestions led in 1571 to the invention of the telescope.

Bacon's most fundamental contribution, however, was none of these things. The contents of science change. It was his commitment to scientific *method* that makes him a man for the ages. To reject authority and armchair reasoning alike as bases for conclusions about the workings of nature was, in Bacon's milieu, a tremendous and brave step forward. He has been criticized for superstition and credulity. This derogation misses the mark. Like all men, he could not totally escape the superstitions of his time. He dabbled extensively in alchemy, the medieval supposed art of transmuting baser metals into gold, of finding a universal solvent, and of developing or discovering an elixir of life. We must remember that alchemy was the chemistry of the Middle Ages. Bacon did not approach it as magic, but as a means of studying the transition of matter to its final form. Indeed, he wanted to expose "the mad acts of the magician" through experimentation. He was one of the first to point out that medicine should use remedies provided by chemistry. Bacon also believed in astrology as a potential science. It was not proved out, but he was

²Clement IV, letter; cited by Jay E. Greene, ed., *One Hundred Great Scientists* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1967), p. 29.

not wrong at that stage of knowledge in exploring its possibilities, surely.

What has been noted so far points up Bacon's important role in the transition to modern thought but does not explain his value to the Christian Church. What he wanted to do above all, however, was to show the unity of all truth (a basic Catholic concept) and the relationships between natural knowledge and supernatural revelation. He did this, not as nearly all of his contemporaries did, by reasoning in circles from questionable assumptions to foregone conclusions, but by addressing questions to nature and answering them by observation.

Last among the natural sciences as described in Bacon's *Opus majus* was *Scientia experimentalis*. He did not limit this to any branch of research but thought of it as "a general method used for the double purpose of controlling results already reached by mathematical procedure and of stimulating new researches in fields not as yet opened to inquiry."³ Yet, as Brophy noted in his biography of the friar, "The ultimate aim of Bacon's immense

labors was, as he so often insisted, the protection and expansion of the Church throughout the world through a reform of studies."⁴

Bacon's opening discourse on method in the *Opus majus* has a distinctly modern tone, reminiscent of Comte. He wrote, for example:

... there are three ways of knowing: authority, reason, and experience. Now, authority never gives the reasons for that which it affirms; it does not understand that which it bids us believe. Reason, on the other hand, cannot distinguish sophistry from demonstration, at least to verify its conclusions by the verification of experience as we propose to do in the experimental science.⁵

Seven Centuries After

ONE MIGHT suppose that, seven centuries after Roger Bacon, the relations among theology, philosophy, and science would have been worked out satisfactorily and widely accepted by Christian scholars. Instead, Bacon was not only ahead of his own time but in some measure ahead of ours. There are still those Catholic apologists who simply regard science as the

enemy of faith. There are others who try to use theology and philosophy to answer empirical questions. They want a unity of truth, but an imposed unity rather than an emergent one. Still others put faith in an isolated category which cannot be related systematically to anything demonstrated by natural reason. Few are they who see knowledge as an analogical concept and work towards a Christian synthesis of belief in which the outlines emerge as they will, not as anyone has predetermined that they should.

Discussions of the relations between religion and science are usually at a rather naive and unsatisfactory level. The non-scientist may have difficulty understanding the roles of models and analogies in modern scientific work. The world of scientist is largely de-ontologized. He is interested in making predictions in the phenomenal order. He does not particularly care, for his immediate purposes, what ultimate status his constructs may have. Further, he deals not in "truth" but in probability. The electron and the proton may be understood as little blobs by the undergraduate student, but the physicist and the chemist understand them as heuristic devices useful for generating discoveries, organizing data, and facilitating prediction. They afford no guaranteed insights into what

really exists. Nobody really knows if there *are* electrons and protons, but physical science is not handicapped by the absence of that knowledge.

This outlook is a reversal of Aristotle, for whom "science" involved the revelation of essence in a series of demonstrative syllogisms. There are still Catholic thinkers who cling to that view and teach it, unaware that the scientific community has long since rightly abandoned it. It can be said of these well-meaning pedagogues that they have not quite caught up with Roger Bacon.

No medieval scientific thinker, of course, could break completely out of the mold of that era which had its origins in Plato and Aristotle. Science was expected to rest on self-evident first principles and to lead to conclusive demonstration. Paradoxically, Plato's kind of realism left more room for models and analogies than did Aristotle's trust in particulars. It could be said that Plato invoked models in the *Timaeus*. In any case, the world of the sensible was approximate and tenuous, and so it, rather than the forms, was Plato's "model." Aristotle, from whom form was imbedded in matter, disagreed with Plato's rejection of the possibility of a true science of physics. Aristotelian science, we can now see, tried to move

³John H. Bridges, ed., *The 'Opus Majus' of Roger Bacon*, vol. 1 (Frankfurt/Main: Minerva G.m.b.H., 1964), lxxviii.

⁴Liam Brophy, *The Marvelous Doctor—Friar Roger Bacon* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1963), p. 72.

⁵Ibid., p. 74 (from the *Opus Majus*).

too simply and quickly from description to essence. Galileo crossed the bridge into modern science, perhaps, when he used analogies extensively in his *Dialogue on Two Chief World Systems*.

Emergent and Imposed Unity

WHILE BACON'S science bears the medieval stamp, we can see him edging towards a positivistic bent in his approaches to the metaphysical controversies of his century. "His aim from beginning to end of his career was to draw men away from verbal subtleties and concentrate them on the realities of life, as plain men understand them."⁶ He told his students, for example, to look at things, "try them, see how they act on you, how you can act on them. As to the matter and form that may underlie them, leave that to God." He dismissed the problem of a principle of individuation as meaningless and foolish.

What can we extract from the legacy of Roger Bacon which might give guidance on what Catholic secondary and higher education will be or should be in the late 1970's and beyond? Certainly, we must acknowledge that the contents of the sciences and even to some extent their character have changed since his

century. We must also concede changes in the contents and methodology of theology and in the prevailing philosophy of science. Even so, important points of Baconian application remain, nor did he fail to anticipate such strands of thought as that of the Vienna Circle. Among the jewels of the Baconian legacy are the unity of all truth and the importance of letting that unity emerge rather than imposing it prematurely, the necessity to resort to experience in answering questions about nature, the value of science being the ally of the Church rather than its enemy, the need to go where the data are in investigating, and the analogical character of knowledge.

In our time, it has become the prevalent fashion among intellectuals to despair of and perhaps even to scoff at the concept of a coherent synthesis of learning. The late J. Robert Oppenheimer wrote, not with approval but with resignation, of the increasing fragmentation which now finds various kinds of specialists within physics unable to comprehend one another's discourse. He rightly warned against any sort of facile formula which would create a *pseudo-unity*. Plato would have his philosopher-kings know mathematics. Today, complained Oppenheimer,

it is not only that our kings do not know mathematics, but our philosophers do not know mathematics and—to go a step further—our mathematicians do not know mathematics. Each of them knows a branch of the subject and they listen to each other with a fraternal and honest respect . . .⁷

Yet, no one was more excited than this same Oppenheimer about the possibility that some discovery around the corner would weld together the disconnected elements of quantum mechanics, relativity, and all the rest. Indeed, in the passage following that just quoted, he noted, "In fact, a great deal of progress in mathematics is a kind of over-arching generalization which brings things that had been separate into some kind of relation."⁸

Oppenheimer's world, of course, did not include divine revelation and its systematic development and explication. The Catholic hope is in principle the same as his, but in practice vastly more ambitious: to see a pattern pervading *all* knowledge. It is fatal to such an enterprise, however, to entertain a univocal notion of what it is to



know. Dated and in need of revision though it be, Jacques Maritain's *The Degrees of Knowledge* probably does a better job than has been done in any other one place of developing an analogical and hierarchical epistemology. We can still ponder that work with great profit. (Lest we forget, Maritain started his career as a student of biology.)

How has the Catholic Church at the level of intent come to terms with the spirit of Roger Bacon? *Gravissimum Educationis*, the document on education of the Second Vatican Council, expresses as a goal "to have individual branches of knowledge studied according to their own proper principles and methods, and with due freedom of investigation."⁹ Lest it be

⁷J. Robert Oppenheimer, "The Tree of Knowledge," lecture, in Michael Rouzé, *Robert Oppenheimer, the Man and His Theories*, trans. Patrick Evans (New York: Fawcett Library, 1965), p. 128.

⁸Ibid., p. 128.

⁹Walter M. Abbott, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild Press, 1966), p. 648.

⁶Bridges, p. xli.

thought that this stress on the absence of any constraints on the sciences pose a danger to the Faith, the opposite is then asserted: "She intends thereby to promote an even deeper understanding of these fields, and as a result of extremely precise evaluation of modern problems and inquiries, to have it seen more profoundly how faith and reason give harmonious witness to the unity of all truth."¹⁰ The document also specifies that, "Since the sciences progress chiefly through special investigations of advanced scientific significance, Catholic colleges and universities and their faculties should give the maximum support to institutes which primarily serve the progress of scientific research."¹¹

How *not* to go about all this is illustrated in a position taken by William J. McGucken:

Every educational institution makes use of indoctrination. Children are indoctrinated with the multiplication table; they are indoctrinated with love of country; they are indoctrinated with the principles of chemistry and physics and mathematics and biology, and nobody finds fault with indoctrination in these fields. Yet these are of small concern

in the great business of life by contrast with ideas concerning God and man's relation to God, his duties to God, his neighbor and himself, man's nature and his supernatural destiny. The Catholic educator makes no apology for indoctrinating his students in these essential matters.¹²

The multiplication table, most mathematicians would agree today, is a set of tautologies. No indoctrination is involved in learning it because it does not assert anything. It is essentially a language game. As for the species of indoctrination that children have often received about their country, it lies buried in the ashes of Vietnam. Any scientist worth his salt would surely cringe in horror at the notion of indoctrinating students with the concepts of chemistry, physics, or biology. In theology, "indoctrination" in the sense of teaching doctrines is something else. The very fact that McGucken could throw all these items into the same hopper and see no difficulty about it illustrates a major typical flaw of Catholic education in the past.

On one occasion when a major disappointment—one of many in his life—had occurred, Roger Bacon remarked to his friend,

Raymond Lull, "It seems that God just wishes us to sow the seed. It will be for other eyes than ours to behold the harvest."¹³ What are we in Catholic education doing to tend the garden?

¹³Brophy, p. 95.

The Wandering Jew

My Lover roams the ages,
a Peddler of wares:
best wine, loaves, and fishes,
oil of compassion for the crowd.

He works His healing wonders,
speaks words never heard,
breaks Bread, says, "Come,"
and some will hear.

But He owns God His Father,
Himself a mother hen.

So take up your stones,
Jerusalem, at road's end.
Drive the wandering Jew
on past the yearning cross
and homeward,
to my heart.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., p. 649.

¹²William J. McGucken, *The Catholic Way in Education* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1937), p. 60.

Vatican II, Charisms, and the Laity

ROBERT E. DONOVAN, O.F.M.

IN MY LIMITED involvement with the "charismatic renewal" in the Catholic Church it has been obvious that this movement is predominantly lay in orientation and language. While still within the hierarchical framework, its strong stress on community and egalitarianism is more observable than in other groups of the present or the Catholic Action of the past.¹ Precisely because it encourages a larger role for the laity while not demeaning the contribution of the ordained ministers, the "charismatic renewal" is a force for the continual renewal of the whole Church.

What, if anything, did Vatican II say about such a lay movement? One might be convinced that nothing was said, especially if one takes into account the fact that the "charismatic renewal" in its organized form began about 1967 while the Decree on the

Apostolate of the Laity was published on November 18, 1965 (over ten years ago). A closer look at this document would indicate otherwise. While the fathers were not capable of foretelling the future, they did comment on the unique and indispensable "charism" of the laity in the mission of the Church. Indeed, many of their comments and guidelines for future development are lived by the "charismatic renewal" today. A closer look at the document will, I feel, bear this out particularly in the areas of vocation, charism, and apostleship.

I. Vocation

THE DECREE on the Laity emphasizes at the outset the necessity of the lay apostolate. The laity's role in the mission of the Church, the Decree maintains, is "indispensable." "The Church can never be without it." The Decree then goes on to indicate

that this apostolate derives specifically from the layman's "Christian vocation."² The term *vocation* had been used to describe the call of Christ in the Spirit addressed to certain Christians to embrace the so-called higher states of perfection, i.e., the priesthood or religious life. In answering this call, those chosen were to carry on the work of Christ of bringing all men to share in his saving redemption. The laity were instructed to foster, especially within the family, the growth of these vocations, and to participate in or collaborate with this apostolic task. Now the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity claims that it is the whole People of God and the whole Mystical Body that is called to bring the whole world into a relationship with Christ. So, "By its very nature the Christian vocation is also a vocation to apostolate." By virtue, then, of his call by Christ in the Spirit, each and every Christian: lay, cleric, and religious, is summoned to an active participation in "spreading the Kingdom of Christ everywhere."³

This call is not issued and forgotten, but, like the more limited concept of vocation, must be continually nurtured. It is a call to a continually active Christian life. There is no room for passivity. Because of the intimate interrelation existing among the various members of the one Body of Christ, any member "who fails to make his proper contribution to the development of the Church must be said to be useful neither to the Church nor to himself." Even the laity cannot be passive. "Incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body through baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord himself."⁴ In saying this the fathers were, in the view of Yves Congar, "rediscovering and affirming the link between consecration and mission. Like unto the cleric who is consecrated or set apart for a specific mission, so too the people of God are chosen and consecrated to announce the wonders of God." This apostolate of all Christians and the lay part in it are not, then, based "on a

¹Catholic Action is the name of the officially sanctioned lay activity in the Catholic Church. Pius XI described it as the "participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy." It seemed to be the only official method of exercising not their own lay apostolate but that of "cooperating with the apostolate of the hierarchy," as Pius XI phrased it.

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²Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, §1, Eng. trans. in Walter Abbot, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild Press, 1966), p. 58. All future quotations from this document shall be from this work, referred to as "Laity."

³"Laity," §2 (p. 491).

⁴"Laity," §§2&3 (pp. 491-92).

reality of the juridical order, but on the supernatural ontology which makes a person a Christian” By the very inclusion, sacramentally, of the laity in the Body of Christ, they are set apart and consecrated for the mission of Christ. “The fundamental title of apostolate is not, therefore,” Father Congar concludes, “a mandate given by the hierarchy.”⁵

Because they are Christians, therefore, the laity participate in the apostolate of the Church. “They exercise a genuine apostolate by their activity on behalf of bringing the gospel and holiness to men, and on behalf of penetrating and perfecting the temporal sphere of things through the spirit of the gospel.”⁶ The laity’s integral and necessary part in this apostolate, their vocation, is marked by their involvement in the secular. Together with the clergy and religious they must work, first of all, to spread the gospel and to sanctify their fellow man from their secular vantage point. Secondly, it is their specific vocation because of their Christian consecration and secular involvement to help perfect the temporal

order by the infusion of the spirit of the gospel, so that their activity in the world may bear witness to Christ and serve the good of mankind.

To accomplish this twofold vocation the laymen must first of all be aware that it is their task to cooperate “with their brothers in Christ, especially with their pastors,” in making the “divine message of salvation known and accepted by all men throughout the world.”⁷ On the other hand, they must be aware that toiling to perfect the temporal order “is the peculiar task of the laity, because the secular is, as it were, their field of expertise. On this point the Decree is rather specific, stating that “since it is proper to the layman’s state in life for him to spend his days in the midst of the world and of secular transactions, he is called by God to burn with the spirit of Christ, and to exercise his apostolate in the world as a kind of leaven.”⁸ Thus he should be aware that “his human vocation is raised to the dignity of an apostolate.”⁹

The Decree further directs the layman to be humble and recognize that he is no better than

other men. Secondly, he must be concerned with his fellow men, and become a man-for-others looking to save their bodies as well as their souls. To do this he must work to make the world a better place, realizing that the very act of his “being-for-the-world” is his apostolate. (“As citizens,” the Decree directs, laymen “must cooperate, using their own particular skills and acting on their own responsibility” so that “the temporal order can be restored in Christ.”)¹⁰ Thus no longer will the layman be viewed as the extended arm of the hierarchy, nor as the bridge between the world and the body of the clergy. The layman is now to be seen as an integral, necessary part of the mission of the Church for-the-world. This real vocation of the layman for the Church and for the world is not uniform, but takes on as many shades as there are laymen. To carry it on, the laymen are given the help of Christ in the Spirit, i.e., charisms.

II. Charisms

FIGHTING the notion that the only charism of the laity was that of giving service and being charitable, the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity insists that the charismatic structure of the whole Church be revitalized.

For the exercise of this apostolate, the Holy Spirit gives to the faithful *special gifts*. Thus may the individual, ‘according to the gift that each has received, administer it to one another (1 Pet. 4:10) . . . and build up thereby the whole body in charity (cf. Eph. 4:16).’ From the reception of these *charisms* or gifts, including those which are less dramatic, there arise for each believer the right and duty to use them in the Church and *in the world* for the good of mankind and for the up-building of the Church.¹¹

In this description of the working of the charisms within the Church, it seems obvious that the Council fathers were not speaking simply of extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit. These were not to be discounted, and the “charismatic renewal” is making good use of these gifts consonant with the teaching of Vatican II. Besides these, however, the fathers of the Council were also speaking of gifts which dispose their recipients to undertake the ordinary and everyday work within the Church. These gifts, too, though less publicized, are the concern of the charismatic renewal. For they, as all charisms, are given for the good of the faithful and are constitutive of the fundamental structure of the Christian community.

⁵Yves Congar, “The Laity,” John Miller, ed., *Interfaith Appraisal*, pp. 241-42.

⁶“Laity,” §2 (p. 491).

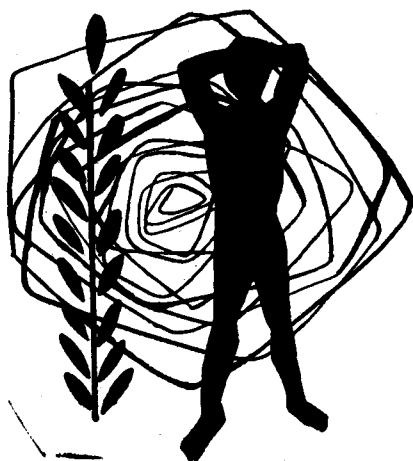
⁷“Laity,” §3 (pp. 492-93).

⁸“Laity,” §2 (p. 492).

⁹“Laity,” §3 (p. 492).

¹⁰“Laity,” §7 (p. 498).

¹¹“Laity,” §3 (p. 492).



Since no one is to be passive, all the faithful should be seen as having their own particular mission or apostolate for which they have received a special charism. Though there be a hierarchy of charisms (the more it serves the whole community, the more it is to be revered), even the most insignificant, since it comes from the Spirit and not from any mandate, stems from the fundamental structure of the Church. (Believers need to enjoy the freedom of the Holy Spirit . . .)¹² Secondly, because in general all the charisms are given to enhance the life of the Church, they all impel their recipients to be for-others, i.e., to work for the creation of community throughout the world. No longer afraid of death, they are disposed to enhance life, especially the life

of their neighbor. Involved in this being-for-others, the faithful are not involved in a mundane or profane activity but in a spiritual and charismatic activity. ("They must act in communion with their brothers in Christ.")¹³ In all of this what is being stressed is the equality among the People of God and the need for true community, based on fraternal charity.

If this understanding of the charismatic structure of the Church had been expanded, one could ask whether charisms which entail a mission also entail a "ministry." Following the lead of the Decree, one can at least say that, although the laymen may not have a part in the direction and decisions of the Church, they nevertheless have rights and duties consonant with their charisms. So, thanks to the charisms received, the layman has a "ministry" in the Church, a specific vocation which cannot be fulfilled by any other layman or cleric.

This raises a further question. Can the laity really be called apostles? They have a vocation, a consecration for a mission, and the charism to help them along, but have they the authority of an apostle? They have rights and duties in the Church, but as long

as they do not have the power to take part in the direction and decisions of the community, are they not at most only second-rate apostles?

III. Apostles?

IT IS CLEAR the conciliar Commission had intended to speak of the laity's role as an apostolate. They had even rejected a suggestion that the title be changed "On the Participation of the Laity in the Mission of the Church." They did so because they felt that it was clear from the whole context of the Decree that what was involved was the participation of the laity in the mission of the Church. This apostolate was not to be seen as a simple identity with the apostolic office (as for example found in Gal. 2:8, Rom. 1:5, Acts 1:25, or 1 Cor. 9:2), but rather in connection with the extended form of the apostolate found in the New Testament. In this more extended use of the term, especially in Paul and Acts (cf. Rom. 16:7, Gal. 1:19, 1 Cor. 15:7, Acts 14:4, 14), *apostoloi* is a comprehensive term for bearers of the New Testament message. Adding to this usage the charismatic reality of all Christians being filled with the outpouring of the Spirit (Acts

2:17, 1 Cor. 2:13, 15), the description of their growing together with Christ (Heb. 3:1, Rom. 6:5) and their commissioning to "declare his wonderful deeds" and form a "royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:4, Acts 4:31), the Decree considers the laity in terms of continuing the mission of Christ, who was sent by the Father into the world "that the world might be saved through him" (Jn. 3:17). This mission Christ in turn entrusted to the whole community that he has chosen or called forth (*ekklesia*). "Thus," Father Klostermann, a conciliar *peritus* (expert), comments, "the mission concerns every member of the Church by virtue of the common calling which every Christian has in the basic charisms of faith and baptism, but also by virtue of the special states and charisms of each." Thus the laity, he continues, have a share in this mission, "simply because they are themselves the Church."¹⁴

In keeping with the more communal and participatory view of the Church, the emphasis is on unity and equality. Here again the "charismatic renewal" is a shining example. Within this movement there is a strong stress on participation and a sense of

¹²"Laity," §3 (pp. 492-93).

¹³"Laity," §3 (p. 493).

¹⁴Ferdinand Klostermann, "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity," in Herbert Vorgrimler, ed., *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1967), vol. 3, p. 303.

community. "The emphasis," Father Kilian McDonnell once pointed out, "is not on 'individual persons' receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but growth and life in a community of people who are living the life of the Spirit."¹⁵

The "charismatic renewal, then, is a perfect example of the ideal held up by the Council fathers that the apostolate of the Church involves the whole of the Body. "All activity of the Mystical Body," the Decree states, "directed to the attainment of this goal [the salvation of the world] is called the apostolate..." But this apostolate is to be carried on "in various ways." Along with the "unity of purpose" there is a "diversity of ministry." The successors to the apostles have a role, and the laity, through their share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ, have their own role.¹⁶ This role is determined to a great extent by their secular involvement.

But—and this is a big "but"—to be an apostle means, especially in the New Testament, not only to be sent but to be sent with full authority, i.e., to be established in power. And in this Decree, there does not seem to be any mention of this needed

ingredient to make the apostolate of the laity a true apostolate. We are not, of course, alluding to a total equality of power, but to some recognition of the co-responsibility of the lay apostles for the Church. This omission, a most regrettable one, was the result of the need for compromise. One could only have wished that the Council could have emphasized more the idea of the reciprocal need of the hierarchy and laity. This reciprocal relationship is obvious within the "charismatic renewal movement."

The Council fathers could have emphasized the reciprocity in the Decree by recognizing more emphatically that all charisms, even those of the apostolate, come from God and are received alike by hierarchy and laity as brothers. Stress could have been placed on the fact that those special hierarchical offices are for the good of the community. Finally, taking cognizance of the so called Council of Jerusalem, where not only the Apostles but the whole community concurred in the decision (Acts 15:6-7), this Decree could have had some practical suggestions for recognizing the authority of the lay apostle.

In conclusion, then, we might

say that the charismatic renewal seems to stand in very firm theological ground spaded and hoed by the Council, and that those in the movement also stand as a beacon for further development of the more participatory role of the laity in the mission of the Church—indeed, in the mission of Christ.



The remarkable thing about Saint Francis is that in his sacrifice of everything he had also sacrificed all 'vocations' in a limited sense of the word. After having been edified for centuries by all the various branches of the Franciscan religious family, we are surprised to think that Saint Francis started out on the roads of Umbria without the slightest idea that he had a 'Franciscan vocation.' And in fact he did not. He had thrown all vocations to the winds together with his clothes and other possessions. He did not think of himself as an apostle, but as a tramp. He certainly did not look upon himself as a monk: if he had wanted to be a monk, he would have found plenty of monasteries to enter. He evidently did not go around conscious of the fact that he was a contemplative. Nor was he worried by comparison between the active and contemplative lives. Yet he led both at the same time, and with the highest perfection. No good work was alien to him—no work of mercy, whether corporal or spiritual, that did not have a place in his beautiful life! His freedom embraced everything.

THOMAS MERTON
No Man Is an Island

¹⁵Kilian McDonnell, "Catholic Charismatics," *Commonweal* 96 (5/5/72), 209-11.

¹⁶"Laity," §2 (p. 491).

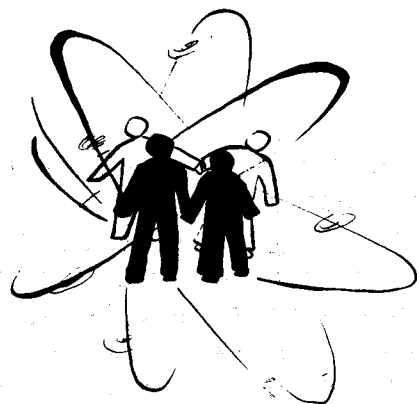
I Need Others—Others Need Me!

BRUCE RISKI, O.F.M.CAP.

HOW MUCH I need others! I need their daily affirmation, charity, and pardon. Without these I really could not carry on effectively, if at all. They are my brothers and sisters; together we are members upon members. We boost one another; and by so doing, we fill ourselves with enthusiasm and zest for life. Because of this loving concern for one another, we contribute more than our share to society.

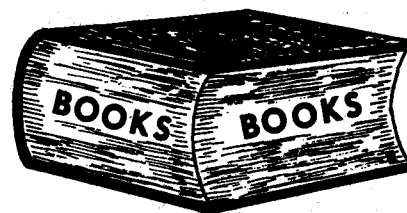
Just as I could not really be at my best, benefiting those around me by being what I am, so likewise, others cannot be truly and fully themselves without me! At times I will be as much a burden to them as they are to me. That is part of daily living and cannot be avoided entirely. But whether we touch each other negatively or positively, we shape and mold one another as surely as a sculptor creates a work of art.

I am here, in this particular environment, with my talents, gifts, and personality, by reason



of divine Providence. And so are those I meet from year to year a part of God's design and plan. God intends that we live in peace and harmony together so that we may ably assist one another to become holy—that is why we were created. By achieving holiness we render to God the honor, glory, and praise that is his due. As a team we can do it. Without me, the goal is difficult, if not impossible, for others to attain. Without others, I fail to attain it. Yes, it is ever so true: I need others, and others need me to become a saint!

Father Bruce Riski, O.F.M.Cap., has served as a military chaplain and in various pastoral assignments in the Mid-West. A frequent contributor to our pages, he has composed many hymns for liturgical use.



The Father Is Very Fond of Me; Experiences in the Love of God.
By Edward J. Farrell. Denville, N.J.: Dimension Books, 1975. Pp. 235. Paper, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Father Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Francis Chapel, the Northway Mall, Colonie, New York.

The author's stated purpose in writing this book is to explore in prayer the gifts God has given us, the future to which he calls us, and "our ever unfolding experiences of the love of God" (Foreword, p. 6). And the author lives up to his promises.

Father Farrell's readers will be delighted with his latest book. Even though two of its chapters (VII, on Poverty, and VIII, on Celibacy) are directed more to his priest-readers, the laity can read them with profit. If every Catholic could read "Whatever Happened to the Church?" (Chapter X), there would be an end to all criticism of the Church. People would be going around beating their breast.

What a wealth of meditation points in this book! Here we have solid, nutritional, non-dietetic spirituality.

Whom were we taught to adore: a Father of love or of dread? If a Father of dread, then we have to correct our false idea of the Father. Pilgrimage to Reconciliation (Chapter II) will open up, at least for some perhaps, the whole new horizon that every Christian is one sent to create the presence of Christ among men.

Chapter III, Prayer in Depth, is just that—an in-depth study of prayer. Be prepared for surprises.

The book as a whole is a proof of God's love for us. Here we have the work of a spiritual director that will not be read just once and then become a dust catcher. It will be read and re-read, pondered, and we prayerfully hope, be implemented.

Praise to the Lord of the Morning: Three Prayer Experiences. With photography by the Author. By Patrick Mooney. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1976. Pp. 127. Paper, \$2.95.

Reviewed by Sister Barbara Marie, O.S.F., a frequent contributor to our pages and a member of the staff of St. Anthony's Hospital, Pendleton, Oregon.

This book is a reverent prayer of praise "hammered out of the experiences of life," as Father Patrick Mooney states in the Introduction. Having served in pastoral ministry for five years before studying for his master's degree in Communication,

he is well equipped to help us feel the Presence of God, hear his call, and see his face in the world in which we live. The lines of verse and the accompanying photography remind one of the Praises of Saint Francis of Assisi, who was lifted up to the Creator by every sight and sound of creation.

The first poem, "A Song for God," invites us to be awe-filled with the wonder of a child at the beauty of the morning, the light of the sun, the song of the bird, the heartbeat of the sea, and the myriad miracles of everyday. The meaningful photography helps to create an atmosphere for contemplative praise and thanksgiving for those who take time to be filled with the Presence of God and the wonders of the universe.

In the second poem, "The Living Bread," the author prays his priestly prayer of the Eternal Sacrifice, expressed in Surrender, Offering, and Consecration. All creation must surrender to ultimate transformation: grapes to wine, wheat-head to bread, winter to spring, death to life. The Prayer of Offering includes not only the material world; it embraces all the people of God, especially those who are crushed with pain or neglect. Here Father Mooney inserts some personal acquaintances: the little boy whose sight and hearing are threatened, the young girl who is mentally disturbed, the religious who has lost the use of her legs. The Prayer of Consecration turns to Christ, who will accept the Surrender and the Offering for transformation. It begs for strength to become one with Christ and live the Eucharist in everyday life:

*Ah but gentle Jesus
Your life is a paradox
You know too well the human heart
You teach your friends
One only finds joy in losing
One only receives by giving away
Blood spilled
Spells life as well as death* (p. 79)

*but
In memory of you
We are afraid to become
Community Builders
To threaten the world with your love* (p. 80)

The third poem, "Touch and Heal," reminds us of our Christian commitment. So occupied with our wants and needs, we do not hear the cry of the hungry and the thirsty. We fail to see Christ in the least of his brethren. But India and Africa are so far away—and so our pets are better fed than the children of the poor:

*Distance makes us indifferent—
The great cop-out on Christian
commitment* (p. 103)

Christ is on our doorstep today in the poor who are always with us. We can touch and heal his suffering brothers and sisters without a trip to foreign lands, for

*The harmony of the world
Begins at home
In the choices we make to touch and
heal* (p. 117)

This book of meditations is written in a style that can be understood and appreciated by all: the layman as well as the priest, the beginner in the spiritual life as well as the contemplative, the modern teenager as well as his conservative elders. In these modern days of confusion and

uncertainty it is difficult to put aside the pressures of a pleasure-loving, success-seeking world and be at peace with the God who alone can make us free. This book will be a powerful aid to our peace and freedom if we allow it to touch and heal us.

The Catholic Priesthood Today. By Donald W. Wuerl. Foreword by John Cardinal Wright. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. 192, incl. bibliography. Cloth, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., a member of the Alumni Staff of St. Bonaventure University.

Father Donald Wuerl is a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh who is presently associated with the Congregation for the Clergy in Rome. In presenting his new work on the priesthood for publication, he prevailed upon Cardinal Wright, Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, to write the Preface. Cardinal Wright honors his young associate and warmly praises and recommends his work.

In his Introduction the author explains his reason for "yet another" book on the priesthood: "I hope to help in some small way to dissipate a little of the intellectual confusion and theological smog that has gathered around this subject" (p. 15). In response to two recent articles in Catholic periodicals that call into question the nature and special character of the priesthood, Father Wuerl calls attention in his exposi-

tion to his two principal sources: the documents of the Second Vatican Council, and the statement of the 1971 Synod of Bishops, "The Ministerial Priesthood." It is his intention to show that the latter is a "reaffirmation by the Church of the teaching on the nature and function of the priesthood [that] was most needed" (p. 16).

In the first two chapters the author lays the groundwork for the rest of the book by quoting various passages from the Second Vatican Council, particularly from the Constitution on the Church, and from the above-mentioned statement of the 1971 Synod of Bishops. Then, in successive chapters, he goes into more detail on the Catholic Priesthood. The chapter titles give a good idea of his procedure: "The Church," "The Mission of Christ," "The Priest as Witness," "The Priesthood," "Sacramental Witness," "Leadership," "Presbyterium," "The Permanence of the Priesthood," "The Hierarchical Church," "The Priest in Sacred Scripture."

In the chapter on "The Hierarchical Church" the writer emphasizes the teaching of both the Council and the Synod rejecting certain opinions expressed by the German theologian Hans Küng. Küng seems to do away with any distinction between the priesthood of the laity and the ministerial priesthood, and the essential difference is here conclusively reaffirmed.

Discussing "The Priest in Sacred Scripture," the author shows that Father Raymond Brown's exegetical conclusions about the origin and the ministerial functions of the priesthood are not in complete accord with

what the Synod taught in "The Ministerial Priesthood." It is Father Wuerl's view that Father Brown fails to take Tradition into account in his statements.

Father Wuerl concludes his work by reaffirming that the Council and the Synod are the authentic sources for the Church's teaching that "a priest by ordination becomes another Christ" (p. 165). His final sentence is even more emphatic: "The priest, therefore, participates in Christ's work permanently and efficaciously in and for the whole Church because he is in his very being identified with Christ" (Ibid).

Throughout the book the author is very clear and to the point. Basing his position on the authentic teaching of the Church's magisterium as found

in the two documents mentioned above, he sets before the reader a lucid presentation of the nature, function, and mission of the Catholic priesthood. This is a "timely" book because of the crisis in the priesthood today, a crisis arising from the diminishing number of priests and seminarians and from conflicting and confusing opinions of writers on the theology of the priesthood. This book will be of value not only for priests and those who may be considering a calling to the priesthood, but also for all Catholic people who have traditionally had such a great love for and respect for priests. This work by Father Wuerl can be found beneficial to any reader who wants a clear understanding of the Church's teaching on the Catholic Priesthood today.

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CONTENTS

OF ESSENCE, PROCESS, AND THE RELIGIOUS LIFE	34
<i>Editorial</i>	
THE SYNTHESIS OF MASCULINE AND FEMININE ELEMENTS IN ST. FRANCIS' PERSONALITY	36
<i>Sister Magdalen Daniels, C.S.S.F.</i>	
FRANCIS OF ASSISI: MAN OF RECONCILIATION	50
<i>Francis de Ruijter, O.F.M.</i>	
CONVERSION WITH FRANCIS	56
<i>Thaddeus Horgan, S.A.</i>	
HABIT	62
<i>Timothy Johnson, O.F.M.Conv.</i>	
BOOK REVIEW: <i>The Importance of Being Sick</i>	63
<i>Wilfrid Hept, O.F.M.</i>	



COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our February issue were drawn by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., of the Monastery of Sancta Clara, Canton, Ohio.

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Of Essence, Process and the Religious Life

READERS WHO have been with us for the past decade or so doubtless recall (perhaps vividly) the innumerable articles and series we have published on renewal, particularly in the mid-to-late sixties, in the aftermath of Vatican II. Our forthcoming Index lists a dozen entries from that period which dealt explicitly with "Aggiornamento" or "Renewal" of the Franciscan/religious life. We were challenged (usually in private) about the publication of some of the more radical, not to say revolutionary, of those articles; and yet even at this late date we tend to feel that their publication was justified, if only to help "clear the air."

Many of these same readers have perhaps noticed a parallel evolution in our editorial and book-review section—a development which might be characterized as your editor's odyssey through the straits of process thought. Here too, one (well, I) can only be grateful for the opportunity to learn through unrestrained opportunity to clear ideas publicly in these pages.

This editorial should not be construed as a retraction of the heart of most of what we have espoused and proposed over those years. But in a sense it is a "retractation," like those discussions Augustine used to write many years later about his earlier treatises.

Our specific subject is the Franciscan religious life, and the point we want to make is extremely simple and brief: viz., precisely as a growing organism—a living society if you will, it has an essence, a nature, a self-identical soul which must be allowed to direct its growth.

What occasions this (perhaps terribly obvious and almost trite) observation is the recent publication of Father René Voillaume's superb series of conferences on the religious life. The conferences were originally a retreat of shortly more than two weeks, given in March of 1971 to the novice Little Brothers and Little Sisters of Jesus.*

The subjects covered in the course of this excellent retreat are the usual ones: the nature of a vocation and of religious life, living in brotherhood, the three vows (with particular emphasis on obedience), the

religious life as a sharing in the paschal mystery, religious dedication and its permanence (stability), silence and prayer, and the apostolate.

Father Voillaume makes good use of the major conciliar documents (*Perfectae caritatis*, *Gaudium et spes*, and *Lumen gentium*), and in all that he has to say there rings clearly a Franciscan-like evangelical simplicity, as well as a refreshing Christocentrism and ecclesiocentrism. His style is direct (the second person of direct address has been retained) and at times aphoristic; and with only a couple of odd expressions by way of exception, it has been admirably retained by the translator.

Among the innumerable items of sage advice, are those on the absolute need for obedience if community is even to exist, on the religious life as a constant "coming to birth" requiring not only liturgical celebration but eucharistic adoration, on dedication as something God (not we) must effect, on religious silence as an "absolute," and on the apostolate as the "motor power by which the Kingdom grows." Would there were space here for a more detailed discussion of the author's fine elaboration of these and many other themes. But of greater importance for present purposes is the welcome balance between contemporary language and awareness, on the one hand, and, on the other, an undercurrent of salutary warning against many contemporary errors, designed to help the novices enter religion "with their eyes open."

I was personally delighted by the many references, all through the conferences, to the communion of saints and, in particular, the angels. But I was hardly prepared for the "Appendix," in which the author synthesized a reply to what had evidently been a number of questions raised in that connection by the novices. This short chapter is one of the best expositions and defenses of Catholic doctrine on the angels that it has ever been my pleasure to read.

In short, then, reality is not process; *created* reality is, surely, *in* process, but it *is something* that processes. The religious life is no exception to this general truth. Fortunately more and more of us are coming to realize that the "renewal" to which we have been summoned by Popes John and Paul and the Second Vatican Council is indeed a re-assertion of the "essence" of the religious life and of our particular (e.g., Franciscan) way of living it. For Franciscans as well as for Little Brothers and Sisters of Jesus, *Spirituality from the Desert* will be a powerful aid to just such a faithful and meaningful re-assertion.

Fr. Michael D. Mailach, OFM



**Spirituality from the Desert*. By René Voillaume. Trans. Alan Neame. Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1976. Pp. xi-145. Paper, \$2.95.

The Synthesis of Masculine and Feminine Elements in the Personality of Francis of Assisi

SISTER MAGDALEN DANIELS, C.S.S.F.

MEDIEVAL SOCIETY is a tapestry of religious paradoxes. There exist side by side, perhaps in response to each other, the most scandalous moral laxity and the most exalted ascetic mysticism. In the name of God, the poor are extorted, unbelievers executed, and indulgences sold. Also in the name of God, thousands enter new forms of religious life, minister to lepers, and seek martyrdom as though it were a duchy. Feudalism creates a social class system while chivalry disregards it to protect the poorest widow. Womanhood is debased as the spoil of battle, subjected to the right of the feudal lord, and married off as a political pawn by her father at the same time as it is exalted in the "lady" of chivalric ideal. Devotion to the Blessed Virgin concretizes in the magnificent cathedrals in front of which half-naked women are sold to the highest bidder during holiday celebrations.¹ It is a male-dominated society, conquest-

oriented, and hotly defensive of its "honor"—which both demeans and longs for the gentler virtues usually associated with the feminine.

Yet there arises in this age a man who, while remaining undeniably the product of his milieu, succeeds in uniting many of its paradoxical elements, not the least of which are the masculine and feminine roles, in the unique synthesis of his personality. His is a personality that in turn gives rise to mystical paradoxes of perception that reach far beyond the thirteenth century in their potential for achieving inner and outer unity. The man is Francis of Assisi.

To understand more clearly this paradoxical and powerful union of male and female characteristics in Francis, let us turn to the medieval encyclopedian Bartholomaeus Anglicus, who gives us a vivid picture of the male/female role and personality

differences as they existed in the medieval mind.

A man is called *vir* in Latin, and hath that name of might and strength. For in might and strength a man passeth a woman. A man is the head of a woman, as the Apostle saith. And therefore a man is bound to rule his wife . . . he adviseth her if she do amiss . . . A man loveth his child . . . and setteth it at his own board when it is weaned. And teacheth him in his youth with speech and words, and chasteneth him with beating . . . and putteth him to learn . . . And the father sheweth him no glad cheer, lest he wax proud, and he loveth most the son that is like to him . . . and purchaseth lands and heritage for his children, and ceaseth not to make it more and more . . . The more the father loveth his child, the more busily he teacheth and chastiseth him . . . lest he draw to evil manners.²

The name *lord* is a name of sovereignty, of power, and of might . . . A rightful lord, by way of rightful law, heareth and determineth causes . . . that be between his subjects . . . and draweth his sword against malice, and putteth forth his shield of righteousness, to defend innocents against evil doers . . . And so under a good, a strong, and a peaceable lord, men of the

country can be secure and safe. For there dare no man assail his lordship, nor in any manner break his peace.³

Bartholomaeus' description of the woman can be drawn from his description of the wife and the nurse. There is omitted here his description of the serving woman, who is portrayed as chattel, base, mean, and having no rights at all.

In a good spouse and wife be-hoveth these conditions, that she be busy and devout in God's service, meek and serviceable to her husband, and fair-speaking and goodly to her meinie, merciful and good to wretches that be needy, easy and peaceable to her neighbors, ready, wary, and wise in things that should be avoided, mightful and patient in suffering, busy and diligent in her doing, mannerly in clothing, sober in moving, wary in speaking, chaste in looking, honest in bearing, sad in going, shamefast among the people, merry and glad with her husband, and chaste in privacy . . . and useth the goodness of matrimony more because of children than of fleshly liking, and hath more liking to have children of grace than of kind.⁴

A nurse hath that name of nourishing, for she is ordained to

¹Arnaldo Fortini, "La giovinezza del Santo," *Nova Vita di san Francesco* (Edizioni Assisi, n.d.), I, 121-25.

Sister Magdalen Daniels, who attended the Felician Sisters' General Chapter last year, is pursuing a graduate course of studies at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University.

²Robert Steele, *Mediaeval Lore from Bartholomaeus Anglicus* (Boston: John W. Luce & Co., 1907), 55-59.

³Ibid., p. 60.

⁴Ibid., pp. 57-59.

nourish and to feed the child, and therefore like as the mother . . . taketh the child up if it fall, and giveth it suck: if it weep, she kisseth and lulleth it still . . . and doth cleanse and wash it . . . And she useth medicines . . . if it be sick . . . And cheweth meat in her mouth, and maketh it ready to the toothless child . . . and pleaseth the child with whispering and songs when it shall sleep . . . She batheth and anointeth it with good anointments.⁵

And for a women is more meeker than a man, she weepth sooner.⁶

We see in these descriptions the clear distinction of masculine and feminine qualities and roles within medieval society. Briefly, the man is ruler, father, judge, defender, acquirer, and teacher.

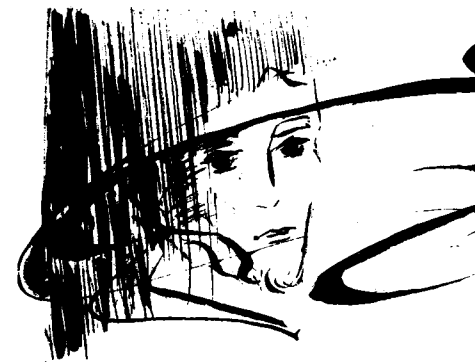
He is stern, dominant, and aggressive—a peacemaker through force, fear, and justice. The woman is subject, mother, nurse, nourisher, comforter. She is religious, modest, meek—a peacemaker through patience, self-control, and mercy. The man likes the son that is most like himself. The woman prefers children “of grace [rather] than of kind.” The first quality mentioned for the ideal woman is that she be “busy and devout in

God’s service.” God is not mentioned directly in the description of the man, who is strongly associated with law and justice. The woman is conscious to bear herself with modesty, to be careful in speaking, humble in public, and mighty in suffering. None of these are mentioned in connection with the man, whose might is described in terms of aggressive external actions, who inflicts suffering on his enemies rather than endures it patiently himself.

Bartholomaeus Anglicus was himself a Franciscan writing twenty-five years after the death of Francis of Assisi, and it is to be wondered whether he ever noticed the correspondences between his own description of proper conduct for a noble woman, wife, and mother, and the directives of Francis in regard to the conduct of the Friars Minor given in the Rule of 1223 and in his Admonitions.⁷ Whether Bartholomaeus did or not, the modern reader cannot but note them. A reading of Francis’ other writings, and the impression we gain from the two biographies of Celano and the *Legend of the Three Companions* only confirms this blending of the roles in the person and spiritual-

ity of Francis. This blend enriches and makes more whole the concept of manhood, rather than diminishes it. Francis, while remaining in many ways the daring, adventurous, paternal medieval man and son of his merchant father Peter Bernardone, upon whom Bartholomaeus’ description could almost have been modelled, still included in his self-concept and behavior many of the very qualities which in that era were considered more expressly feminine and maternal, such as tenderness, meekness, and personal ministry. Without any self-consciousness or any knowledge of modern genetics or psychology, Francis balanced the masculine paternal tendencies in himself with others that were more feminine and maternal. The balance of these aspects within his personality gave him a charism and an attractiveness that continue to inspire after 700 years. He simply was truly himself before God and men, and in being that, allowed all that God had given him to find outlet and praise Him in return. Let us explore this balance further.

The specific association of



devotion to God with the “feminine” that we find in Bartholomaeus’ description is not an isolated instance. A brief dictionary study reveals that the linguistic origins for the word “soul” are consistently feminine in gender in Greek, Latin, Italian, French, German, and Gothic. The same is true for the words for “prayer” and “spirituality.”⁸ This perception finds dramatic personification in the Franciscan legend.

If we are to follow Brother Pacificus’ interpretation of a dream that Francis had (recorded by Celano), it would seem that Jesus revealed Francis’ soul to the Poverello in a definitely feminine form. According to the dream, Francis was shown “a certain woman that looked like

⁸Any appropriate dictionary may be used, but the results are as follows: In Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, German, and Ancient Gothic the word for soul is feminine; in all but one of the languages (i.e., except where there was no word given in the dictionary checked), the words for prayer and spirituality are likewise feminine. (In the Latin, “animus” is used to refer to the principle of intellection; the feminine, “anima” for the life-giving principle.)

⁵Ibid., pp. 53-54.

⁶Ibid., p. 52.

⁷Placid Hermann, O.F.M., tr., *XIIIth Century Chronicles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1961), p. 62.

this: her head seemed to be of gold, her bosom and arms of silver, her abdomen of crystal, and the rest from there on down of iron. She was tall of stature, delicately and symmetrically framed. But this woman of such beautiful form was covered over with a soiled mantle."⁹ Francis refused to interpret the dream for Pacificus, but Pacificus had received an inner interpretation as he was listening to Francis' account. "This beautiful woman," he said, "is the beautiful soul of Saint Francis." The golden head, reminiscent of alchemists' symbolism, signified contemplation; the silver bosom and arms represented the Word of God carried into action, the crystal abdomen symbolized sobriety and chastity; the sturdy iron spoke of perseverance; and the soiled garment was "the despised little body" of Francis that covered his soul (2 Cel. 82, p. 431). Others who heard of the dream said the woman was Lady Poverty or the Franciscan Order, but Celano wisely concludes that it was indeed Francis' soul because "avoiding any arrogance, he refused absolutely to inter-

pret it. Indeed, if it had pertained to the order, he would not have passed over it with complete silence."

It can be noted that Francis' own writing and Celano's writing about him bear out this feminine way of regarding the soul in several other instances. In his "Letter to All the Faithful," addressed to both men and women, Francis definitely speaks of the soul in a predominantly feminine way:

A person is his [Christ's] bride when his faithful soul is united with Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit, we are his brethren when we do the will of his Father who is in heaven (Mt. 12:50), and we are mothers to him when we enthrone him in our hearts and souls by love with a pure and sincere conscience, and give him birth by doing good.¹⁰

The concept of the soul, either of an individual or of a nation, as "spouse" of the divine is an ancient Judeo-Christian tradition and can be found throughout the Old Testament, especially in the Canticle of Canticles and Hosea. Therefore Francis, who loved and read Scripture, is not

unique in this perception, but he expresses it with an ease and unconsciousness that are somewhat unique to his era. It is Celano again who tells us that Francis sought privacy, or at least tried to shield his face when his soul was in prayer, "lest bystanders should become aware of the bridegroom's touch" (2 Cel. 94, p. 440).

Above all else, Francis is an imitator of the gospel Christ, and is it not Jesus who says, addressing a mixed crowd, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act upon it" (Lk. 8:21)? It might also be noted that Jesus, too, perceives and gives expression to a certain maternal dimension of his role. He often addresses the disciples as "little children"; he insists on their allowing children to come to him to be blessed and fondled; and his sorrow over Jerusalem is that of a mother over stubborn, wayward children: "How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a mother bird collects her young under her wings, and you refused me" (Lk. 13:34). Thus we are not surprised when Celano tells us that as his order grew, Francis dreamed of himself as a little

black hen with innumerable chicks and then went to the Pope to seek a Cardinal Protector for his order (2 Cel. 24, pp. 382-83). Even in this aspect of his life and personality, Francis has a precedent in Christ, whether he was specifically conscious of it or not.

Francis' way of being at ease with the masculine and feminine in his own nature finds reflection in his regard for women. In spite of his cautioning the brothers about too familiar associations with women (Rule of 1221, ch. 12, p. 42), unlike many of his medieval male contemporaries, Francis did not doubt the ability of the feminine soul to match that of the male in spiritual stamina and integrity, perhaps because of his subconscious perception of the soul's role as feminine. He believes that eighteen-year-old Clare is as capable as himself of leading the austere and demanding life of strict poverty and literal observance of the gospel and encourages her to leave her family in spite of the total insecurity she will face.¹¹ A short time later, he also accepts her even younger sister Agnes.¹² He so admires the courage, stamina, and spiritual gallantry of the widowed Lady Jacopa that he

⁹Marion A. Habig, O.F.M., 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. 430. The reference here is to a passage in the second life of Francis by Thomas of Celano. All subsequent references to that work and others in the *Omnibus* will be given in text using abbreviated forms of the titles.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹¹Thomas of Celano, "The Legend of Saint Clare of Assisi," *The Legend and Writings of Saint Clare of Assisi* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1953), p. 22.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

affectionately calls her Brother Jacopa and sends for her on his deathbed (2 Cel. 37, pp. 549-50). This belief that women could be the spiritual equals of men also finds expression in the fact that Francis' Rule for the Third Order Secular was addressed to men and women alike (*Omnibus*, pp. 168-75), as was his "Letter to All the Faithful" which called both sexes to sanctity (*Omnibus*, p. 93; L3C 34, p. 922).

But Francis' perception of the particular strength and valor of the feminine is directed not only to those virtues as seen in women, but, as was mentioned earlier, also to the fostering of certain of these qualities within himself and his brothers. And in this he is somewhat startling in his simplicity and candor. Whether it is his remembrance of his own mother who respected his radical vocation enough to free him from his father's imprisonment and risk the paternal anger (1 Cel. 13, pp. 239-40), or his meditation on the love for the Blessed Virgin as the chosen mother of the Incarnate Word, or his intuitive appreciation of the maternal role in all forms of life that was an overflow of his nature

mysticism—Francis has an awareness of and identification with the maternal role that is almost unique among male religious founders of his time. In fact, it exists simultaneously and in direct opposition to the Albigenian estimation of maternity which subtly influenced so much of the society of Francis' time and viewed women as evil and carnal, seeing maternity as the perpetuation of the soul's imprisonment in flesh.¹³

To be a "mother," if we are to gather the meaning of the expression from Francis' own writings, is to care for the needs of others, to provide them with nourishment of soul and body, to care for them when sick, to protect their spiritual peace from the prying and intrusion of others, to comfort with a gentle affection and spiritual support those who are weary or distressed. These are concepts that can be easily related to those found in the passage quoted earlier from Bartholomaeus Anglicus.

Francis therefore directs, in his "Rule for Hermitages," that "Two of these should act as mothers, with the other two . . . as their children. The mothers are to lead

the life of Martha; the other two, the life of Mary Magdalen The friars who are mothers must be careful to stay away from outsiders and in obedience to their custos keep their sons away from them, so that no one can speak to them Now and then the sons should exchange places with the mothers" (*Omnibus*, pp. 72-73).

In many of his words of advice, especially those regarding how brothers should love one another, even when Francis doesn't use the word "maternal," he describes the unreserved love that we associate with a mother. A beautiful example of this occurs in his "Letter to a Minister." He is dealing with the superior-subject relationship in a matter requiring correction, but the picture he paints is anything but the stern medieval father who chastizes and beats his sons. On the contrary, he says,

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 again a thousand times, you should love him more than you love me, so that you may draw him to God . . . [*Omnibus*, p. 110].

That the friars themselves perceived this "maternal" dimen-

sion of their love for each other is reflected in the *Legend of the Three Companions'* description of the mutual charity of the first friars (ch. 41, p. 929):

. . . each deeply loved the other and cared for him as a mother cares for a cherished only child. Charity burned so ardently in their hearts that it was easy to risk life itself, not only for love of Jesus Christ, but also for the soul and body of any one of the brothers.

In his 25th "Admonition" (on True Love), Francis again refers to this unqualified love when he says, "Blessed that friar who loves his brother as much when he is sick and can be of no use to him as when he is well and can be of use to him" (*Omnibus*, p. 86). Although the term "mother" isn't specifically used here, it is present implicitly in the idea of acting as "nurse" to one who is sick. Celano tells us that "on his own sick bed, [Francis] commissioned Elias to take the place of a mother in his own regard and to take the place of a father for the rest of the brothers" (1 Cel. 98, p. 313). The dual roles were evidently present in Francis' mind at times, and he consciously synthesized their attributes, at least in this instance toward the end of his life, realizing that an order of men devoid of the gentling and compassionate qualities provided by family life had to integrate these within

¹³A significant example is Chapter 8 of the Book of Wisdom in any edition of the Bible. The chapter begins: "Her I loved and sought after from my youth; I sought to take her for my bride and was enamored of her beauty. She adds to nobility and splendor and companionship with God; even the Lord of all loved her. For she is instructress in the understanding of God" (vv. 1-4).

their own personalities and community life for both to be whole and healthy.

Again, this same tone is in evidence when Francis deals with spiritual suffering or illness. He says to Leo, for example, "As a mother to her child, I speak to you, my son And if you find it necessary for your peace of soul or your own consolation and you want to come to me, Leo, then come" (*Omnibus*, pp. 118-19).

This "maternal" attitude of open affection is also expressly stated or described in scenes where brothers face separation from Francis and are taking leave of him before going on journeys. As the first eight friars set out on their initial missions, Celano tells us that Francis "embraced them and said to each one with sweetness and affection: 'Cast thy thought upon the Lord, and he will nourish you'" (1 Cel. 29, p. 252). Another instance from later in Francis' life, after he had already receive the stigmata, uses the actual term in direct address: "So prepared to leave, they both came to the saint, and kneeling down, Brother Pacificus said to Saint Francis: 'Bless us, dearest Mother, and give me your hand to kiss'" (2 Cel. 137, p. 473). The source here is later, and whether or not these exact words were used is debatable, but the fact that the term "mother" is

used here and elsewhere in the Franciscan Legend indicates the presence of the concept and very likely the practice itself, or else it would be a most unusual choice of words for medieval male biographers.

In contrast to scenes of leave-taking, when the friars return from journeys, Francis consistently receives them as "father," welcomes them, hears their confession of faults, admonishes them, and teaches them.

They then gave an account of the good things the merciful Lord had done for them; and, if they had been negligent and ungrateful in any way, they humbly begged and willingly received correction and punishment from their holy father For the spirit of purity so filled that first school of the blessed Francis that . . . the blessed father, embracing his sons with exceedingly great love, began to make known to them his purpose and to show them what the Lord had revealed to him [1 Cel. 30, p. 253].

In fact, true to Bartholomaeus' earlier description, whenever Celano portrays Francis teaching, he always describes him as "father." Yet an interesting sidelight is that in several passages what "father" Francis is teaching his sons are those qualities and modes of behavior that Bartholomaeus specifically categorized as feminine! Perhaps that was why it was necessary to "teach"

them to young men brought up on medieval standards who did not automatically associate them with the fullness of Christian behavior for a man.

Amid all these things they strove for peace and gentleness with all men, and always conducting themselves modestly and peaceably, they avoided all scandals with the greatest zeal. They hardly spoke even when necessary; neither did anything scurrilous or idle proceed from their mouths, in order that nothing immodest or unbecoming might be found in their life and conversation. Their every action was disciplined, their every movement modest; all their senses were so mortified that they could hardly permit themselves to hear or see anything except what their purpose demanded . . . No envy, no malice, no rancor, no abusive speech, no suspicion, no bitterness found any place in them; but great concord, continual quiet, thanksgiving, and the voice of praise were in them. These were the teachings of their beloved father, by which he formed his new sons, not by words alone and tongue, but above all in deeds and in truth [1 Cel. 41, p. 263].

This maternal/paternal distinction can also be found in the descriptions of Francis' relationship with creatures. For the most part he is "brother" or "father" where he blesses, preaches, or admonishes the creatures of nature; but in several instances,

especially where the emotion is pity or tenderness, the maternal references appear. Speaking of the little rabbit that had been freed from a snare, Celano says, "after he [the rabbit] had rested there a little while, the holy father, caressing it with motherly affection, released it so it could return free to the woods" (1 Cel.

60, p. 279). Or again, when Francis encounters two lambs being taken to market and bleating plaintively, "he was filled with pity; and coming close, he touched them and showed his compassion for them like a mother over her weeping child" (1 Cel. 79, p. 295).

Even Francis' temptations against chastity reveal the balancing effect of this maternal dimension within him. While they are definitely the temptations of a man, and he deals with them in the direct, immediate, and aggressive style of a man, despite the severity of what he does physically, there is still a certain tenderness psychologically: he builds for himself a snow-wife and four snow-children—two boys and two girls (2 Cel. 117, p. 459). It is somewhat interesting that his imagination conceives two daughters instead of four sons in a society that prized male children. This same thought is reinforced when Celano tells us that one of his favorite retorts to those who would praise him



was, "I can still have sons and daughters; do not praise me as being secure" (2 Cel. 133, p. 471). It would seem that the having of children was as much a temptation as the pleasure and comfort of the love of a woman, which again reminds us of the distinction Bartholomaeus made in regard to that matter.

The positive spiritual imension of this particular attitude is found in Francis' concept of praying as the source of spiritual motherhood:

Why do you glory over men who have been converted when it was my simple brothers who converted them by their prayers? . . . 'The barren,' he said, 'is my poor little brother who does not have the duty of bringing forth children for the Church. This one will bring forth many at the judgment,

because those he is now converting by his private prayers the Judge will give to him unto glory [2 Cel. 164, p. 494].

Francis saw his own responsibility to his brothers and sons in a similar way. "He believed that he would be without future glory unless he made those entrusted to him glorious with him, those whom his spirit brought forth with greater labor than a mother's labor in giving birth to her children" (2 Cel. 174, p. 502).

This same concept found vivid portrayal in the parable Celano tells us Christ revealed to Francis as the means by which he should request the approval of his Rule before Pope Innocent. It is the story of a king who loved a beautiful woman in the desert and begot handsome sons by her, then returned to his kingdom. When the sons were grown, their mother sent them to the king to claim their inheritance. "This woman was Francis, because he was fruitful in many sons, not because of any softness in his actions" (2 Cel. 17, p. 377). The *Legend of the Three Companions* records the same parable and interpretation, but without the justification: "This vision was shown to blessed Francis while he prayed, and he understood that the poor woman was himself" (L3C, p. 935). The single phrase "not because of any softness in his actions" seems to be

the only instance where Celano seems conscious of breaking medieval male tradition by his "maternal" references. It occurs early in the second biography and seems to stand for all the subsequent references which often do describe actions of tenderness or compassion.

But perhaps the most mysterious feminine reference of all those applied to Francis is found in Celano's second biography and has to do with Lady Poverty.

In his first life of Francis, Celano shows us Francis taking Poverty as his "Lady." She is Christ's spouse. Francis "espouses" true religion (1 Cel. 7, p. 235). The same relationship is detailed in Chapter 7 of the *Legend of the Three Companions* (*Omnibus*, p. 896). However, in the second life by Celano, Francis himself espouses Poverty (2 Cel. 55, p. 411). But also in this second biography there is an instance where Francis' identity merges with that of Lady Poverty. According to Celano, there was an occasion when three poor women, whether real or angelic, or the product of hagiography, met Francis and greeted him as though he were Lady Poverty himself. "When Francis approached, they reverently bowed their heads and praised him with this new greeting: 'Welcome,' they said, 'Lady Poverty'" (2 Cel. 93, p. 438). Francis accepts

the feminine title "immediately . . . with exquisite joy, inasmuch as there was nothing in him that he would rather have men salute than what these women had chosen." A few moments later, the women have disappeared and they realize it was a miracle of the Lord. If the progress of the identification of Lady Poverty is followed carefully, in one respect Francis' final identification with her identifies him (or his soul) as the spouse of Christ!

Another revealing area of Francis' personal assessment of masculine and feminine qualities and roles can be found in the symbolism of his poetry. Here, where he is most spontaneous, most lyrical, we find personifications that embody and lead us back to the unity and uniqueness of his mystical perceptions.

In his "Praises of the Virtues," wisdom is "Queen Wisdom," much as we find in the biblical sense where wisdom is also personified in feminine form.¹⁴ But here, her sister is "pure, holy Simplicity." We are reminded of Christ's admonition to be "wise as serpents and simple as doves (Mt. 10:16). Thus the apparent paradox between wisdom and simplicity that is crucial to Francis' concept of the ideal brother has its foundation in Christ's teaching. Poverty, the most beloved to Francis of all

virtues, appears here as "Lady Holy Poverty." Later we will find the full personification unfold in the *Sacrum Commercium (Omni-bus, pp. 1549-96)*. And here also, Francis introduces us to his sister "Holy Humility." "Lady Holy Love" is then praised with her sister "Holy Obedience" (*Omni-bus, 132-33*). It is significant that the first virtue in each set is given a noble title. The unique addition of Francis' paradoxical insight is that each is given a less attractive, untitled "sister" to keep her pure. The synthesis of the two virtues within the personality prevents pride and makes conscious the realization that is central to Francis: all good is from God; all evil from himself. Simplicity, humility, and obedience keep one from glorying in the greatness of the gift of wisdom, the radicalness of poverty, or the generosity and tendency to self-will in love. These are powerful virtues, but they are powerful through their meekness in the sense of the Beatitudes. Because they are associated with meekness, to Francis' medieval mind they are feminine.

Later in the "Praises" they are set up against their negative opposites whom they defeat. Satan, false learning, and avarice are conquered by Wisdom, Simplicity, and Poverty respectively. Satan is traditionally described

as male, and it might be argued that in medieval society learning was certainly a male privilege. Greed and avarice and the anxieties of this life were easily associated with the merchant's desire to achieve status by wealth and the medieval husband's obligation to be the sole support of his family and provider of inheritance for his sons.

But male qualities are not always portrayed as negative. The imagery and personifications used in Francis' "Canticle of Brother Sun" are perhaps the most vivid expression of the positive synthesis of the masculine and feminine elements within his own personality. Moon, Stars, Water, and Death are "Sister," Earth is "Mother." Wind and Air and Fire are "Brother," and the sun is "my lord Brother Sun" (*Omnibus, pp. 130-31*). It would seem doubtful that Francis actually weighed carefully the gender he assigned to each of the creatures. More likely, the masculine or feminine designation rose spontaneously as he composed out of free response to the qualities his personality associated with these elements. A little symbolic conjecture reveals their aptness. Moon and stars are reflective of the greater splendor and overwhelming aggressive radiance of the sun. They are less severe in intensity, a source of comfort and guidance in the darkness of the

night, and they exert a more subtle, but real, influence than the powerful dominance of the sun. Water is the medium of the womb. It is the more tangible and nourishing parallel to the currents of Brother Wind. The masculine Wind scatters seed which is received by "Mother Earth" and nourished by Sister Water. Under the force of "lord Brother Sun" she brings forth "various fruits with colored flowers and herbs." Brother Fire is joyful, rowdy, strong—an element of defense, delight, or destruction—difficult to handle, but highly valued, a source of power. Death is perhaps the most surprising in its feminine conception. Medieval drama frequently personified Death as the black-robed male executioner, messenger of the High King, or angel. But Francis perceives it as "Sister," as a Door, a passageway to a greater Birth, and therefore feminine, maternal—welcomed rather than feared by those who are ready for the second birth. Here again we discover the unifying synthesis of paradoxical perception: Death is Birth.

There is a beautiful implicit appreciation of the balance and proportion of masculine and feminine traits, powers, and gifts in this poem—a proportion that has its origin in Francis' own personality. Francis of Assisi is definitely manly. He is daring, aggressive, dramatic, and heroic. He sublimates chivalry into the most exalted service of complete love of God through radical following of the gospel Christ. He battles inner and outer demons unflinchingly. He is afraid of no person or force within society. But the very power and fullness of his manhood is reached by his allowing the gentler, so-called maternal or feminine, aspects of his personality to also find conscious and full expression and be synthesized in his Self, no part of which is then held back from God or others. Like the creation he sings of in his "Canticle," no part of his inner universe is silenced. All parts of himself praise God, and in their act of praise synthesize into a remarkable wholeness that makes him indeed the "vir Catholicus," the universal man.



Francis of Assisi:

Man of Reconciliation

FRANCIS DE RUIJTE, O.F.M.

YOU WILL NOT find the term *reconciliation* in Saint Francis' Writings.¹ But his biographers quote many examples of reconciliation, for instance of cities (Arezzo, Siena, Gubbio, Assisi), of people hostile or opposed to one another (2 Cel. 89; LP 27; Fior. 25), or even at war with their own selves (1 Cel. 101; 2 Cel. 52).

Francis was a reconciliator, or rather a pacifier: he bypassed the reconciliation phase (in which people are brought to agreement, outwardly) and attained the phase of appeasement or pacification, which is an inner attitude.

We must ask ourselves what brought about Francis' desire to pacify at any cost, for it cannot be said that, either by nature or

¹N.B.: Francis uses the verb "to reconcile" at least once in his own Writings ("Letter to All the Friars" 13):

12 to show all possible reverence and honour for the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,

13 in whom *all things in heaven and on earth have been pacified and reconciled* with almighty God.

(The italicized text is a free quotation from Col. 1:20.)

Thomas of Celano in all the five books he wrote (viz., the First and Second Lives of Francis, the treatise on his Miracles, the Life for choir use, and his Life of St. Clare) used the word only three times:

1. 2 Cel. 188 (*Omnibus*, p. 512): "Not to seek popularity"=friendly favors (*conciliatos favores*).

2. 3 Cel. 99 (not in *Omnibus*): "She was advised to reconcile herself to her husband" (based on a quotation from 1 Cor. 7:11—*viro suo reconciliari*).

These findings are based on the *Thesaurus celanensis*. Note by translator.

This text consists mainly of quotations taken from the Writings of St. Francis and his early biographers. They were selected by friars of the Franciscan province of Belgium. The English adaptation was done by Francis de Ruijter, O.F.M., an experienced spiritual director, currently pursuing studies in Franciscan Spirituality at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University.

by education, he was a man of peace. Right from his childhood he belonged to the "minores" party. At the age of 16 he participated in the destruction of the Rocca Maggiore. At 20 he fought against Perugia.

How can we explain his change of attitude? Is it merely a reaction against his tumultuous past? The answer is, in part, found in the Legend of the Three Companions: "Said Francis to his brothers, 'Since you speak of peace, all the more so must you have it in your hearts'" (§58). First peace must be in the heart. Because his heart had changed (a *metanoia*), Francis had become a man of peace.

To understand this profound change, we should have to undertake a complete analysis of Francis' conversion. At least let us outline the main points of his inner evolution.

I. Outward Release

FIRST WE SEE an outward release which manifests itself in three principal ways. Foremost among these is an indifference to money—that, after all, is the easiest. Even in his youth Francis had been generous. He would gladly give to the poor. From now on, he will give even more, especially to the lepers and to the church.

There is also evident a gradual detachment from the easy life,

the luxury, and the parties to which he had been accustomed, and even from his former friends.

And then there is the loosening of his family ties—also a slow process—climaxed in his total surrender at the trial before the bishop.

Being thus freed of everything, says his biographer Thomas of Celano, "Peace will walk hand in hand with poverty all along his way" (1 Cel. 15). The same holds good for the first brothers: "Because of their poverty, they had peace of mind everywhere; not embarrassed by any fear, nor distracted by any worries, they awaited the next day without apprehension" (1 Cel. 39). This attitude of the early brotherhood is summed up by Saint Bonaventure in his Major Life of Francis: "Without any material possessions, no desire to have anything, and no fear to lose anything, their hearts were at peace" (4,7).

II. Inward Liberation

SECONDLY, without doubt, this outward release is real yet incomplete. Saint Francis' peace does not come only from the absence of goods but from a more inward liberation, from a release of self.

Let us remember the fear he had for his father Bernardone, his shame to beg in front of his

friends and relatives, his attempts to avoid lepers. He learned to conquer himself. He did so because he clearly understood that he had to, in order to find "the hidden treasure," the kingdom, the Lord. Before becoming a pacifier, Francis had himself to be inwardly pacified.

A rapid survey through Francis' 27 Admonitions is sufficient to show us what inner peace is and how it expresses itself.

You are *not at peace* in the following situations:

1. when you follow your own will (Adm. 2, 3).
2. when you boast about the good that the Lord does in you (Adm. 2, 3; 12, 2; 17.1).
3. when you dismiss your superior (Adm. 3, 7).
4. when you claim the office superior as your own and are disturbed (dis-pacified) about losing your position (Adm. 4, title and v. 3).
5. when you boast about God's gifts (Adm. 5, 4-8; 19, 1).
6. when you envy your brother for the good he does (Adm. 8, 3).
7. when you get upset or angry or are scandalized, when someone sins (Adm. 11.2).
8. when you get angry or disturbed in the defense

of your rights or interests (Adm. 11, 3).

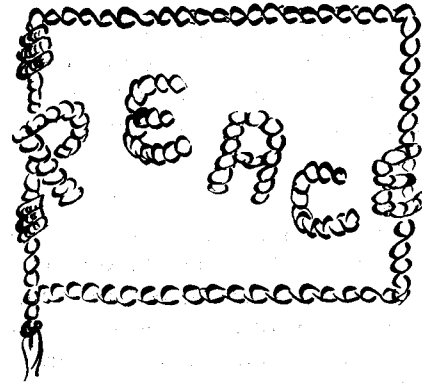
9. when you are scandalized or distressed at the first word spoken against you or the first thing done against you (Adm. 14, 3).
10. when you grudgingly accept reproof, accusation, and blame (Adm. 23, 1).
11. when you are not amenable to the rod of correction (Adm. 24, 2).
12. when you are unwilling to accept rebuke with courtesy... even when you are not to be blamed (Adm. 23, 2-3).

On the other hand, you *are at peace* in the following situations:

1. when you don't hold any grudge at the wrong done to you but instead love your enemy (Adm. 9, 2).
2. when you don't get upset or angry, should your superior give an order that is against your conscience (Adm. 11, 2), but keep peace of soul.
3. when, despite all that you have to suffer in this world, you remain at peace in mind and body (Adm. 15, 2).

III. Francis at Peace

FRANCIS SANG about his inner peace in his Cantic of Brother Sun. After he had composed it, a serious dispute happened to arise between the Bishop of Assisi and



the podestà. As a result, the bishop excommunicated the podestà, and the podestà issued an order forbidding anyone to sell anything to the bishop, to buy anything from him, or to make any business transaction with him. Said Francis: "It is a great shame to us, that at a time when the podestà and the bishop so hate each other no one can be found to reestablish peace and concord between them." On this occasion he added the following strophe to his cantic:

All praise be yours, my Lord,
for those who forgive for love of
you
and bear illness and trial;
happy those who endure in
peace.
By you, Most High, they will be
crowned.

Then he called one of his companions to ask the podestà to go to the bishop's house. When the brother had left, he said to two others: "Go and sing The Song of Brother Sun before the bishop,

the podestà, and those who are with them. I trust that the Lord will at once put humility and peace in their hearts, and that they will return to their former friendship and affection." And, as Francis had foretold, peace and concord were restored between these two men. From great discord and scandal they returned to complete harmony (SP 101 and LP 44).

The circumstances are also instructive, under which Francis wrote the other verses of his Cantic:

already very sick... living in a cell made of mats near San Damiano [LP 42]: hardly able to bear the light of the sun during the day or the light of fire at night, his eyes causing him so much pain that he could neither lie down nor sleep, so to speak, a horde of rats running around and over him.... In all that Francis remained peaceful and wrote his Cantic to Brother Sun [LP 43 and SP 100; cf. 2 Cel. 213]

He lived peacefully in spite of his sufferings, as if he had already entered the kingdom of God. He remained unshaken and joyful, singing in his heart (Eph. 5:19—1 Cel. 93).

On the other hand, there is no doubt that Francis has known his hours of trouble. He is described as being sometimes worried about his own salvation or that of his brothers, fearful also about

the future of his Order, disturbed over the scandals caused by some of the brothers. Each time he complains about it in his prayer to the Lord, and each time, too, he regains inner peace in the Lord's presence (2 Cel. 116-117; LM 83).

IV. Conclusions

WE SHOULD read these texts over and over. Then we would discover Francis' secret: he was a peacemaker because he had inner peace, peace deep within his heart. But he came to this inner state of pacification through a long series of renunciations, and even more so through a steadily growing closeness to his Lord. That, after all, goes together with renunciation.

Thomas of Celano describes in his first biography of Francis this continual search for the Lord: the "hidden treasure," as Francis calls it, which he finds in the grotto during his novitiate years (1 Cel. 6) or in suffering and tribulations at the end of his life (1 Cel. 93; LP 43; SP 100; 2 Cel. 213) is his Lord Jesus. It is the reign of Jesus that takes over Francis' life and fills it with peace. This treasure removes all the rest and takes the place of his former wealth and money, as well as his youth's light-heartedness and aspirations. Thus Francis appears as a man focussed on God, without luggage, free, his heart liberated,

in peace. With his brothers he forms a group of pilgrims completely free, without fears, capable of announcing true peace.

Bonaventure has put it in one phrase, short but loaded with meaning: "He announced peace, preached salvation, and united in the bond of true peace great numbers who, separated from Christ, had been far from salvation" (LM 3, 2). We find here the words "unite," "peace," "salvation," and "Christ"—all used synonymously. To announce salvation is to make peace, because it is to proclaim Jesus Christ, the true Peace. To be in sin, far from Christ, is equivalent to not being pacified. Preaching is the same as announcing Jesus, the Savior and our Peace (Eph. 2:4). That is why Francis, in all his preaching, first said, "The Lord give you peace" (1 Cel. 23; Test. 23).

The pacifier, the preacher of peace, must first of all be himself a peaceful man if he wants his mission to be successful. To be at peace implies to be free of material possessions, to be free of any desires, to be free of our very selves; above all it means to be one with Christ. This explains Francis' demands in his admonitions: material poverty, and even more, spiritual poverty—poverty which makes free, free of everything, free of your own

self, free of all longings and ambitions except to possess "the hidden treasure."

In other words, a peaceful man is a man without sin, for peace and sin are opposed to each other. Sin is something negative: it is hostility which sets one man against another, it is judging and condemning (and often a means of justifying yourself). On the contrary, peace is something positive: it is not only the absence of hostility, fighting, or adversity, but an intimate encounter with the Lord, the Lamb of God who takes away and destroys all sin and all enmities, judgments, and condemnations.

If you have met the Lord, you are justified, pacified, without resentment, and without the morbid need to judge or condemn anyone. As Saint Paul wrote to the Ephesians (2:13-16): "Jews and pagans, you used to be so far apart from one another; but you have been brought very close, by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, and has made the two one, breaking down the barrier of hostility that kept you

apart, killing hostility by the cross."

In concluding, let us bring out some guidelines for truly living in peace:

1. First you must strip off your old behavior with your old self (Col. 3:9), your pretentious rights and your resentments.

2. Next, close your eyes and your heart to any evil and error, present or past, in your brother; for otherwise you cannot make peace with him.

3. Have confidence in others, not because of themselves, but because of Christ who has reconciled them.

4. Be creative and imaginative in finding, like Saint Francis, the word and the deed that will draw people together.

5. Finally, be patient, not expecting peace immediately, and not becoming discouraged.

"I recommend my brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ to avoid quarrels (Titus 3:2) and disputes about words (2 Tim. 2:15), not to criticize others, but to be gentle, peaceful and forbearing, courteous (Titus 3:2), and humble" (Rule of 1223, 3, 10-11).



Conversion with Francis

THADDEUS HORGAN, S.A.

ASSISI IS a charming hill-top city in Umbria. As one drives down the State Highway just past Spello it appears in the distance to the right. As the car approaches Rivo Torto its charm increases. It appears to be dominated by the yellow stucco and pink stone of the buildings which softly reflect the sun. Mount Subbiasco's large rounded shape seems to sit there like a properly placed stage prop. The scene justifies its being a tourist stop. The city's domes and spires suggest it is also a pilgrimage place. In fact, it is both, depending on the visitor.

Being a Franciscan in the Penitential tradition could be like a tourist experience, or it can be, as it should be, a pilgrimage. Like

Assisi, Franciscanism has become a charming legend which idealizes lofty goals. It can become a refreshing spot that somehow lifts us out of reality and makes us feel good. Assisi's guides have a lot of nice little stories to tell the tourist, and the

scenery is a perfect blend to add just that touch of beauty needed to uplift our spirits. The charm of the place, its suggested images of a past religious chivalry, and its relics can almost put us in touch with the impossible dreams of a self-assured simple sanctity at which all the world likes to smile. A tourist trip is refreshing and, like all vacations, unreal because we have to return to our everyday lives.

Or we can step beyond the preserved atmosphere of a thirteenth century city and take into ourselves, not the images, but the realities of Assisi. Assisi is the city of people who lived at the threshold of the Renaissance. Like other men and women of his day, Francis of Assisi experienced the trend in society that made men and women the center of the world. Assisi is his monument. It still is a city of people experiencing anew the trend to make the human person the center of all reality. But it is a city with a religious flavor. It is a living contradiction to the trends of the

time. Its men and women may hawk souvenirs and try to entice visitors into "genuinely quaint" restaurants built during the past twenty years, but they cannot change its basic appeal. Assisi turns one's attention to God. It exists today because of the fame of a man turned to God. The neighboring town of Spello which in many ways is as charming as Assisi lacks that one basic quality. It is just another quaint Umbrian town. Assisi is the place to go, and for one reason: it is the town of the joyous penitent, Francis of Assisi.

The city is a contradiction. It holds the mementoes of pain, denial, and the hard realities of a human life. But these very things are enshrined in a motif of joy. People who go there to see only the joy are tourists. People who go there to see the reality that constituted that joy are pilgrims.

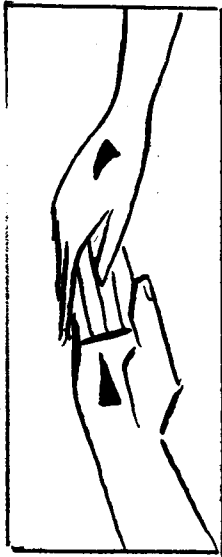
On walls all over the city small multi-colored tiles proclaim *Pax et bonum*. That sums up Francis' life. It was the goodness of God that turned his life into a pilgrimage for peace. By God's grace the path of the pilgrimage was revealed to him: Conversion.

Franciscan Penitential life is a pilgrimage along the path of conversion. Our guide is Francis. Saint Clare wrote in her Testament that "The Son of God became for us the Way; and that

Way our Blessed Father Francis, his true lover and imitator, has shown and taught us by word and example." Our guide teaches us by word and example. We are not to try to copy him. Rather, on our pilgrimage we should try to assimilate and make part of our lives his teaching and his example. We cannot be Francis of Assisi. We are ourselves. It is that self that is called to conversion.

As individuals we have values, opinions, prejudices, likes and dislikes. All of these and all that makes up our personalities are called to conversion. Aware of our humanness we know from the outset that this will take time. It will be a lifelong pilgrimage. Its beginnings are in our faith. And we are sustained on the way by obedience to the will of God. From time to time we will have to recall that, as Francis did. He was like us, as human, as faltering, as hesitant. Unlike Saint Paul, he did not fall off a horse and see the light instantly and totally. Francis' experience of his vocation was gradual and developmental. Here I would like to review that experience to point out how real it was, despite the legends; how much like our vocational experience it was, despite our supposition that "it couldn't have been"; and how similar with circumstances changed it was to ours despite our tendency to think that the grace given Francis "couldn't be given to us."

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forgiveness to overcome the narrow limits of our sinfulness.¹

Biblically, sinfulness means alienation from God. It is hard to admit our sinfulness. That is the first obstacle to conversion. Yet, like us, Francis of Assisi was a Christian from birth. Like all young people he was ambitious to be somebody, to make his mark, to accomplish something with his life. Seeking glory through knighthood was not a very unusual dream for a well heeled merchant's son. Seeking opportunities on his own terms to prove himself is also a common human experience. So is a sense of dissatisfaction, of pondering the worthwhileness of it all, and feeling unsuccessful. He tried again and again to be what he thought he should be.

The first moment of the grace of conversion offered him and to which he responded was when he opened himself up and wondered if God had willed something other than his own self-perceived future. He felt a need for God and struggled with what this meant. In our lives our failure to accept our need for God is the greatest cause of alienation in our lives. In a word it is sinfulness. Look at Francis and how he groped with this. It was not until

he was 23 that he fully realized his basic need. He fumbled with it, tried to open himself up to discern the meaning of his need, and wandered about "seriously," so much so that his peer group noticed a difference in him. Then through a series of dreams born of his experience he started to convert.

What had happened? Francis underwent a changed view of what it means to be a Christian. Jesus' first preaching (Mt. 4:12-17) had to do with changing his hearers' understanding of what the Kingdom of God was about. It was not territorial, nor were its signs power, prosperity, and might. Rather, it was, is, and is to be the active rule of God over all creation through the Messiah. It was the reality of a relationship of love alive and active in the world. Francis realized this. His heart began to change, that is, the source of all his being and personality and energy was turning more and more to God. Francis experienced on his pilgrimage what it meant to change his fundamental values from those of his society to those of God. The experience made him aware of what total dependence on God was. It was the beginning of his appreciation of poverty as the safeguard of the security of God in one's life. It made him realize that to be turned to God means leaving aside values that the times pro-

pose—like consumerism, accumulating this world's goods, and putting trust in the genius of humanity alone.

As is doubtless true of us, Francis was still not totally converted. For two more years he wrestled and struggled. He had learned of God's pardon and all embracing compassion. Saint John's words meant much to him, as they should to us: "I am writing this, my children, to stop you from sinning, but if anyone should sin, we have our advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, who is just; he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away, and not only ours, but the whole world's" (1 Jn. 2:1-2). He increasingly became aware of the grace and pardon and compassion of Jesus. He became pardoning and compassionate. His love increased, his awareness of all creation's participation in redemption increased, his knowledge of Christ increased. And all this was done by prayer and deeds. Turning to God also was turning to neighbor. All of this gave him peace.

But Francis still had a hard time forgetting himself. The life of conversion was up-hill. Francis experienced the great jolting that all dying to self entails. Little by little he assimilated the gospel message. With each step he had to expend energy. Finally one day he met a leper. He had a

¹Karl Rahner, S.J., *Encyclopedia of Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 292.

particular revulsion for lepers. He could not see himself with his talents, abilities, and self-perception having any contact with lepers. Yet he knew God called him to heroic love, to complete selflessness, and to total conversion. He dismounted and embraced what he thought he hated.

In his Testament, Francis tells us what then happened: "The Lord gave me, Brother Francis, the grace of beginning to do penance in this way: that when I was in sins, it seemed extremely bitter to me to look at lepers, and the Lord himself led me in among them and I practiced mercy with them. And when I came away from them what seemed bitter to me, was changed to sweetness of spirit and body for me; and after that I did not wait long and left the world."

For Francis, this was his victory over self. He experienced concretely dependence on God (poverty) and the lowliness (humiliation) of life that characterized Jesus. He had literally put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Or to phrase it another way he replaced egoism in his heart with living out what it means to be in the body of Christ. He broke the fetters that bound him away from

God. His appearance before the Bishop of Assisi and his encounter with his father symbolized that no longer would the values of this world, the expectations of his father and peers, or his own desire for greatness on his own terms, hold him back from fully realizing the will of God. Damian Isabel, in the introduction to the *Workbook for Franciscan Studies*, points out that "this historic moment was the external sign of what already happened to Francis interiorly."²

Francis retired then, as was the custom among the penitents of his day, to a hermitage on Mount Subbiasco. There he lived a life of penance in prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. His alms, however, were no longer material; they were the witness of his life. He consciously chose to be poor and little like Jesus who emptied himself and did not cling to his equality with God. Phillippians 2 contains the great hymn of the early Church about Christ. It sums up Francis' goal of living the life of Christ.

Yet for all this, Francis' conversion was not complete. During this period of his life when reflection on the Word of God had such an important effect

on him, he grew and developed in what might be called the biblical virtue of "steadfastness" or "singlemindedness." All the while it became clearer and clearer to him that conversion, however personally experienced, has an ecclesial or communal side to it as well. Francis, as he came to understand this, responded by going about fixing up chapels. It was a normal response—he did the things at hand which he could do in his effort to discern God's will. He was ready to risk himself even for what he might have felt unprepared to do. He did not hesitate to ask and get help from others in the Body of Christ. The practical implications of this in our lives are obvious.

We may remember clearly that Francis heard the words "Go and repair my house" from the cross at San Damiano, but we might tend to forget that God works more often in ordinary circumstances. The totality of his call came to Francis while he heard the Gospel of Saint Matthew proclaimed at Mass. The passage was Mt. 10:7-13. After receiving an explanation and reflecting on it, Francis knew what he must do. His vocation was to be united

to God in prayer, to live literally the life of Jesus, and to proclaim to others the Good News of the Gospel. Francis began to preach penance (1 Cel. 23). At this moment, Franciscanism came into being. Francis was to incarnate in himself the entire meaning of the Incarnation and to proclaim it to others so they would do likewise.

This, too, is conversion. As Francis' subsequent life shows, conversion is continuous, should be constant, and ought to be total. In our life's pilgrimage on the path of conversion as Penitential Franciscans let us learn from the experience of Francis. We can be like visitors to Assisi. Either we are tourists and see Francis as extraordinary and "oooh" and "aah" at all the sights; or we are pilgrims, who recognize that Francis attained peace and joy because of his fidelity to his call to conversion, his steadfastness in prayer, his singlemindedness to preserve his changed heart, and his obedience to proclaim by his living and example as well as by his preaching, the Good News that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel!

²See p. 19; I recommend, in this connection, pp. 8-28 of this work, as well as Chrysostomus Dukker's *The Changing Heart: The Penance-Concept of Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1959), for further insight into the meaning of Francis' conversion.

Habit

The garb of most common man,
Now given in this moment,
Descends as the prodigal's inheritance.

No habit of perfection,
Only symbolic confirmation
Of sin's consistent habit.

Sign of what is,
Hope of what becomes,
All contained within.

All stand as priest-friars.
Black habit becomes liturgical garment
For the fraternal sacrifice.

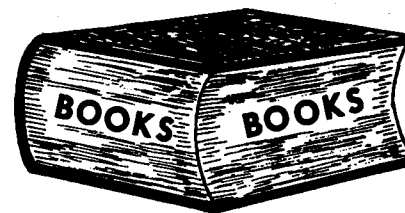
Within, the empty sacrifice.
Nothing is offered
But the nothingness of sin.

The black is proclamation
Of void too wide to be filled
By any created thing.

But in death's last moment,
The common man will discover
Deception no longer present.

Calvary, finally fully manifested:
The Cross, no thing, but a person.
It is Christ who wears the habit.

Timothy Johnson, O.F.M. Conv.



The Importance of Being Sick: A Christian Reflection. By Leonard Bowman. Gaithersburg, Md.: Consortium Books, 1976. Pp. viii-218. Cloth, \$12.00.

Reviewed by Father Wilfrid Hept, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Francis Chapel, Providence, Rhode Island.

From the very moment man is born of woman's pain to die in his own, the question "why pain and sickness" naturally presents itself. Whether the answer be philosophical, theological, or scientific, it always leaves us with a gnawing feeling that there must be more to the answer. In a culture where God is a question and the pursuit of earthly paradise is the dream, modern man is inclined to look to medical science for his answer to the question of death and sickness. In his book *The Importance of Being Sick* Leonard Bowman rejects science as the ultimate answer because it leads to a nightmare of illusion. He uses scripture and the insights of Christian thinkers to come to grips with this most baffling and elusive topic. In a foreword the author points out that his book is not intended to be a full-bloom theology of sickness, nor is it

addressed to professional theologians. The book, intended to explore ideals, is a Christian reflection on what can happen in the life of a sick person animated by faith or in the lives of those who serve the sick.

The book is divided into four parts, entitled "The Sick and Health," "Coping," "Caring," and "Some Special Challenges." In Part I the author gives a stimulating discussion of what it means to be sick or healthy. But the most fruitful insights come in Chapter Two, which concerns itself with what the Bible says about sickness. For the non-scripture-scholar this chapter is a nice compendium of the gradual awakening of the meaning of suffering in the relationship of the sick person with God in the light of the Old and New Testament writers. The reader sees the historical development of the attitude toward pain and suffering as it progresses from Old Testament times to its full meaning in the Good News of the gospel. In the beginning the first Psalm gives expression to health and prosperity as a reward for faithfulness to the Law. From this primitive concept the author goes on to consider the problem as it is seen through the eyes of Job and like Job realizes that God's designs are sometimes inscrutable. But it was the prophet Isaiah "who realized that there is a vital connection between suffering and establishing of God's own realm where suffering and death are overcome." The real answer to the question of sickness and death is

found in the gospel account of the God-man Jesus Christ, who conquers sickness and death through his resurrection.

Part II gives some interesting observations concerning suffering for the sick person as well as those who are close to him. There is a rather significant chapter on "Dying," especially as it affects the survivors and has implications for them.

Part III is perhaps the most rewarding for the professional person—doctor or nurse; for Chapter Seven is entitled "Professionals and People," and the next chapter "Facing Ethical Challenges." The author points out the high esteem in which the medical profession is held in American Culture. This is indeed an advantage, but it also has its dangers. The Author says, "Revered like a priest, the medical professional may be tempted into a sort of clericalism, especially in his relationship to non-professionals. This is especially true of those who unconsciously share the assumption that "salvation is a full life in an earthly paradise." This attitude may cause the doctor to make decisions concerning undue and expensive treatment in prolonging life and other responsibilities that more rightly belong to the family. There is a very good appreciation of the delicate function of the nurse. "Though the doctor has the primary responsibility for the patient's medical care, it is the nurse who cares for him most immediately and constantly." And "The nurse is called upon to walk the delicate emotional

balance between becoming overly involved and becoming depersonalized." While both the professional and non-professional will find good guidelines for "Facing Ethical Challenges" (as Chapter Eight is entitled), the reader will no doubt wish the author had been a little more specific in regard to some of these ethical questions he discusses. This reviewer wonders whether the author, in a desire to avoid religious denominationalism and promote ecumenism, has not been deliberately vague in facing some of the medical ethical questions.

The final Part considers three classes in our society that are of deep concern to every involved Christian: the aging, the handicapped, and the mentally ill. The best way to characterize these chapters is to say they are a realistic evaluation of coming to terms with these limitations in living a full, normal life. The author, however, never loses sight of the ultimate goal of life, which is eternity where imperfections will be no more. Like most of the book this section presents the limitations of our humanity which call for an acceptance not of despair, but of hope—an acceptance not necessarily looking for a cure to sickness but rather for meaning and value in sickness. This meaning and value will come, not from any human relationship of parent and child, husband and wife, doctor and patient—nor even wealth or poverty; but from one's fundamental relationship with Christ. Hence the apt sub-title of this book: "A Christian Reflection."

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- Boros, Ladislaus, *Christian Prayer*. Trans. David Smith; New York: Seabury Press, 1976. Pp. vi-121. Cloth, \$5.95.
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COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1977

FI 500 Bibliography

1 cr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 8:00-9:05, Room 4, M-W
This course is required of all new degree candidates after June
1977. It must be taken in the first summer session attended.

FI 501 Sources for Franciscan Studies

3 cr., Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D. Cand.: 9:10-10:15,
Room 1
This course is a prerequisite for 503 and 504.

FI 503 Early Franciscan Texts

3 cr., Dr. Duane Lapsanski, D.Th.: 9:10-10:15, Room 4
Prerequisite: 501

FI 504 Life of St. Francis

3 cr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 2
Prerequisite: 501

FI 506 Survey of Franciscan History

3 cr., Fr. Lawrence Landini, O.F.M., H.E.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 1

FI 508 History of Franciscan Thought

3 cr., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 2

FI 511 Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts

2 cr., Dr. Malcolm Wallace, Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 2

FI 517 Introduction to Palaeography

2 cr., Dr. Girard Etzkorn, Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 3

FI 521 Rule of St. Francis

2 cr., Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D. Phil., Oxon.:
10:20-11:25, Room 3

FI 523 Bonaventurian Texts

2 cr., Fr. Juvenal Lalor, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 4

FI 532 The Lay Franciscan Movement

2 cr., Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M., M.A.: 8:00-9:05, Room 2

FI 534 Conventualism, Primitive Observance and Capuchin Reform

2 cr., Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., S.T.L.: 8:00-9:05, Room 4

FI 539 Spiritual Direction and the Franciscan Tradition

2 cr., Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D. Min.: M-W-F, 7:00-9:00 P.M.
Room 3

FI 552 The Franciscan Contribution to Peace and Justice

2 cr., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.; Fr. Roderic Petrie,
O.F.M., M.A., M.S. Ed.; Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap.,
D. Phil., Oxon.: 11:30-12:35, Room 1

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March, 1977

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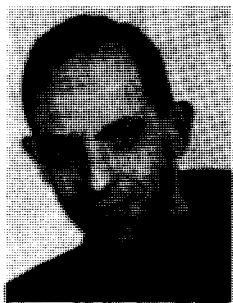
Vol. 27, No. 3

CONTENTS

THE OTHER SIDE	66
<i>A Review Editorial</i>	
TWO GOSPEL HAIKUS	67
<i>Roberto O. González, O.F.M.</i>	
BROTHER GILES AND THE DESERT FATHERS	68
<i>Timothy Johnson, O.F.M. Conv.</i>	
ASK ANOTHER SIGN	77
<i>Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.</i>	
GETHSEMANE	78
<i>William L. Beaudin, O.F.M.</i>	
PROPHETICALLY LIVING FRANCISCAN PENANCE	80
<i>Thaddeus Horgan, S.A.</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	92



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The Other Side

“THE IDEA SOMETIMES heard today that darkness can be avoided and we should find God only in joy and celebration, in peace and comfort, is a grave delusion that perhaps reveals our present lack of experience.” This statement by Professor Morton Kelsey is found in his new and superb book, *The Other Side of Silence: A Guide to Christian Meditation* (Ramsey, N.J.; Paulist Press, 1976; viii 314 pp.; paper, \$5.95, cloth, \$8.95), p. 47. The context of the statement is a chapter called “Cracking the Husk: Man’s Need for God,” in which a forceful case is made for the inevitability of facing up to our own emptiness and the darkness within us (John of the Cross), so as to reach the true life and light to which we have been called.

This is a superb book, written as a practical (almost how-to) complement to the author’s earlier *Encounter with God*. Professor Kelsey is an Episcopal priest with thirty years of parish experience (twenty as rector of his own church) as well as extensive academic, counseling, and publishing experience. He knows first-hand whereof he speaks, and his advice is as compelling as it is sensible. The particular service he feels he has rendered us with the publication of this book is the integration of the insights of depth psychology (the doctrine of Jung, in particular) with those of traditional Christian spirituality.

Readers will perhaps recall the author’s earlier *Myth, History, and Faith* (Paulist, 1974), reviewed in our April, 1975, issue. In both books, and in so much else of what Kelsey has written, what stands out with sustained forcefulness is his personal experience of “the spiritual world” as the atmosphere in which we have our being. A good deal of this present book is devoted precisely to an explanation of that atmosphere—on the need not merely to express abstract intellectual belief in it, but to experience it as real in one’s own life. Now that so many of us have looked into what oriental mysticism has to offer, and have been forced in the long run to admit that it is not exactly what we have needed (which is not to detract from the very real benefits it does offer), perhaps we are ready once again to turn to our own tradition in all docility and humility.

It would be very difficult to find a more practical, up-to-date guide-book for this renewed journey than this latest by Morton Kelsey. After leading the reader gently through the introductory material (obstacles to even undertaking the journey, the character of the environment in which it is undertaken), the author spells out the individual, specific factors in disposing oneself for the divine Visitation: questions of the time for meditating, the need for silence, the keeping of a journal, etc. He then devotes a good deal of attention to the need to *understand* the experiences sought and attained, and here is where depth psychology has so much to teach us. After a fine discussion of the healing power of meditation, e.g., in overcoming depression and anger, he concludes with some “examples” of meditation—i.e., meditative applications of gospel passages, of passages from John of the Cross, Francis Thompson, and others.

The book is well written, by an author thoroughly at home in the Roman Catholic tradition (he teaches at Notre Dame) as well as the Anglican. It would seem impossible to recommend it too highly to any of our readers seeking either to begin the meditative journey or to gain a better understanding of what they have already learned to savor. Perhaps it is to belabor the obvious, if one were to point out that Lent is the ideal time to set out on this genuinely paschal journey, and that Easter is precisely the “other side” that we all hope to reach.

Fr. Michael D. Mailach, OFM

Two Gospel Haikus

I
Scratches in the sky
Are like the bottom of my heart
When the syrophoenician woman
Fills my dreams

II
Icy waves chiseled blue idols,
Sea gulls broke the rhythm of time,
As lovers transformed water into wine.

Roberto O. González, O.F.M.

"Words of Salvation":

Similarities between the "Sayings" of Brother Giles and the "Sayings" of the Desert Fathers

TIMOTHY JOHNSON, O.F.M. CONV.

WHEN BROTHER Giles left the active ministry to give himself wholly to the contemplative life, he did not act as an egocentric individual. Many friars, including Saint Francis, had spent time within the solitude of the hermitages to seek God above everything else. But when Giles entered the hermitage, he united himself with a tradition much deeper than that of the Franciscan eremitical life. He touched upon a highly respected and ancient tradition within the Church: that of the early anchorites or, as they are more commonly known, the "Desert Fathers."

There are many parallels which could be drawn between Giles and the early anchorites. Both Giles and the desert hermits agreed that no one should give himself to the contemplative life without undergoing some sort of purification beforehand. The reason for this was simple: The

"desert" of the cell was no place for an egocentric person. This would lead only to self-destruction.

Why would anyone desire to give himself to a wholly contemplative life? The answer from Giles and the Desert Fathers was to find oneself and God. It was the intention of both Giles and the Desert Fathers to leave the worries and anxieties of the world so that they could find their true identity in God. For Giles it was through "contemplation"; for the Desert Fathers it was through "quies," which means "rest." Actually both terms describe the same reality. For Giles and the desert hermits, finding their true self was discovering their "nothingness" when faced with the "Allness" of God. This experience of the "Allness" of God is called "contemplation" or "rest."

Giles and the Desert Fathers left the noise and cluttered ob-

structions of the world and sought out quiet and lonely places for their search for themselves and for God.¹ They were not, however, completely alone in their search. Giles lived within the context of a community, and the early anchorites lived in a community as well, though it was very loosely structured. For both, this search for their true selves and for God took on the added dimension of community. To leave out the aspect of community would have gone against their experience of faith; for, not only did they find themselves and God within the solitude of their cells, but they also found others in God.

It was this finding of others in God that allowed Giles and the early anchorites to share freely their spiritual insights with those who came to them seeking advice. It was from this constant flow of visitors seeking "a word of salvation" that we have today the *Verba Seniorum* and the *Golden Words of Brother Giles*.

With these similarities in mind, some of the different "sayings" of Brother Giles will be compared with some of the "sayings" of the Desert Fathers. The intention is not to draw out some sort of "theology" from these sayings (because neither Giles nor the Desert Fathers had this in mind when they uttered their "sayings"), but to approach these sayings as they stand and to show that these "words of salvation" have many common themes. These sayings should be approached as words which were uttered for the spiritual welfare of others and were lived by those who uttered them.

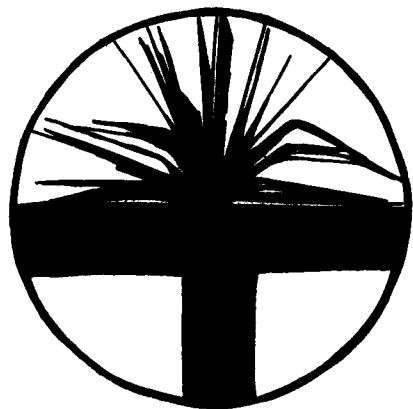
Humility

IN THE SEARCH for God, both Giles and the Desert Fathers saw the pre-eminence of the virtue of humility. Giles stated this fact quite plainly when he said: "Nobody can come to God except along the road of humility."² The desert monks had said pretty much the same thing, as can be

¹The idea of the "world" is used quite frequently throughout this paper. When the term is used it is not meant to suggest that the world in and of itself is evil. What is meant is that there are many things in the "world" which, because of their influence on man, can have a negative effect on his spiritual life.

²The *Golden Words of Brother Giles*, #28, p. 54.

seen from this "saying" of John of Thebes: "The monk must be before all else humble. This is the first commandment of the Lord who said: 'Blessed are the poor of spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God.'"³



Once Abbot Macarius was on his way home to his cell from the marshes, carrying reeds, and he met the devil with a reaper's sickle in his path. The devil tried to get him with the sickle, and couldn't. And he said: I suffer great violence from you, Macarius, because I cannot overcome you. For see, I do all the things that you do. You fast, and I eat nothing at all. You watch, and I never sleep. But there is one thing alone in which you overcome me. Abbot Macarius said: What is that? Your humility, the Devil replied, for because of it I cannot overcome you.⁵

It should be noted that Giles and the early anchorites saw humility as a powerful weapon against evil because, by means of it, they could distinguish between illusion (evil) and reality (good) with the experience of their individual "deserts."

Both Giles and the desert monks recognized the power to confront evil which comes from the virtue of humility. Giles expressed this insight well when he said: "Lowliness is like lightning. A thunderbolt hurtles and strikes devastatingly and is seen no more. That is how humility destroys every evil. It is the enemy of each fault."⁴

The Desert Fathers concurred with Giles (although each expressed it in a slightly different way), as can be seen in the following "saying":

³*The Wisdom of the Desert*, p. 52.

⁴#40, p. 56.

⁵Pp. 52-53.

The attempt to try to seize illusions in place of reality is sin; and this action is proper to the false self of man

Through their humility, they came to recognize their true selves in God and so did not try to grasp at and possess illusions. The attempt to try to seize illusions in place of reality is sin; and this action is proper to the false self of man. Thus, through humility Giles and the Desert Fathers rejected their false selves and sin.

Temptation

THIS REJECTION of the false self and the evil which it predicates did not happen all at once, nor was it a painless experience for Giles or for the Desert Fathers. This rejection of evil placed them in the midst of deep spiritual conflicts which were in many cases highlighted by the severe temptations they experienced. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that both Giles and the desert monks viewed temptations as something necessary and even beneficial if they were dealt with properly. Giles expressed this thought when he said:

A mighty treasury cannot be maintained by peaceful means since struggles and fights re-

peatedly erupt around it. That is why, the bigger the graces a man has, the more daring are the assaults he endures from the Evil One. But he must not let this deflect from developing the gifts he has been given because the sharper the contests the grander the crown of victory—if he wins.⁶

The Desert Fathers agreed with the basic idea that temptations are necessary and beneficial. This can be seen in the following saying:

Abbot Pastor said that Abbot John the Dwarf had prayed to the Lord and the Lord had taken away all his passions, so that he became impassible. And in this condition he went to one of the elders and said: You see before you a man who is completely at rest and has no more temptations. The elder said: Go and pray to the Lord to command that some struggle be stirred up in you, for the soul is matured only in battles. And when temptations started up again he did not pray that the struggle be taken away from him, but only said: Lord give me the strength to get through the fight.⁷

It is important to see that both Giles and the Desert Fathers saw temptation in the same light be-

⁶#137, p. 74.

⁷Pp. 56-57.

cause they recognized that they could be used as stepping stones in the search for God. This is true because every temptation offered them the opportunity further to reject their false selves and thereby find their true selves in God.

Detachment from the World

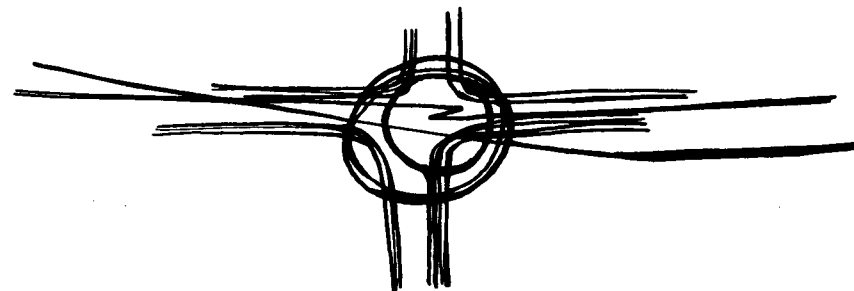
ALTHOUGH IT may not be true for all Christians, both Giles and the Desert Fathers saw great harm in involving oneself with the activities of the world. That is to say, they felt they had to remove themselves physically as much as possible from the world and its activities. Giles had this in mind when he said: "Trees along a beaten track are sometimes broken by the blows of passers-by, so that their first fruit does not ripen. In the same way harm comes from remaining in public."⁸ And the same thought was echoed by Abbot Anthony when he said:

Just as fish die when they remain on dry land so monks remaining away from their cells or dwelling with men of the world lose their determination to persevere in solitary prayer. Therefore, just as fish should go back to sea, so we must return to our cells lest remaining outside we forget to watch ourselves interiorly.⁹

Within the desire of Giles and

the Desert Fathers to flee from the world, there is no hint of a frantic attempt to run away from something that was good. On the contrary, it should be noted that they are not so much running away from something good, as running towards something they perceived to be better. That is to say, their search for God demanded the rejection of something "good" which would enable them to receive that which is the "best."

The importance of being physically withdrawn from the world as much as possible is closely united with the belief that it is important for a man to be physically alone as much as possible. There are two principles at work here. The first is that the contemplative, as Giles and the Desert Fathers envisaged him, should be physically separated from the world. The second is that he should be physically set apart from other men—i.e., he should be alone. Giles stressed the second principle when he said: "Further, if a man were truly spiritual he would hardly ever force himself to see, hear, and entertain others except for some special necessity. He would always try to remain alone."¹⁰ The same idea is embodied in the following saying from the Desert Fathers:



A certain provincial judge heard of Abbot Moses and went off to Scete to see him. Someone told the elder that the visitor was coming and he rose up to fly into the marshes. But on the way he ran into the judge with his companions. The judge asked him, saying: Tell us, elder, where is the cell of Abbot Moses? The elder replied: What do you want with him? The man is a fool and a heretic! The judge went on and came to the church of Scete and said to the clerics: I heard about this Abbot Moses and came out here to meet him. And an old man heading for Egypt ran into us, and we asked where the cell of Abbot Moses was and he said to us: What do you want with him? The man is a fool and a heretic! But the clerics, hearing this, were saddened and said: What kind of old man was this, who said such things about the holy man? They said: He was a very old elder with a long black robe. The clerics said: Why, that was Abbot Moses himself. And because he did not want to be seen by you, therefore he said those things about himself. Greatly edified, the judge returned home.¹¹

It is important to realize that, in their desire to be alone, Giles and the Desert Fathers were not saying that man was evil. What they were saying is that they had to be alone to find themselves in God. This is why they fled from the world. When Giles and the early desert monks found their identity in God, they could then see the world in God and likewise find all men in God. In other words, they could not find the world until they gave it up, and they could not discover men as they are in God until they were set apart from men. This ideal is intimately bound to the virtue of humility. It has been said that through humility one rejects his false self to find his true self in God. Likewise, as Giles and the Desert Fathers viewed it, the contemplative must reject his false idea of men and the world so that their true identity can be revealed in God. For Giles and the early anchorites, this rejection took the form of a radical, physical separation from the world.

⁸#222, p. 102.

⁹P. 29—Abbot Anthony is Anthony the Great.

¹⁰#163, p. 82.

¹¹Pp. 35-36.

Although both Giles and the Desert Fathers insisted on the importance of being physically alone in the search for God, they did not turn their back on the reality of the Church as a community with Christ as its head. The tension which existed between the need to be alone and the reality of Christian community was eased by means of the virtue of love within the respective communities of Giles and the Desert Fathers. Giles and the early anchorites were aware of the importance of community and the help which it could offer in their individual search for God. This belief was brought out by Giles when he said: "One's confreres, too, help one toward virtue by their fraternal words inspired by charity, and by the example of their holy lives."¹² And the same belief was expressed by one of the Desert Fathers when he said: "In the beginning when we got together we used to talk about something that was good for our souls, and we went up and up and ascended even to heaven."¹³

It is clear that love, in the eyes of Giles and the Desert Fathers, served to strengthen and encourage them in their search for God. Both Giles and the early anchorites recognized that they

were neither angels nor islands unto themselves. They could see that they were not pure spirits but flesh and blood which demanded that they experience the love of God not only in the heights of contemplation but also within relationships with other men. Giles and the desert monks knew that if they were completely cut off from other men they would eventually turn in on themselves and experience, not the "death" of contemplation, but the death of self-contemplation.

It can be seen that love, for Giles and the Desert Fathers, expressed within a community of those who shared the same calling, eased the tension between the real need to be physically alone and the real need for Christian community.

Contemplation

BY FOLLOWING the road of humility, Giles and the Desert Fathers finally reached and experienced the peace of God which they had been striving to find. This peace was, for them, ultimately experienced within the heights of mystical contemplation, where they discovered their true identity within God and became immersed in his Mystery. This experience of the

contemplative is described by Giles in the following passage:

He does not miss anything the mind can think up in this world. He wants nothing beyond what he experiences and possesses in contemplation now. That's how it was with Mary, "who seated herself at the Lord's feet" (Lk. 10:39). She experienced such bliss at hearing God talking that none of her faculties were aware of, or chose to do, anything beyond what then engaged her.¹⁴

And again this experience described by Giles can be found in the following saying of the Desert Fathers:

They used to say of Abbot Sisois that unless he quickly lowered his hands and ceased from praying, his mind would be carried away into heaven. And whenever he happened to pray with another brother, he made haste to lower his hands lest his mind be carried away and he remain in another world.¹⁵

It was here, within the experience of contemplation, that Giles and the Desert Fathers found the peace of God. It was here, within the experience of contemplation, that they found their true selves, their "nothingness" in comparison to the "Allness" of God. Thus through contemplation Giles and the Desert Fathers were relieved of

the burden of their false selves, and they could find rest within the knowledge and experience of God's love for them.

Conclusion

IT IS OBVIOUS that there is a high degree of similarity between the "sayings" of Brother Giles and those of the Desert Fathers. Their view of the contemplative and his life style were remarkably alike although nine centuries separated them from one another. What then does this say to the world of today, and in particular to those who share as Giles did in the charism which the Spirit breathed into Francis of Assisi?

First of all, it must serve to validate the calling into the "desert" which both Giles and the Desert Fathers received. The fact that there is such deep agreement on the nature of this calling verifies that it was truly inspired by the Spirit of God. This profound agreement points to the fact that these men were not eccentric individuals or the victims of some historical "fluke," but, on the contrary, reasonable men who displayed a tremendous amount of docility to the prompting of the Spirit.

The union of these visionaries speaks aloud a message to the world of today because their

¹²#325, p. 132.

¹³p. 47.

¹⁴#170, pp. 84-85.

¹⁵p. 50.

worlds were in significant ways not much different from today's world.

The world at the time of the Desert Fathers had accepted Christianity at least in name when the Roman Empire had made it the religion of the State. Yet, despite this fact, many men felt the calling of the Spirit to turn their backs to a large degree on a world that was officially "Christian" and enter into the "desert."

The world at the time of Giles identified the Church as having temporal power. In the process, the Church became so identified with the world that it was in many places difficult to draw a distinction between the two. It was in this atmosphere that the hills and valleys of Europe became dotted with the hermitages of those who sought God and felt obliged to turn their backs on a "Christian" world.

What, then, of today's world? The message of Giles and the

Desert Fathers speaks clearly to those countries which masquerade under the banners of Christianity but, in fact, are anything but "Christian." In particular, they speak a word of warning to those who, calling themselves Christian, wish so to identify themselves with the world that in the process the witness value of the Church and the Cross of Christ is diminished if not extinguished. Instead of the world becoming conformed to and transformed by the redemptive wounds of Christ Crucified, the Church becomes conformed to and transformed by the hideous and deceptively destructive wounds of technological madness and egocentric secularism. The time is ripe—in fact, the time demands—that those who are inheritors of the traditions of Giles and the Desert Fathers enter into the "desert" and offer the witness to the world which Giles and the early anchorites offered to theirs.

ONCE AGAIN... it is with real regret that we are forced by rising production costs to increase the price of a year's subscription from \$4.00 to \$5.00. This increase will take effect beginning with 1978 subscriptions to THE CORD. We do hope that the increase will not prove an excessive burden to our faithful readers, and we look forward to continuing to provide you with enlightening and inspiring Franciscan essays, poems, and reviews.

1978 subscriptions to THE CORD — \$5.00

Ask Another Sign

See it:

earth deep, Heaven high,
Holy Cross, stretched aloft,
draw bridge, spanning space,
stumblers' sure foothold
to God's embrace.

But a toll bridge . . .
How pay the passage?
Unclang the gate?

A Body!

Fit a Body to the tree,
Fix a Pontiff,
Priest on the cross bridge.
Tolle, tolle, crucifige Eum.
Ask it.

Christ, Christ,
Savior named,
For this cause come
and slain;
lifted once for all
One for all,
Mercy,
cross us to our Father.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

Gethsemane

I have not been.
I have never seen
Except in pictures, these lines of gothic trees
Arching the road, embracing.
I have passed the cemetery rain-stained angel,
Only in a dream.
For I have begged the silence to prevail
Over common taunts and taut travail;
I have sought to set the burden of these nights
Between the burning compline candles,
To rest my feet in monkish sandals,
To walk the cloister of the gothic trees.

I have not been.
I imagine
I have faced, unflinching, the address above the door—"GOD ALONE"
And known, before I saw the words, their meaning—
Taught by the song of men's voices,
Men who, from all love's choices,
Chose to love the dryness of this desert;
Voices reflecting the image from above
Of silence incarnate.

I have not seen,
Only pictured
The shaven men whose praise resounding
Bounds of listening finches' wings,
And echoes over stone walls and straw fields,
Through barns of stored yield.
I have thirsted for the wetness of sung words
That seep with silence through walls that heard
Divine quiescence speaking to these shaven men.



But I will never go.
It will remain
Unheard, unseen, this place that comprehends its meaning;
These men, the empty, receptive vessels, leaning,
Listening with ears against the silence.

Except as my release from the daily lie,
Except in thought, I have no courage to stay.
I who cater to the question pale at the answer.
I am content to sip the strength of men here
In this place so like the distant garden they remember—
This treasury of unbound beauty and sorrow,
Gethsemane.

William L. Beaudin, O.F.M.

Prophetically Living Franciscan Penance

THADDEUS HORGAN, S.A.

THE ROCK OPERA *Godspell* strikes me as a very Franciscan piece of music. One song in particular stands out:

Day by day . . . O Dear Lord, three things I pray,
To see Thee more clearly,
To love Thee more dearly,
To follow Thee more nearly.

The script of *Godspell* is based on St. Matthew's Gospel. The lyrics express the underlying theme of that Gospel. They also express Francis' ongoing conversion experience. In our lives they sum up how we prophetically can live Franciscan Penance.

Francis lived his change of heart every moment of his life. His sense of sinfulness and need for God were constant. He placed his living, his values, and his deeds always under the judgment of the Gospel. He never permitted himself to forget his encounter with the leper, his victory over selfishness, nor his human tendency to backslide.

Francis turned resolutely to God and responded to the grace of conversion by incarnating in his own person and personality the Gospel personified, the Incarnate Word. His prophetic living of the Gospel was life-long. So, too, is it for Penitent Franciscans.

In our day of instant cures by medicines, gadgets that do things for us instantly, and computers that can remember for us, the "ongoingness" of life can escape our consciousness. One of the countercultural realities of our chosen lives as Franciscans is to accept the fact of growth in ourselves and in our neighbor in the ordinary situations of living. So much of life today is reaction. Our vocation is to grow, like Francis, into living the Gospel. Hans Küng, in his book *The Church*, expresses this well for all of us who are the Church:

... it is clear that the need for reform in the Church, for which it always has ample grounds given that the Church is human and sin-

ful, does not arise from any kind of opportunistic or transient reason, such as an enthusiasm for progress, the desire for modernity, an automatic conformism, fear of temporal powers and so on. It arises primarily from the demands made in the Gospel by the Lord of the Church, the call to metanoia, to new faith, to new righteousness, holiness and freedom, to new life.

In pursuing his goal of total Gospel life, Francis turned to Sacred Scripture to learn there just what a life turned to God practically meant for one who day by day wanted to see, to love, and to follow his Lord. I would suggest that three realities sum up what he learned. These are Repentance, Belief, and the Kingdom of God.

Repentance

FRANCIS DID NOT merely speak or learn about repentance. He repented. The root of his action was acknowledging his need for God. How difficult this is for us in today's society! An acquaintance of mine, a young man who is prosperous, energetic, and ambitious, no longer goes to Church regularly. "I don't need God," is his comment. Fulfillment means independence: political, economic, and moral. Religion connotes restraint for him. He does not see the need for freedom in Christ because in our society freedom means

choice—the right to do or not to do what one wants. It does not necessarily mean the right to choose the good or what is better. This young man feels free. That is enough for him. Francis felt the same way once as the merchant's son.

Yet events in our lives make us aware of our need for God. With prayerful hope I am sure this will happen to this modern young man. It has happened to us who have responded to the call to be Franciscans. But do we keep it alive in us as Francis did, or do we succumb to that security which our life can sometimes claim to offer us? Unless we search for God day by day we may find ourselves more intent on getting "a piece of the rock" (as the Prudential Insurance Company commercial puts it) than on sustaining a real change of heart.

What did Francis do? He was an ecclesial man. He realized that God approaches us individually only to open us up to the expansiveness of the Body of Christ in us and in others. Francis turned to Scripture, to God's revelation, to his Word alive in the Church. It is in and through the Church that we fully become the People of God. Francis' and our call to repentance is ecclesial. Reading Scripture, especially St. Matthew's Gospel, brings this out. Jesus came to establish the reign

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of God in our hearts, the Kingdom of God. We are to be the living covenanted People of God celebrating our relationship with our Father and with our brothers and sisters.

In chapter four of Matthew's Gospel, notice that the first thing Jesus did was to correct the prevalent notions of what the call of God to repentance was all about. Despite the great prophetic preaching of first Isaiah (9:1-7), Jeremiah (23:5-6), Ezekiel (20:33), and others, the current values of power, dominance, and prosperity pervaded the attitudes of Jesus' hearers. Similar attitudes were held initially by Francis, and now perhaps by us. Because Hebrew thought saw God as the Lord of Creation, many saw themselves as lieutenants of a great worldly King. But the Kingdom of God would not be established according to the norms of superior might. Rather, it would be centered in the hearts of people, have its meaning in obedience to God and its practical expression in God's people living the way, the truth, and the life of God incarnate.

This was Francis' great discovery, the great key to sanctity for all the saints. But it was not easy for him because it meant *and means* a topsy turvy re-ordering of the life values which we have and which direct our lives. It amounted and amounts to changing (radically) all that is in

our hearts. In the writings of Francis "the heart" is the source of our dynamic energy for life. As such, it is where sinfulness, egoism, pride, anger or love, service, praise, and thanksgiving have their roots. That is the choice before the Penitent Franciscan.

From his reading of Scripture, from sermons and out of his own experience, Francis learned that God was full of pardon and compassion. Salvation-history and Jesus meant one thing: God's will to pardon, to bridge the gap of estrangement and alienation, to be compassionate with his People who struggle for life in abundance. This was the teaching of Jesus. His example deeply impressed Francis. Jesus not only exhorted men and women to repentance, he welcomed them and reconciled them to his Father. He healed to show that God's power to pardon was alive in the world. He instituted a new covenant relationship in himself by identifying himself with all humanity. He did it in his blood, the source of life in the Hebrew understanding. He rose, and with him all humanity, to a new life of union with the Father. Finally, he sent his Spirit into time so the Church would continue to preach repentance and communicate forgiveness, reconciliation, and life.

Francis realized in time that what Jesus did, he should do. It cannot be stressed enough

among people who have chosen to follow the Poverello's life and example that he not only pondered the life of Jesus, he lived it and experienced in deeds its meaning. He spoke from his experience, not merely from reflection! Living repentance for him was not just personal, it was ecclesial. The power to pardon, to forgive, to reconcile, and to be compassionate belonged to God but was concretized in the fragile efforts of God's People who had received these gifts. And God asks that they be used. This power to pardon was more in the consciousness of Christians in Francis' day than in our own. This perhaps is why confession is now less frequently used. Look at Francis' life. He confessed sacramentally, to his brothers, and even publicly in sermons. People pardoned one another. This willingness to pardon others should be the first fruits of our repentance. It is the healing force of Christianity whose power has never been fully in force. It is an imperative of Franciscan life.

The importance of confession, both sacramental and otherwise, should not be underestimated today. In his doctoral dissertation on the subject, Damian Isabel notes:

Confession was an integral part of being "in penance"; by it one

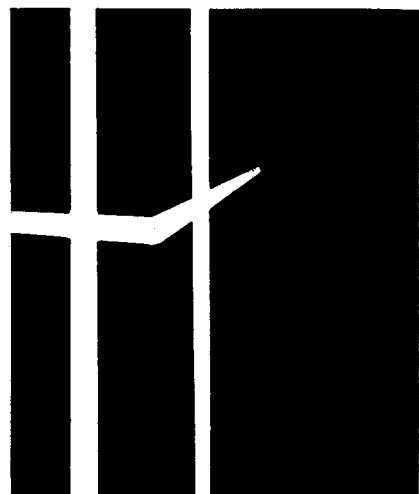
entered into penance and by means of it one continued to express his penitential attitudes. This attitude must be maintained "in the heart," that intimate sphere of man in which the word of God is received, retained and is brought to bear fruit" (1 Rule, 22).¹

In Franciscan parlance, confession maintains "purity of heart," or that steadfastness in repentance, desired by Francis. It was and is a way to "keep close watch" and to remain "vigilant." The practice of confession, both in the sacrament and among ourselves keeps alive the healthy humility one needs to sustain awareness of the need for dependence on God as well as the ready disposition to forgive because we have been forgiven and reconciled.

Biblical Forms of Repentance

FRANCIS HELD confession in high practical esteem for the penitential life. He also undertook penitential practices. They expressed his daily dying to self in order to live the life of the risen Lord. As such, they expressed his continual conversion. They were ecclesial as well because they reminded Francis of the fundamental relationship of loving union with the Father,

¹*The Practice and Meaning of Confession in the Primitive Franciscan Community* (Pont. Univ. Gregoriana, 1973).



with one's neighbor and all creation that the sacrificial life of Jesus established. It is no wonder, then, that Francis assumed the biblical forms of self-denial: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

a. *'Prayer* in the Hebrew Scriptures meant "to intercede for another," to ask for favor and mercy, and was always addressed to God alone. Yahweh was the God of the Covenant, the God who wills to save. Prayer was offered by a people conscious of their covenant and assured of an answer (e.g., Ez. 32:11-14). Daily they prayed the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-9) lest they forget the covenant. In a sense Francis' life was his *Shema*. Franciscan Penitential living is our form of the *Shema* today. In the New Testament prayer is much the same, but with one unique difference: God is Father, the Father of Jesus who

unites us to himself in his covenant sacrifice. God who is Father (Mt. 6:9-15) is a central doctrine in Franciscanism. Discovering this great truth, Francis found the reason (Jn. 14:6) and not only the courage, to give all his earthly possessions to his natural father and turn to God, his true Father. This truth fully perceived and assimilated by Francis led him to do what he did before the Bishop of Assisi. The action that was signified by his conversion was his living faith in God as Father, rather than his stripping himself of all that Peter Bernadone gave him. Francis knew that God, our Father, could always be approached, would always listen, and would respond (Jn. 15:7; 17:16-26). The best statement of the meaning of Franciscan prayer that we have is Francis' paraphrased "Our Father." Francis, turned to God, sought God's Will which he knew was for his good and for that of all creation. His prayer reflects this inner faith. It was genuine prayer because within himself Francis found that integrity offered to the redeemed which leads to confidence.

b. *Fasting* is healthy, doctors tell us, and "Weight Watchers" say it is even fashionable! And fasting is part of the Christian life as it was of Christ's. Why? Fasting for Francis, and for anyone truly turned to God, is not a value in itself. Its value rests in that it expresses an interior dis-

position of conversion (Jer. 14:12; Jonah 3:8). Like true prayer, genuine fasting implies conversion of the heart. It is meant as an aid to assist us in reinforcing our commitment to the will of God. To take up our cross daily means more than imitating others or making ourselves feel the tinge of hunger. Rather we should find in our life's experience what God wills us to take up as our form of the cross. Nevertheless, fasting should be part of our lives. Jesus expected it of his followers (Mt. 6:16), even though his own attitude about it when confronted by the Pharisees was rather casual. For the Lord, whose example we should follow, fasting expressed true commitment. Like real commitment, he notes, it should be without display. Because Francis had a true understanding of human nature and our tendency to weaken, he fasted. In this way he continually felt in his body an expression of the need for God. There is another aspect of fasting, too, that the New Testament points out (Acts 13:2ff): fasting accompanied prayers of petition. In our efforts to be converted, we might well keep this in mind. For Francis life was a living petition for the grace to grow daily into a converted man. He fasted!

c. *Almsgiving* is a fascinating study in Scripture. The social makeup of biblical times did not

admit of a middle class. Wealth and power were held by the ruling class, and everyone else was a peasant. Jesus was a peasant, as were the vast majority of people before him and after him until the time of Francis. Power was absolute, arbitrary and often oppressive. Read Amos, Micah, Hosea, Zephaniah, and I Isaiah to learn about God's view of wealth and power. In our day, when these are still held or sought after as primary objectives both privately and internationally, allow yourself to wonder why the Son of God never attempted and even blocked attempts, to make himself more than a peasant. The answer is found in the meaning of covenant. All God's people are loved by him. True religion, the covenant faith, is so much more than social services or giving to the poor. It enjoins loving all people, trusting them as neighbors, and sharing with them in the same covenant relationship. Almsgiving manifests this interior disposition on the part of one who loves as God wills, giving of himself and out of his stores to the poor, being among them, caring for them, and giving them hope. All these activities are signs of faith in the covenant.

The poor were especially loved by God because their circumstances of dependence disposed them to realize our fundamental human need: dependence on

God. The real poor are those dependent on God, who honor him and fear him. Their fear is not dread, but respect, like a child's for a loving parent. Jesus' peasant status was another expression of his total and complete will to be dependent on God. In fact, he says that total renunciation of wealth, of power, and of self is the condition for becoming his disciple (Mt. 19: 27-29; Mk. 10:28-30; Lk. 18:28-30). Francis did this and required it of his first friars. It was a sign of what truly was within them.

Francis' almsgiving became himself. Franciscan almsgiving is giving of oneself, like Jesus, for the sake of the Kingdom. It means ministry and spending oneself for the sake of the Gospel. You may want to call this Franciscan poverty because it is more a giving than a denying. But whatever you want to call it, it is essential in our lives of conversion if day by day we wish to see the Lord more clearly.

Belief

IN OTHER PARTS of these papers I have shown how faith is the basis of Christian life; much more so is this true for religious life. Faith grows in a person. Francis' life reveals this. For two years he struggled with faith. He responded to its demands, but only gradually. With each surrender it became easier. "Surrender" is a hard word today, when individu-

ality, personalism, and independence are in the ascendancy. Yet practically this is what faith is all about. God asks us to see his past actions, to look upon his Son, and to examine the credibility of his revelation and its implications. He solicits belief. He asks us to accept the marvelous gift of our own creation, to respect it, and to affect it with belief. We do not lose our individuality, our person-ality; we enhance them by faith.

God does not make us believe. There comes a point in our lives when we are confronted with the decision to believe. There are many moments in our lives when belief asks us to go one step further in living out what we believe. For two years Francis went through this type of struggle. Celano vividly and candidly notes that "he bore the greatest suffering in mind and was not able to rest until he should have completed in deed what he had conceived in his heart; various thoughts succeeded one another and their importunity disturbed him greatly" (1 Cel. 6). How like ours was Francis' struggle! But he was open to faith. Little by little, as the richness of what living faith implied impressed itself upon him, he surrendered to God and embraced what God called for.

This leap of faith is loving obedience to the will of God. It is never-ending, as Francis' later life shows. It is the source of joy.

As we experience this call to living faith we can hesitate, we do hesitate. But we can always resume the adventure of faith because God draws us with love, not threats. Because each of us is different, we may be drawn to a greater or lesser degree. But God does always call us to a greater following of Christ according to his gifts of grace and creation. Total and constant conversion to God is always before us, because God's love is divine and we are finite.

God's love communicated to us through the mediation of the Church which proclaims our faith is what draws us to him. The leap of faith is an act of love, the giving of ourselves to God. Opening ourselves to do this involves prayer and reflection on the Word of God. This was the experience of Francis (Acts 7:10). As Franciscans, this should be our experience. Like Francis we will discover that values and things we desired or treasured may have to be exchanged for the treasure of God in Christ alive in us by the power of the Spirit to a degree we never imagined. Francis' encounter with the leper made all this clear to him. He knew he could love more, more than he ever thought, and he knew he could love God because God had first manifested his love to Francis and to all creation in Christ.

The wonder of it all was that

God first loved us. Francis' leap with faith revealed his capacity to love.

Before all else Francis appreciated the depth and extent of the love of God. The cross represented this (Jn. 3:16). It showed how totally Jesus emptied himself for our sake. As much as one could, Francis felt he should give back to God in kind. Francis' poverty, his love for poverty, and his personification of Lady Poverty all have their meaning in the significance of the cross. The love of God literally poured out for us in the Crucified could be returned only by a literally lived poverty in this world. To live in the world, yet not to be of it: what better way to exemplify this than by poverty? This is what Jesus did. And like his Lord's, Francis' poverty had meaning because of its purpose, not of itself. Poverty was Francis' expression of love for God. It was a graphic expression of faith that grew into love.

In the cross, too, Francis discovered the humility of God. Jesus was the suffering servant. His suffering proclaimed a servanthood that was love expressed. Jesus took on the form of a slave, as Saint Paul notes in Philippians, the lowliest type of servant, and in this capacity waited upon humanity. He took humanity and raised it to his exalted position of filiation to the

Father. Being a slave excluded no one from redemption. Being a slave would cause the effects of redemption, which we, the Church, are to minister to one another and to all humanity, to be effectively communicated. Francis, with the clear vision of faith, saw in this his charismatic mission. When he banded about him a fraternity, he called his brothers "minors," "lesser ones," and charged them with the ministry of proclaiming the Kingdom. They were to be like Christ. Their mode of ministry, as a result, would always have

"that human touch" as Christ's did, because they would live the Gospel.

Francis' belief tells us what ours should be. It does not mean being poor or being humble in the sense of putting on an act. Rather it challenges us on our pilgrimage of conversion to love God totally and to dare to express that love by literal poverty. It calls upon us to see ourselves as servants of the Cross, humble as our Lord was, so that like him and with him by the power of the Spirit we can give new life and hope to our brothers and sisters. This leads us now to the third thing that Francis learned about a converted life and that shows how totally ecclesial he was.

Kingdom of God

DAY BY DAY, as Francis loved the Lord more dearly, he knew that day by day he had to follow him more nearly, as the song from *Godspell* puts it. Following Christ meant doing what Christ did for the reason the Lord did it. Jesus came into time to proclaim and effect the Kingdom of God, to re-establish the relationship of love between himself and humanity, and in this way to overcome all alienation among people. It was a mission of peace. Francis, like Christ, was impelled by faith and love to be an instrument of that peace, first by following Christ literally (witness)

and proclaiming his Good News to all (ministry).

His starting point was himself. Like Jesus he had to exemplify the requirements for participation in the Kingdom which the preaching of Jesus had announced (Mt. 5-7). Jesus was the personification of the Kingdom. To be like him was to inaugurate in oneself the Kingdom of God.

In summary and in practical terms, to be like Christ is to be gentle. Matthew stresses this throughout his Gospel. Jesus is humble and gentle of heart (Mt. 11:29); when he is hailed as the messianic King (Mt. 21:5) he enters Jerusalem humbly; and in his role as suffering servant he accepts death gently. Gentleness is a spirit or attitude born of love; it is the opposite of inconsiderateness and force. It is persuasive and effective. Rather than a sign of weakness, gentleness is an indication of sureness and confidence in oneself and one's purpose. THE Lord was gentle because he embodied all the requirements of the Kingdom.

Gentleness in Franciscan terms is to be "Poor in spirit." The poor "in spirit," biblically, are those who live in humble expectancy of God's mercy or of the Kingdom of God. All those who live a life of conversion are characterized by the practical and practiced meaning of the Beatitudes. They have been called a summary of Franciscan

life because they declare what were the values in Christ's life.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." This is the root of that joy which should characterize Franciscans. The world flees sorrow; but for the Franciscan the greatest sorrow is the loss of or lack of awareness of God. Our joy is living in God. The Franciscan accepts the fact that happiness is found in the Good News of salvation which shows that sacrificial love, giving oneself for others, and accepting God is the cause of peace. The world rejects mortification, but the Franciscan accepts living poorly because that facilitates the realization of true values in life, the ones God has revealed. In a word, the essence of Penitential Franciscan spirituality is summed up in three words: Poverty, Love, Joy. This is what the Beatitudes are all about. If we assimilate the values they represent, we become *bearers of peace*, of God's peace or of his will that all men be saved; and we participate in God's own joy. It means being children of God. It includes that openness called for by Francis' prayer for peace. Finally, poverty in spirit means *patience* for the sake of the Kingdom. Today we would call this zeal, or an apostolic spirit.

Franciscan ministry results from an assimilated Christ-like gentleness, or the goodness of

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God alive in the person. The poor in spirit are not the "poor spirit-ed," but those who recognize that they can do no good without God's power in them. They are anything but proud, self-sufficient, or arrogant. Rather, they are compassionate (Mt. 18:35), merciful with the mercy of God in action clothed in deeds (Mt. 23:23). They can be so because they are forgiven and know that in securing God's mercy they are called to extend that mercy to others by the gift of themselves. The Franciscan minister is pure of heart or innocent of all evil in fact and in deed. "Steadfastness," "singlemindedness of purpose," or "fidelity" (Mt. 10:22; 23:13) which is sincere is another way to say the same thing. A true peacemaker works consistently to reconcile (Jn. 17:21) and to enlarge human good will (Rom. 10:13-17), because he or she knows the consistency with which God has offered his own peace and love to him or her.

Two facts from the life of Francis should impress us. The first is that he did not offer to others what was not first given to him, assimilated by him, and embodied in his life. To be converted means to make part of oneself what God proposes as the attitudes and deeds of one totally and continually turned toward himself. Secondly, Francis' assimilation of God's peace plan for

humanity made him an ecclesial person. This is what distinguished him from other reformers who bolted from the Church and found themselves on the bleak road to heresy, schism, separation, and discord. This was so because of Francis' deep appreciation of and faith in the Body of Christ. To be united to Christ and the Father meant to be united to men and women to whom the Spirit has been given so that the Kingdom of God could be fully arrived at. Jean Mouroux expressed it this way:

Living in the Church means living surrounded by mystery, and hence—because the Church is the Act of Redemption made permanent, lasting from the Ascension to the Parousia—it means living at the very centre of the movement that carries mankind forward. For Christianity, of course, there is only one mystery of salvation; it is a tremendous divine action that takes place, one may say on three different levels . . .

Henceforth, time and the human race and the universe itself have only one purpose, the fulfillment of this mission; and when it is complete, time will reach its consummation, the universe will pass away and the New Jerusalem will appear before God in all its glory. Meanwhile, however, there is work to be done, and all the faith that Christians can muster, all their love, all their industry, all their pleasures and pains, all their hope, are to be thrown into this task, which is

always there to be continued, and pushed forward and begun again from the beginning. This active mission introduced like leaven into the dough of history is the Church herself, the mystery of the Act of Redemption, in labour.²

It is in this context that Jesus' life proposes evangelization be done. It was in this context, too, that the total expression of Francis' vocation developed. Francis knew after reading the gospel imperative to proclaim the Good News (Mt. 16:15) that Jesus gathered together the new People of God, the Church, for one purpose: to bring about the Kingdom of God (cf. the Decree *Ad Gentes*, §35). The greatest significance of Francis and his early followers in this regard was their understanding that bringing about the Kingdom began with their own human persons and personalities.

Conclusion

FRANCIS HAD A healthy and honest view of human nature. For this reason, he wrote his admonitions, which constitute a clear statement of his realism. Great and lofty ideals are contained in fragile human vessels. I would recommend to the reader the questions related to these Admonitions, in the *Workbook*

for *Franciscan Studies* (pp. 68-72), so that his or her appreciation of Franciscanism may remain true, concrete, realistic, and concretely practical. In themselves, the Admonitions show us our need for constant and continuous conversion. This also is the nature of our vocation as Penitent Franciscans.

Francis did something else as well that we should perhaps take more seriously in our day-to-day living of Franciscan life. He gathered his friars together periodically and restated and explained the Christian truth of his inspiration (Leg. 3 Comp., §§57-60). Then together they reflected commonly on the meaning of the Gospel, examined their living, experience, and ministry in its light, and sought together to discern what behavior and tasks God willed of them now. They then decided how they would live and minister on the basis of what they had discerned. This is how Franciscans should see the Lord more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly, day by day.

Francis and Franciscans are called to be a sign of conversion to God among all the Peoples of God, by sharing in the life of Christ, proclaiming his Good News, and witnessing by their lives of mercy and gentleness in

²J. Mouroux, *The Christian Experience: An Introduction to a Theology* (tr. George Lamb; New York; Sheed & Ward, 1954), p. 186ff.

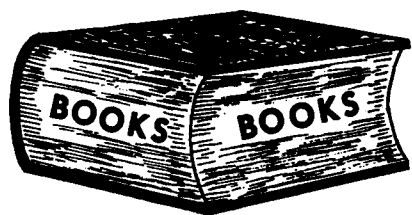
the midst of a world that needs reconciliation in every way. This is the one mission of the Church, but the roles and the ministries to achieve it are multiple. (1 Cor. 12:4-7). This is why there is a variety of communities in the Franciscan tradition. A survey paper of this kind cannot, and I believe should not spell out how in each instance we are to fulfill our service of witness and ministry. Like Francis and his first friars we should seek to discern this among ourselves. The spirit is given to us. In our community gatherings,

general, provincial, and local, let us keep that in mind.

By way of conclusion to this discussion, I can do no better than to cite Dr. Paul Löffler's remarks after a scholarly study of "The Biblical Concept of Conversion":

... fellowship [fraternity], minus the passion for conversion, leads to ghettoism; service minus the call to conversion is a gesture without hope; Christian education minus conversion is religiosity without decision; and dialogue without the challenge to conversion remains sterile talk.³

³*Mission Trends*, n. 2: "Evangelization" (Ramsey, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1975).



Saint Francis: Nature Mystic. The Derivation and Significance of the Nature Stories in the Franciscan Legend. By Edward A. Armstrong. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973. Pp. 270, incl. index & 19 plates. Cloth, \$13.50; paper, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Hugh Eller, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Athenaeum Antonianum), a member of the Staff of the Franciscan Institute.

This book's imposing title is somewhat misleading. The main focus of the book (stated in the Introduction) is not so much Saint Francis or his mystical life, but the relationship of Francis to animals *as this is presented in the Franciscan Legend*, i.e., the stories about him and recorded details of his life and teaching. The work is Armstrong's appraisal, as a naturalist and historian, of the significance of Franciscan nature stories, and of how Francis's hagiographers use them in portraying him.

The initial chapter is about "Saint Francis, Nature Mystic." The next concerns "Traditions that Influenced Saint Francis"; and the remaining six chapters treat of Francis and birds (3), animals of household

and farm (4), the "small deer"—worm, bees, and flies, scorpion, ants, and the cicada (5), fish, "reptiles," and the dragon (6), the furred beasts (7), and the Cantic of Brother Sun (8). The black and white plates reflect the Francis-animal relationship and are accompanied by helpful notes (pp. 245-51).

Chapters 3 to 8 are full of interesting information. The author's erudition and experience as a naturalist combine to provide abundant material on natural history as well as popular beliefs on the subject from different cultures, and all of this is related to the Franciscan Legend. Woven throughout, too, is Armstrong's conviction that the Irish tradition, transmitted through Irish pilgrims and monks, had an influence on the early Franciscan movement and its hagiographical tradition. Scholars will express reservations about his argumentation on this point; yet the reader can draw benefit from the many allusions to the Irish tradition and its possible influence in early Franciscan hagiography.

The section on the Wolf of Gubbio (pp. 199-217) and the chapter on the Cantic of Brother Sun (pp. 218-43) merit special mention for their systematic exposition of theme. One wishes that the book's first two chapters had a similar quality. This reviewer felt a lack of cohesion in them which weakens the reader's interest.

Specialists in the field of Franciscana can find points to criticize and expressions of opinion that will raise dissent, but it is not our purpose to detail them in this review. One point is that the author nowhere clearly states his principles for

judging the biographical sources for the life of Saint Francis; nor does he indicate that all are not of equal value. Contrary to most scholarly opinion on the matter, he favors the *Fioretti* and *Mirror of Perfection* over Celano and Saint Bonaventure. Within pages 165-169 he gives a brief statement of principles for understanding the nature and aim of medieval hagiography in general, and Franciscan *Legenda* in particular. This should have been developed and given prominence in an earlier chapter. In this whole matter one notes the omission of any reference to Delahaye's *Les legendes hagiographiques*. We cannot agree in any way with Armstrong's depicting Bonaventure as presenting Francis as a "wizard," "wonder-worker," or "magician." Perhaps his viewpoint as a naturalist hindered his appreciating the broader context in which Bonaventure sets Francis' miracles. At times the author shows some appreciation for Bonaventure's effort in the *Legenda Maior*, but one fears the general reader will not receive a favorable impression of the Seraphic Doctor.

Despite these observations and some minor flaws in the work, we can only be grateful to Armstrong for the love and sympathy he brings to this work of deepening our understanding of the nature stories in the Franciscan Legend. In achieving his purpose he has not lost sight of the deepest dimension of Francis, that he is a *saint*, and that "single-minded devotion to Christ gave unity to his life" (p. 219). It is heartening, too, in a book of this nature, that its author should remind his readers of "the positive, creative, redemptive

aspects of the missions of Jesus and Francis. 'Christ for the joy that was set before him endured the cross' (Heb. xii.2), and joyfully the Poverello followed."

Letters from the Desert. By Carlo Carretto. Trans.- Mary Rose Hancock. Foreword by Ivan Illich. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1972. Pp. xxi-146 Cloth \$4.95; paper, \$1.50.

Reviewed by Father Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Francis Chapel, Colonie, New York.

Carlo Carretto is a Little Brother of Jesus who has been called by God three distinct times in his life and has obeyed that clear call with no regrets. Before becoming a Brother, Carlo had been actively involved in the apostolate of Catholic Action. Now, after some years of prayer and solitude, he wants to share with the many friends he left behind, the story of these past years of his life, the stages he has reached, and the trials he has undergone.

In laying bare his spiritual life, Brother Carlo teaches the timeless truths of our life in Christ. In their preface, the publishers state that they "were at first tempted to request the author to 'update' and modify what he has written in solitude," because so much had happened in the Church since the first printing of the book. After much consideration, they did not make that request. They ultimately came "to believe that the type of spirituality Carlo Carretto lives and writes about

is perhaps more relevant, more needed than it was in the seemingly serene pre-Conciliar Church" (ibid.).

The fact that *Letters from the Desert* has gone through twenty-four editions and has been translated into eight languages is more than adequate recommendation for the book. The style is exceptionally clear and easy to read. The reader does not have to stop and ask himself, "Now, what does he mean by that?" And yet the spirituality is profound. This reviewer was particularly impressed with certain chapters: Chapter 1, "You will be judged by love"; chapter 3, "You are nothing"; chapter 4, where the author gives this striking advice: "Don't worry about what you ought to do. Worry about loving." Chapter 12, "Nazareth," has some new insights into lay spirituality, as does chapter 15 on forgiveness, and chapter 17 on faith. This is not to say that the other chapters are weak. They are not.

Those who hunger for a deeper prayer life should add this book to their reading list.

Padre Pio: He Bore the Stigmata. By John A. Schug, O.F.M.Cap. Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1976. Pp. 256. Paper, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Father Evan Roche, O.F.M., Ph. D., Professor of Philosophy at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.

Of the many books written about Padre Pio in English, this is the best to date. Such is the opinion of this reviewer, who has read all he

can find about Padre Pio. Much more significantly, it is also the definite opinion of the Capuchin priest who was Padre Pio's constant companion—day and night—during the last six years of the Padre's life. This priest, mentioned throughout the book, is Father Alessio Parente, publication manager and English language correspondent for *The Voice of Padre Pio*, a magazine emanating from the Capuchin Friary of San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy. Father Alessio very recently visited the United States, and this reviewer had the good fortune of meeting with him for several hours. Father Alessio discussed the book at length. He had read all the proofs and had also aided Father Schug in his research in the archives of the Friary and in many of his interviews with townspeople who had personally known Padre Pio.

I asked Father Alessio if he had any criticisms of the book. He himself had nothing but praise for it and for its author, Father Schug. He did inform me that the Postulator General of the Cause of Padre Pio—Father Bernardino of Siena—had also read the proofs and had made some corrections in the chapter dealing with the difficult years during which the Holy See had restricted the public, priestly activities of Padre Pio. If there is any portion of this brief biography that can be faulted as being too incomplete and a bit puzzling, it is the treatment of these shadowy years. Despite or perhaps because of the delicate questions regarding the steps taken by Rome, it is to be hoped that the author will write again at greater length and remove these shadows.

All of the other chapters are a delight to read and a work of spiritual edification. We can hope that they, too, will be greatly enlarged in some future book. The dominant sentiment

FRANCISCAN PLAYS

Several new Franciscan plays are now available, based upon the original sources and commended by Franciscans who have read them. Brother David Paul Benzshawel, O.F.M., holds a degree in drama, and from his studies at the Franciscan Institute, has written the following:

—*Sacrum Commercium*, adapted from the work by the same name as a medieval mystery play.

—*Clare's Song of Songs*, in analogy with the Old Testament Song of Songs, portraying Clare's conversion.

—*Lord or Servant*, dramatizing Francis' conversion and transformation into the leader of a new Order.

Scripts are available in mimeograph form for \$2.00 each. All rights of production and performance with purchase of script. Scripts are suited for dramatic presentation, choral readings, or private reflection and meditation.

Write to
Bro. David Paul Benzshawel, O.F.M.
St. Paschal's Friary
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Oak Brook, Illinois 60521

of one who has finished reading this book is the hope that there will be much more forthcoming.

The author does an excellent job of selecting and pruning his material. He manages to give a true and clear picture of Padre Pio, while limiting himself to the best authenticated incidents in Padre Pio's long and revealing life. He handles the most sensational happenings in a calm and scholarly manner. This book is a biography and not a theological work; yet everything in it is in complete accord with sound theological principles.

Others have written uncritically about Padre Pio in a way that gave

ammunition to his critics and detractors. Then too, much has been written in poor and even dreadful English. Lovers of Padre Pio can be grateful for the excellence and clarity as well as for the soundness and authenticity of Father Schug's writing. Those who are leery of any popular accounts of the miraculous will be hard pressed to fault this book. Those who are devoted to Padre Pio will of course welcome it and hope for more from the pen of the author. Those who are unfamiliar with Padre Pio will find this book an excellent introduction to his life and deeds. But without exception all who read this book should find it an inspiration.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our March issue were drawn by Sister Marie Monica, O.S.F., of Sacred Heart Academy, Klamath Falls, Oregon.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Doherty, Catherine de Hueck, *Not Without Parables: Stories of Yesterday, Today, and Eternity*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 187. Paper, \$3.50.
- Freburger, William J., and James E. Haas, *The Forgiving Christ: A Book of Penitential Celebrations*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 128. Paper, \$2.95.
- Gaster, Theodor H., introd. & notes, *The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation*. 3rd rev. & enlarged ed. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1977. Pp. xvi-580. Paper, \$3.50.
- Gelpi, Donald L., S.J., *Charism and Sacrament: A Theology of Christian Conversion*. Ramsey, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1976. Pp. x-258. Paper, \$5.95.
- Hales, E. E. Y., *Chariot of Fire: A Fantasy*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 191. Cloth, \$6.95.
- Heymans, Betty, *Bittersweet Triumph*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 191. Cloth, \$5.95.
- Kilby, Clyde S., *Tolkien and the Silmarillion: A Glimpse of the Man and His World of Myth*. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1976. Pp. 89, incl. index. Cloth, \$3.95.
- Larsson, Flora, *Between You and Me, Lord: Prayer Conversations with God*. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1976. pp. 106, illus. Paper, \$1.45.
- MacDonald, George, *Creation in Christ: Unspoken Sermons*, ed. Rolland Hein. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1976. Pp. 342. Paper, \$4.95.
- Scanlan, Michael, T.O.R., and Anne Thérèse Shields, R.S.M., *And Their Eyes Were Opened: Encountering Jesus in the Sacraments*. Preface by Leon-Joseph Cardinal Suenens. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Word of Life, 1977. Pp. xi-119, incl. bibliography. Paper, \$1.95.
- Shaw, Luci, *The Secret Trees: Poems*. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1976. Pp. 80. Cloth, \$3.95.
- Talley, James M., ed., *Jesus, The Living Bread: A Chronicle of the 41st International Eucharistic Congress, 1976*. Plainfield, N.J.: Logos International, 1976. Pp. 159. Leatherette, \$14.95; cloth, \$9.95.
- Taylor, Kenneth N., paraphraser, *My Living Counselor: Daily Readings from the Living Bible*. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1976. Unpaginated. Paper, \$4.95.
- Watson, David, *How to Find God*. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1976. Pp. 158. Paper, \$1.95.

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COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1977

FI 500 Bibliography

1 cr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 8:00-9:05, Room 4, M-W
This course is required of all new degree candidates after June 1977. It must be taken in the first summer session attended.

FI 501 Sources for Franciscan Studies

3 cr., Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D. Cand.: 9:10-10:15, Room 1
This course is a prerequisite for 503 and 504.

FI 503 Early Franciscan Texts

3 cr., Dr. Duane Lapsanski, D.Th.: 9:10-10:15, Room 4
Prerequisite: 501

FI 504 Life of St. Francis

3 cr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 2
Prerequisite: 501

FI 506 Survey of Franciscan History

3 cr., Fr. Lawrence Landini, O.F.M., H.E.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 1

FI 508 History of Franciscan Thought

3 cr., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 2

FI 511 Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts

2 cr., Dr. Malcolm Wallace, Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 2

FI 517 Introduction to Palaeography

2 cr., Dr. Girard Etzkorn, Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 3

FI 521 Rule of St. Francis

2 cr., Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D. Phil., Ozon.: 10:20-11:25, Room 3

FI 523 Bonaventurian Texts

2 cr., Fr. Juvenal Lalor, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 4

FI 532 The Lay Franciscan Movement

2 cr., Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M., M.A.: 8:00-9:05, Room 2

FI 534 Conventualism, Primitive Observance and Capuchin Reform

2 cr., Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., S.T.L.: 8:00-9:05, Room 4

FI 539 Spiritual Direction and the Franciscan Tradition

2 cr., Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D. Min.: M-W-F, 7:00-9:00 P.M. Room 3

FI 552 The Franciscan Contribution to Peace and Justice

2 cr., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.; Fr. Roderic Petrie, O.F.M., M.A., M.S. Ed.; Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D. Phil., Ozon.: 11:30-12:35, Room 1

The M.A. Program is offered during the Autumn, Spring and Summer sessions.

the CORD

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Vol. 27, No. 4

CONTENTS

LIFE AFTER LIFE	98
<i>Editorial</i>	
ECCLESIASTES 1:9	99
<i>Sister Marie Garesché, F.M.M.</i>	
THOMAS MERTON AND ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY	100
<i>Thomas T. Spencer</i>	
THE ETERNAL GAZE	107
<i>Sister M. Thaddeus, O.S.F.</i>	
CHRISTIAN JOY IN FRANCISCAN PENANCE	108
<i>Thaddeus Horgan, S.A.</i>	
THE HUNTER	114
<i>Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.</i>	
FRANCIS AND WOMEN	115
<i>Sister Jeanne M. Glisky, S.F.P.</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	122



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Life after Life

IN ALMOST ANY extended conversation you get into, and in a surprising number of homes, you hear about (or are handed a copy of) the Moody bestseller which reports accounts of "death experiences" by people who have come back from clinical death. While not constituting "proofs" in any strict philosophical sense—as the author points out—the reports are a positive indication of the existence of a spiritual soul in man, its survival after death, its judgment, and its future with God, who is described as a "being of light" in an echo of Paul's words to Titus ("who dwells in light inexpressible") and those of the beloved disciple ("I am the light of the world").

Christians this month in a very special way commemorate their unique hope of survival and the ground of that hope: the bodily resurrection Jesus. "Christ is risen, alleluia" is a cry of victory over what is experienced as so final in life—death. That life "is changed, not taken away" is the reminder of the liturgical Preface for the Dead. The special feature of Christian hope is a "life after life," the resuming of our bodies, is the theme of the Easter Liturgy and, increasingly, the theme of funeral Masses (now called Liturgies of the Resurrection). "Our hope in Christ is not confined to this life"; he has gone before us to a glory that "eye has not seen." And this glory is unending: we believe in the resurrection of the body *and* life everlasting.

Jesus has not spelled out for us the details of our hope. He dismisses as impertinent a question about marriage in heaven. Until very recently Christians have understood the moment of resurrection to be at the end of time when Christ comes again to judge the living and the dead. And it was heresy to think that the *soul* of the just person did not immediately get into the presence of God or was denied the Beatific Vision until the Final Judgment. Some contemporary theologians, however, have spoken of the moment of death as the moment of resurrection, time-frames and physical matter being irrelevant to life after death. Such speculation does not appear to me to be at all helpful, in view of traditional understandings

of Christ's teaching about his own and our resurrection. Furthermore it makes questionable the practice of praying for the dead in order to deliver *them* from their sins, and makes an unconscious charade of our practice of revering the bodies of our deceased.

As we celebrate again and again the alleluias of Resurrection Liturgies, let us recall that we celebrate the personal victory of Christ our Leader over death and his promise to us (if we are faithful) of a personal bodily resurrection to life everlasting with him. The newness and freshness of springtime is certainly an appropriate symbol and sign of the Event which transpired one Spring in Judea and will transpire for us some day. But Spring is a symbol, not the reality; and as symbol it can be read only by one who reads as a believer.

Life after Life may be another such sign. Yet it opens up only a very partial view of what will always remain a mystery. The Easter kerygma completes this picture. Jesus has risen. We too may and must hope to rise with him again after death, as we have already risen with him in baptism to a life of grace and divine sonship.

I Julian Davis ofn



Ecclesiastes 1:9

("Nothing new under the sun")

Shadows slide slowly
New graphics cov'ring
Sunlit sidewalk;
Lilac-wonder wafts,
Wind-wended;
Violet chiaroscuro:
Fresh designs still.

O Qoheleth, I can't hear you!

Sister Marie Garesché, F.M.M.

Thomas Merton and St. Bonaventure University

THOMAS T. SPENCER

BEFORE HIS death in December, 1968, Thomas Merton had become one of the foremost religious and spiritual writers in America. His vast number of publications, ranging from books and essays on prayer, spirituality, and solitude to manuscripts on the oriental philosophy of Zen and issues of social concern, established him as one of the most seminal spokesmen of the spiritual way of life. In 1966 *Jubilee* magazine paid him a fitting tribute when it called him "probably one of the most prolific writers in the modern world."¹

Helpful to any understanding of Merton and his writings is a consideration of this early life before he entered the Trappist monastery at Gethsemani, Kentucky, in 1941. Merton's conversion to Catholicism after leading a very worldly and carefree life and his eventual decision to become a Trappist at the age of twenty-six could be viewed as evolutionary phases in his growth and commitment to the religious

life. One of the most important periods of his early life was the time spent teaching English at St. Bonaventure University, then a small college run by the Franciscans and located in Olean, New York. It was here that Merton made his decision to become a Trappist, and it was here that he found much happiness and practiced many of the principles that marked his later life and writings. His first wish was to become a Franciscan; and, though his vocation lay elsewhere, he maintained a close affection for the Franciscans and the University throughout the remainder of his life. A consideration of Thomas Merton's relationship to St. Bonaventure University shows much about the man and about his commitment to the spiritual life as well as to the Franciscan school that still honors his name.

Merton's first association with St. Bonaventure University was in the summer of 1939 while he was still a student at Columbia

University. Bob Lax, one of Merton's closest friends, was given the use of a cottage in the Olean area for the summer, and Lax and Merton, along with Ed Rice, established temporary residency in the house surrounded by woods and located on the top of a hill. Their interest in books led them to nearby St. Bonaventure College where Lax introduced Merton to Father Irenaeus Herscher, Bonaventure's librarian. Merton's first impression of the Franciscans and the college was a favorable one. He was impressed by the simplicity and happiness of the Franciscan spirit that Father Irenaeus seemed to convey, and he relished the freedom he was allowed to roam among the stacks of books in the library. He noted in his autobiography, however, that he still did not know that he had discovered a place where he would find out something about happiness.²

Merton returned to Olean the following summer and once again found happiness in the library that Father Irenaeus opened to him. He remarked that he did not think he had ever been so happy as he was sitting in that library

and reading the works of Saint Thomas Aquinas. The previous year had brought many changes for the young student, and instead of continuing his graduate studies at Columbia he had now decided to become a priest and was preparing to enter the Franciscan Order in August. He was attracted to the Franciscans by their freedom from spiritual restraints, systems, and routines; and he especially liked the simple, informal, and happy atmosphere at St. Bonaventure that seemed to convey the Franciscan spirit. Merton believed that the spirit and inspiration of Saint Francis were still present in the Franciscan way of life. He felt the friars' inspiration was one of joy, grounded in a simple confidence that God watched over them.³

Having planned to begin his novitiate in August, he suffered a bitter disappointment when the Order refused to admit him at that time. On his own accord, Merton had informed the Franciscans of the unsettled life he had led before his conversion to Catholicism, and that information had led to a postponement of his admittance. Merton believed his vocation lay in ruins; but the door

¹*Jubilee*, March, 1966, pp. 28-33.

Dr. Thomas T. Spencer (Ph. D. in American History from the University of Notre Dame, 1976) was graduated from St. Bonaventure University in 1971.

²Thomas Merton, *The Seven Storey Mountain* (New York, 1948), pp. 234-36; Edward Rice, *The Man in the Sycamore Tree* (Garden City, 1972), pp. 33-36.

³Merton, 282-84, 255.



had actually been left open for him: it was suggested that he go to St. Bonaventure, where he could observe the friars in action and learn more about them. After talking to Father Thomas Plassmann, President of the College, he secured a job teaching English at the school.⁴ He would now be able to observe first hand the life he had chosen to follow, even if it was not as a member of the Order.

While at St. Bonaventure Merton began leading a more religious and contemplative way of life and was gradually moving toward a much deeper religious commitment than he had first thought possible. The carefree life he had led while a student at Columbia now gave way to a life of scholarship, prayer, solitude—all trademarks of his later life at Gethsemani.

Scholarship was an important part of Merton's life, especially after he had become a Trappist, and he found much fulfillment in scholarly pursuits at St. Bonaventure. He enjoyed his role as teacher and derived a great deal of satisfaction from the courses he taught in English literature. He developed an interest in his students who ranged from football players to seminarians, and he stated that he learned more about people from his students than he taught them about books. He also found time to write and work on his own projects, and he remarked that from his secluded dormitory room on campus he was able to do as much work in one year as he had done in an entire lifetime. He began writing a book, added to his insightful diary which would later become his *Secular Journal*, and wrote poetry while walking on the hills near the college.⁵

⁴Ibid., 290-91, 297-98; interview with Father Irenaeus Herscher, O.F.M., March 17, 1976, at the St. Bonaventure University Friary.

⁵Merton, 298-301.

In addition, he found time to become a student once again when he enrolled in a class at the Franciscan Institute that was founded at the college in the summer of 1940. The Institute was established to provide an opportunity for students to study sacred and secular sciences from the Franciscan viewpoint, and Merton and Bob Lax were the first students to suggest to Father Plassmann that the University have such an institute. The ideal for the Institute had been planted long before, and their suggestion was by no means decisive, but Father Thomas was impressed by their enthusiasm and interest. When the Institute offered its first class, Merton and Lax were among the students enrolled.⁶ Today the Institute is known throughout the world for its scholarly publications, and it seems only fitting that a scholar of Merton's outstanding quality was one of its first students.

While Merton had an interest in teaching, writing, and scholarship at St. Bonaventure, he had an even greater commitment to solitude and prayer. His autobiography relates how much he enjoyed walking by himself through the woods or by the Allegheny River near the college, and his account shows that even

before entering the Trappist Order he found much enjoyment in the solitary life. Father Irenaeus, one of those who knew Merton best while he was at St. Bonaventure, relates that Merton was even then a loner. He would take long walks on Saturdays to the surrounding hills, and he would always return filled with questions from his afternoon of contemplation. On one occasion Merton and Father Irenaeus discussed the idea of solitude. Father Irenaeus told him of Saint Francis and how solitude had played a major part in his life as well. On another occasion Father Irenaeus showed him an article that had appeared in the *Antonianum*, discussing the guidelines for setting up a hermitage. Merton was very impressed with the article and never forgot it. Twenty-five years later, on New Year's Day, 1966, he wrote Father Irenaeus informing him that his superiors had given him permission to set up his own hermitage at Gethsemani. He was very excited over the prospect, and he asked Father Irenaeus to send him the *Antonianum* article to help him in building his hermitage.⁷

Though he found much pleasure in solitude while at St. Bonaventure, Merton never lost his

⁶Mark V. Angelo, O.F.M., *The History of St. Bonaventure University* (St. Bonaventure, 1961), pp. 175-76; interview with Fr. Irenaeus 3/17/76.

⁷Interview with Fr. Irenaeus 3/17/76.

love or appreciation for the many people he met and came into contact with at the school. Besides Father Irenaeus and Father Philotheus, head of the Franciscan Institute, with whom he developed close friendships, he had a great affection for the many sisters he met on campus and in his classes. Bob Lax notes that Merton loved the sisters, especially the German ones who worked in the kitchen and made good soups, and he would often remember them when he wrote his poems. He also had a special affection for Francis Griffin, a lovable, friendly man who frequented the campus and is today as much of the Bonaventure tradition as anyone or anything else associated with the school. When Father Irenaeus visited Merton at Gethsemani in the early 1960's, one of his first questions was "How's Griff?"⁸

Along with his celebration of the solitary life at Bonaventure, Merton found much spiritual fulfillment in prayer. Prayer was fast becoming one of the most important aspects of his life, and his writings do little to hide the fact. With the help of Father Irenaeus he learned how to pray the Breviary, and he made

frequent visits to the shrine of the Little Flower of Jesus and Our Lady of Lourdes located on the campus. In one revealing account in his *Secular Journal* he showed the importance he attached to prayer. He was astonished at how little people prayed, and he felt that it was really incredible that the world had any virtue at all with so few of its people praying. He believed Catholics should pray every minute for peace and stated that the reason the world was without peace was that no one prayed for it. In another entry he talked of praying for peace. Peace, to him, did not mean an end to the war that was then being waged in Europe, but instead a hope that God would move all men "to pray and do penance and recognize each one his own great guilt."⁹

Merton's growing involvement with solitude and prayer at St. Bonaventure was part of his deepening commitment to the religious life, and a means to find greater understanding of his life and his relationship to God. His time at St. Bonaventure was important, for he was questioning his vocation and trying to determine what path he should take. Though he had achieved much

happiness at Bonaventure and wished to enter the Franciscan Order when he began teaching, he gradually came to realize that his vocation should be one that required greater sacrifice. For Merton, Bonaventure offered too easy a life. As long as he remained there he would have to sacrifice very little; as he himself said, therefore, St. Bonaventure College had outlived its usefulness in his spiritual life. It was "too tame, too safe" and demanded too little of him even though he felt he were as happy as if he were leading the "richest kind of life."¹⁰

For Merton, the decision to leave Bonaventure was not an easy one, and he turned for spiritual help to Father Philotheus. By late November of 1941, he was considering entering the Trappist Order at Gethsemani, where he had previously gone for a retreat, or of pursuing social work in Harlem under Baroness de Hueck, whom he greatly admired. As the days passed and his uncertainty grew, his trips to the shrine of the Little Flower and to Father Philotheus became more frequent. At one of the visits to the shrine he imagined hearing the great bell of Gethsemani tolling in the night at approximately the very time it should have been ringing. Merton be-

lieved the bell was telling him where he belonged. After talking with Father Philotheus that same night, he decided to enter the Trappist Order, and on December 8, 1941, he took the train to Gethsemani to begin what he described as a transition to a new life.¹¹

In the years after entering Gethsemani Merton still maintained a close affection for St. Bonaventure University. He sent Father Irenaeus over seven boxes of material dealing with his writings and teaching at the monastery, and Father Irenaeus received about thirty letters from him in the twenty-seven years he spent as a Trappist. In the early 1960's, when Father Irenaeus visited him in Kentucky, Merton was full of questions about the University and the people there.

The University, for its part, never lost its appreciation of Merton either. At one point its administration considered giving him an honorary degree, but Merton declined, feeling it would not be right for him to accept such an honor for his work. Even today the University is negotiating with the owners of the area where Merton would frequently go on his many walks to see if some type of small memorial could be constructed.

⁸Bob Lax to Thomas T. Spencer, May 26, 1976; interview with Fr. Irenaeus 3/17/76.

⁹Merton, 298, 330; Idem, *The Secular Journal of Thomas Merton* (New York, 1959), pp. 164-65.

¹⁰Merton, *Seven Storey Mountain*, 351; *Secular Journal*, 259.

¹¹Merton, *Seven Storey Mountain*, 350-61.

Referred to by many as "Merton's Heart," the area is a heart-shaped clearing that overlooks the campus. Officials are presently trying to obtain permission to build a small hermitage or shelter at the area for the benefit of the many people who still go for walks there.¹²

Thomas Merton's brief stay at St. Bonaventure did not attract a great deal of attention, and it is generally overlooked today by Merton scholars. His important spiritual writings and impact as an author did not come until later in his life, and it is his time spent as a Trappist for which he is most noted. The years spent at St. Bonaventure were, however, vital for him; the school unquestionably played an important part in his spiritual development. The peaceful, serene campus and the many friendly Franciscans he met there provided him with the

ideal environment in which to think out what direction his life should take. His first intention was to become a Franciscan, and he found a great deal of peace and happiness at the school. He left, not because he rejected Franciscanism, but because life there had made him too happy. Merton knew his vocation demanded sacrifice of the sort he could not offer at St. Bonaventure. Though he left at the early age of twenty-six, he had grown in his brief two years at the school, and he had learned much from the friars he came so to admire and to love. Much of what he learned about the value of prayer and solitude was put to use in his later life at Gethsemani, just as much as what Merton stood for still remains in the peaceful woods and friendly Franciscan community in Olean, New York.

¹²Interview with Fr. Irenaeus 3/17/76.

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The Eternal Gaze

Darkest uncertainties light his path
As Francis stumbles on God's way.

"Just continue—God will direct—
the crooked path— the erroneous step."

Flounder—fall—pause to rest—
rise and drop to your knees.

Sing the eternal gaze with vision clear
Press on till all is done.

Note well the essentials on your way—
Mere accidents cause all the pain—

The Gospel story is all he needs—
The reading fills his soul.

So Francis walks in the darkest light
And sings his song with lightest heart,

Despised, discouraged, deprived, unwanted
In his latest hours

The light in darkness gleams more clear
As Sister Death draws near.

What is written, is God's—he proclaims—
"And not a word is to be changed!"

His hands, his feet, his side, all speak
The victory that is his.

And death embraced his cheerful soul
And smiled on her gentle guest,

Leaving his body supple and whole,
White as a new-born child—

Never so beautiful in life,
As the eternal gaze now styled.

Sister M. Thaddeus, O.S.F.

Christian Joy in Franciscan Penance

THADDEUS HORGAN, S.A.

THERE IS probably more romanticism associated with Franciscanism than with any other movement in the life of the Church. It does infect us, and that is not necessarily bad. People expect Franciscans to be joyful, to love playful creatures, and to praise God heartily for all that he gives us. Correspondingly, we try to meet that expectation. We are not afraid to smile, to laugh, to enjoy the simple things of life. Yet we may do this with a religiously adolescent heart. A time might come when we find either a hollow reason, or none at all, for this projection of joy. What we need to be truly joyful is the capacity to understand why we should be joyful as followers, like Francis, of Christ.

Hanging on a wall near my desk, where I have to see it, is a small ceramic plaque which reads: "He has revealed that indescribable GLORY through the radiant light of his Gospel." Next to the plaque is a window, and from my fifth-floor room I can see all of lower Manhattan aglow.

It is a spectacular sight at night. The darkness accentuates the flood of light from the ground level, and the skyscrapers seem to pick it up and hurl it, like so many flickering sparks, against the sky. The city sparkles. In daytime, however, I can clearly see the bustle of activity, black-tarred roofs, soot, and smog. In this, too, we Franciscans should realize the joy of God's glory in his creation. It is in the adult reality of daylight that the joy of Franciscan Penitential life has its meaning.

In the light of day one can be totally realistic about the Gospel. Francis was. His joy in God was in no way marred by the clear light of humanity's good use or abuse of God's goodness. In light of the Gospel all things can be open to the message and effects of salvation. Father Barnabas Ahern once wrote that "the biblical way of life involves an alert God-consciousness . . . an abiding awareness of God, the consciousness that he is ever at hand to save." And in another

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place he wrote, "If we are thinking of God as someone of the ancient past, if we think of Jesus only as he walked in the land of Palestine, we have not begun to walk the biblical ways of life in which God is always present in the here and now."

The awareness of who God is and what he does, aroused and sustained in reflection and prayer makes us understand, as Francis' life manifests, that nothing lacks the capacity to receive salvation. The Gospel is for all. This is the true reason for a Christian's joy. The Gospel tells us that all creation has an intrinsic harmony. It proclaims that this harmony reached its apex in the loving Creator's revelation of his own Son as the reason for the existence of the universe. Joy is God's gift of self in salvation—in Christ. All of reality is ordered to Christ, as the hymn in Colossians points out.

In this joyful spirit, then, we accept our life of on-going conversion.

Salvation is God's loving relationship with all humanity and with all creation in Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit. It is being realized in each of us and in our world. Theologians use a phrase which helps us understand this. They say that the Kingdom of God is, and is becoming. The Lord effected our salvation by his death and resurrection. In so doing, he established the Kingdom of God's loving relationship with us all. The Holy Spirit was then sent into time to spread and intensify the Kingdom in and among us. The Kingdom will reach its plenitude at the end time when all things and everyone will be all in all, in Christ. We, then, are part of God's process of making ourselves and all things one in Christ. This was Francis'

Father Thaddeus Horgan, former contributing editor of The Lamp and Omnis terra, was director of the Pro Unione Ecumenical Center (Rome) from 1968 until 1973. Since then he has been giving retreats and workshops to Franciscan religious and has been serving as a member of the General Council and Ecumenical Coordinator of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement.

life perspective, and this is why we say that the life of penance is directed toward an ever more intense union with the Lord. This is a cause of our joy.

Like Francis, we are converted and converting, turned and turning, healed and healing. In light of the Gospel we know that God's love in Christ by the Spirit seeks a response, not initially only, but one that can be intensified, made more complete and filled with greater joy. The Tau cross which appears on so many of our stationery letterheads represents this. Do you know its symbolism?

Read Ezekiel 9:5 for its biblical origin. Francis adopted it as his own at the Fourth Lateran Council. There Pope Innocent III referred to it as a form of the Cross, the symbol of redemption, the symbol of all who live in Christ. The Tau is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet and represents the end of time when Christ will be all in all. This sign of the totality of Christ (pleroma Christi) became Francis' and ours. For him and us it means the healing and reconciliation of humanity, because on the Cross Jesus handed over all humanity to the Father in an intense relationship of love. It represents the victory of God in his pursuit of humankind and is an eschatological symbol of God's definitive reign. It is, the, the sign of peace and the symbol of our

joy.

That peace and joy is attained, as Francis teaches, by the "pure of heart," by those who steadfastly seek the Kingdom of God. To seek this is "to put on the Lord Jesus Christ." As Franciscan Penitents we do this after the manner of life and example of Saint Francis. In a word, he did this by fulfilling literally what the Gospel spells out as a pattern of living. The word "discipleship" best expresses what is meant here. Discipleship is opening oneself to the Spirit so he will effect in us what he did in the humanity of Christ. This is the basis of Francis' great devotion to the humanity of Jesus. The Jesus of the Gospels, who was human so we could know him and be like him, is the center of every Franciscan life. Our consciousness of Christ and all that he means for us and for all humanity, and all that we can do or achieve in him—viz., the Gospel mission of salvation, is the reason for our joy.

Francis was conscious that God was the Lord of Salvation History, a Father who manifests his love for a repentant people by giving us his Son. Francis responded to this love by that discipleship which the Gospel proclaims. Discipleship is the true meaning of the word "witness," which is today in such extensive use. It implies not merely attesting to the truth of God's revelation, but

committing oneself to the truth by living what truth proclaims. God who is truth has redeemed us and sent his Spirit to effect redemption in the world. Giving oneself totally to the Spirit so that he can bring redemption to its fullness in and among us is Christian witness.

Following Francis' life and example implies several fundamental things. The first is what biblicists call *kenosis*, or voluntarily emptying oneself in imitation of Christ. Saint Paul beautifully shows, in Philippians 2 that out of obedience to the Father Christ chose not to manifest his divine glory. His desire was to do God's will, which was that he should reestablish the relationship of love between God and humankind. Jesus chose to open his humanity completely to the Spirit. By his Incarnation and Passion he became poor so that the real wealth of God—redemption and at-one-ment—might enrich many (2 Cor. 8:9). For Francis this meant poverty, being poor and simple, so that nothing could impede the action of the Spirit in effecting or intensifying redemption in him. Francis' poverty has no other meaning than the Gospel message of salvation and its realization. It is the Franciscan's principal expression of discipleship and has its origin in our obedience to the loving will of the Father. For this reason,

Francis called upon all his followers to live the life and poverty of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

He meant this literally. Like Christ, Franciscans are to become servants of humankind for the sake of the Kingdom of God. We are to be poor as the Lord was poor, so nothing can distract us from that single-mindedness of purpose to take up the cross daily, to die to self and selfishness that we and all humanity may rise to new life. Francis projects to us a life style from which we should not attempt to escape, and which we should not try to disguise. It involves renunciation of wealth or possessiveness in any form because we should be possessed by the Spirit. It involves the renunciation of power, or any form of domination over others, because we all ought to be under the domination of the Spirit. It involves being with the poor, the humble, the meek, those who find it hard to realize that the curse of poverty is removed by the blessings of the Kingdom. Our life style should be the living pattern set before us by the teachings of the Gospel, notably in the Beatitudes.

Francis lived the life of the poor Man of Palestine probably more perfectly than anyone else. His joy, then, was also complete. He expressed this evangelical life in many ways. Our Founders and Foundresses saw in his life

and example aspects that they wished us to live and to develop. Like the ancient Penitents of old, they followed Francis' example of putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. To be faithful to the Franciscan Penitential tradition, to our own Community traditions, and to the current renewal of religious life in the Church, therefore, we should discern anew those aspects of our life which the charism of our Founders stresses. What aspect of Franciscan penance your community should live is a matter only you, by openness to the Spirit, by study, and by reflection, can and should discern. I can hope only to point out its root in the common heritage of living the Gospel after the life and example of Saint Francis that we all share.

Reflection on the meaning of Franciscan Penitential life should lead us, as it did Francis, to respond prayerfully with praise, adoration, and goodness extended to all. The love of God in our hearts will then teach us to turn with his compassion, forgiveness, and love to all men and women. Our lives will herald the Gospel. Our lives will witness to God's peace and goodness. Our lives will offer the healing of God through our ministries which were conceived by our Founders and expressions of the Franciscan charism. Our fidelity to that charism will be the source of our joy which is in God, who sent his

Son to redeem us and who now has sent his Spirit to accomplish in us his work of conversion.

"You must live your whole life according to the Christ you have received—Jesus the Lord; you must be rooted in him, built on him, and held firm by the faith you have been taught—and full of thanksgiving" (Col. 2:6). That "thanksgiving" in our day-to-day life should be manifest in the simple joys of life. Thus our joy will reflect our awareness of the universality of God's salvation, from which no one is excluded. It will proclaim our concern for the spread of God's Kingdom, and because it is a "doing joy," it will contribute to the Kingdom's realization. It would be an adolescent, passing, and superficial joy if it were not rooted in our faith in what it means to be in the Body of Christ. Our joy is both personal and communal, for such is the Body of Christ. It is also eminently human, as was the Lord's. Pope Paul notes, in his Apostolic Exhortation on Christian Joy (May 9, 1975), that Jesus

has manifestly known, appreciated, and celebrated a whole range of human joys, those simple daily joys within the reach of everyone. The depth of his interior life did not blunt his concrete attitude or his sensitivity. He admires the birds of heaven, the lilies of the field. He immediately grasps God's attitude towards creation at the dawn of

history. He willingly extols the joy of the sower and the harvester, the joy of the man who finds a hidden treasure, the joy of the shepherd who recovers his sheep or of the woman who finds her lost coin, the joy of those invited to the feast, the joy of a marriage celebration, the joy of a father who embraces his son returning from a prodigal life, and the joy of a woman who has just brought her child into the world. For Jesus these joys are real because for him they are the signs of the spiritual joys of the Kingdom of God: the joy of people who enter this Kingdom, return there or work there, the joy of the Father who welcomes them. And for his part Jesus himself manifests his satisfaction and his tenderness when he meets children wishing to approach him, a rich young man who is faithful and wants to do more, friends who open their home to him, like Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. His happiness is above all to see the Word accepted, the possessed delivered, a sinful woman or a publican like Zacchaeus converted, a widow taking from her poverty and giving. He even exults with joy when he states that the little ones have the revelation of the Kingdom which remains hidden from the wise and able. Yes, because Christ was "a man like us in all things but sin," he accepted and experienced effective and spiritual joys, as a gift of God. And he did not rest until "to the poor he proclaimed the Good News of salvation and to those in sorrow, joy." The Gospel of St.

Luke particularly gives witness to this seed of joy. The miracles of Jesus and his words of pardon are so many signs of divine goodness, all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him, and gave glory to God. For the Christian as for Jesus, it is a question of living, in Thanksgiving to the Father, the human joys that the Creator gives him.

The greatest joy of life is to make it a reality in our giving back to God the goodness he has given us by our service to others. Practically that is what living as a member of Christ's Body is all about. Our joy is rooted in the unfathomable gift of our awareness of God's love for us in Christ and in the Spirit. But our experience of that joy comes about by our deeds of thanksgiving, as Christ demonstrates in his humanity.

The testimony of the final days of Francis of Assisi further demonstrates this fact. He was physically wearied and worn by his tireless prayers, fastings, and almsgiving—his ministry of proclaiming by his example, deeds, and words the wonders of the Kingdom of God and the meaning of the Gospel life. Yet despite his blindness and pain he hailed all creation as "blessed" because in Christ it would be totally restored to its original blessedness. His consciousness of the power of salvation in him and in the world made it possible for

him to dictate the simple but powerfully beautiful, lively, and colorful Cantic of Brother Sun. His joy gave him a catholic openness to all people, to all creation. That is Franciscan joy!

Our lives should witness to that joy. Not the superficial gadfly "jolly good fellow" hilarity that is only momentary. But we should witness to the great joy of being alive, to the marvellous joy of sanctified love, to the appreciative joy of nature, to the satisfy-

ing joy of work well done, and to the Godlike joy of serving and sacrificing for others. Christian joy is meant for now and not just hereafter. When we say we should be instruments of peace we might wonder how. The answer is simple: joy! Faith, hope, and love alive in a person are manifested genuinely only by joy. Joy is the indescribable glory revealed through the radiant light of the Gospel. It is Christ alive in and among us now.

The Hunter

Bread, breaking
like twigs—and I hear
the Hunter.

The brittle crack
is the snap of a trap
wherever I go.

In dawn's unending quest
Your arrows lodge,
O Christ, within my breast.

Here I am,
on Your shoulder draped,
trophy for the Father
and pardon shaped.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

Francis and Women

SISTER JEANNE M. GLISKY, S.F.P.

THERE ARE men who live so profoundly that they live on as an inspiration for all times and all people. Francis of Assisi is such a man. Thirteenth-century biographers of the saint, Thomas of Celano and Saint Bonaventure, tell us that among the laity both men and women were attracted by his life and preaching to live the Gospel in a more intense manner. That women were attracted to live the Gospel under his inspiration attests to the fact that he considered them equally capable of living it as men. For Francis, women were both an advantage and a distraction. But for those who would seek a deeper insight into his attitudes and behavior toward women, an introduction is necessary. Likewise, the possibility and reality of women coming together to live a community life as Third Order members finds its most immediate thrust in Francis' attitudes and

behavior toward women. His writings and biographies reveal that he was neither exclusively positive nor negative toward them. They also show that he possessed certain strong convictions against fostering spiritual and personal relationships with women. Yet Francis made two exceptions in this regard through the relationships he established with Clare di Offreduccio and Lady Jacoba di Settesoli of Rome.

Clare di Offreduccio exemplifies the fact that women were capable of living the Gospel in the context of the Franciscan ideal. In her *Legend*, written by Thomas of Celano, Francis and Clare share equal status in their quest for God since both were led by the same spirit, "whose first promptings each had followed although in different ways."¹ Francis became Clare's spiritual director,² and Clare became Francis' "little plant" (*plantula*):

¹Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *The Legend and Writings of Saint Clare of Assisi* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1953). The present reference is to the "Legend," 3, 5; p. 21.

²Ibid., pp. 83 and 22.

Sister Jeanne M. Glinsky, S.F.P., M.A. (Franciscan Institute), a member of the Resurrection House of Prayer community in Cincinnati, originally wrote this article as an appendix to her Master's Thesis, "An Investigation of the Origins and Development of Third Order Franciscan Communities of Women."

the feminine foundation of his ideal:

And no less did Francis, impressed by the fair fame of so gracious a maiden, desire to see and speak with her, for being wholly eager for spoils and having come to depopulate the kingdom of this world, he would fain somewhat "deliver" this noble prey "from the wickedness of the world" (Gal. 1:4) and restore her to his Lord.³

Thus Clare, as a woman called by God to live out her vocation under the inspiration of Francis Bernadone, was considered as equally capable of living the Gospel as Francis. Women, therefore, were an advantage for the Kingdom of God.

Francis' relationship with Clare, however, although authentic and enduring, did not develop outside the confines of religious reserve and caution. Even though Francis is a product of his age both culturally and ecclesiastically regarding the inferior status of women, he displays great spiritual insight into the limitations and weaknesses of human nature regarding man-woman relationships. Yet, on the other hand, he seems to carry to an extreme the idea that women are a threat and obstacle to a man's religious way

of life based on the Gospel. At the base of this seemingly defensive approach to women is Francis' astute recognition of his own vulnerability to the allurements of the "flesh."

The dichotomy within the nature of man between flesh and spirit preoccupied the consciousness of Francis to such an extent that it became a frequent topic of discussion in his writings, not only to the brothers, but to all people. An example of this can be noted in the "Letter to All the Faithful" which Francis addressed to all Christians whether clerics or lay, men or women, religious or seculars. In it he outlines a program for living an intense Christian life based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He likewise indicates that the non-Christian life is based on man's lower nature (flesh) and not Jesus Christ (spirit).

Our lower nature, the source of so much vice and sin, should be hateful to us We are bound to order our lives according to the precepts and counsels of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so we must renounce self and bring our lower nature into subjection under the yoke of obedience . . ."⁴

Francis' adoption of a rather defensive and negative attitude toward relationships with women

is more understandable within a context influenced by his day's non-affirmative philosophical and theological concepts of women and likewise the negative concept of human nature with which women were identified. To illustrate this: Francis warns the brothers that they are to avoid all "evil" and suspicious relationships with women, including even nuns.⁵ He minutely specifies how the brothers are to relate to women and for what purposes. In chapter 12 of the Rule of 1221, he prescribes a code of conduct in which the only legitimate relationships with women are those of a pastoral or spiritual nature, and they are to be engaged in with caution. This chapter warns the brothers that they are to guard against evil from the sight and association with women and are not to speak with them alone. Priests are to speak respectfully with them while administering Penance or while giving spiritual counsel. The brothers are forbidden to allow any woman to profess obedience to them. Finally, Francis warns the brothers that they are to have control over all their members (senses, passions) because it is the Lord who says that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Mt. 5:28).

Chapter eleven of the Rule of 1223 further warns the brothers not to engage in unsanctioned relationships with even religious women, since the possibility exists that they too could be a source of temptation. Francis is so strong in this recommendation to the brothers that they must seek permission from the Apostolic See if they want to enter the monasteries of nuns. He realizes, then, and also fears that even the best intentions of the brothers to recruit nuns and assume their spiritual direction could give rise to abuse and scandal. As the passage from the Rule of 1223 suggests, Francis feared the danger that could result from familiarity with even religious women.

Thomas of Celano, moreover, astutely captures the spirit of Francis' attitude toward women and the attitude he wished his brothers to have:

That honeyed poison, namely, familiarities with women, which led astray even holy men, Francis commanded should be entirely avoided. For he feared that from such things the weak spirit would be quickly broken and the strong spirit often weakened . . . Indeed, a woman was so unwelcome to him that you would think that this caution was not a warning or an example but rather a dread or a horror He once said to a

³Ibid., p. 21.

⁴St. Francis, "Letter to All the Faithful," *Omnibus of Sources*, ed. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973), p. 73.

⁵St. Francis, Rule of 1221, c. 12 (*Omnibus*, p. 42); Rule of 1223, c. 11 (Ibid., p. 64).

companion: "I tell you the truth, dearest Brother, I would not recognize any woman if I looked into her face, except two [Clare and Lady Jacoba]. The face of the one and of the other is known to me, but I know no other." Rightly, so, Father, for looking upon them makes no one holy. Rightly so, I say, for they provide no profit but only great loss, at least of time. They are an impediment to those who would walk the difficult way and who want to look up to the face that is full of grace.⁶

And yet, as Celano observes in the very same paragraph, when it came to "those women in whose minds an urgency of holy devotion had set up the abode of wisdom, he taught [them] by wonderful yet brief words." Even though he seemed more receptive and positive towards pious women Celano again illustrates Francis' cautious reserve with them when he tells us of Francis' trip to the town of Bevagna. The Saint had become too weak to continue the journey, and the brothers begged some bread and wine from a spiritual woman who had a daughter, a virgin vowed to God. After Francis had regained his strength, he preached to the two

women but did not look either of them in the face. When asked why he did not look at the holy virgin who had ministered to him with such great devotion, Francis replied, "Who must not fear to look upon the bride of Christ?"⁸

It is also recorded that Francis paid fewer and fewer visits to Clare and the Poor Ladies, even though he continued to give them "his affection in the Holy Spirit by caring for them."⁹ While showing great solicitude for Clare and her sisters on the one hand, Francis displays, on the other, an intolerance toward his brothers if they fail to heed his severe policy regarding the visiting of monasteries of nuns. Again, Celano tells us how a certain brother, not of Francis' strong feelings against such visits, visited a monastery of nuns "on an errand of sympathy." When Francis found out about the brother's visit, he made him walk "several miles naked in the cold and deep snow."¹⁰ Francis felt that only those brothers ought to minister to the sisters whom long experience had shown to have the Spirit of God.¹¹

Bonaventure mirrors Celano's

treatment of Francis' dealings with women. Although he summarizes Celano's account with less detail, Bonaventure seems to emphasize theologically the fight in man between spirit and flesh. He associates women with Eve and the fall of mankind within the context of Salvation History. After the fall, woman assumes an interior status to man because of her association with flesh (evil) rather than spirit (good). In an Augustinian sense, therefore, she is looked upon as evil, inferior, and the tempter of man.¹² Francis warned his friars, according to Bonaventure,

to beware of women and avoid close friendships or conversation with them which can often lead to a fall . . . He was convinced that it was dangerous to allow any representation of them to enter one's mind because the flames of passion could easily be rekindled or the purity of a clean heart be stained . . . "What," he asked, "has a religious got to do with women anyway, unless they are looking for confession or ask for spiritual direction? When a man is too sure of himself, he becomes less wary of the enemy, and if the Devil can call his own even one hair of a man's head, he will lose no time in making a rope of it."¹³

Even though in one sense Francis' writings and biographies



focus on the unspiritual dimension of mankind's creatureliness (projected through the inferior status of woman as associated with the fall of mankind and the rendering of her as a polarity to man and his spiritual nature), in another they focus on the spiritual dimension of mankind's creatureliness (insofar as creatures are images of their Creator) and reveal Francis' profound recognition that all creation is made up of two principles: the masculine and the feminine.

⁶Omer Englebert, *Saint Francis of Assisi*, 2nd ed., trans. Eve Marie Coober (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1965), p. 166.

⁷2 Celano 112 (*Omnibus*, pp. 454-55).

⁸2 Celano 114 (*Ibid.*, p. 457).

⁹2 Celano 204 (*Ibid.*, p. 525).

¹⁰2 Celano 206 (*Ibid.*, p. 527).

¹¹2 Celano 205 (*Ibid.*, p. 526).

¹²George H. Tavard, *Woman in Christian Tradition* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973), p. 116.

¹³St. Bonaventure, *Legenda Major*, 5, 5 (*Omnibus*, p. 666).

In the case of man, these two principles of the spirit as opposed to the flesh are realized in the form of man and woman.¹⁴

Modern psychologists, especially those of Jung's school, have placed these two elements of the masculine and feminine within the framework of two psychological principles which Jung refers to as *animus* and *anima*. Paul Evdokimov interprets these terms (within the Jungian framework) to be

the conscious and the unconscious, introversion and extraversion, the rational functions of thought and feeling and the irrational functions of sensation and intuition [of] the infra-complementary parts of the psyche.¹⁵

Jung places these principles within the structure of the soul and describes the *animus* as masculine: "consciousness, extraversion, the rational functions of thought and feeling," and the *anima* as feminine: "Unconscious, introversion, the irrational functions of sensation and

intuition." Jung sees each person as possessing both principles, although one dominates more in the male while the other does so in the female.¹⁶

Francis also perceived and recognized the existence of the masculine-feminine principle in mankind and in all creation. His writings and biographies reveal that the feminine aspect of this principle influenced his thought and his relationship with the brothers.¹⁷

Thus far, an examination of Francis' attitudes and policy toward women in relation to himself and the brothers has shown him to be cautious in his relationships with women on a natural level but, on a supernatural level, receptive and open to the feminine element and influence present in all creation. Despite his negative exhortations regarding the consequences that can result from associations with women, Francis leaves a "Form of Life and Last Will for Saint Clare" in which he states:

¹⁴Ibid., p. 166.

¹⁵Paul Evdokimov, *La femme et le salut du monde* (Paris, 1958), p. 195.

¹⁶Tavard, p. 167.

¹⁷Ed. note: Obviously, this point is crucial to Sister Jeanne's thesis; only after weighing the matter carefully did we decide to omit the next few paragraphs developing and documenting the point. We did so because, as Sister Jeanne could not have known when she sent us her manuscript, Sister Magdalen Daniels, C.S.S.F., had already given us an article dealing expressly and at length with the same point. See "The Synthesis of Masculine and Feminine Elements in the Personality of Francis of Assisi," THE CORD 27 (1977), 36-49. A shorter discussion of the matter will appear in our June issue.

"I desire and promise you personally and in the name of my friars that I will always have the same loving care and special solicitude for you as for them."¹⁸

As mentioned previously, Lady Jacoba di Settesoli of Rome was the other woman (besides Clare) who was taken into Francis' inner circle of friends. Lady Jacoba was the widow of Gratiano Frangipani, a noble Roman patrician. She made Francis' acquaintance in Rome after the investiture of Clare in 1212. Thomas of Celano and the *Mirror of Perfection* both emphasize Francis' friendship with her.¹⁹ She was one of the very few women to whom Francis ever gave a gift: "On another occasion while in Rome, Saint Francis had a lamb with him which he kept out of reverence for the Lamb of God; and when he was leaving, he gave it to Lady Jacoba di Settesoli to keep."²⁰

Lady Jacoba's relationship with Francis did not assume the usual restrictive character that he imposed on other women. Celano records, as do the authors of the "Legend of Perugia" and the "Mirror of Perfection," that a few days before his death Francis asked that a letter be sent to Lady

Jacoba summoning her to his bedside since she was his devoted friend. He also asked her to bring along a tunic and some almond cakes (*mostacciulo*).²¹ The other two Legends mention that she also brought along candle wax and incense for his burial. As the letter was about to be dispatched, Lady Jacoba arrived with her two sons and companions. A brother went quickly to Francis and said:

"I have something to tell you, Father." And the saint immediately said in quick reply: "Blessed be God, who has guided the Lady Jacoba, our brother, to us. Open the door and bring her in, for our Brother Jacoba does not have to observe the decree against women."²²

After the death of her husband, Lady Jacoba had been left with two sons to raise and the family estate to administer. Scholars have associated her with being one of the first Third Order members because of her unique relationship with Francis and the First Order, together with her spirit of poverty, evident in her renunciation of a claim to property which had been under dispute in a lawsuit between herself and

¹⁸St. Francis, "Form of Life and Last Will for St. Clare," 1 (*Omnibus*, p. 76).

¹⁹2 Celano 37 (*Ibid.*, p. 549); "Mirror of Perfection," 112 (*Ibid.*, p. 1249).

²⁰St. Bonaventure, *Legenda Major*, 8, 7 (*Ibid.*, p. 694).

²¹Loc. cit., and "Legend of Perugia," 101 (*Ibid.*, p. 1077).

²²2 Celano 37 (*Ibid.*, p. 549).

the Holy See.²³ Such a generous act on her part suggests that it might have been due to the influence of Francis and what he taught her about poverty. Her manner of life, too, seems to have manifested a likeness with the spirit of the Third Order.²⁴

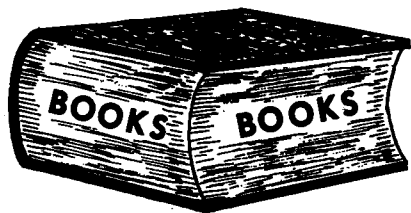
Lady Jacoba's special relationship with Francis, together with information revealed by the sources, suggests that Francis may have given her a spiritual

program to follow which resembles the one he gave to the Third Order in the thirteenth century. This is attested to be her sanctity, "perfection of virtues," "continence as a widow," "gift of tears," and "fervor from God" as indicated in the sources.

Thus we see that, at least with Clare and with Lady Jacoba, Francis did not adhere to his strict prohibition against relationships with women.

²³This was disclosed in a deed of May 13, 1217, made on her behalf and that of her two sons; see Englebert, p. 259.

²⁴Cuthbert Hess, O.S.F.C., *Life of St. Francis of Assisi* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1927), p. 325.



The Story of Latin and the Romance Languages. By Mario Pei. New York: Harper & Row, 1976. Pp. 356. Cloth, \$15.95.

Reviewed by Father Luke M. Ciampi, O.F.M., formerly editor of Padre, who studied under Dr. Pei at Columbia University and now teaches at St. Francis Seraphic Seminary, Andover, Massachusetts.

Franciscan readers who know that the *Canticle of the Creatures* by Saint Francis of Assisi was one of the first writings to appear in what is now

the Italian language will be especially interested in Dr. Pei's bibliographical reference to that work. All those who are interested in languages, their origins and backgrounds, and their later development, will find this latest publication by the Professor Emeritus of Romance Philology at Columbia University an eminently readable book. It is developed popularly enough for the dilettante and with scholarly depth enough for the serious student.

The importance to English speakers of Latin and its subsequent emergence as the five Romance languages stems especially from the influence exerted on the original Anglo-Saxon. While English is of Germanic origin, and its Germanic elements as well as its Anglo-Saxon structure are in more common use, yet by

actual dictionary word count the Latin and Romance language elements comprise about 50%. The Germanic elements come to only about 25%. The balance of the elements derive from Greek, Celtic, Slavic, Hebrew, Arabic, American Indian, African, and other sources.

The importance of Latin and the Romance languages to Christianity grows out of the fact that once Rome became established as a "world state," so to speak, its way of life became a broad avenue for the progressive spread of the Christian religion—despite the initial obstacle of some three hundred years of persecution. After the *Pax Constantina*, through all subsequent incursions and vicissitudes, the Roman Latin tradition persisted to shed its light and influence on many, if not most, of the major happenings of history down to our own time.

Another important feature of Romance languages today is their distribution throughout the world. They are spoken indigenously over one-fifth of the earth's land surface, about ten million square miles. They are, in addition, used commercially, culturally, politically, or otherwise over an additional seven million square miles.

The Story of Latin and the Romance Languages is in two parts, the first dealing with the historical backgrounds and the second with the linguistic evolution of the tongues spoken by those who absorbed and assimilated the culture, traditions, religion, and customs that grew up about and flowed out from the mouth of the Tiber. To comprehend how such influence could have been ex-

erted, one must be aware of the three basic forces that act on language development and the demographic impacts. Those three forces are history, geography, and psychology, to which must be added, in the case of the Romance languages, also religion.

The abundant examples and explanations dredged up from Dr. Pei's prodigious memory and depth of knowledge make this study of Latin and its successors in effect a review of medieval history and romance. Though currently retired from the academic world as such, Dr. Pei continues to make his substantial voice heard wherever language is important. Serious students of the Bible and of Christianity will be looking forward to publication of his forthcoming study on the language of Jesus.

Bible Study for the 21st Century.

By Lucas Grollenberg, O.P. Trans. from the 3rd rev. ed. by John E. Stelly. Wilmington, N.C.: Consortium Books, 1976. Pp. 179. Cloth, \$12.00

Reviewed by Father Cassian F. Corcoran, O.F.M., L.S.S., S.T.D., Asst. Director of Formation at Holy Name College, Washington, D.C., and Professor of Sacred Scripture at the Washington Theological Coalition.

This book was originally written in Dutch by a Roman Catholic priest, Dominican Father Lucas Grollenberg, whose expertise as an author is well known to those involved in biblical studies. A Southern Baptist,

Dr. John E. Steely, translated it into English. Roman Catholic authorship and translation by a Protestant may be said to symbolize one of the hopes that the author aimed to achieve through this book. The Bible "should contribute strength to the ecumenical striving of the churches" (p. 157).

Judaism accepted the Bible as God's inspired books which are "forever fixed." But since everything in the world is subject to change, the interpretation of the inspired books varies according to times. Using non-technical language and supporting his statements with very good examples, Grollenberg shows how Judaism, Jesus, the early Christian community, the Church Fathers, and theologians have interpreted the inspired books. The material is fascinating and provides helpful insights to understand and appreciate the inspired books of the Bible.

Beginning with the 19th century, scholars subjected the scriptures to a critical examination and proposed an historical interpretation vs. a literal interpretation. Stiff resistance resulted. A survey of the historical approach as it is applied to the Pentateuch, Isaiah, and Chronicles demonstrates how these inspired books are interpretations. For the most part, since the 1960's, there is a new attitude with respect to the interpretation of Scripture. The tools of historical criticism applied in the light of faith produces the message of the Bible. The Bible does not divide Christendom. Its message unites.

Grollenberg directs his book to the ordinary adult readership. His arguments are cogent. His examples are

lucid. A serious reader will profit from a study of this book. It will be most helpful. There are, however, some drawbacks. The price is high. Furthermore, although the book concludes with five pages of notes, there are no references throughout the text to these notes which clarify it. Finally, there is no index.

Overcoming Anxiety: A Christian Guide to Spiritual Growth. By Gerald Schomp. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1976. Pp. 124. Paper, \$1.50.

Reviewed by Paul Centi, Ph. D. (Psychology, Fordham University), Director of the Counseling Center and Professor of Psychology at Siena College.

Although Freud first used the term in 1894 when he described for therapists the anxiety neurosis, it was not until about forty years later in the 1930's that writers of books on psychology began to use the term more generally. This rather slow beginning has now culminated in a plethora of books and pamphlets, both scholarly and popular, dealing with anxiety in all its causes and manifestations. No wonder, since anxiety does appear to be the curse of modern man!

Schomp's paperback is one of many self-help books available today dealing with anxiety and, as with most of them, it does provide some things which might be helpful to some readers, while at the same time it tends to oversimplification and naivety, and it may even cause increased anxiety in a few readers.

The book consists of fifteen short

chapters on such topics as "So What's Bothering You?" "How Anxiety Can Affect Your Health," "How Anxiety Can Help You," "How to Overcome Anxiety about Your Work," and "Overcoming the Ultimate Anxiety: Death." Each chapter concludes with a number of questions under the heading "Points to Ponder," which are presented to serve as a means by which the reader may apply the material in the text to his personal life.

As the author states, the book has a twofold purpose: (1) to help the reader to handle *normal* anxiety, and (2) to help him enrich his life by using *normal* anxiety creatively. The italics are mine, for perhaps one of the more serious weaknesses in the book is the author's failure to differentiate clearly and consistently between what is normal anxiety and that anxiety which is pathological.

Other weaknesses are the following. On page 32, the author does state that excessive anxiety is not the cause of inner disorientation but its outward result. Yet the book does treat anxiety as the cause of our difficulties while neglecting, for the most part—at least in the chapters concerned with how to deal with anxiety—the inner conflicts and frustrations which may result in anxiety.

Also, although the author does write in the concluding section that learning to overcome anxiety is not as easy as reading this book, the book does seem to be based on the premise that a person who is anxiety-ridden is capable of rational self-analysis and that this self-analysis plus personal effort can lead to emotional change.

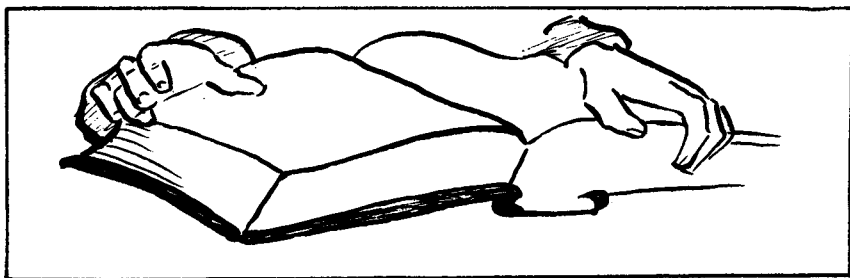
On the positive side, the book is different from many others available because of its Christian orientation. Frequent references to God, the faith, the Bible, and the works of other writers permeate the text and provide support and encouragement to the reader as he attempts to overcome his anxiety. In this day when God and faith are being more and more ignored as sources of hope and strength in adversity, the reader is reminded through the words of Thomas Merton that "anxiety is inevitable in an age of crisis like ours. Don't make it worse by deceiving yourself and acting as if you were immune to all inner trepidation. God does not ask you not to feel anxious, but to trust him no matter how you feel."

The Birth of a Movement. By David E. Flood, O.F.M., and Thadée Matura, O.F.M. Trans. Paul La Chance, O.F.M. and Paul Schwartz, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975. Pp. xxii-151. Cloth, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Eugene Honan, O.F.M., M.A. (Franciscan Institute, in Franciscan Spirituality), Guardian of St. Anthony Residence, Boston, Mass.

This small book on the First Rule of Saint Francis is made up of three main sections, each by different authors.

In Father Kajetan Esser's Foreword the keynote is sounded in the words of the poet Bernt Lie: "The writings of Francis of Assisi deserve to be widely read and studied. They



are a spring from which we can draw inexhaustibly. I have never read anything as beautiful or as sublime as these texts of the Poverello. What a spirit must have enlivened this man!"

In the Introduction Father Matura says that in the past thirty years there has been a discovery and utilization of the numerous actual writings of Francis himself, leading to a much deeper understanding of the inner spirit of the real Francis. This presentation of the Rule of 1221 gives us a view in "shorthand fashion" of an inspiring spiritual document that can positively enrich the lives of Franciscans and others who wish a pattern for their religious living today.

The four-page chronology of the life of Saint Francis is a handy reference source for the main events in the Poverello's life.

The first section, by Father David Flood, shows the origin and evolution of the Rule. It studies its historical context and formation and then gives an analysis of the text. Father Flood notes that "Francis was able to step out at the head of a line of men who thirsted after Christian authenticity" because he had the happy facility of making concrete the

theoretical elements that had previously been only vague ideals. An interesting reference is made to the influence of Lateran IV on the text, and Flood makes comments relating that situation to the present one following Vatican II.

The second section, by Fathers Paul LaChance and Paul Schwartz, gives a very readable English translation of the Latin text (which is also provided). The arrangement is good—Latin on the left page, English on the right. The numbering of the sentences in each chapter is a useful device for handy reference. At the end of the text are three pages of notes on variant readings of individual words.

The last section, by Father Matura, is a truly inspiring and spiritual interpretation of the First Rule with excellent applications to our present day situation. He treats questions that lead the reader into dialogue with the text. This section I would classify as "conferences" on such pertinent topics of the day as "The Franciscan Charism Today," "Dynamism of the Rule," "Faith," "Thinking with the Church," "Confrontation or Reconciliation?" "Fraternity," "Living where the Action Is," and "Poverty."

This treatment is far from the embalming of the dead letter of a 13th century document. It enhances the spirit and life of the most heartfelt words spoken by Saint Francis and makes them real for Franciscans and other zealous Christians today.

This is a stimulating, inspiring, and very worthwhile book for those who wish to go back to the sources to better taste and see the real Saint Francis. A few typographical slips here and there are my only negative observation.

Mary's Spiritual Maternity according to St. Louis de Montfort. By Patrick Gaffney, S.M.M. Bay Shore, N.Y.: Montfort Publications, 1976. Pp. xviii-124. Paper, no price given.

Reviewed by Father Pius F. Abrahams, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Anthony's Shrine, Boston, Massachusetts.

Father Patrick Gaffney, in writing *Mary's Spiritual Maternity*, presents a lucid treatment of this aspect of Mariology. His subject matter is given simply, yet offers, even to a mind skilled in theological method, solid and appealing doctrine. Father Gaffney, a Montfort Missionary with a doctorate in theology which he received *summa cum laude* from the Angelicum in Rome, writes specifically, in this work, of Mary's spiritual motherhood according to St. Louis de Montfort.

St. Louis, the author explains, "not only lived a life of filial devotion to the Mother of God, but founded this prerogative of Mary (her spiritual motherhood of all men) on solid

theological grounds and preached it in a simple but powerful way to the people of western France" (p. 85). Again, in his introduction, Father Gaffney points out, "St. Louis de Montfort is a theologian, for his writings, the fruit of his contemplation of God's Love, are evidently founded upon the rock of theological truth, which he is at pains to put into ordinary language for the simple people of his time. His authority in the field of Mariology has been recognized by Popes and theologians" (p. xvi).

Pope St. Pius X declared that he relied upon Montfort's *True Devotion* in composing his encyclical *Ad diem illum*. In that document the Pope succinctly expressed the doctrine of Mary's spiritual maternity. "All of us, therefore, who are united with Christ and are as the Apostle says 'Members of His body, made from his flesh and from his bones' (Eph. 5:30) have come forth from the womb of Mary as a body united to its head. Hence, in a spiritual and mystical sense, we are called children of Mary and she is the Mother of us all" (p. 76).

In its general sense, the spiritual maternity is the cooperation of Mary in our birth to life in Christ (p. 3). Father Gaffney shows that explicit references made by St. Louis to this marian privilege read like a special litany composed in honor of her spiritual maternity: "My good Mother," *Marie est ma bonne Mère*—"My true Mother"; "Mother of the Predestinate"; his own dear Mother and yours"; "Mother of Christians"; "Mother of His Members." And in his *Cantiques*, p. 167, Grignon de

Montfort, who *lived* the teaching he preached, sings: "As a child at the breast, I am attached to her bosom, this pure and faithful Virgin nourishes me with a milk all divine." Children of Mary, we are, according to the Saint, "hidden in Mary's womb" (*enfermé dans le sein de Marie*) and "the fruit of her womb."

The book under consideration is well structured. The divisions are logical, theological, and easily followed. In Part I, "The Fact of the Spiritual Maternity" is treated both in the life of St. Louis and in his writings. Part II of the work, which discusses the premises from which Montfort deduces the spiritual maternity, is divided into four chapters. The first deals with the prime principle of the Saint's Mariology: "For Saint Louis de Montfort, therefore, the source of all the privileges of Mary is the fact that she is the Mother-Associate of God the Redeemer, and such appears to be his prime principle of Mariology" (pp. 24-25).

The second chapter elucidates the premises of the spiritual maternity based upon the will of the Father; chapter three upon the will of the Holy Spirit, and chapter four upon the will of the Son. Arguments in these three latter sections are culled from Scripture, Tradition, and theology. Throughout, the expertise and ability of Father Gaffney are amply demonstrated. The book itself will have to be read for the reader to appreciate the penetrating presentation of content.

Footnotes in this brief book are lavish, numbering some 413. The annotations are helpful in grasping

more fully the statements of the text itself. Contemporary students of Mariology will be pleased to discover in the text of *Mary's Spiritual Maternity* frequent interlacing of the teaching of Grignion, the 8th chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, the *Marialis Cultus* of Pope Paul VI, and *Behold Your Mother*, the pastoral letter of the U.S. Conference of Bishops.

Father Gaffney purports to discuss Mary's spiritual maternity according to his founder, St. Louis de Montfort, and so the Saint's citations form a highlight of the book. This reviewer was particularly impressed by three of his reverent references to Jesus' Mother and ours. To delve into explanations is not possible here, but they provoke thought and, in true Franciscan fashion, lead from head to heart.

First, "God redeemed the world by the 'Hail Mary'" (*Cantiques*, p. 135). Secondly, Mary surpasses all that is not God (*Cantiques*, p. 161). And thirdly, "You [Mary] give us life because you break our chains" (*Cantiques*, p. 40).

Father Gaffney's book is rewarding to the reader both in content and presentation. It is scholarly yet simple.

M. Philippon termed St. Louis de Montfort the "Doctor of the Spiritual Maternity." The Saint contemplated, studied, and loved our *Genetrix*, our Mother in the order of grace. The epitaph inscribed on de Montfort's tomb in the parish church of St. Laurent-sur-Sevre, Vendée, France, reads in part, *Nullus Bernardo similior*, "No one was so like Saint Bernard."

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COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our April issue were drawn by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., of the Monastery of Sancta Clara, Canton, Ohio.

Summer
1977

A Franciscan Growth Opportunity

THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES M.A. PROGRAM OF THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE

AT ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY

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

CALENDAR

Registration	Saturday, June 25
Classes begin	Monday, June 27
Modern Language Exam	Friday, July 15
Final Exams	Saturday, August 6

COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1977

FI 500 Bibliography

1 cr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 8:00-9:05, Room 4, M-W
This course is required of all new degree candidates after June
1977. It must be taken in the first summer session attended.

FI 501 Sources for Franciscan Studies

3 cr., Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D. Cand.: 9:10-10:15,
Room 1
This course is a prerequisite for 503 and 504.

FI 503 Early Franciscan Texts

3 cr., Dr. Duane Lapsanski, D.Th.: 9:10-10:15, Room 4
Prerequisite: 501

FI 504 Life of St. Francis

3 cr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 2
Prerequisite: 501

FI 506 Survey of Franciscan History

3 cr., Fr. Lawrence Landini, O.F.M., H.E.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 1

FI 508 History of Franciscan Thought

3 cr., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 2

FI 511 Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts

2 cr., Dr. Malcolm Wallace, Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 2

FI 517 Introduction to Palaeography

2 cr., Dr. Girard Etzkorn, Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 3

FI 521 Rule of St. Francis

2 cr., Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D. Phil., Oxon.:
10:20-11:25, Room 3

FI 523 Bonaventurian Texts

2 cr., Fr. Juvenal Lalor, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 4

FI 532 The Lay Franciscan Movement

2 cr., Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M., M.A.: 8:00-9:05, Room 2

FI 534 Conventualism, Primitive Observance and Capuchin Reform

2 cr., Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., S.T.L.: 8:00-9:05, Room 4

FI 539 Spiritual Direction and the Franciscan Tradition

2 cr., Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D. Min.: M-W-F, 7:00-9:00 P.M.
Room 3

FI 552 The Franciscan Contribution to Peace and Justice

2 cr., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.; Fr. Roderic Petrie,
O.F.M., M.A., M.S. Ed.; Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap.,
D. Phil., Oxon.: 11:30-12:35, Room 1

The M.A. Program is offered during the Autumn, Spring and Summer sessions.

the CORD

May, 1977

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Vol. 27, No. 5

CONTENTS

THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD	130
<i>Editorial</i>	
FRANCIS	131
<i>Sister Antoinette Kennedy, O.S.F.</i>	
SAINT FRANCIS AND PRAYER	132
<i>William Slattery, O.F.M.</i>	
TEACH US, HOLY SPIRIT	141
<i>Bruce Riski, O.F.M. Cap.</i>	
A HYMN	142
<i>William De Biase, O.F.M.</i>	
PRAYER	144
<i>Julian a. Davies, O.F.M.</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	152



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EDITORIAL



The Handmaid of the Lord

IN PROOF-READING the review of Father Maloney's book, *Mary, the Womb of God* (see page 159 of this issue), I was struck by a reference to an entire chapter on Mary's submission to God. And it occurred to me that submission is a concept which needs rehabilitating in these days. What came to mind, first of all, was the relevance of such a doctrine to the recent papal document indicating that the ordained priesthood was not in God's plan for women. (We hope to have a sustained treatment of this issue in a future issue.) Stated so baldly, it seems a complete puzzle that Christian—even religious—women, could respond, in effect: "How dare you, God, leave me out of something I want?" Or "How could a message so out of step with the times really be your message?" But if there is anything that the whole of God's dealing with his people reveals, it is that his ways are not their ways.

In recent years the stress on the positive in our relationship with God: on love, on the friendship model of our relation with him, has perhaps led to some misconceptions about the demands of love. Love means giving, surrender, putting the will of the beloved above one's own. Marriage can be a partnership, but love never can, for as Augustine told us, "The measure of love is that it loves without measure." So too with religious life. We are promised a hundredfold here and hereafter (full measure, pressed down and running over) for our fidelity—but "giving to get" isn't total dedication.

God is our friend, yes. But he is our *God* and can never stop being so. Quibbling, second guessing, analyzing his decisions mediated to us by his Son and his Bride the Church shows lack of respect for him; and no one who doesn't respect God can really lay claim to loving him. We are God's children, too, the object of his special care and affection. To pout because that care and affection doesn't provide for all we want is to love childishly, not as a child *should* love.

We get lots of cards at Christmas time which say "To you in God's service." Vatican II styles our Church a *servant* Church. The servant is one who has someone else's good in mind, not his own. How really out of step with God's Spirit we would be, if we were to put our own desires uppermost in our minds. "To serve God is to reign," the Prayer of Peace reminds us. We are really in command, really free, when like Mary we have fully said, "Let it be done to me according to *your* Word."

A. Julian Davis



Francis

With birds and blossoms
decorating hands and robe, are you
sole property of Spring?
One would think a branch
blown pure by Wind,
stripped smooth by rain and
Sun would be a more apt sign, its world
a more apt season.
Ascetic wood, fine design
across Autumn-into-Winter skies,
you mark the universe with angled suffering:
brown promise of chilled slumber
before the break of green.

SISTER ANTOINETTE KENNEDY, O.S.F.

Saint Francis and Prayer

WILLIAM SLATTERY, O.F.M.

FROM THE TIME of his conversion around the year 1206 until his death in 1226, Saint Francis of Assisi lived an extraordinary life of love, humility, poverty, and joy. This extraordinary life was possible primarily because of the goodness of God and because Saint Francis was first a great man of prayer. Saint Bonaventure writes of Francis:

Saint Francis realized that he was an exile from the Lord's presence as long as he was at home in the body (cf. 2 Cor. 5, 6, 8), and his love of Christ had left him with no desire for the things of this earth. Therefore he tried to keep his spirit always in the presence of God, by praying to him without intermission, so that he might not be without some comfort from the Beloved. Prayer was his chief comfort in this life of contemplation in which he became a fellow-citizen of the angels, as he penetrated the dwelling places of heaven in his eager search for

his Beloved, from whom he was separated only by a partition of flesh. Prayer was his sure refuge in everything he did; he never relied on his own efforts, but put his trust in God's loving providence and cast the burden of his cares on him in insistent prayer. He was convinced that the grace of prayer was something a religious should long for above all else. No one, he declared, could make progress in God's service without it, and he used every means he could to make the friars concentrate on it. Whether he was walking or sitting, at home or abroad, whether he was working or resting, he was so fervently devoted to prayer that he seemed to have dedicated to it not only his heart and his soul, but all his efforts and all his time.¹

It was in prayer that Saint Francis discovered his vocation. Celano, at the beginning of his First Life, writes that the Saint "withdrew for a while from the bustle and the business of the world and tried to establish

Jesus Christ dwelling within himself."² And again, "He went with a certain man of Assisi to remote places and there Francis, 'filled with a new and singular spirit,' would pray to his Father in secret He prayed devoutly that the eternal and true God would direct his way and teach him to do his will."³ It was after this that Francis sold his goods, despised money, was persecuted by his father, and began serving the lepers.

In San Damiano, before the Crucifix, Francis received a clarifying message on his vocation from our Lord. At Mass in the Church of St. Mary of the Angels, he heard the Gospel proclaimed which was to become his Rule of Life. Francis discovered God, himself, and his vocation in prayer at this, the beginning of his religious life. What he wrote in his Testament is, then, literally true: "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."⁴

To get clearer on God's will for himself, Francis not only prayed himself but also had others pray for him, as on this

occasion when he consulted Saint Clare and Brother Sylvester:

Dear Brother, go to Sister Clare and tell her, on my behalf, to pray devoutly to God, with one of her purer and more spiritual companions, that God may deign to show me what is best—either that I preach sometimes or that I devote myself only to prayer. Go to Brother Sylvester who is staying on Mount Subasio and tell him the same thing.

When Masseo returned, Francis knelt down and bared his head and crossed his arms before Brother Masseo and asked him: "What does my Lord Jesus Christ order me to do?" Brother Masseo replied: "God wants you to go preaching, because he did not call you for yourself alone but also for the salvation of others."

Aflame with divine power, he jumped to his feet: "So let's go—in the name of the Lord."⁵

The end of Francis' life was so centered in prayer that Celano was able to say that the Saint had himself become a living prayer. We recall Greccio, Poggio, Bustone, La Verna. Waiting at the Portiuncula for his imminent death, Francis "commanded them to sing in a loud voice with joy of spirit, the Praises of the Lord over his approaching death, or rather over the life that was so

¹The citations for this article have all been taken from the *Omnibus of Sources* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973) . . . The present reference is to St. Bonaventure's "Major Life of St. Francis," ch. 10, p. 705.

Father William Slattery is serving as Acting Master of Novices at St. Joseph's Mission, Besters, South Africa.

²1 Celano 6 (p. 234).

³Ibid.

⁴Testament (p. 68).

⁵Fioretti, 16 (p. 1335).

near."⁶ Praying, listening to the Gospel of St. John, he died.

Francis was always praying:

His safest haven was prayer; not prayer of a single moment, or idle, or presumptuous prayer, but prayer of long duration, full of devotion, serene in humility. If he began late, he would scarcely finish before morning. Walking, sitting, eating, drinking, he was always intent upon prayer.⁷

Where Did He Pray?

IT IS AGAIN Celano who tells us that Francis

always sought a hidden place where he could adapt his soul and body to God. When he suddenly felt himself visited by the Lord in public, lest he be without a cell he made a cell of his mantle. At times, when he did not have a mantle, he would cover his face with his sleeve so that he would not disclose the hidden manna. Always he put something between himself and the bystanders, lest they should become aware of the bridegroom's touch. Thus he could pray unseen even among many people in the narrow confines of a ship. Finally, when he could not do any of these things, he would make a temple of his breast. Because he was forgetful of himself, there were no sobs, or sighs; because he was

absorbed in God, there was no hard breathing or external movement.⁸

Generally, however, Francis went away to lonely places for long times of prayer. We know the names: Fonte Colombo, the Carceri, the Celle at Cortona, La Verna, etc. As the Legend of the Three Companions tells us, he often hid himself from the eyes of men and withdrew to pray in secret. He was drawn by sweetness of heart to pray apart, far from all public meeting places.⁹ Small, deserted Churches, quiet valleys, high mountain caves, lonely islands, silent woods, were Francis' favored places of prayer.

Wherever he prayed, Francis tried to keep his prayer life a deep secret. As Celano has it, it "was his habit to rise so furtively and so gently to pray that none of his companions would notice him getting up or praying. But when he went to bed late at night, he would make noise, and even a great noise, so that his going to rest might be noticed by all."¹⁰

How Francis Prayed

AT THE beginning, prayer must have been very difficult for Saint Francis; it apparently took a lot

out of him. We read in 1 Celano, for example:

When he came out again [from the grotto] to his companion, he was so exhausted with the strain, that one person seemed to have entered, and another to have come out.¹¹

Francis was absolutely convinced of the need for humble prayer; so he persisted, he allowed nothing to distract him. Saint Bonaventure relates an incident:

During Lent one year he carved out a dish to occupy his spare moments . . . Then when he was reciting Tierce, it came into mind and distracted him a little. At that he was seized with fervor and he threw the dish into the fire, saying: "I will make a sacrifice of it to God, because it interfered with his sacrifice."¹²

If we were equally dedicated, how many cars, houses, etc., would we throw into the fire!

With his dedication to prayer, Francis found prayer easier. He took steps to deepen his prayer life. He avoided uncharity, he hated gossip, he tried to remain quiet in God's presence, he absorbed the Bible. The Gospel really was the food and method of his prayer. Saint Bonaventure says:

He had never studied Sacred Scripture under any human teacher, but the unwearied application of prayer and the continual practise of virtue had purified his spiritual vision.¹³

When someone consoled him on his poor eyesight and his inability to read the Gospel, he said that he was so filled with the Gospel now that he did not need to read it.¹⁴

Still, he had to undergo frightful attacks from the devil, says Bonaventure, who tried to withdraw him from prayer. But the Saint's fervent prayers and steadfast intention overcame the enemy.

Although we don't associate methods of prayer with the free-spirited Francis, it is obvious that he was extremely regular and methodical in his prayer. "Every day," says the Legend of Perugia, "he mediated on the humility and example of the Son of God . . . the sufferings and bitterness which Christ endured for us were a constant subject of affliction to him—so much so that he was totally unconcerned with his own sufferings."¹⁵

Speaking to a brother, Francis said: "Every day I find such sweetness and consolation in re-

⁶1 Celano 109 (p. 323).

⁷1 Celano 71 (p. 288).

⁸1 Celano 94 (p. 440).

⁹Leg. 3 Comp., 8 (p. 897).

¹⁰2 Celano 99 (p. 444).

¹¹1 Celano 6 (p. 235).

¹²Bonaventure, Leg. Maj., ch. 10, n. 6 (p. 710).

¹³Ibid., ch. 11, n. 1 (p. 711).

¹⁴Leg. Perug., 38 (p. 1016).

¹⁵Ibid., 37 (p. 1015).

calling to mind and meditating on the humility of the Son of God... that I could live until the end of the world without hearing or meditating on any other passage from the Scriptures."¹⁶

Francis began with Jesus in the Gospels. He saw that this was the Son of God, he saw his humility, he visualized and saw depicted in the crib and on the cross the unbelievable goodness of God, and this led to setting his heart on fire with prayer.

Remember him in the home of Bernard of Quintavalle, repeating "My God and my All" the whole night.¹⁷ A simple prayer like this—prayed, lived—overcame him, filling him with the awareness of his own nothingness, insignificance, and sinfulness healed with the merciful goodness of God behind and beyond his own weakness. He was now well beyond the first stage of purifying prayer and into the prayer of simplicity.

How did he pray during those long nights on the mountains?

But when he prayed in the woods and in solitary places, he would fill the woods with sighs, water the places with his tears, strike his breast with his hand... he would often speak with his Lord

with words. There he would give answer to his Judge; there he would offer his petitions to his Father; there he would talk to his Friend; there he would rejoice with the Bridegroom.... Often, without moving his lips, he would meditate within himself and, drawing external things within himself, he would lift his spirit to higher things.¹⁸

Saint Francis' faithful response to the graces of prayer led him to the heights of contemplation. As Celano puts it, "Francis was often suspended in such sweetness of contemplation that, caught up out of himself, he could not reveal what he had experienced because it went beyond all human comprehension."¹⁹



¹⁶Ibid., 38 (p. 1016).

¹⁷Fioretti, 2 (p. 1303).

¹⁸2 Celano 95 (p. 440).

¹⁹2 Celano 98 (p. 443).

Bonaventure tells a story:

As Francis was passing through the crowded village of Borgo San Sepolcro on one occasion the crowds rushed to meet him in their excitement. He was riding an ass because he was not well, and they pulled him and dragged him this way and that and crowded all about him, pushing against him on every side, but he seemed insensible to it all and like a dead body, noticing nothing that was going on. Long after they had passed the village and left the crowds behind they came to the leper hospital and then, as if coming back from far away, he inquired anxiously when they would be near Borgo San Sepolcro. His mind [concludes Saint Bonaventure] was fixed on the glory of heaven, and so he had lost all track of changes of place or time or people.²⁰

So, beginning with humble, hard, tiring effort in prayer, Saint Francis advanced with God's help to the prayer of union in contemplation. But alongside this, what we might call the private prayer of Saint Francis, let us not forget his love for the liturgy of the Church. Let us not forget his love, reverence, and devotion centered around the blessed Eucharist. For him, long before Vatican II, the Mass was "the center and source of [his] spiritual life."

²⁰Bonaventure, Leg. Maj., ch. 10, n. 2 (pp. 706-07).

²¹Mirror of Perfection, n. 94 (p. 1228).

Francis took great care to celebrate the great feasts of the Church, preparing for them with long and arduous fasts. The Mirror of Perfection speaks of his devotion to the Divine Office (which, of course, does so much to bring to the fore in our consciousness the spirit of the Feast or day's liturgy):

He was so devout and reverent at the Divine Office that when saying it he would never lean against a wall or support. He always stood upright and bare-headed, although he sometimes knelt.... One day it was raining heavily, and he was riding an ass because he was sick. Although he was already drenched to the skin, he discounted from the horse when he wished to say the Hours, and said the Office standing in the road with the rain pouring down on him, as though he had been in a cell or in Church. He said to his companion, 'If the body likes to take its food in peace and ease, although it becomes food for worms, how much greater should be the soul's reverence and devotion when it receives the food which is God himself!'²¹

In his Rules Francis is careful to see that his brothers say the Divine Office, and in his Testament he suggests rather forceful measures of dealing with those who refuse to do so.

The Prayers of Saint Francis

THE MAIN prayers found to be authentically from Francis are the Praises of God, the Canticle of Brother Sun, the Blessing for Brother Leo, the Praises of the Virtues, the Salutation of the Blessed Virgin, the Praises before the Office, and the Office of the Passion.

It is important to notice the extent to which these prayers are permeated by praise of God's goodness. They are all, in fact, prayers of a man going to the limits of words' ability to praise. They are prayers showing an extremely extensive knowledge of Scripture, being themselves, in some instances, just a collection of scriptural texts. They show, too, an appreciation of nature. They make it clear that Franciscans should praise God for his gifts (sun, moon, stars, etc.). Do, at your leisure, read some of Francis' prayers preserved for us in the *Omnibus of Sources*.

Characteristics of Saint Francis' Prayer and Devotion

THE MOST characteristic feature of the prayer of Saint Francis is his devotion to our Lord and his identification with Him. Our Lord was God become man.

1. Francis appreciated who God was to an extent rarely found among human beings. God was, in him, a loving Father, infinitely generous, absolutely good. God was everything; Francis, nothing. "Who are you, God, and who am I, your poor miserable servant!" he prayed; "My God and my all!"

2. The thing, then, that really astounded Francis was the love and humility of this all-powerful God in becoming Man. His prayer is a meditation upon, a worship of this God-become-man, especially at his humblest, in the crib and on the cross. "Above all things," Celano observes, "the humility of the Incarnation and the love of the Passion so occupied his mind that he could scarcely think of anything else."²² Francis cried at the poverty and squalor of the crib; he shed tears "because Love is not loved." He prayed on La Verna that he might feel in his own body and soul "the pain that you, sweet Lord, did bear in the hour of your most bitter passion" and that he might teach others to "die for love of Your love as You deigned to die for love of my love."²³ The good God, who became a man born among animals and who died among criminals, is at the center of all Francis' prayer

life.

3. If you were to receive a letter from Saint Francis, there is one thing you could be sure of: he would tell you "Above everything else, I want this most Holy Sacrament to be honored and venerated and reserved in places which are richly ornamented" (Testament). All his letters bear on the subject of the Blessed Sacrament, so that it could be called the central preoccupation of all his thoughts and prayers.

In the Letter to All Clerics, we read that "Indeed, in this world there is nothing of the Most High himself that we can possess and contemplate with our eyes, except his Body and Blood," and in the Letter to a General Chapter, likewise, we are told, "I implore all my friars to offer single-mindedly and with reverence the true sacrifice of the most Holy Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ." To the "Rulers of the People," finally, Francis addresses the same urgent counsel: "This is my advice: Put away all worry and anxiety, and receive the holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ fervently in memory of him."²⁴

Jesus Christ, Son of God, present in the Blessed Eucharist, is for Saint Francis the beginning and the end of his prayer life. As he writes in his first Admonition: "It is the Most High himself who has told us, This is My Body and Blood of the New Covenant"; and, He who eats My Flesh and drinks my Blood has Life everlasting."²⁵

4. Francis' prayer is characterized by being founded on sacred Scripture, for which he had so great a love. He made a point of picking up the writings containing the words of our Lord and putting them in a proper place.²⁷ He said: "I want my friars to be true disciples of the Gospel and to progress in knowledge of truth in such a way as to grow in simplicity."²⁸

Francis' love of God's word served to focus his attention on Jesus as the center of all devotion and prayer.

5. Francis' prayer is characterized by humility. His prayer shows a man who realized he was nothing and that God was everything. "Why does everyone run after you?" queried Brother Masseo.²⁹ "Because," said Francis, who expected

²² 1 Celano 84 (p. 299).

²³ Fioretti, 3rd consid. of the Stigmata (p. 1448). For the following reference to the Testament, see p. 67.

²⁴ Letter to All the Faithful, p. 95.

²⁵ Pp. 101, 104, 116 respectively.

²⁶ Admonition 1, p. 78.

²⁷ Testament, p. 67.

²⁸ Bonaventure, Leg. Maj., ch. 11, n. 1 (p. 712).

²⁹ Fioretti, 10 (p. 1322).

The adorable humanity of Christ is the royal road which leads to contemplation.

Masseo to believe it, "God did not find on earth a viler creature." We remember his heart-rending cries at Poggio Bustone, where he begged God to have mercy on him—a "sinner."

6. The Effect of Saint Francis' Way of Prayer

THE CONCENTRATING of his contemplative love upon the historical facts of Christ's earthly life and his effort to share in these facts made the prayer of Francis have great influence on the Church.

"This approach," writes John Moorman,

was common to all those who drew their inspiration from St. Francis, and it had a considerable influence upon the spiritual life of the Church. If hitherto the Christ of the divine plan had been thought of in terms of the Judge before whom all must one day stand, the High Priest who pleads his sacrifice on man's behalf, the Redeemer who reigns from the tree; he now came to be loved and worshipped as the Son of Mary who smiled and wept, who loved and sorrowed, who knew

pain and grief as well as joy and peace, who lived among men and shared with them in the vicissitudes and injustices of life. From this teaching and all that it implied, changes took place not only in popular religion, but also in art and literature, as the austere yet triumphant Redeemer of Byzantine art gave place to the tender and mournful sufferer, the man of sorrows acquainted with grief, of later medieval art and devotion.³⁰

The early Franciscans, following Francis, prayed as he prayed. Bonaventure writes: "The adorable humanity of Christ is the royal road which leads to contemplation." And later, Ubertino of Casale writes: "Jesus made me feel, in an extraordinary way, that I was with him in every action of his life—that I was first the ass, then the ox, then the crib; then the hay on which he lay, then the servant attending him; then one of his parents, and lastly, the Child Jesus himself."

"He took me with him," Ubertino continues, "when he fled into Egypt and to the temple

on his return, and to Nazareth with his Mother. In a strange manner I knew that I was with him at his baptism, in the desert, in the course of his preaching, and constantly in treacheries, desertions, insults, and injuries." And again, Ubertino imagined himself as Mary Magdalene, or Saint John, or the Virgin Mary, or the penitent thief."³¹

7. The effects of Francis' prayer

life are inestimable. Because he gave himself completely, God too gave Himself completely. All the gifts for which he is revered: his joy, his peace, his originality, his charity, his courtesy, his infatuation with our Lord, his Stigmata, his joyful death—all were possible, all are real, because Francis was a man of prayer—because, rather, he WAS A

PRAYER.

³¹Ibid., p. 259.

Teach Us, Holy Spirit

I

Teach us, Holy Spirit, Flaming Breath,
How to be a saint—that is Your call!
Strengthen that desire;
Fill us with Your fire,
Lest we falter on the way, or stall.
Teach us how to live in love 'til death!

II

Teach us, Holy Spirit, tell us how
Holier we can become through grit.
Stir our souls to will
All that You instill;
Learning ever more from Holy Writ,
'Til we love in that eternal Now!

BRUCE RISKI, O.F.M.CAP.

³⁰John Moorman, D.D., *A History of the Franciscan Order from Its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 256.

A Hymn

God and Lord of all, I thank and praise you with all of nature.

With the Sun and the Moon; with the water and fire;
With all animals and living things, from the smallest plant
to the mightiest redwood; from the smallest insect to the
largest animal.

With all these I praise and thank you.

You are the God from whom all these things come.

They are my brothers and sisters because they come from you.
But there is another world, a world unnatural, a world
discovered by other creatures, a world magnificent and
wondrous.

It is a world with which I live every day. So often, though,
I forget that along with this world, I too should sing to
you.

In this world, my brothers and sisters cannot see, but with
their unseeing eyes they say: "See for me, my brother,
the good God who is waiting for us."

In this world my brothers and sisters cannot hear, but they
look at me with their unhearing ears and say: Listen for
me, listen to the voice of God."

In this world, this unnatural world, my brothers and sisters
cannot speak or sing; but they look at me and say:
"Sing a hymn of praise for us to the Great King."

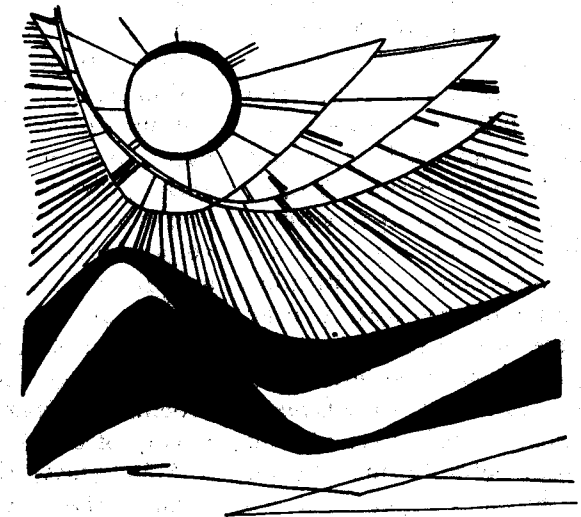
So, Father, with these brothers and sisters of mine of that
unnatural world;

With these brothers and sisters of mine who are so often
misused and misunderstood;

With these brothers and sisters of mine who are not appre-
ciated as your gifts;

With these brothers and sisters, I raise a voice to you.

I praise you with my sister the telephone, who brings friendly
voices from so far away.



I praise you with my brother the computer. How smart he is,
so quick to discover the order you created.

I praise you with my brothers and sisters, the automobile, the
train and plane. So swift, so kind to lazy legs.

I praise you with my sisters the cooking range, the washing
machine and dishwasher. How strong they are, such good
friends, always making my life a little more enjoyable.

I praise you with my brothers the air conditioner and heating
system. So kind to cool the summer and heat the winter.

I praise you with my sisters the television set, radio, and
movies. They bring faces and voices to me that I would
never see or hear.

All these brothers and sisters of that unnatural world. How
often I have seen but not seen, heard but not heard.

But now, as a creature among them, I raise my voice to you,
God; for you are God and we but your creatures.

WILLIAM DE BIASE, O.F.M.

Prayer

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

RECENTLY I HAD the pleasure of being the third man in a presentation on prayer. The main speakers were a married couple who were talking to other married couples about the ups and downs of their personal prayer life and their prayer life together. My role was similarly to share my own feelings and attitudes about prayer: the way I pray alone, the way I pray in community. Such an experiential approach to prayer is a bit foreign to my normal style, but I think it has some value for instruction. (And I do have a penchant for autobiography.)

One way of talking about prayer life—in fact, one way of talking about almost every area of relationships and in particular personal ones—is to speak in terms of cycles: a cycle of romance, of disillusionment, and of perfect joy. The words, especially the second, may sound too strong for you, but when you hear their meaning, you will, I think, go along.

As religious people, i.e., people who are together in com-

munity, we can trace these cycles in two areas: personal prayer and community prayer.

Romance implies attraction, enthusiasm, zest, almost fun. Perhaps you can recall your very early prayer experiences when you used to love to go to novena or kneel at your bedside and remember twenty or thirty intentions, or go into a downtown shrine church and attend three or four Masses. Or maybe your "romantic" stage was the discovery of the peace and quiet of a 6:30 Mass, the Holy Week chants, the real devotion engendered by Benediction. You knew your prayers were being heard, and you stormed Heaven with confidence.

Then—and maybe it didn't happen this way—you got some no's from God, or a few jolts, like the death of a loved parent or friend—or you started noticing that few people your age were at Mass and Benediction in the morning. And you began to wonder whether it was all very real. Disillusionment is the name given to this phase, which may

or may not say too much.

Then, as is evident from your presence in your community (and perhaps from the fact that you are reading these pages), you came back to prayer—or rather, you stuck it out—and you found a new dimension to it. You started thinking of it in terms of something you are giving, not getting. You no longer demanded answers from God which were precise, but you acknowledged that his Wisdom was by and large superior to your own. Such a growth process, which may well have happened before you even had a notion to enter the religious life, repeats itself throughout our lives. In the spiritual literature the phase of disillusionment goes by the name of "aridity." We know that Teresa of Avila endured it for seventeen years, and that plenty of other saints also felt no joy in praying despite the long hours they spent at it. The perfect joy phase may seem like and overstatement, but certainly there have been times in our lives when we have reached a stage of peace and contentment in our prayer—with our prayer.

Profuse illustration of the same stance toward community prayer is unnecessary. How many have passed from loving it to despising it to tolerating it to (to add a new phase) profiting from it! Few things, it is safe to say, have generated so much annoyance as community prayer. Some of us

felt it really was an occasion of sin—or at least some of us male religious did. The translation into English of our Office, and the cutback on the amount of it said in choir certainly took away much of the grief connected with the Divine Office, but by no means all of it. The liturgical renewal triggered by Vatican II had its three phases in our communities, I'm sure. Dittoed liturgies, something different every day, singing and hugging found us polarizing, and we became surfeited with too much of a good thing.

Hopefully the dust has settled now, and the new Liturgy of the Hours can offer us a stable backdrop against which to conduct our prayer in common. Of course, Vatican II has opened up other forms of prayer in common: shared prayer, spontaneous petitions, or declarations of thanksgiving, or praises of God. These things have not miraculously transformed our community prayer lives (or, for that matter, our personal ones); but they have become more or less familiar, and many who thought they could never be comfortable with such "Protestant" spontaneity really value it.

The thing about cycles is that they keep coming. Of course, they never come in exactly the same way, and so they are hard to recognize. But knowing that our prayer life has rhythms or patterns can be a help, for when we

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seem to be getting nowhere we may well be in a transition stage. In fact, here is where the cyclic view limps as an analogy, since the new cycle should be at a higher and deeper plane and ordinarily will be so as we grow in religious life. Perhaps "spiraling" is a better image.

Some may say this talk of three stages is obsolete—that today people see only two: up and down. If it seems this way, it may help to recall that downs are followed by ups, and that in the life of faith, "down" is not only not out, but also may well be a real time of growth. John of the Cross spoke of dark nights of the senses and of the soul, of the purification that God's friends need to go through as they grow closer to him. So, far from depressing us, as they tend to do, our "downs" in prayer (if they are not caused by any willful backsliding or neglect of our own) ought to inspire us to go on.

Here again, perhaps, some words of caution are in order. An experiential approach to prayer such as that referred to at the beginning of this article relies heavily on describing how we feel about our prayer life, and also on a rather keen evaluation of it. To take the second first, I don't think we should be continuously asking ourselves, How is my prayer life? Am I almost to the prayer of the quiet? In which of the seven castles

am I now dwelling? (Or am I in a shack?) Our relationship with God, like our relationships with one another, flourishes best when we don't keep score. The less self-conscious we can become in relating to God, the better we will be. The pursuit of perfection, we all know, is not necessarily the pursuit of God. If we are too frequently rating our performance in prayer, we may find ourselves performing instead of relating.

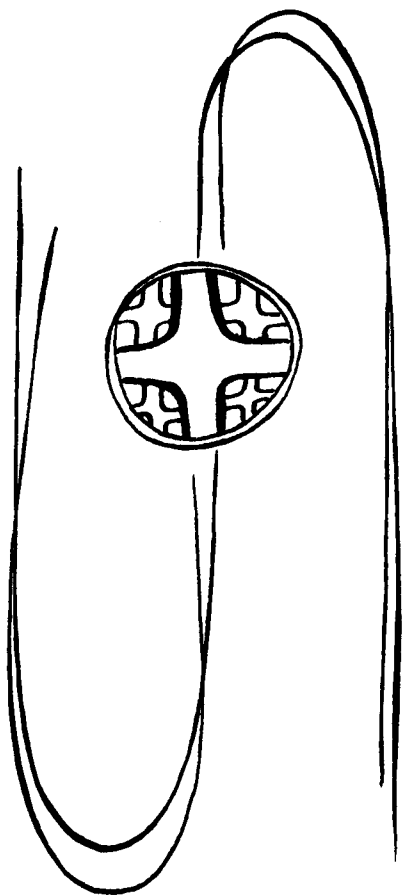
With regard to feeling in the matter of prayer, we need to be warned again against Paphnutianism, of FIF—the funny-inside-feeling that some mistakenly take to be the goal of and sign of union with God. And we need to remind ourselves that like any relationship our relationship with God depends on our decision to maintain it. Time and again the spirit of our age—the Age of Aquarius—suggests that prayer must spring spontaneously and gushingly forth from within to qualify as prayer. Certainly such moments are a part of our experience. But they are what are known as "peak experiences," not everyday ones: the death of a loved one, a time of desperate spiritual need, an occasion of great joy. Faith tells us that prayer is not limited to these peak experiences—that any conscious effort to contact God is prayer. Moreover, it indicates that we must make these con-

scious efforts and not just "wait for it to happen." We plan and set aside times to be with those we want to be with, and we must do the same for God. Another thing: prayer is a responsibility. We owe it to ourselves and others who support us in our calling to be professional "holy people," to pray. We don't let our feelings stop us from teaching, or nursing, or visiting, or whatever our job is; so we mustn't let our lack of feeling stop us from prayer to which we have committed ourselves either by personal resolution or by public profession in our community.

Closely related to the question of feeling is that of honesty in prayer and about prayer. Honesty means being ourselves in prayer, not the someone we think God wants us to be. It means recognizing what feelings we have—even negative ones like resentment and bitterness, envy, ambition. It means leveling with God about the time we set aside for prayer. So often we find excuses to omit our devotions or to skip communal prayer. We say we have papers to correct, letters to write, phone calls to make, sleep to catch up on; we don't have time to do it properly (one of my own favorites), are too distracted, etc. Like the devils', excuses' names are legion. But we ought not to fool ourselves in the matter of prayer; we should acknowledge that here and now we

don't *want* to pray, we don't *feel* like it. Such a state will hardly persist, though it is possible for us humans to make honesty a cop-out from prayer as we can from any personal relationship. Again, our own experience should enable us to see the shams that most of our excuses are for not praying: we save ten or fifteen minutes from communal recitation of the Office and make two or three extra phone calls which leave neither us nor our phones any better off. We are too tired to pray, and yet we manage to summon up the energy for television or a novel. We have too much work to do, and we end up not doing any work—or any praying.

It is a delightful experience that I pass on to you now. Recently a college student came to me with a problem: he was having difficulty with mental prayer. What is delightful in this is that serious young people are convinced of the value of mental prayer. (You can't have any difficulty with something you are not trying!) The term "mental prayer" is one we Franciscans have always been a little leery of—we prefer to think that the meditation stage signified by the word "mental" quickly passes to affective prayer—i.e., prayer of the will and emotions—prayer in which we talk to God more than think about him. Such prayer is apart from that of the Divine



Office or of the Mass. It is time we spend with God . . . and ourselves . . . recalling his presence, his favors, his care for us, the example of his Christ. Theoretically nothing should be easier— if we forget that we are human beings with imaginations and senses and a yen for the physical and tangible. Concentrating on God, who is Spirit, isn't easier, and doesn't get that way, whether you are 19 or 39 or 59. We have to prepare ourselves for prayer.

Being in God's work should give us a good start on some common interests, and being Jesus' friend and brother/sister ought to give us some more. Spiritual reading is suggested for us precisely to give us a context in which to approach God. Conversation is a two-way street; we can certainly relate to God from where we are, but common decency suggests we be familiar with his interests (conversation comes easily with people from our home town).

Then we have to give ourselves a proper atmosphere for prayer—a quiet place, whether bedroom or chapel or backyard, or bus or car—and we need quiet, interior peace. We must resolutely put aside all worries or concerns about our work, our friends and families, our problem children. One resolution I make (and break too) and recommend for general use is never to use any ideas you get during the time of mental prayer. I don't mean to imply that God cannot inspire us at prayer. What I do mean is something like this. One of the stories about Saint Francis is that while praying the Office he found himself thinking about a piece of ceramic that he was making (he was into ceramics "therapy" before we ever conceived of calling it that). After prayers he went to his bench and broke the jug which was taking his mind from God. Now that was a bit

excessive, for sure; but the point remains valid. In my own case I find myself planning classes, or giving advice, or making a phone call, or looking forward to a future visit while I'm supposed to be praying—and I try not to act on any of those plans, not because I superstitiously think they will be doomed, but because I want to get myself accustomed to the fact that time with God is not meant to be time for solving my personal problems or thinking about my concerns. Self then gets the message: no sense thinking about your concerns now, since they won't be attended to. Far from ruling out divine inspiration, then, I am trying here to repeat the caution we need to take so that time for God not be converted into just so much more time for ourselves.

Distractions will of course be a part of our prayer. As the word's etymology suggests, distractions are thoughts that draw our concentration away from God and spiritual realities. The best remedy is still to ignore them, make a prayer of them, laugh at them if need be. As one who has opted for the 4-volume edition and is trying to get back to saying the Matins prayer, or Office of Readings as it is now called, I was pleased to hear from a fellow friar that he found that the Office spoke to his own needs—that when he read the Readings he inevitably (or almost that often)

found God speaking to him about a present concern or feeling. In brief, he found the Divine Office not only relevant, but satisfying in the best sense of the term. We have to remember that this has certainly held true for us many times; for most of us prayer is something we want to do, choose to do, not something we have to push ourselves to do.

A second nice experience: my sister, married and the mother of three, has recently rediscovered prayer and the Mass. What caused the turn-about in her was her involvement with a charismatic group. All of you have undoubtedly heard about charismatic prayer groups, and many of you may have participated in some, as I have not. My initial skepticism about the movement has been tempered a good deal, not only by my sister's experience but by my conversations with others who attend these meetings. They do produce good fruit; and by their fruits, Jesus tells us, you shall know them. I know the prayer sessions are sometimes long, frequently far more emotional than most of us can stand, do appeal to mentally troubled people (who of course do not constitute a large proportion of the participants); yet I find the prayer groups do influence people in the direction of orthodox Catholicism—in the direction of attending Mass and of loyal adherence to Church

teachings. Where such a direction is lacking, you can be sure that it is not the *Holy Spirit* operating, but the spirit of the world or the flesh. Unfortunately such results are part of the total picture of the charismatic movement. Still I would like to go on record as endorsing the movement for any who want to try it, and expect that sooner or later I myself will get to it.

One thing, however, no one will push me into it, and I have to take my stand forcefully and explicitly here against any effort to force people to pray in any particular way. Prayer of open petition can be beautiful, and it can be painful too. Dittoed liturgies, constant changing of music, etc., often make uncomfortable what should be a comfortable experience—the Mass and Divine Office. Communities and individuals have to respect one another in this matter as in all else.

A couple of more things need to be said about prayer, before I sum up what I have been trying to say. First, prayer before the Blessed Sacrament is still, in the Catholic Christian community, a special opportunity and a special place to pray. Jesus is there in a special way, and it's for our benefit, not his. I have yet to hear of a saint since the middle ages who did not zero in on Christ in the Eucharist as a pivotal point of his or her prayer-life—and we can

include the late Pope John, if we can canonize him, as well as Mother Teresa, if we can name her a "consensus saint."

In reminding ourselves that we were not misguided when directed to center our prayer lives on Christ in the Eucharist, we need not close ourselves off to other opportunities or modes of prayer. We know we can pray anywhere: in the open air on a mountaintop, in a car or bus while traveling, in our room; and we must be flexible enough to make the most of any circumstances of prayer. For myself, some of my best prayer is done while traveling—I find it inconceivable one could be in a car for any more than an hour without praying. We ought to feel free to try a different form of prayer, a charismatic or meditative reading, or shared prayer, or to stick by what has been very successful for us.

The major points I think have been made in the foregoing pages are these: that prayer has cycles (or rhythms, or spirals); that it is a growing thing, and like a growing plant grows better the less frequently we take out the tape measure and see how long the shoot is. Again, I have tried to illustrate that prayer is alive and well among all sorts of people, and that it is alive because of the work of God and because it is a satisfying experience. I made a small, but

important, point about distractions: that they should not worry us. I indicated that we should be flexible in our prayer life and open to new approaches, but should not feel compelled to try them. I urged Eucharistic prayer as part of our religious prayer life. Throughout this article I have been operating on a theory of the person-to-person relationship as the model of the God-and-I relationship. Just as love between individuals is a matter of decision, covenant, commitment—not just feeling, so our relation with God which we foster through prayer is a matter of decision, choice, and selection, and not one of mere impulse or happenstance.

In my office in Ryan Hall at Siena College hangs literally the biggest thing anyone has ever given me—a banner, hand cut, on which Saint Paul's words to the Thessalonians about prayer are written: "Rejoice always, render constant thanks, never cease praying. This is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thess. 5:15-16).

FRANCISCAN PLAYS

Several new Franciscan plays are now available, based upon the original sources and commended by Franciscans who have read them. Brother David Paul Benzshawel, O.F.M., holds a degree in drama, and from his studies at the Franciscan Institute, has written the following:

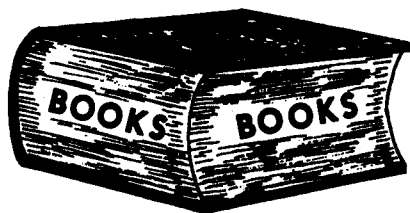
—*Sacrum Commertium*, adapted from the work by the same name as a medieval mystery play.

—*Clare's Song of Songs*, in analogy with the Old Testament Song of Songs, portraying Clare's conversion.

—*Lord or Servant*, dramatizing Francis' conversion and transformation into the leader of a new Order.

Scripts are available in mimeograph form for \$2.00 each. All rights of production and performance with purchase of script. Scripts are suited for dramatic presentation, choral readings, or private reflection and meditation.

Write to
Bro. David Paul Benzshawel, O.F.M.
St. Paschal's Friary
3400 St. Paschal's Drive
Oak Brook, Illinois 60521



Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours. English trans. by ICEL, of the official text. Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1976. Pp. 1760, incl. illustrations and indices. Leather, \$19.95; leatherette, \$15.50; plastic, \$8.50. Clergy and religious discounts: 20% up to 50 copies, 30% for more than 50.

Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Editor of this Review.

The Daughters of St. Paul ought surely to be very proud of this handsome new Breviary. Before writing up this notice, I used it for a couple of weeks and can thus speak from some experience about its convenience and many attractive features.

I suppose translations of the Psalms are a matter of taste, but I for one much prefer the one used here to that used in the interim Breviary. The hymns seem much better too, both because of their content and because the editors had the sense to avoid destroying rhyme by modernization of archaic forms (although, occasionally, one does find *you* and *thou* in the same hymn!).

The *Benedictus* and *Magnificat* are printed in full for each day instead of only once, in the Ordinary—a great convenience! A short biographical sketch is included for each feast or memorial of a saint. The

antiphons are repeated after the psalms, and the *Gloria Patri* is likewise indicated at the end of each psalm.

Typographically, this breviary is fascinating. It makes use of three sizes of both light and bold faced sans-serif type, and you must actually use it to see how pleasantly and sensibly these faces have been distributed in the text. The illustrations are, I think, wood-cuts, and are so beautiful that I wish more of them could have been included. The prayers before and after Mass are reprinted from the Sacramentary at the end of this delightful book, which is printed on non-glare paper, lies flat no matter where it's opened to, and—wonder of wonders—can be held comfortably in one hand. I certainly hope it will be possible for our community to adopt it for choral use, and I recommend it most enthusiastically to any individual or group, lay or religious.

And Would You Believe It!: Thoughts about the Creed. By Bernard Basset, S.J. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976. Pp. 120. Cloth, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father John Marshall, O.F.M., Assistant Pastor at St. Joseph's Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and author of some widely acclaimed series of spiritual conferences for religious.

We all have our favorites. They are favorites in that they provide a menu that never fails to satisfy the appetite.

So it is with favorite authors. With

the publication of each of their books we are guaranteed satisfaction in the reading and profit in the perusing. Such is one of my favorite authors, Bernard Basset. Time and again he has provided in content, style, and pertinence, incisive insights and observant outlooks, as in his most recent book *And Would You Believe It!*

The content of this latest effort is the Nicene Creed, the style is both picturesque and humorous, the pertinent is the need in a changing climate for a renewed inspection of a basic stance, faith in God. As Basset himself says, the creed may not put last things last, but it does put first things first.

Bernard Basset takes the Nicene Creed and analyzes it with the support of those twin giants of the faith, that "Creed man" John Henry Cardinal Newman and the prolific translator of the Bible, Ronald Knox. Belonging not to the sphere of having but of being, he dissects not to murder or to muddle but to expose the articles of the Creed in such a manner that in our own faith we see them as the necessary precondition for living, moving and having our being in Christ.

In reading this book we have the same problem that Franz Werfel had when he gave us "The Song of Bernadette." To those who do not believe, no explanation is possible. To those who do believe, none is needed. But we must add that even those who do believe must nurture their faith, scout about in support of it, continue to plant and water, and so appreciate God's increase. Abetting us in this holy endeavor is this delightful volume of 115 pages

fully complemented with documentation.

Central and pivotal to Father Basset's source inspiration is a line plucked from Cardinal Newman's *Grammar of Assent*: I am as little to think by any mind but my own as to breathe with another's lung. As Newman applied this to conscience, his power-hold on truth, our author applies it to faith and gives it pride of place. He refrains this conviction throughout the book.

For Cardinal Newman any creed was a prayer or a hymn. The Athanasian Creed was a "war-song" of faith. Like the earliest creeds the Nicene Creed must also be a personal pledge of allegiance. Admittedly this is the need of the hour. Thanks to Father Basset and his latest book we are confronted with that need and comforted in the truth that only real, not merely notional, martyrdom can do justice to the Nicene Creed. Many are they who say they are willing to die for their faith even while they are failing to live up to it.

Living the Eucharistic Mystery.

By Ernest Lussier, S.S.S. Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1976. Pp. xix-209. Cloth, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Francis de Ruijter, O.F.M., B.A., B. Th., a graduate student working towards his M.A. in Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University.

The author depicts the Eucharist and Jesus, the Bread of Life, against a biblical background, both NT and OT. Although the scholarly investigation is evident, the book reads smoothly without undue scientific

show. Its 31 chapters, not too long (usually 6 pages) yet long enough to stimulate meditation, can appropriately be used for one's daily quiet time with the Lord, during an entire month.

Already a natural meal has the biological purpose of sustaining life, the sociological effect of renewing human ties, and the religious sense of blessing God for all his gifts; over and above all this the Eucharistic meal is infinitely richer because it has also the characteristics of a sacrifice. It is a meal of healing, the remedy for sins because the Son who was sent "to be a bodily and spiritual medicine" is always present. It is a meal of divinization because it infuses deeply into our being the life of Christ, the Trinitarian life . . . At the Lord's Table, Christians become what they eat [pp. 118, 136].

Greater stress is given to a number of aspects of the Eucharistic celebration—which have at times been overlooked in the past. The unity of the Eucharist finds its best expression in concelebration, so much appreciated by lay people, but still misunderstood by many priests. There should be no celebrations without song or silence (p. 84). Between the two comings of Christ—Incarnation and Parousia—the Church is in a state of mission, which the author calls a dimension of the Apostolic Pentecost (p. 131). In chapter 18, Father Lussier brings out the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Eucharist—something we rarely read about and is therefore so new and refreshing! Christ's action in the Eucharist must be understood as a constantly more encompassing hold on all creatures as they are drawn to their ultimate end. This will be achieved with the cooperation of man who is re-

sponsible before God for creation's march towards its maker. Do we dare to live as resurrected people? Do we dare for Christ's sake to commit ourselves to the service of mankind and proclaim the hope which our Lord by his Spirit has planted and fosters in our hearts? Let us be honest enough to admit that too often our Masses could become practically a call to atheism, if we remained indifferent to the demands of social justice. The Eucharist is a dangerous, indigestible food for anyone who would disregard the true aspiration of man. It is ours to make our Eucharistic celebration a constant protestation against any structure marked by sin and egoism, and a commitment of our energies to the service of mankind (pp. 205-07).

A number of obvious printing errors side-track the reader—I noted 14 of them on the way through. Still, this is a book which will make people love the Eucharist, a book which is, like its subject, spiritual nourishment. It is a very positive and worthwhile book, highly recommended for reflection and for renewal.

Francis of Assisi. By Walter Nigg. Photographs by Toni Schneiders. Foreword by the Rt. Rev. John R. H. Moorman; trans. William Neil. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975. Pp. 142. Cloth, \$12.95.

Reviewed by Sister Donna Marie Woodson, O.S.F., B.S. (St. Louis University), who works in physical therapy Home Care on Chicago's South Side and is a summer student at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University.

This book is a beautiful experience for anyone who longs to return to the sources and become familiar with the world of Saint Francis. It is published in commemoration of the 750th anniversary of the death of Francis and joins the myriads of books about this fascinating man. The remarkable full page photographs are a key feature making this an important and colorful addition to any Franciscan library.

The sections of the book fit together loosely. A foreword by Bishop Moorman, whose interest in Francis is well known, tells us that our holy Father "was not an ordinary person . . . all he wanted to do was to take Christ seriously—and face the consequences." An essay of 30 pages by Walter Nigg, "Francis, the Little Brother from Assisi," concludes with a translation of the Testament. Third is "The World of Saint Francis," including excerpts from the Lives by Celano, Bonaventure, and the Three Companions. Toni Schneiders' beautiful color photographs are effectively arranged at key places in the text. A concluding section explains the photos, each of which is identified numerically and reprinted in a smaller size. These pages should have been numbered, however, for easier reference.

Walter Nigg is a Swiss historian who has written two previous books about Francis. His essay seems to capture Francis' spirit well enough but with some distortion. There are statements attributed to him, e.g., which are not thus documented by recent scholarship on the early sources. The attempts to compare the youth, society, and Church of today

with those known by Francis and his opinions about them seem forced. Do we really know that he had all that in mind? A better knowledge or use of the earliest writings and the relative value of the later sources of Francis' life could have improved the essay's historical accuracy. The translation from German by William Neil speaks of "Brother Everglad," and also of "Brother Death," a rendition which fails to capture the spirit as well as other renditions which speak of "Sister Death."

What makes the book so worthwhile, then, is clearly the pictures—72 pages of full color reproductions for which the photographer is to be heartily commended. The selection, arrangement, and variety are truly remarkable. There are scenes, landscapes, important buildings, hermitages, and early paintings which capture the corner of the world known by Francis and those who lived shortly after him.

The book is recommended to all Franciscans, with some reservation for those who are interested in historical accuracy.

Bioethics: Basic Writings on the Key Ethical Questions That Surround the Major, Modern Biological Possibilities and Problems. Edited by Thomas A. Shannon. Ramsey, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1976. Pp. x-513. Paper, \$9.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy, Fordham University), Head of the Stena College Philosophy Department and Associate Editor of this Review.

The 29 essays in the collection

cover seven bio-medical areas: abortion, the treatment of severely handicapped infants, death and dying, experimentation with humans, genetic engineering, the allotting of scarce medical resources (both organs for transplant and such machines as kidney dialysis ones), and behavior modification (whether by chemical, psychological, or electrical methods). The strength of this work lies in its breadth and in the real acquaintance with critical issues manifested in the by-and-large outstanding papers. Particularly fine, whether or not one agrees with all the ethical positions taken by the authors, are Gustafson's essay on the right to life of mongoloids, Capron's and Kass's essay on a definition of death, Jonas' treatment of experimentation with human subjects, and Lappe's essay on morality and genetic control.

Generally speaking the essays would be characterized as "pro-life." Kass's remark that "We must all get used to the idea that biomedical technology makes possible many things we should never do" (p. 316) is a good case in point. A significant exception is the stance of Joseph Fletcher in his two essays. In one he draws an empirical profile of what constitutes humanness—a profile which would rule out of the human race a good many of its helpless members. In the other, he urges a shift from rights to needs as ground for norms in genetic decisions, a stance which undermines any tough pro-life stance.

An introductory essay on the evaluation of Roman Catholic medical ethics seems out of place, for although Catholic stands are mentioned one way or another in most of

the articles, very few of them are written by Catholic theologians, and perhaps only one by a representative of the traditional position the editor criticizes. The absence of a really solid, sustained argument against abortion seems inexcusable in virtue of the plethora of literature on the topic. That section on abortion thus ends up, in this reviewer's judgment, as one of the weakest in the book.

Bioethics is a valuable source book and should be in the library of any college or rectory.

Gadgets, Gimmicks, and Grace: A Handbook on Multimedia in Church and School. By Edward N. McNulty. St. Meinrad, Ind.: Abbey Press, 1976. Pp. xi-130. Paper, \$3.50.

Reviewed by Father Thomas J. Burns, O.F.M., College Chaplain at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.

Gadgets, Gimmicks, and Grace was written to allay the fears of some that there is no grace in gadgets and gimmicks. The objects, to be sure, contain no "stuff" called grace. But when used under the watchful eye of a good liturgical artist, the most inexpensive audio-visual Equipment can assist the minister or educator to proclaim the Gospel in a most powerful way.

The author, a Presbyterian minister, presents a compelling case for going to the trouble of incorporating films, slides, and music into congregational worship. Drawing from his perceptive analysis of Scripture and history, his appreciation of contemporary art and music, and the

impact of his multi-media programs upon his congregations, he integrates these new media tools into worship in such a way that the electronic invasion of the sanctuary seems less like tinkering with the sacred Mysteries and more consistent with some of the traditional principles of Judeo-Christian ritual and worship.

Gadgets may also prove helpful to the congregation or youth group faced with restricted budgets (most of us, we can safely assume), since one of the main premises of the book is the possibility and feasibility of producing quality audio-visual experiences without spending great amounts of money. A number of money-saving procedures are enumerated (including a remarkably simple method of converting magazine pictures into slides—simple because the author discovered that magazine photos are not laid directly on the page, but on a very thin layer of clay, which can be lifted off into a transparent cellophane pane). In addition, a useful guide to judicious purchasing of electronic equipment is included.

Most importantly, the author attempts to encourage pastors, individuals, and groups to stop believing that multi-media ventures, even film-making, are beyond their realm of competence. Any group with a fair sense of artistic value, patience, and liturgical sense can enhance the proclamation of the Word for very little money but with a great spiritual return.

Francis of Assisi: The Wandering Years. By Anthony Mockler.

London: Phaidon Press, 1976. Pp. 256. Cloth, L 4.95.

Reviewed by Father Regis Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., Ph.D. Cand., Professor at Maryknoll Seminary, Institute of Contemporary Spirituality, Dunwoodie, N.Y., and presently involved in research in Franciscan Spirituality in Rome.

"...the mystery of sanctity is something that is very difficult for the ordinary unholy biographer to describe, and almost impertinent to analyze" (p. 248). These words of Anthony Mockler come at the end of this very difficult and impertinent biography of Francis of Assisi; they provoke a question as to the motivation of this author. Any Franciscan who has struggled to deepen within himself the spirit of Francis will undoubtedly close this book convinced that Mockler never should have attempted such a task.

Francis of Assisi: The Wandering Years is launched from a platform of history: the history of Europe before and during the time of Francis. The author offers the definition of history through which he will view Francis in these words: "A hard core of interpretation surrounded by a pulp of disputable facts" (p. vii). From this pulp he enters into the Franciscan world by way of a cloud of political, military, literary, and religious interpretation. There is hardly a glimmering of light which is left unnoticed: the intrigues of the papal campaigns, the medieval trade fairs, the literary ballads of knights and courtships, even an examination of the fundamentalist religious movements

which were springing up in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

What is the most basic flaw of this book is the indisputable way in which the author presents the history of medieval Europe in such a sharp contrast to the history of the primitive Franciscan fraternity. This is evident in the very first chapter, "Legends, Lives, and Literature," in which Mockler examines the sources of the life of Francis. It is evident that he spent a great deal of time discovering the world in which Francis lived; it is a shame that he did not spend more time more time discovering the world of Franciscan literature. If he had done this, Mockler might not have been as impertinent or flippant in his use of the early biographers. Bonaventure, for example, is completely dismissed for his politically motivated compromises and interpretations of history. The Three Companions are, once more, cast in the roles of real heroes whose portrait has emerged as the most accurate. There is an inconsistency in Mockler's approach to these sources. The *Fioretti* are seen as pious, apocryphal stories with little foundation in history; yet they are used for many examples and interpretations. What is the most prominent failure is Mockler's failure to study the writings of Francis himself. He is certainly aware of them, for he quotes them throughout the book, but it is obvious that he did not study them or try to plumb their depths.

The role of Francis is founding the Order, his relationship with Clare, his desire to preach to the Saracens: all of these aspects of his life are examined without any serious

attempt to discover what was the central reason for them all—God. Mockler offers a psychological analysis which is superficial, for it fails to understand the dynamism of love in the personality development of Francis. The author offers a sociological understanding of the Saint without a deep look at the society of the Franciscan fraternity, which was of paramount importance to his life. In short, the author writes a biography of a saint by writing about the world which surrounded him and not about the saint himself and the profound mystery of his life with God.

It is unfortunate, for *Francis of Assisi: The Wandering Years* is a well written book. It is a rare author who is able to write of history in an interesting, absorbing, and colorful way. Mockler succeeds in this particularly throughout the early sections of the book which describe the political intrigues and military conflicts which enveloped the world of Francis. There is evident in these sections the style of a literary historian which is reason for enjoyable and easy reading. Moreover the book is printed in a most attractive and readable manner.

Mockler suggests that he wrote this biography of Francis because of a request, a request which he was able to satisfy in an unusually short time. Perhaps that is the reason for the failure of his book. A book cannot be written about Francis of Assisi without the process of absorbing his spirit, which is to say, without spending time in prayer and in peace striving to be filled with the Spirit which so absorbed his life.

One final thought. The author acknowledges the kindness, hospitality, and assistance of the many Franciscan friars and nuns who were influential in the writing of this book. If the book reflects the life-style or the interests of our Franciscan lives, then it should be used as a communal examination of our manner of living. What emerges is a concern for the things of this world: organization, psychology, secular culture, etc. If this was the Franciscanism of which the author drank, then his biography is sadly understandable, for it reflects an emptiness and shallowness in living what the Saint of Assisi was all about.

Viewed in this light, *Francis of Assisi: The Wandering Years* may have some value in contributing to the spiritual vitality of the followers of Saint Francis and of those who are fascinated by his charism. Otherwise, it is another attempt to understand the mystery of sanctity through the eyes of the historian and the secular man.

Mary: the Womb of God. By George A. Maloney, S.J. Denville, N.J.: Dimension Books, 1976. Pp. 208. Paper, \$3.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard Leo Heppler, O.F.M., Chaplain to the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, West Paterson, New Jersey.

Using Sacred Scripture, quotations from the Fathers, and theories of modern psychologists and theologians, Father Maloney has erected an inspiring Marian shrine.

The book is composed of an Introduction, nine chapters, an appendix

(Russian Devotion to Mary, Mother of God), and seven pages of footnotes.

Mary is introduced as the contemplative woman always attentive to God. Even in her youth Mary was aware of God as the center of her life. She realized that God was seeking entrance into her life, and she stood ready to yield her whole being to him, so great was her faith and love.

The Fathers often contrasted Mary and Eve. They pointed out that while both listened, the results were the opposite. Eve listened to the serpent and was instrumental in bringing death into the world. Mary listened to the angel and was instrumental in bringing life into the world.

Mary continually grew in grace; hence she is the model of the individual and of the Church.

A one-word summary of Chapter 2 (Mary, Virgin) is *submission*. Virginity is seen as feminine receptivity. Not only at the Annunciation, but always does Mary agree to accept God's plan.

A one-word summary of the next chapter, Mary—Mother of God—is *service*. We are told that God began his new creation with the new woman who was willing to do what Eve had refused to do: be the handmaid of the Lord. And by her union with the new Adam, Mary became the Mother of the human race, offering her maternal service to all her spiritual children.

The Holy Spirit, Father Maloney reminds us, saturated Mary with grace from the first moment of her existence. She is a sign of what God has destined us to become in Christ. For we too are expected to grow in grace by cooperating with the Holy Spirit.

In her sorrows Mary was the woman of hope looking forward to a participation in God's glory. She comforts us in all our sorrows and stiffens us in our struggle to yield to the demands God makes upon those who love him.

From the womb of Mary came the Lord Jesus. From the womb of the Church comes the people of God. But Mary is the Mother of the Church; she is the Mother of the living for the many Fathers who work out an Eve-Mary-Church parallel showing the Mother of Jesus as the Mother of his followers.

As intercessor Mary unites her prayers with those of her Son to plead for all her children as Virgin Most Powerful and Gate of Heaven.

In the section on Russian devotion to Mary we learn that the Russian people for centuries have been conscious of Mary's blessings upon them and have honored her with innumerable shrines and special feasts. The heart of this Marian devotion is to be found in sacred icons and

in liturgical texts.

The book is obviously a labor of love. It does occasionally get a bit classroomish. There is an element of repetition that a teacher uses to make his point, to impress a truth. A few sentences do get ponderous ("In this respect Mary's cooperation in the redemption of the human race is one of intimate union as *socia* or companion used by God, not only in order that God could penetrate into the temporal, the human, the finite, but also that Mary might remain the perfect example for the Church as *socia* to Christ in cooperating with the Second Adam, the New Man, Christ, in restoring the whole created world and in transfiguring it into that which perfectly mirrors forth God's plan from all eternity"—pp. 63-64).

But when a skilled professional theologian combines erudition with love in praising Mary, we are assured of a fine book. That the author should demand some work on the part of the reader proves no deterrent for the client of Mary who wishes to know and to love her better.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Bacigalupo, Leonard F., O.F.M., *The Franciscans and Italian Immigration in America*. Hicksville, N.Y.: Exposition Press, 1977. Pp. 80. Cloth, \$4.50.
- Critelli, Ida, and Tom Shick, *Unmarried and Pregnant: What Now?* Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. vi-137, incl. index. Paper, \$1.95.
- Dubay, Thomas, S.M., *A Call to Virginity?* Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. 63. Paper, \$1.95.
- Koyama, Kosuke, *No Handle on the Cross: An Asian Meditation on the Crucified Mind*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1977. Pp. ix-120. Cloth, \$7.95; paper, \$3.95.
- Lukas, Mary, and Ellen Lukas, *Teilhard: the Man, the Priest, the Scientist*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 360, incl. index. Cloth, \$10.00.
- Maier, Gerhard, *The End of the Historical-Critical Method*. Trans. Edwin W. Leverenz & Rudolph F. Norden. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977. Pp. 108, incl. bibliography and glossary. Paper, \$4.50.
- McCloskey, Patrick, O.F.M., *St. Anthony of Padua: Wisdom for Today*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. VIII—120. Paper, \$1.75.
- Rosenbaum, Jean, M.D., *How to Be Friends with Yourself and Your Family*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. 79. Paper, \$1.35.
- Whitehead, Raymond L., *Love and Struggle in Mao's Thought*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1977. Pp. xx-166, incl. glossary & index. Cloth, \$8.95; paper, \$3.95.

CORRECTION

The final listing for April Books Received should have read:

Kelsey, Morton T., *Encounter with God*. Foreword by John Sherrill. Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 2nd ed., 1975. Pp. 281. Paper, \$3.95.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our May issue were drawn by Sister Marie Monica, O.S.F., of Sacred Heart Academy, Klamath Falls, Oregon.

Summer **A Franciscan Growth Opportunity**

1977

THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES M.A. PROGRAM OF THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE

AT ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY

CALENDAR

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

Registration	Saturday, June 25
Classes begin	Monday, June 27
Modern Language Exam	Friday, July 15
Final Exams	Saturday, August 6

COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1977

FI 500 Bibliography

1 cr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 8:00-9:05, Room 4, M-W
This course is required of all new degree candidates after June 1977. It must be taken in the first summer session attended.

FI 501 Sources for Franciscan Studies

3 cr., Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D. Cand.: 9:10-10:15, Room 1
This course is a prerequisite for 503 and 504.

FI 503 Early Franciscan Texts

3 cr., Dr. Duane Lapsanski, D.Th.: 9:10-10:15, Room 4
Prerequisite: 501

FI 504 Life of St. Francis

3 cr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 2
Prerequisite: 501

FI 506 Survey of Franciscan History

3 cr., Fr. Lawrence Landini, O.F.M., H.E.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 1

FI 508 History of Franciscan Thought

3 cr., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 2

FI 511 Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts

2 cr., Dr. Malcolm Wallace, Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 2

FI 517 Introduction to Paleography

2 cr., Dr. Girard Etzkorn, Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 3

FI 521 Rule of St. Francis

2 cr., Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D. Phil., Oxon.: 10:20-11:25, Room 3

FI 523 Bonaventurian Texts

2 cr., Fr. Juvenal Lalor, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 11:30-12:35, Room 4

FI 532 The Lay Franciscan Movement

2 cr., Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M., M.A.: 8:00-9:05, Room 2

FI 534 Conventualism, Primitive Observance and Capuchin Reform

2 cr., Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., S.T.L.: 8:00-9:05, Room 4

FI 539 Spiritual Direction and the Franciscan Tradition

2 cr., Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D. Min.: M-W-F, 7:00-9:00 P.M., Room 3

FI 552 The Franciscan Contribution to Peace and Justice

2 cr., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.; Fr. Roderic Petrie, O.F.M., M.A., M.S. Ed.; Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D. Phil., Oxon.: 11:30-12:35, Room 1

The M.A. Program is offered during the Autumn, Spring and Summer sessions.

the CORD

June, 1977

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Vol. 27, No. 6

CONTENTS

COMMUNITY	162
<i>Editorial</i>	
NEW HUNGER	163
<i>Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.</i>	
A QUESTION OF VOCATION	164
<i>Sister Marie Beha, O.S.C.</i>	
SAINT FRANCIS	177
<i>Anthony Augustine, O.F.M.</i>	
ASCETICISM—I	178
<i>Julian A. Davies, O.F.M.</i>	
FRANCIS: A MAN OF TENDERNESS	185
<i>Sister Marie Therese Archambault, O.S.F.</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	188



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EDITORIAL



Community

S EVEN YEARS AGO IN THIS SPACE (October, 1970), we called attention to an attempt in our community to build better communal relations through "affective communication." In small groups and meetings, members shared feelings (as opposed to opinions and judgments) on religious life. As is the case with so many good ideas, implementation broke down under the pressures of apostolate, time, what have you. Turnover, attrition, the passage of time, the impact of attempting to be part of a process of planning, all have made us—and perhaps you—ready for another voyage into affective communication, or rather better community through affective communication *in the Lord*.

The "New Testament Way to Community"* is a twelve-step scripturally based program for volunteers to meet in small groups and share their reactions to biblical texts which they have (ideally) mulled over for a week. Developed by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Australia, the New Testament Way seeks to group affective sharing in response to meditation on God's Word. Groups are limited in size, and guidelines for listening attentively and sharing affectively are read at the start of each meeting. Each individual is guaranteed time to share (or remain silent), though our Franciscan desire for freedom has perhaps led us to keep our eyes off the clock. Trust is building slowly—the ideological gaps are large—but those engaged are beginning to feel free to say to some where they are in the light of God's Word.

The strength of this somewhat new approach, it seems to me, lies in the two features already somewhat emphasized above: its voluntary character (only those who want to participate do so—now about a fifth of our

* Distributed in the United States by the Oblate Missionaries, New Testament Community, Lewis Lane, Godfrey, Illinois 62035.

total community) and its biblical, evangelical basis. Both help to shift communication from issues to persons. Both ensure that the heart and will, not just the mind, will be addressed. Naturally there are risks, but in proportion to the risk that is community life itself, they seem minimal. The "New Testament Way to Community" is surely not *the* definitive answer to all our ills or needs, but it is an approach to the healing and growing to which we are called as friends and followers of Jesus Christ.

Julian Davis

New Hunger

Rich I have walked
beside Your poor
in the Breadline at dawn.

Always there was a Portion
even for my wealth.

Today in rags of contrition
I reach out for You,
free Bread,
delivered up, doled out.

Savior, Provider,
come,
fill the seven empty baskets
swinging on my heart.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

A Question of Vocation

SISTER MARIE BEHA, O.S.C.

In the progress toward religious understanding one does not go from answer to answer but from question to question. One's questions are answered, not by clear, definitive answers, but by more pertinent and more crucial questions. In the case of the Zen master and his disciple, the disciple asks a general, abstract, doctrinal question—one which could admit of any amount of theoretical elaboration. The Master replies with a direct, existential concrete question to which there is no theoretical answer, and which no amount of verbalizing will be able to penetrate. It has to be grappled with in an entirely different way.¹

“WHAT DO YOU mean by love?” “How do you conceptualize God?” “What is your imaging of being poor for the sake of the kingdom?” To ask such questions is not to turn from reality, but to go below the surface of the thinking process itself in order to discover what is real. For it is a truism to say that the way in which we conceptualize sets up expectations, modifies our acceptance, makes possible our fulfillment or

determines, to some extent, our despair. In short, the way we think changes the way we live.

This principle, which is operative on all levels of perception, becomes even more important when we are dealing with those spiritual realities which are less subject to empirical verification. If we think, for instance, that “85° in the shade is hot,” then we adjust our activity to suit our perception of reality; another's view that “85° isn't hot

¹Thomas Merton, *Opening the Bible* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1970), pp. 19-20.

Sister Marie Beha, O.S.C., is presently Directress of Novices at the Poor Clare Monastery, Greenville, South Carolina. She is the author of two books, *Living Community and Dynamics of Community*, and a frequent contributor to religious periodicals. Sister holds a Ph. D. from the Franciscan Institute.

at all; you should live where I live” doesn't change our feelings of discomfort. However, a thermometer does give some kind of objectification to temperature, a point of departure for further discussion.

But no such starting point is found in terms of less quantified realities. “What is a great work of art?” can never be objectified, only exemplified. And even this much objectification is not possible when the subject of discussion is more spiritual still. All that can be done, it seems, is to examine carefully our conceptualization process, so that the way in which we image reality can be taken into account. All of which is to say that our theology and our philosophy do make a real difference!

The present article will attempt to examine the way in which our imaging of the reality of vocation affects, not only our theologizing—i.e., our conceptualizing—but also our living out of vocation with all of its implications.

Traditionally, vocation has been presented in terms of call and response. And no one can deny the solid etymology behind this approach, nor its usefulness in many contexts. To call someone has all the gracious overtones of invitation, desire, re-

quest; it also has some of the dimensions of summons, demands, pressure. Call also may imply something predetermined in the mind of the one who calls, some plan, a project, something to be shared. Consequently, the call image of vocation has led some persons to expect that God was inviting them to something already determined; that he desired one specific response, and so that a mistake in response would be “failure,” even if it lacked the moral implications of outright refusal. As a consequence of this theory of vocation, one felt a responsibility to set out on a serious search for the specifics of his own call. After all, no one wants to be so deaf that he finds himself making an inappropriate response, simply because he never heard what was said in the first place.

Many times this search for the specifics of God's call led to very unrealistic expectation and to unnecessary strain. Even though persons say that they do not expect an angelic visitation, it seems that anything less would be inadequate! Valuable energy goes into spelling out and evaluating possible responses. In this type of searching can be so absorbing that it might even negate the freedom to listen and lose oneself in responding to

and to others.

By way of reaction to such anxious soul-searching for the right answer, some contemporaries seem to feel that anything that is personally fulfilling is automatically signed with the seal of vocation. Such is the permissiveness that says "Do whatever you want to do" and adds "continue doing it as long as you find it fulfilling." In such a theology of vocation, "concrete activity is felt to be too much beneath God's concern and human life becomes a landscape under a divine sun . . . where all landmarks are blurred to indistinctiveness. Our religious pilgrimage is deprived of milestones."²

Such are some of the disadvantages of the call theology of vocation; obviously there are counter-balancing good points in such an imaging. It is the purpose of this article, however, to examine another model which may incorporate the strengths of the call image and, at the same time, avoid some of its weaknesses. The model that I am proposing is that of vocation as question.

To begin with, the model of question and response offers a less determined structure. To ask someone a question, if that question is honest, is not to predetermine the answer. For ex-

ample, if a teacher raises a question which is meant to call forth some previously determined answer, which answer is necessary to "pass the test," no question is really being asked; all that is being given is a framework for stimulus-response.

In contrast, an honest question implies that the one who asks waits on the answer of the other. He does not know what that answer will be. More accurately, even though he knows *an* answer, he still does not know the answer of the one who is being asked. Such questioning implies that the reply of another makes a real difference in the unfolding of the dialogue.

The other's answer may range from a complete refusal to say anything, which, of course, is an ultimate sort of answer, to the guarded response of "I don't have anything to say"; "Fifth amendment"—which hints that the other could say a great deal if he so chose! A question may also elicit such unexpected replies as a seemingly irrelevant response, even a complete change of topic. The answer may well be couched in a counter question as Scripture evidences: "How shall this be done?" (Lk. 1:34). In fact, such questioning of the questioner may well be the only honest thing to do.

Another way in which the analogy of question seems apt for a theology of vocation is the paradoxical presence of both permanence and transitoriness in the very process of questioning. On the one hand, once a question has been asked, it cannot be erased; even if it is ignored, as we have seen, it is answered! So the question of vocation remains a constant; a man may wish that he had never heard it, never been asked, but he has heard, has been questioned.

Of course, a man may not have heard what he was being asked. Who of us has not experienced at one time or another being so taken aback by a question addressed to us that all we could do was to ask for a "Please repeat"? Or, at other times, we may have attempted an answer, only to be interrupted by a "but what I asked was. . . ." Still, even in such cases, we have changed by becoming involved. Such is the permanence of the questioning process that it makes a difference that the question has been raised no matter how we respond.

But the question image also brings out that vocation, by its very nature, is process and so also has an element of transitoriness. This is not to say that vocation is temporary; only that vocation is always a passing beyond, a going on. When one question has been replied to, another is raised.

And the reply to this new question calls forth still other challenges. Each new answer goes deeper, is more comprehensive, and, at the same time, more personal and more specific.

In all such asking and responding to vocation, the initiative is God's. It is he who raises the question, begins the dialogue. In so doing he sets a certain framework, and this not to limit a man's freedom but to make that freedom operational by setting up some boundaries. Here again the question model seems a useful way of dealing with the mystery of freedom in both God and man. God freely chooses to initiate the process (the logic of his choice, as we shall see later in this article, is beyond our rationalizing just as he himself is beyond our conceptualizing). But this very initiation of the creative process is always for the sake of growth in freedom.

In an analogous way, a good question, just by being asked, makes possible a certain level of response. It creates a capacity in the one who answers; it calls to mind whole areas that a person may not have been aware of, or it may open up other areas that an individual has never questioned before. On the other hand, it may also call forth the reassuring experience of knowing that one has already faced this question and given an answer.

²Robert Ochs, S.J., "Experiments in Closing the Experience Gap in Prayer," *Review for Religious* 30 (Nov., 1971), p. 994.

A good question, then, is revelatory; it reveals something of the one who asks and something to the person who hears it. For instance, a sound question may help a man to discover his own ignorance, and such a discovery—even if it is painful—is still better known than unknown, better revealed than concealed. For ignorance that is known is an improvement over ignorance that is ignored.

The divine vocational question, then, is always an enabling of man's capacity to respond. It is asked, not to trip or to trick, but to open the way to further revelation and to fuller freedom.

Part of the latter function of the good question is its existential character. A good question touches life; it is not just an intellectual game, an exercise in abstraction. It is not a puzzle to be solved by piecing together the parts in some vague hope of discovering the key pieces. God's questions point toward life and are answered in life. His revelatory grace enables us to live out our answers and so to discover still deeper questions.

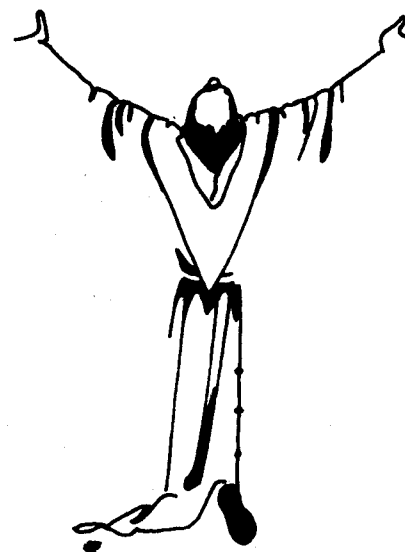
Just as the initiation of the vocational question belongs to God, so too does its finality. In a very real way every question implies an eschatology. It is pointing toward something, has some goal of discovery. Only the trivial is lacking in this purpose-

fulness, and such a question is not worthy of an answer.

But the creative question of God's activity in our lives is the purpose behind every question and every answer asked of us. Who are we? Where are we going? And why? Every answer brings us closer to that final response which will include, "summarize," the meaning of our lives and reveal the end of all of our questioning.

There is a definite progression in this life-long process of vocational questioning, from the more general to the more personal and ending, as has just been suggested, in the most personal revelation of the name by which the Father addresses each of us. In this progression, vocation is rather like an achievement test where the easier questions are asked first and then the increasingly difficult ones. Or, better, it is like a dialogue where two people begin to get acquainted with a series of polite and rather innocuous questions. As acquaintance deepens into friendship, the dialogue becomes more personal. And more of a risk both for the one who questions and for the one who responds.

So vocation seen in the framework of question-response allows for a process of growth, indicated by greater specificity. By this is meant, not so much the presence of additional detail, but rather a



greater awareness of one's own life direction. Too much spelling out of detail in answering the vocational question may simply be an escape, rather as too much verbalizing can indicate that a person doesn't know how to answer the question! On the other hand, a person who finds that the question of vocation calls forth his deepening understanding of himself can answer briefly and to the point.

Such progress toward vocational responsiveness is, then, in the direction of greater self-awareness, which can then be expressed in concrete life-choices. But the process cannot be hurried. To ask a man to be specific in his response before he is ready is to risk a certain

dangerous "fixation." Or an answer that cannot be interiorized.

A man's true and unique response to the vocational question must come from within. It must be as clear and specific an answer as the life of the individual's present will permit. By this is meant that it cannot be left to vague generalities that carry no commitment. On the other hand, it cannot be made so definite that it precludes any further "questioning," any further progression of divine challenge.

The first question that God asks of a man is the fundamental option of "to be or not to be." And like all the other vocational questions it is a query that is repeated over and over. Will we choose to exist, as fully as we can exist, i.e., as fully as God both asks and enables us to be, or do we prefer to limit our existence to what is safer, more under our control? It is certainly one of the basic ironies of the gravitational pull of sin in our lives that we tend to choose safety over the growth possibilities of transcendence.

If our answer is a refusal to go along with God's creative action, we slow down the development of our vocational potential. But we do not stop the questioning process. We will be asked again . . . and again . . .

again . . . will you choose to be or not to be? Will you choose life or death?

One of our temptations, of course, is to temporize, delaying the choice and its consequences. So we say, "Maybe." "Some-day." "Later." But the divine questioning goes on, repeating this option until such time as we are able to sum up our life's response in one final option: "Do you choose eternal being—or eternal non-being: yes or no"?

To begin to answer "yes" to the question of being is to discover further questions and further possibilities of response. If we are to "be," then we are asked to be as human persons. And so the next level of vocation is that of basic humanness. Such a saying "yes" to being human is also a saying "no" to what is less than human. Similarly, it is a saying "no" to what is more than human, to those desires for a god-like perfection that is always beyond us.

These, then, are a few of the vocational questions that our basic humanness asks of us. Perhaps they can all be caught up and summarized in the question of our willingness to continue growing, maturing, as a human person.

Such personal growth seems to focus on the complementary areas of self-acceptance and self-forgetfulness in loving concern

for others. So further vocational questions asked of the human person are those of: "do you accept yourself?" "feel comfortable with yourself?" "love yourself enough to let go of yourself?" Such are the essential vocational choices. But the phrasing of the questions is often more subtle. What we are asked is more like: "Can I accept, be comfortable with, a self that continually makes mistakes, that will never be 'perfect'?" "Do I have enough perspective on myself to laugh at myself?" Can I keep my balance, when the world around me threatens my peace?" "Am I secure enough within to risk meeting others, where they are?" In short, does the center of the world have to be "me," so that my world doesn't fall apart; or am I whole enough to be in real relation with others, a relation that has its center outside myself, my concerns, my perception of reality?

To begin to answer who we are as human beings is to face the challenge of accepting our bodies, their unique needs, their strengths and weaknesses. It is a process of realizing and, at times, transcending, our needs for such things as food and sleep, comfort and security. For our answers to questions along these lines will incarnate in everyday ways, the meaning of our lives and our call to grow. Another question about our bodies centers around our

sexuality. Here again we are challenged both to accept and to transcend. We need to accept ourselves as male or female and also to accept the ways in which this dominant sexuality shapes all of our vocational responses. How do we respond . . . as men? as women? How do we answer life's questions out of that unique blend of male/female that is our own personal sexual orientation? Here it seems particularly important for us to discern what we are really called to affirm and what is simply a conditioned response to the expectations of our environment or culture.

As human persons we are also asked vocational questions in the whole area of emotional response. On the one hand, how we "feel" is by no means an adequate picture of the way things are—only of the way we experience them to be. But our present emotional experience is rooted in the whole of our body's past. So the vocational question we must face is: first of all, just what are we feeling? And this is not a simple, nor an easy, answer. For knowing what we are feeling is, very often, to walk back down a road of past associations which have clouded and colored our reactions. This awareness of what we are experiencing enables us to make some judgment about whether our immediate response is proportionate to the present

situation. If it is not, then we must ask further questions about where this present fire is being fueled.

Further, if we are to grow in our emotional response we need to turn away from those emotions which are destructive of our unity; and we need also to foster and give expression to those emotions which are healthy and productive of our growth as persons. All of which presupposes that we have learned to distinguish between suppression and control, between control and healthy release. Even more fundamentally, it presupposes that we are able to say "yes" to our being human and so being emotional.

Such are a few of the vocational questions asked of the maturing person. And since these questions are asked in life, their accents become very concrete and particular. It is in specific instances that the individual is asked to turn away from an emotion that has gotten all entangled with meanings read in from the past. On a particular day and time, a person becomes aware that he has made a mistake and chooses either to forgive or to hold a grudge—against himself and probably against another. The choice of laughing at self that implies a going beyond self-centeredness toward self-forgetfulness is made over and over

again in the concreteness of life situations. All of this is response to the vocational question: "Will you become a fully human person, or do you choose to settle for something less?"

Such growth in humanness is, of course, intimately bound up with the vocational choices of the Christian vocation. To be called to become Christ is to be called to become a man, a man in special relation with the Father. On the one hand, the Christian must ask himself that basic question asked by Christ himself in the Gospels: "Who do you say I am?" And his answer must be a profession of faith that is not only expressed in words, but is made real in his own life. For the Christ who is real for any individual is the Christ who is realized in his own life choices. So the vocational question addressed to the Christian is translated from the abstract, "Who do you say I am?" to the more specific, "Who is the Christ you are called to become?"

Some of the answers to this question are basic to any man's acceptance of his Christian vocation. Every man is called, in Christ, to relate as son to the God who is his Father. As a son he is called to live in trustful reliance on his Father's care, to accept a divine love that will include growth through suffering, to open himself to some re-



sponsibility for the world of his Father's continuous creation.

In addition to such putting on of Christ in ways that are basic to the life of every Christian, an individual will be challenged to live the gospel in other still more unique ways. How am I to embody Christ? Am I asked to be a bearer of the good news, teaching, preaching, journeying to other places and other peoples? Or am I called to a more settled sort of life, with my "preaching" done in the critical atmosphere of

the local setting? Am I to be Christ in a family situation or in celibacy, living in a community of others whose only bond is this common call to be one in Christ? Will the questions I am asked by Christ's life be answered in a life-style or radical poverty? Or will the works of mercy call me to receive and spend my substance in giving of myself, my goods, my talents, to those who need such services?

In a general way an individual's answers to these questions can be summarized in what have been traditionally called the states of life. Perhaps these could better be called states or stages of further questioning about life's values. In such a conceptualization each response channels further questions and gives them a certain orientation, a certain direction. In short, each question-answer calls for still more dialogue, which dialogue follows from what has already been said. Each answer brings the individual a little closer to that call which is his own.

In any case, the ultimate vocational question asked by God of each individual calls for a response out of the depth of his own personhood. It can be phrased something like this: "Who are you for me and for others?" The answer is a whole life's giving. And it takes a whole life to give. As has already been

suggested, even in the areas of commonality, such as that of being human or being Christian, the response is still uniquely personal. But even beyond that, each man must come face to face with questions that are addressed to him, as this present moment, at this present place in his life. Here, vocation as a process of constant, on-going questioning is particularly revealing. For each time a man faces these most personal questions and responds out of his own truth, he discovers that still further questions have been raised. At first sight, this might seem an invitation to constant frustration, a being doomed to take unending examinations. But this is to miss the true nature of the process. For when questions are divine they are revelatory; each reveals still more of a person's truth.

Phrased in still another way, the whole question of individual vocation could be summarized as one of on-going dialectic between gospel values and the reality of a person's life. How can I incarnate these values in a way that is real for me here and now? For example: the gospel value of poverty must be realized in the life of every Christian; for me as an individual, the question becomes one of, how is this done most really, most honestly, given the circumstances of my life, my respons-

ibility toward myself and toward others? Then all the other practical day-to-day questions are focussed in terms of my reply to this first one: questions, for example, like further education, type of job, kind of car to buy, etc. These answers must make sense *in* my life, make sense *of* my life.

All this may sound easy on paper; it is anything but easy in actuality. So again the temptation will be to evasion. I may find myself attempting counter questions: the "what if" kind of stalling that will keep the whole thing in the realm of the comfortably theoretical. Or, again, I may try to anticipate the questions with too ready answers that prevent the real questions from ever being asked.

But the divine Questioner is not easily put off. Certain questions may be repeated over and over again despite our reluctance to hear them. Sometimes this reluctance may be so unconscious that all we experience is a certain vague familiarity about the phrasing; we know, on some level of our being, that we have circled this issue before. Or we may recognize that a great deal of our past has been summarized in a certain question and so we recall how our life has come back again and again to this certain point.

Once a question has been

recognized as hauntingly familiar, it must then be faced in all of its most pressingly personal applications. For vocational questions are addressed to me, must be accepted by me. They are not rhetorical questions, nor are they general question, intended for "every man's" answering. This personal element, already discerned in a certain familiarity of accent, is further evidenced in an acute awareness that I am not able to answer this question out of my own immediate resources. Such is one of the authentic notes, it seems, of any vocational discerning. I recognize that I am being asked; I also recognize that I am being asked for something that is beyond me. So my first response may be a protest of poverty. I cannot do this thing. And this is correct. The individual cannot answer of himself. He is not being asked to. He is only being asked if he is willing to try. And even this willingness, like the question itself, is already graced. Furthermore, the very hearing of a vocational question is promise that strength to answer is already being given. In fact, it seems that such recognition of personal poverty, joined to a confident trust in the enabling power of God, is one of the strongest signs of authentic vocation and promise of enduring consecration.

It should be noted, however, that the poverty of the individual

who is called is real; it is not just a lack of self-confidence, nor excessive fear. It is not simply an excuse, much less a disguised need for too much affirmation. Rather, it is an experience of the trust that "without me, you can do nothing."

Just as the question of vocation is addressed to a man in individual terms and in ways that will draw him beyond himself in growing trust, so too the response of the individual must be specific and ongoing. Even a question that may seem to be very spiritual and abstract requires a flesh and blood answer. "Simon Peter, do you love me?" was meant to call forth a very definite response in the life of Peter. On the one hand, we may be tempted to temporize by being too spiritual; on the other, we may evade the sacredness of the present by a canonization of the past.

Such a pull toward security in response remains an element of danger in any vocation. The specific expression of consecration can become so confused with its realization that a man called to a life of striving for perfection may think himself assured of its accomplishment. A marriage once celebrated can begin to fall apart. The counter-tendency, however, is equally dangerous. To fail to give expression to one's life-answer, is to allow it to evaporate. Better to be in-

complete, even mistaken, than to be found "deaf" or "hard of heart."

What is important is that an individual's response be ongoing, that he be faithful in answering every question when it is asked. Just how critical any particular response may be in an individual's life is part of the basic mystery of his vocation. Something that may be a serious matter in the case of one person, may be much less important for another. But no fidelity need be "hopelessly" endangered; for even in serious matters, the grace of God is waiting, continuing to call in these changed circumstances, still offering an opportunity for us to become the person we are capable of becoming.

Just as infidelity may be more or less critical, but never (in this life) fatal, so too fidelity may be more or less life-giving. At times a great part of an individual's life may be caught up and expressed in a particular response, either because that particular response marks a crossroads in a person's life choices or because it may be a particularly significant expression of a person's freedom. In such circumstances we come to know that a specific response, or lack of it, is especially revelatory of our desire to choose, or to refuse, life.

In discerning that such is; in-

deed, the case, the individual may experience both a feeling of inner necessity ("I need to respond—it is important") and a sense of dread, followed by freedom and joy once the answer has been given. But the presence of only one or the other of these signs can be dangerously misleading. A feeling of "oughtness," for example, may indicate only unfreedom and evasion of personal responsibility; dread may signify nothing more important than a human reluctance to change; joy and peace may be only a temporary reaction to the easing of tension. It is the conjunction of both rightness and reluctance that comes closer to authentic response to the question of individual vocation.

As our vocation becomes more personal, both in terms of divinely initiated questioning and in the specifics of our own response, so too does it become more truly communal. I will become increasingly responsible to and for others. And this will give impetus to my search for a community of others who can help me realize my response. It is to this community that I already belong; I simply have to find this, my "homeland."

In all of this, I will be asked to set aside any image of myself, or of my ideal community, in order to discover my vocation in the real world where God is at

work. Here too, the ideal may become the enemy of the real. I am not being asked to discover a perfect community, or to found one. I am being asked only to try to grow in and with others away from false gods and toward the one true God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The direction of our vocational discovery, then, is first conversion from the false self and a corresponding movement toward the true self. And then, paradoxically, a letting go of self, a surrender of self, a dying to self for the sake of greater identity with Christ, a living in him. These stages of growth are real in the sense that they are necessary, that they cannot be skipped over, that they will come, unless we refuse them. In short, the laws of growth and development in the life of the spirit are somewhat like those we see in all of human life: there is process and sequential development, but rate and amount of growth are variables.

In every situation in which he finds himself, a man is being asked over and over again, "Who are you—for me? for others?" In his own life, his talents, his weaknesses, the needs of others around him, the response of his heart to the Word of God, the counsel of those to whom he can speak of his deepest mys-

teries, the individual begins to discover something of what is being asked of him. For vocation, ultimately, is not so much a matter of being married or celibate, being busy with one work or another, but of living as I am being asked to live for the sake of being most myself and so contributing my best to the building

up of the Body of Christ. As Thomas Merton has phrased it, "Each of us has an irreplaceable vocation to be Christ; and this Christ that I am supposed to be has got to be *my* version of Christ, and if I don't fulfill that there is going to be something missing forever and ever in the kingdom of Heaven."³

³Thomas Merton, "A Life Free from Care," *Cistercian Studies* 5 (1970), p. 219.



Saint Francis

May you listen
To beckoning silence,
As a man entering a cave
Strained in deepest darkness
Toward a stifled secret
Overheard in whispering stillness
Brought his cave out into day,
Ran in naked clarity
Heralding a treasure,
A Father newly found free
For orphaned ears.

Anthony Augustine, O.F.M.

Asceticism

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

IN HIS BOOK, *OUR LIFE WITH GOD*, Father Constantine Koser makes much of practical atheism as well as theoretical atheism, which—being in the atmosphere we live in—has to affect our thinking and doing. It strikes me that an essay on asceticism needs both to prove and to explain that concept. As there are no few atheists who are so because they have a wrong concept of God (e.g., as Big Boss or capricious tyrant)—a concept so bad that it would be bad for them to believe in such a being—so there are those who, when they hear the word *asceticism*, conjure up images and caricatures that are so distorted that they cannot but reject the notion. The Gospels and the lives of the saints both teach and exhibit what self-denial (to use one term almost synonymous with our main topic) is all about.

One of the goblins with which asceticism is often associated, even viciously identified, is formalism: preoccupation with externals even to the neglect of charity—love—and compassion, the very marrow of the gospel.

The Pharisees, who were so roundly criticized by our Lord, were formalists par excellence; they had no more religion than a pony, as Father Victor Mills, an illustrious confrere of mine, used to say. Every human institution, we ought to note, is plagued with such creatures. In government we call them bureaucrats. In society, we call them snobs or sticklers. In religious life, they are particularly obnoxious—but they are really few and far between. And I think this is so, not only in my province of which I have first-hand experience, but also of just about all the religious groups among whom my readers are to be found. (It may be worth reflecting, incidentally, that most of our formalists were, not vicious hypocrites, but just plain oddballs.)

But formalism, we must remind ourselves, is an attitude—a stance taken by a person toward forms—rather than forms as such. To care about forms isn't to be a formalist (love, surely, always wants to do what's right!). To be preoccupied with forms is, however, close to formalism; and to deify forms is

in very fact the ugly reality. Actually, we can't help caring about forms; to do so is part of our cultural conditioning. Even the abandonment of religious garb for modern dress means an attempt to be "modern," to conform to what professional—"smart"—people wear. And handshakes, hugs, and kisses are all of them *forms* of affection, which may be mocked but hardly replaced.

It seems that in our times a dread of formalism has led to a dread of forms; and many of us have experienced the religious vacuum stemming from the reckless abandonment of forms of prayer, dress, penance. I fear that on the personal level as well, we have all of us run a little scared in this matter: we are afraid to admit we *care* about forms; we are afraid to follow out our impulses to take on ourselves the mortification that observance of forms so often puts on us, e.g., a prescribed amount of prayer, appropriate chapel wear, participation in the community silliness called recreation, sharing in the drag that can be a community meal. There's a song about big bad Leroy Brown, "the baddest guy in the whole darn town." We are leery of being the goodest guys or gals in the whole darn town, but we surely know that doing all the right things doesn't in itself make us

good—even though it very frequently is a result of goodness pouring itself out.

Perhaps it is not the forms we fear, but ourselves—we're afraid of being hypocrites—or maybe, more precisely, we're afraid of being thought better than we really are. We all want to be loved, but not to be canonized, and we back off from forms for fear of being overestimated. But that is a trap. Giving someone reason for thinking kindly about us isn't bad. Sometimes, we avoid the forms because we dread being accused of formalism—because we really aren't all that we have promised to be. Well, that last is the truth; but hypocrisy is rendered maningless if it makes hypocrites of people who try to do what they can but fall short, as every human does. It isn't really hypocrisy, is it? to be a person who has promised to do all for God and is basically operating on peer pressure. Isn't it crooked to feign a disdain for forms you don't really feel—and to try to cover up what is a basic cowardice by some fancy words about formalism—or to hide one's own reasons from oneself by a tissue of rationalizations?

We conclude, then, that asceticism is *not* formalism. If we have that misapprehension out of our minds, we have indeed made progress. Now, let's look at another misapprehension, viz.,

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that asceticism is equivalent to pain. An ascetic, this line of thought goes, is one who makes a career of suffering, particularly by pains he/she inflicts on his/her own self. How do the Gospels actually talk to us about carrying a cross, denying ourselves, losing our lives? The answer is not quite as simple as some may try to say. Modern psychologists, e.g., tell us that pain is really necessary for growth. I think they are right: pain and suffering do have to be integrated into our life. But they don't—ever—have to *become* our life; and the same goes for self-inflicted pain, mortification, self-denial.

Asceticism aims at training, disciplining, correcting. It does *not* aim at pain. We all shrink from pain (or the thought of it); for that's the way we're built. Proper upbringing teaches us to evaluate pains, however—to take a long- and a short-range view of pain—to take something that we don't like for a tummyache, to do things right away rather than let them hang over our heads, not to fight city hall, or at least to take as few stands as necessary. Yet pain is reluctantly accepted. And if asceticism is identified with pain, no wonder we shrink from it, accepting it only when no other choice is available.

Asceticism, however, means self-control, self-discipline, self-

correction, self-improvement, self-surrender, and hence self-fulfillment. The Apostle Paul tells us to deny ourselves intelligently as athletes and soldiers do to win prizes and ensure survival. Red-blooded American boys are still willing to forego beer for a few months to keep in shape for lacrosse or football; calisthenics and crawling are still part of soldiers' lives; and there are probably few of us who have never dieted out of sheer desire to look better (few of us over 35, that is—which is about the time I first tried to do anything about weight).

Old-time spiritual writers used to talk about asceticism as medicine for the spirit—bitter tasting but helpful. I suspect the limp in that analogy is that we not only resent what is bitter, but kind of suspect we aren't so sick as to need medicine. Today, of course, medicine-taking doesn't connote anything bad—in some areas it's a status symbol and a crutch—so perhaps we should begin again to say our ascetical practices are just medicine to heal our sinful tendencies.

We are nearing the point when I'll have to define asceticism. I have already said there are such things as ascetical practices, which may bring to your mind hair shirts, fasts, long hours of prayer and silence, avoidance of recreation, and

shunning fun like the plague. Well, some of these do qualify, and some don't; but before we work out the distinction, we ought perhaps to reflect about St. Francis' definition of perfect joy to Brother Leo—a joy that included endurance of pain with an eye to participating in the sufferings of Christ.

We also have to consider, here, another view of asceticism that would turn anyone off—asceticism as doing something *extra* for God: doing more praying, fasting, etc. Paul told his readers rather dramatically that it wasn't doing more than others, being more heroic than others (giving one's body to be burned, selling all goods to give to the poor) that made one God-like—but love. Ascetical practices are rooted in love and flow from it. If we try to force ourselves beyond our strength we end up either exhausted or quickly discouraged and the biggest laxists to come down the pike. In these days of liberty you must have seen, as I have, some of the people who lived poorest becoming the biggest spenders, and the meekest becoming the biggest operators—probably in self-defense, but maybe too in reaction to excessive demands they had put on themselves. I've resolved the asceticism biy, personally, by saying I'll wait till I love as much as the saints to give as much as they did. Till then, I'll

settle for what my rule prescribes (even if it doesn't bind under sin), what my apostolate demands, and what my personal life needs. Now, sometimes my needs may be "more"—but the call to asceticism and holiness is not a call to give, give, give; do *more*, do *more*, do *more*. It's got to be a response to a whisper from within, and it's got to work its own way out.

One last note on what asceticism is not: it is not doing penance for one's sins. Atonement, reparation, showing you are sorry in deeds as well as words is necessary. Love does need to say I'm sorry, and to put some money where its mouth is. When the late Pope John said that without discipline one is not a man; without penance one is not a Christian, he was calling attention to a real spiritual need that genuine Christians feel, and one that is genuinely Christian. Saints do penance for their own and for others' sins. This is not taking away from Jesus' sufficiency, or trying to bribe God, or at least twist his arm; it is a response to an inner demand. Still, even though we may include the atonement for sin as part of what it means to be an ascetic, we cannot simply identify penance and asceticism.

In positive terms, then, let us repeat it: asceticism is **self-denial**, self-discipline, self-abandonment

to and for God. True, in using such "self"-centered terms to define asceticism, one may seem to force ascetics in on themselves and away from Christ. But asceticism does of necessity focus on the self. There is a risk in it, but a risk it is cowardly and un-Christian not to take. If our asceticism is sincere and not too unintelligent, it will bear good fruit—or rather, God will bring to fruition our honest efforts. Asceticism doesn't mean pulling oneself up by one's own bootstraps, but it does mean *doing* something with ourselves—even to ourselves—as part of our effort to be imitators of Christ. Jesus himself was an ascetic—he opened his public life with a 40-day fast; he prayed early in the morning; he did not have his own money but used the common purse; he had no place of his own; he ate *in* and not *out* because he wasn't a big spender; he took the trouble to go to Jerusalem for the feasts. He, of course, was not a fanatic, and was chided for his lack of austerity (as his disciples also were) and his willingness to associate with people who were clearly sinners. He did accept death on a cross, and didn't work a miracle to defend himself.

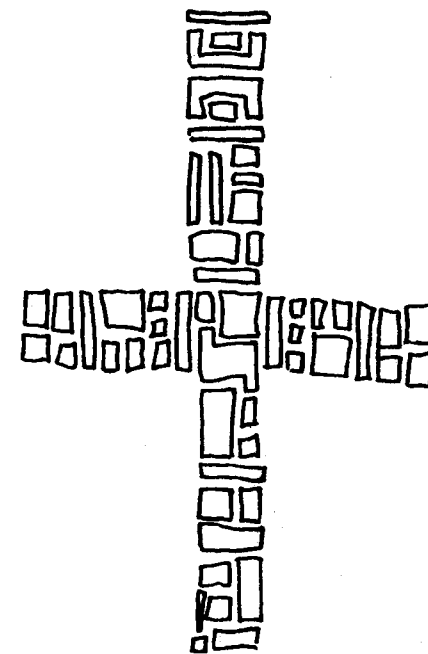
The saints in turn, who were so enamoured of Christ—like Francis of Assisi—desired to imitate him, and that desire led

them to ascetical practices. Not long ago one of the collegians on my dormitory floor dropped in and said to me: "It's something, having priests in class. You find out they are human, they can catch colds, just like other people." And I could add, lose their temper, complain about students, and much else. The image the boy had of a priest was of a person really removed from the world. Some pious folk have thought of Jesus that way, but looking at the bible should dispel any such notion. Jesus wasn't a professional ascetic; he radiated, not austerity, but warmth and firmness. The saints generally went around spreading, not the frown, but the smile of religion. Few have denied themselves to the extent that Francis of Assisi did, and few have attracted as many to religion and to Christ. The point is, ascetical practice does not make one cold, forbidding, stoical—nor does it demand that one try to put on such an attitude.

But ascetical practice does demand self-denial as opposed to self-indulgence, self-control as opposed to self-pampering, self-immolation as opposed to self-adoration. These three pairs may be a hang-over from my exposure to medieval philosophers, but I think they can help us clarify our thinking a little bit. For the remainder of this

present article, then, we devote our attention to the first pair: self-denial as opposed to self-indulgence. Next month we can consider the other two.

In speaking of self-denial as opposed to self-indulgence, I am obviously talking about the relationship between ourselves and our senses, or, more broadly speaking, ourselves and pleasure. Obviously we have foregone the pursuit of sexual pleasure (if you haven't, then it isn't chastity that you have pledged, vowed, promised); and we have also (perhaps less obviously) foregone the pleasure of luxurious things (the feel of fine fur on your back, the best in stereos, and the comfort of a Continental) and the pleasure of being our own boss (a pleasure that very few people actually ever get in its fullness anyway). But as Christians we are also obliged to watch those smaller indulgences that worldly people make light of: over-indulgence in alcohol, for example; dirty movies and books; gossiping; petty quarreling; petty theft; little white lies. And we are encouraged to deny ourselves some lawful things from time to time, and some lawful uses of things, as a way of atonement and of denying ourselves and so imitating the self-denial of Christ. Food, drink, entertainment have proved popular fare for self-denial in the history of the



Church. Fasting for a cause, such as peace in Vietnam or justice in the lettuce-fields have even become a vogue! But the practice of asceticism is a personal rather than a social protest—a protest against one's own weakness.

Personal self-denial, we can establish as a principle, ought to be as personal as possible—as unostentatious and hidden as possible. Sudden changes in patterns ought to be avoided unless they are really called for. It's probably better to switch to a smaller glass than to duck dinner and drinks; or to pass up sneaky snacks than collations whose purpose is community rather than chow. When it comes

to entertainment, the social dimension always has to be considered. Thus resolute self-denial which pulls you away from community is suspect. If a lonely confrere wants to go to a movie, that loneliness is more important to assuage than the desire you have to avoid the cinema. The same holds for television where it is a community affair, and for just plain recreation.

If we have some special hobbies, it might not hurt us to forego these on occasion—to leave a camera behind on a trip, to miss one or the other of our favorite TV shows, to give away a few records or tapes (or miss a few sales), to say no to a bargain suit or dress that would really make us stand out. (Weren't our lives simpler when all we had to worry about was looking clean and neat?) When it comes to lawful things and practices, the old axiom of Father Faber comes in: If self-denial makes you unhappy, skip it; better you keep your disposition than pile up merits on forced marches that make you mean and miserable. But let's not be too quick to excuse ourselves from self-denial on these grounds, blaming our indisposition on the self-denial. Many things bother us, and our

(to be continued)

self denial may have nothing to do with the way we feel. By all means, we should avoid the sensational—Saint Francis made his friars turn in the chains which they wore around their waists to punish themselves, and in his rule he dispensed friars from corporal fasting and the penance of bare feet and of walking when necessity hindered those practices of asceticism. Still, we shouldn't set our sights so low that anything like giving up drinking, or snacks, or movies, or excessive travel, is judged to be heroic. God may ask something big of us, and we have to be open to hear such a call. If we think he is doing this, we should check it out with a confessor or spiritual director who will certainly let us try anything for a little while.

Of the self-denial that is involved in the careful fulfillment of our duties I have said nothing, because I am convinced (from my own experience and the example of the saints) that such enduring, while sanctifying, is not enough *all of the time* even if for *some* periods it is all we can manage. Absorption in work too often weakens the life of prayer to which penance is supposed to contribute, not be detrimental.

Francis: A Man of Tenderness

SISTER MARIE THERESE ARCHAMBAULT, O.S.F.

IN THE PAST several years we have been challenged to answer deep questions about the real Franciscan meaning of our personal lives and of our life together in community. For this reason, many of us have engaged in long term study, reading, and prayerful reflection on the earliest Franciscan sources. The following article is a short reflection on one Franciscan's reading and the meaning derived.

The Francis that I met in my reading is a man of great tenderness, gentleness, and affection toward all persons, especially his Master and Lord Jesus Christ, his brothers, and then toward all living creatures and the whole cosmos. He is a man of extraordinary freedom who can easily and without hesitation take up a womanly quality of "mothering" into his own behavior and easily recommends it to his brothers: "If a mother cares for her child in the flesh, so should a brother all

the more tenderly . . ."¹ Whenever he wants to express the care and affection needed in the relationships of the brothers, he uses feminine terms. In his letter concerning the hermitages, he says to the friars living there: "Two of these should act as mothers, with the other two, or the other one, as their children. The mothers are to lead the life of Martha; the other two, the life of Mary Magdalen."² Immediately in the use of these feminine words one senses the quiet, loving environment Francis wants in the hermitages. They are to be places of brotherly concern, and not places of willful isolation.

In his own relationship to his brothers we sense this same freedom and open affection expressed in feminine terms. Celano writes that in his later years "Francis had chosen Brother Elias to take the place of a mother in his own regard."³ Francis would here play the child's role under the watchful "motherly eye" of Elias,

¹Rule of 1223, *Omnibus*, p. 61.

²Ibid., p. 71.

³I Celano 98, *Ibid.*, p. 313.

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particularly regarding his advanced illness. His relationship with Brother Leo was also one of deep affection and care, as shown in his letter to Leo, where he says, "Leo, as a mother to a child, I speak to you, my son."⁴ For Francis, the qualities of a good mother: tenderness, nurturance, care, and gentleness, were unquestioned; they flowed from within his being in response to a greater gentleness that he had himself experienced. He exhorts

his brothers in the Rule of 1223 to be as members of one family to one another: "Look after one another as though looking after yourself."⁵

Celano states that Francis also was consumed by a great and tender love of Jesus. Particularly in his later years he wanted to speak of Jesus always and to dwell with him constantly.

The brothers, moreover, who lived with him knew how his daily and continuous talk was of Jesus and how sweet and tender his conversation was, how kind and filled with love his talk with them. His mouth spoke "out of the abundance of his heart," and . . . indeed, he was always occupied with Jesus . . .⁶

This tender love for Jesus manifested itself particularly in his love for non-rational creatures that reminded him of Jesus. For example: "So, all things, especially those in which some allegorical similarity to the Son of God could be found, he would embrace more fondly and look upon more willingly . . ."⁷ In his letter to the brothers announcing the death of Francis, Brother Elias recalls to them how Francis, as a good shepherd, a comforter, "carried us like lambs in his arms."⁸ One gets the same pic-

ture when reading Celano's account of Francis holding a rabbit with such "motherly affection" that it did not want to leave him, but kept returning to him. He adds that Francis had the same tender affection for the fish also.⁹

The whole Canticle of Brother Sun, line after line, speaks of his extraordinarily loving attitude toward all creation. The entire universe had become a personal relative to Francis; so he easily and naturally spoke to its various parts as members of his own family: Brother Wind, Sister Water, Brother Fire, and so on. In the Francis I met, I do not sense the slightest willful violence toward any being—only a deep gentleness that rises from the wellsprings of his inmost being. There, in those wellsprings, dwells God, "Yahweh, a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in kindness and faithfulness" (Ex. 34:6).

It seems to me that the Spirit achieved within the soul of Francis what Galatians 3:28

states: "In Christ there is neither male nor female," i.e., he was not a man bound by society's definitions of maleness and femaleness in his response to God, but he moved where the Spirit led him and became a man of exquisite, reverent freedom, meeting God himself, "who lies hidden within" all things.¹⁰ What Adrian van Kaam describes here was true in the life of Francis:

To be at one for the One, to know and taste with the whole being—like the scribe praised by Jesus—that there is no other than He, is the aim of poverty of spirit. The tender flower of this total presence blooms in a climate that is mild and even, a climate of equanimity. A spirit absorbed in the Divine is a gentle spirit.¹¹

Thus Francis, by surrendering to the Spirit, became like a finely tuned instrument of the Spirit who "Strove for peace and gentleness toward all men,"¹² and in this unique giftedness "he diffused the Gospel waters over the whole world by his tender watering . . ."¹³

⁹Elias' letter (private trans. distributed in class), §2.

¹⁰St. Bonaventure, *Retracing the Arts to Theology*, tr. Sister Emma T. Healy (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1955), p. 41.

¹¹Adrian van Kaam, C.S. Sp., *Spirituality and the Gentle Life* (Denville, N.J.: Dimension Books, 1974), p. 63.

¹²1 Celano 41, *Omnibus*, p. 263.

¹³1 Celano 89, *Ibid.*, p. 304.

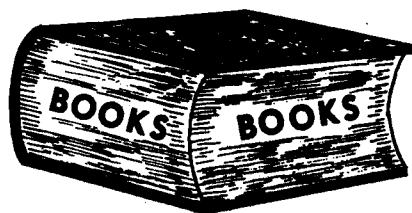
⁴Letter to Brother Leo, *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁶1 Celano 115, *Ibid.*, p. 329.

⁷1 Celano 77, *Ibid.*, p. 293.

⁸1 Celano 61, *Ibid.*, p. 280.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 61.



Christian Prayer. By Ladislaus Boros.
Trans. David Smith. New York:
Seabury Press, 1976. Pp. vi-121.
Cloth, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father John F. Marshall, O.F.M., Assistant Pastor at St. Joseph's Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and author of some widely acclaimed series of spiritual conferences for religious.

"Prayer is not so much an activity as a state of being." Once our author proposes this as his premise, he can evidently go on to treat of prayer as a reality deep and broad as life itself. Given this as a radical point of departure, any book that has ever been conceived could be called "Christian Prayer."

Since the converse is not necessarily true, however, there is reason for insisting on manner, method, style, and schools of prayer. And this of necessity if we are to arrive at a more balanced perspective on prayer as it is actually prayed. We cannot strive for diversity at the expense of unity, security at the expense of risk, coziness at the expense of courage. For if prayer is a state of being, then it must involve all these.

I found the last two chapters, on Human Fulfillment and Providence, especially engrossing because of their profound insights. They capped an escalating experience in the

reading that went from the initial mere acceptable to the more enlightening. In fact, I believe, these last chapters served to set the book off from the mediocre and run of the mill.

This is a book worth reading, since it gives a fullness and satisfaction to prayer, as it must, since prayer is coextensive with life. It posits the burden of the effort to pray more on the mind than the memory and leaves to the reader the essential task of placing his heart into it.

The chapter topics have a progression to them that is both realistic and logical. They strike at where life is really lived, would it be a Christian life.

If one were to place this book alongside that of Gregory Baum's acclaimed *Man Becoming*, it would be not only complementary but also much in accord with the latter's thesis: nothing is beyond the influence of God's grace, influence, and support. Once the first and ultimate gift, life, is gratefully accepted, there remains but to nurture, sustain, and enjoy that life by converting it to prayer—always with the trust and conviction that God will provide the increase.

Not Without Parables: Stories of Yesterday, Today, and Eternity. By Catherine de Hueck Doherty.
Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 187. Paper, \$3.50.

Reviewed by Father Wilfrid Hept, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Francis Chapel, Providence, Rhode Island.

Not Without Parables is a book of

stories gathered by Catherine de Hueck Doherty, founder and Director of Madonna House, Combermere, Ontario, over a long life of dedication to spreading the good news of the gospel. At first glance some adults might dismiss this book as a story book for children. It truly is a book for children, but they must be children of the kingdom of God, for Jesus said, "I assure you, unless you change and become like little children, you will not enter the kingdom of God" (Mt. 18:3). For such a reader who is familiar with her recent books, *Poustinia* and *The Gospel without Compromise*, this new book gives concrete examples of the faith she explains in the earlier ones.

This book is divided into three parts: Stories of Yesterday, Stories of Today, and Stories of Eternity. In the first part the author recalls stories which she remembers from her childhood in Russia. In the first chapter she writes, "As a child, I remember sitting wide eyed at the feet of the pilgrims, listening to their tales about God, about Our Lady and the Saints." The reader, too, will be fascinated by these stories. The first, heard when Catherine was nine years old, relates the experience of an elderly lady. Wandering about the forest the lady encounters the devil in the form of a sinister looking man. He predicts terrible bloodshed in Russia because of religion. She sprinkles him with holy water, at which he screams and vanishes. Later the Blessed Virgin appears as a beautiful lady and foretells: "There will come a day when, under the sign of my Son, I will lead Russia to show my Son's face to the world." Is this a true story, or are any of the

stories of the pilgrims true? There immediately rises to mind those famous lines: "To those who believe, no explanation is necessary; to those who do not believe, no explanation is possible." Catherine is one of the believers, and to her such a question would only occur to the "Western mind," for what is really important is the message of the stories. These pilgrim stories and the others as well, are one of the several ways that Catherine Doherty uses to share with others her understanding of the gospel.

The second part is devoted to stories or happenings in the many foundations or Friendship Houses the author has established. The door of each of these houses is painted blue in honor of Our Lady, and so she calls these stories the "Blue Door Stories." Everyone who passed through these doors had a story to tell. Some of the most interesting of these are recorded in this book. In a time when we are feeling the energy crisis, one story especially stands out, which occurred in the first Canadian Friendship House during the great Depression. The cook had announced that the coal for the heater and cook-stove was just about exhausted. Having no money, Catherine and some others had recourse to prayer. Suddenly a deep, mocking voice made itself heard, challenging her statement about praying to God. She had set the time for the delivery at 4:00 P.M. The coal was delivered one minute before the deadline. I'll leave the unexpected outcome of this story to your reading the book. In the other "Blue Door" stories, the blessings are not always so visible, but it is a true joy to

read about them.

The third part contains stories of "eternity." These stories are from the fertile imagination of the author. The reader soon realizes that the virtues personified here are not the abstract concepts of a book of ascetical theology, but the everyday lived experiences of a woman in love with God. Such story titles as "How Death Became Life," "How Sorrow Became Joyful," "How Ugly Lady Pain Becomes So Beautiful," give an idea of how diversified the topics are. To hear her address Death, Sorrow, Prudence, and Humility as "Lady," moreover, reminds one strikingly of another Romantic aflame with the love of God—Saint Francis of Assisi, who addressed his poetry and prose to the praise of the various Virtues as well as of Brother Sun and Sister Moon. Perhaps some Franciscans will see in this volume a modern version of "The Little Flowers" of Saint Francis. At the very least the stories are a delightful change from the sex and violence ridden stories of so much contemporary writing. They are in the great tradition of the greatest story teller of them all: Jesus, of whom the gospel says, "In all this teaching to the crowds Jesus spoke in parables; in fact he never spoke to them without parables" (Mt. 13:34).

Feminine Spirituality: Reflections on the Mysteries of the Rosary.
By Rosemary Haughton. Ramsey, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1976. Pp. ix-93. Paper, \$1.95.

Reviewed by Sister Donna Marie Woodson, O.S.F., B.S. (St. Louis University), who is working in the

field of Home Care on Chicago's Southside.

We have here another book of reflections on the mysteries of the Rosary, one which does not follow the usual pattern of thoughts to be used at the time of recitation. Rather, this book is for reflective reading apart from the prayer—reading which will enrich the prayer or lead one to his/her own personal meditation. Today, when many women are searching for the specifically feminine aspects of their personality and for role clarification which is feminine, they can find some leads in this book.

Rosemary Haughton brings us a book of fifteen brief chapters, each more or less based on one of the mysteries of the Rosary. Feminine qualities are mentioned or alluded to throughout its pages. The joyful mysteries are presented as a "yes" to God and the growth which occurs within a person as a result of hearing and responding to the Word. Reflections on the stages of growth, human and spiritual, are interwoven with feminine aspects of parenthood.

The sorrowful mysteries are presented as different aspects of one event. Thoughts on death, the avoidance of thinking about it, and possible responses to the "successive dyings" occurring throughout life, are part of the section. Death is seen to be necessary for a full life—to go forth peacefully to whatever is demanded. "We will have to make the choice of carrying deliberately what we picked up without much thought."

The glorious mysteries are covered

as a sequence: Resurrection-Ascension-Return to the Father, and Mary's role as an essential symbol of redemption is highlighted throughout. The human body is capable of glory, even though capable of suffering and afflictions, if it hears the Word and responds. The mystery of Mary assures us of this. She means, for us, the tenderness and yet toughness of God's handling of us, as a mother has to be tender and tough to raise her family properly.

Feminine self-awareness is strug-

gling to find its full meaning. The first five chapters and the last two in this book are of real help toward this end for women of today. The author notes that an idea must be "taken home" and "lived with" in among all the good, tested, familiar ones, and its relative value will gradually become clear. I feel this holds for her latest book as well and would recommend it to anyone interested in discovering the uniqueness of the feminine personality, whether the reader be male or female.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

The Imitation of Christ. By Thomas a Kempis. A modern version of the important spiritual classic by Harold C. Gardiner, S.J. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976. Pp. 213. Cloth, \$6.95.

What can you say about another edition of the Western World's number two best seller? Father Gardiner's version is readable, and it has a particularly valuable introduction. In it he makes clear the author's presupposition that his readers have a background in the Catholic Faith—that a Kempis stresses a healthy mistrust of self which is never to be separated from a deep confidence in God. Gardiner, in brief, gives a context into which this spiritual classic must be set if it is to produce the abundant fruits of holiness in the present that it has in the past.

Christian Morality and You: Right

and Wrong in an Age of Freedom. By James Finley and Michael Pen-nock. Notre Dame, Inc.: Ave Maria Press, 1976. 2 vols.: text—pp. 191; paper, \$3.50; teacher's manual—pp. 95; paper, \$1.95.

This is a quite sophisticated and orthodox treatment of Catholic morality designed as a high-school text, but suitable for adult education, colleges, or seminaries. Explanation of the concepts of man, freedom, responsibility, relationships, conscience, law, sin, sexual morality, respect for life are found combined with cases and value clarification exercises. The authors are very much aware of the influence of our society and of their peers on teen-agers' (and adults') moral viewpoints, and they clearly show how Christian morality as found in the Catholic tradition at times sets one at odds with society and friends. Anyone ex-

posed to a course taught from this text would have a most substantial moral grounding—provided of course that the teacher was as well grounded as the authors.

Jesus Christ, the Gate of Power. By Ernest Larsen. Canfield, Ohio: Alba Books, 1976. Pp. 127. Paper, \$1.75.

Father Larsen's book of five short chapters in verse-like form calls our attention to the need to get Jesus, Church, and Sacraments really to mean something to us. He summons us to know Jesus, not just about Jesus; to realize that the rituals of religion are doors to Jesus, that His Spirit is one of freedom, patience, balance, love, and sacrifice. Although it is aimed at those in parochial settings, the book can serve the wider audience of all reflective Christians.

Between You and Me, Lord: Prayer-Conversation with God. By Flora Larsson. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1976. Pp. 106, illus. Paper, \$1.45.

The sub-title accurately reflects the kind of thing that the author is doing: talking out loud to God about anything in her life. Among the topics are human situations that all can relate to—not only matters like deciding for Christ and forgiving your enemies, but also reflections on having the flu and bugs in the garden. Basically about feelings—and the sharing of them with God—this book has an appeal for any mature adult who wants to integrate prayer and daily life.

How to Be Friends with Yourself and Your Family. By Jean Rosenbaum, M.D. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. 79. Paper, \$1.35.

Written by a psychiatrist, this little book deals in readable and clear fashion with positive self-image, fear, anger, loneliness, and human relationships. If its lessons were as easy to carry out as to read, there would be no need for books like it. Recommended for all who are ready to take an open look at themselves.

St. Anthony of Padua: Wisdom for Today. By Patrick McCloskey, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. viii-120. Paper, \$1.75.

This is a book on "everybody's saint" for everybody. After briefly explaining the Catholic teaching on devotion to the saints, Father McCloskey sets the scene for and sketches the life of Anthony—a life like most of ours with many ups and downs (you have to read between the lines to spot the downs, but they are there). Then follows a series of reflections on short texts from Anthony's sermons. These reflections constitute a summary of the spiritual life. Particularly fine are the explanations of prayer, penance, and the Eucharist. Also included in the book are a historical account of devotions to Saint Anthony and the most popular such devotions. *St. Anthony of Padua* is a book not only for clients of the Paduan, not only for priests in search of mini-homilies rooted in Franciscan sources, but for anyone who wants to draw closer to God.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Corbishley, Thomas, *The Prayer of Jesus*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 119. Cloth, \$5.95.
- Foley, Leonard, O.F.M., *Sincerely Yours, Paul*. 124 Sunday Readings from St. Paul, with Commentary, Arranged according to Topic. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. xiii-166, incl. liturgical, scriptural, and topical indices. Paper, \$2.35.
- Jones, Alexander, gen. ed., & Fannie Drossos, illus., *Illustrated Psalms of the Jerusalem Bible*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 379. Paper, \$6.95.
- Kelly, George A., *Who Should Run the Catholic Church?* Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1976. Pp. 224, incl. index. Cloth, \$8.95.
- Laurentin, Rene, *Catholic Pentecostalism: An In-Depth Report on the Charismatic Renewal*. Trans. Matthew J. O'Connell; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 239, incl. bibliography & chronological table. Cloth, \$6.95.
- Marsden, George, and Frank Roberts, eds., *A Christian View of History?* Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975. Pp. 201, incl. indices. Paper, \$4.50.
- Pennington, M. Basil, O.C.S.O., *Daily We Touch Him: Practical Religious Experiences*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 115. Cloth, \$5.95.
- Vanderpool, James A., *Person to Person: A Handbook for Pastoral Counseling*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. xii-156, incl. bibliography. Cloth, \$6.95.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our June issue were drawn by Brother Robert G. Cuniff, O.F.M., Co-moderator of the Third Order at Bishop Timon High School, Buffalo, New York.

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Vol. 27, No. 7

CONTENTS

THE DEBUNKERS DEBUNKED	194
<i>Review Editorial</i>	
FRANCIS' PEACE AND GANDHI'S NON—VIOLENCE	196
<i>Joy Prakash, O.F.M.</i>	
CLARA, ROYAL DAUGHTER	209
<i>Timothy Johnson, O.F.M. Conv.</i>	
CLARE'S SONG OF SONGS	210
<i>David Paul Benzshawel, O.F.M. Conv.</i>	
MODELS OF THE CHURCH AND LAY SPIRITUALITY	224
<i>Robert E. Donovan, O.F.M.</i>	
WE ARE MIRRORS	236
<i>Bruce Riski, O.F.M. Cap.</i>	
MARY	237
<i>Mary Lou Sleevi</i>	
THE LIGHT OF HIS FACE	240
<i>Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C.</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	244



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The Debunkers Debunked



“THE CORRELATIVE OR COUNTERPART to revelation is not critique but obedience,” Dr. Gerhard Maier rightly insists in his recently translated book, *The End of the Historical-Critical Method*. (The quite serviceable translation, by Edwin Leverenz and Rudolph Norden, has been published this year by the Concordia Publishing House in St. Louis—it is a 108-page paperback and sells for \$4.50.) “It is not correction,” he continues (p. 23) but it is a let-me-be-corrected.”

This book is extremely dense and closely reasoned—even to summarize its argumentation adequately would be almost to reproduce the entire book. Its message is so important, however, that we want to give it editorial prominence even at the cost of having to be excessively brief and superficial in setting forth its contents.

In the first of three chapters, the author demonstrates through a systematic exposition of “basic principles” the intrinsic contradiction involved in the very notion of a “critical” approach to the Bible: there is simply no way to separate a “word of man” from that of God or to find a “canon within the Canon,” the former of which would alone be normative as revelatory.

The second chapter is an effort to confirm the theoretical conclusion of the first by evaluating E. Kaesemann’s collection of essays on the critical method. Two of the fifteen contributors are Roman Catholic, and most of them are exegetes rather than systematic theologians. It is hardly surprising, given the cogency of the first chapter’s arguments, that an analysis of several of the essays in Kaesemann’s book shows once again the inadequacy and the illusory character of this rationalistic approach to the Bible, which many readers will be surprised to learn goes back to the years immediately preceding the American Revolution.

As so often happens, the author’s attempt, in his third chapter, to establish positively a new, “historical-biblical,” method does not succeed nearly so well as his criticism of the “historical-critical” method. Dr. Maier is

rather strictly traditional in his Lutheran theology, however, and so one would tend to expect him to end up in the usual impasse consequent on the insistence of scripture’s own absolute self-sufficiency. (It struck me as truly ironic that after accepting Hans Kueng’s criticism of the h-c method, the author had in turn to reject what saves Kueng’s position: the appeal to an authoritative magisterium.)

Maier has, of course, to set up some specific points of methodology, and it is equally obvious that they must resemble those of the h-c method: finding the text, critical evaluation of translations, looking into the *Sitz-im-Leben*, taking into account the findings of comparative religions, etc. He does stop short of accepting unreservedly the conclusions of form criticism, and in doing so he points cogently and most helpfully to the ecclesial community, “scripture as a whole,” and salvation history as context for the analysis and appreciation of the Bible. I have no idea, to be candid, whether the community’s “spiritual experience” as set forth here will really satisfy any but the most strict adherents of the “protestant principle.” I do know that any orthodox Roman Catholic must find this norm of “spiritual experience” inadequate.

But the point of this editorial is not to cavil about *differences*. It is, rather, to emphasize *agreements*. We feel very strongly, with Dr. Maier, that the h-c method has in fact borne much evil fruit, and that it is time to celebrate its demise. It may be unfair to make the point so boldly, sweepingly, and superficially; but (1) as said above, editorial prominence seems worth that cost, (2) an editorial does not provide space for extended, nuanced theological discussion, and (3) we welcome and will seriously consider for publication readers’ comments on either side of this issue. Such comments could take the form of letters (thus perhaps resuming our earlier “Riposte” feature) or extended articles.

Father Eugene H. Maly, in a brief review of the *New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* (*Celebration* 6:4—April, 1977—p. 5) says of that 1969 volume that “every one of the individual commentaries and articles reflects the historical-critical method. In that respect it is as up-to-date as any commentary could be.” Apparently the last place to look for criticism of the h-c method, then, is in the ranks of professional exegetes. It is rather the systematic theologian, and also the educated layman—who partakes of the *sensus fidelium*—who must begin to question aloud the anti-transcendent, anti-supernatural, anti-vertical bias that has gone so far toward turning God’s word into psychological, sociological, and historical documents seen as fair game for exclusively empirical analysis.

Fr. Michael D. Mailach, *ofm*

Francis' Peace and Gandhi's Non-violence

JOY PRAKASH, O.F.M.

SHOULD THE Nobel Prize for Peace ever be posthumously awarded, who would be the more likely recipient: Francis or Gandhi? Perhaps it would be Gandhi, because his peace strategy through non-violence has proved to be a successful one and has won national and international admiration and sympathy. Not so the peace movement of the little man of Assisi. Moreover Gandhi can be easily placed among internationally acclaimed peace makers like Dag Hammarskjöld, Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, and Helder Camara. Francis did not solve international disputes, nor social inequalities. The peace which Francis offers is "not as the world gives." Is this the whole truth?

Of all the modern social revolutionaries of peace, Gandhi comes closest to Francis' ideal. His concept of non-violence is fascinating. As Pope Paul said in his message on the World Day of Peace: "Has not our time had an example of what can be done by a weak man, Gandhi—armed only with the principle of

non-violence—to vindicate to a nation of hundreds of millions of human beings the freedom and dignity of a new people?"¹ But Francis' medieval idea of peace is equally captivating for our century. The little man of Assisi whose legacy is more spirit than doctrine has had profound influence upon social teaching, liturgy, piety, philosophy, theology, and art; and he has contributed a definite solution for peace in today's world.

This comparative study is an attempt to capture the vision and the ideal, and the "points of contact" between these two revolutionaries of peace. It is also meant to be an evaluation of non-violence, to see if it could be a definitive form of action for the Franciscans in the context of oppressive socio-economic situations. To put it plainly: We are asking how far the Gandhian non-violence is compatible with the Franciscan Peace Movement. Perhaps an objective analysis of Gandhi's non-violence and Francis' "peace and good" may provide the ingredients of a non-violent Franciscan Peace Movement.

¹"The Real Weapons of Peace," Message of His Holiness Pope Paul VI for the celebration of the Day of Peace 1 Jan. 1976, p. 13.

Father Joy Prakash, O.F.M., ordained in 1974, has been active in both pastoral and academic pursuits. He has done extensive editorial work and contributed many articles and poems to various ecclesiastical and religious publications in India.

1. Non-violence and Peace

THE FIRST problem to be solved is: How is non-violence, which is a means, to be combined with and related to peace, which is an end? For Gandhi non-violence was only a principle of action. He did not view it as an end but as a means (though rarely he did, apparently, identify the means with the end). When we examine certain components of Gandhi's concept of non-violence: his concept of non-possession, his commitment to justice, his idea of personal sacrifice, and his religious inspiration, we see a certain similarity with Francis' ideal of peace.

By peace we do not mean an inner tranquil feeling, nor do we term cold-war co-existence as peace. Peace is not the balance of power nor the often bartered peace of treaties nor the peace wrought by law and order. The peace which we are discussing is not merely a part but the apex of a system of values which posits other values as well, and it could be argued that as long as these other values are not fully realized, the crowning value of peace is out of joint. By peace, then, we mean the loving response of man to God, man to man, and of man to the world: that peace which will effect the reconciliation of man with God as well as with other men. The peace under discussion is armed with a formidable principle: "You are all brethren" (Mt. 23:8). This peace would, in the words of Isaiah, hammer people's swords into plough-

shares, their spears into sickles (Is. 2:4).

2. Gandhi's Non-violence

GANDHI WAS NOT a born believer in non-violence. He himself confessed that in the first years of his public life he believed in violence and that it was only after reading the works of Tolstoy that he was definitely converted to non-violence:

It was forty years back, when I was passing through a severe crisis of scepticism and doubt, that I came across Tolstoy's book, *The Kingdom of God Is within You*, and was deeply impressed by it. I was at that time a believer in violence. Its reading cured me of my scepticism, and made me a firm believer in *Ahimsa*.²



Gandhi's concept of *Ahimsa*, or non-violence, cannot be easily defined, since it is rich and many-sided. Gandhi found something of it in the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount competed with the Bhagavad Gita for the domination of his "heart." The verses: "But I say unto you, that you resist no evil: but whosoever shall smite you on your right cheek turn to him the other also; and if any man take away your coat, let him have your cloak too" delighted Gandhi beyond measure, and he recognized similar thoughts in the teaching of Gita. His childhood Gujarathi poem,

²D.G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi* (Bombay: V.R. Jhaveri & D. G. Tendulkar, 1951), vol. 2, p. 418.

"For a bowl of water, give a goodly meal,"³ reminded him of the Sermon on the Mount.

Even though the Christian thinking influenced him extensively with regard to non-violence, he refused to admit that any system of religious thought in particular helped him to reach the idea of non-violence.

Gandhi has not given an all-embracing definition of *Ahimsa*. His extensive writings on the subject would in fact make the reader quite confused.

Literally speaking, *Ahimsa* means non-killing. But to me it has a world of meaning and takes me into realms much higher, infinitely higher than the realm to which I would go, if I merely understood by *Ahimsa*, non-killing. *Ahimsa* means that you may not offend anybody, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy.⁴

Gandhi said that the goal of *Ahimsa* was difficult to reach. Complete non-violence was complete absence of ill-will against all that lives. It therefore embraced even sub-human life, not excluding noxious insects or beasts. Like Francis, Gandhi held the whole created reality in his loving embrace:

*For a bowl of water, give a goodly meal;
*For a kindly greeting, bow thou down with zeal;
For a simple penny, pay thou back with gold;
If thy life be rescued, life do not withhold.
Thus the words and actions of the wise regard;
Every little service tenfold they reward
But the truly noble know all men as one,
And return with gladness good for evil done.

Poem of Shamal Bhatt, as quoted by Gandhi in *The Message of Jesus Christ* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan, 1964), p. 2.

*M. K. Gandhi, *The Law of Love* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Ghavan, 1970), p. 17.

*Ibid., p. 21.

If we only know the mind of the Creator, we should find their proper place in his creation. Non-violence is, therefore, in its active form, good will towards all life. It is pure love. I read it in the Hindu Scriptures, in the Bible, in the Quran.⁵

Non-violence was the fulcrum of Gandhi's thought and conditioned the other concepts which seem consequently to be derived from it or, at least, to be seen in its light. The independence movement staged in India was spear-headed by the doctrine of *Ahimsa*, which "tells us that we may guard the honour of those who are under our charge by delivering *ourselves* into the hands of the man who would commit the sacrilege."⁶

Gandhi, as said earlier, did not view non-violence as an end, but as a means. For him the last end was Truth, which means God. Non-violence is subordinated to the attainment of God, the Supreme Truth. If the living of poverty meant for Francis to incarnate Christ in the world, Gandhi's non-violence was to attain the Truth which is God. But in so far as the end is present in the means, non-violence and Truth are identified with one another.

Equally, non-violence is identified with love: "Non-violence means loving those who hate us."⁷ Truth was never abstract for Gandhi. Very often Truth was realized in right action, in the right decision, and in the right course of action.

Satyagraha (attachment to truth) and *Ahimsa* were not synonymous for Gandhi; rather the former term indicates a technique of non-violent resistance which consists in sacrificing everything, even one's life, for the sake of truth.

3. The Constitutive Elements of Non-violence

GANDHI'S non-violent strategy is composed of various elements, all of them essential to the central concept itself.

a. *Dispossession*. If Francis would embrace poverty for the sake of Christ, Gandhi would be dispossessed of worldly goods for *Ahimsa*. "I suggest that we are thieves in a way," he said:

If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use, and keep it, I thief it from somebody else . . . so long as we have got this inequality, so long as we are thieving . . . I do not want to dispossess anybody. I should then be departing from the rule of *Ahimsa*.⁸

Gandhi wanted to overcome immorality, untruth, and selfish political gain. Hence he believed in dispossession. Because love and exclusive possession can never go together, there is a very self-evident cry for

justice in his idea of dispossession "If we are to be non-violent, we must then not wish for anything on this earth which the meanest or the lowest of human beings cannot have."⁹ The Poverello in his child-like enthusiasm to live the Gospel expressed himself in like terms when he said he would not like to see anyone poorer than himself.

b. *Pursuit of Justice*. Gandhi's non-violence does not mean that one should just bear with wickedness. But being aware that retaliation would only increase wickedness in society, Gandhi sought to oppose it through non-violence. He even fought hidden or structural violence, i.e., that kind of violence which is not evident or bloody, but is embodied in existing institutions or contracts or international laws; or even that which maintains situations of flagrant injustice using the so-called forces of order. The *Satyagrahi* cannot tolerate any kind of injustice.

Another concern of Gandhi in the sphere of justice was to gain equality in human society. He tried to do away with the distinctions which set man against man on the ground of humanity. By calling the Untouchables "Harijans" (People of God), he raised the dignity of persons who were victims of superstitious religious beliefs and caste mentality. Gandhi's commitment to justice was an integral part of his non-violence.

c. *Suffering*. Gandhi was indeed certain that dispossession and working for justice would mean much personal sacrifice for the cause

⁷N. K. Bose, *Selections from Gandhi* (Ahmedbad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1968), p. 17.

⁸Ibid., p. 75.

⁹Ibid., p. 16.

of non-violence. To put it in his words, non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering.

It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul, and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration.¹⁰

The example of Christ's suffering impressed Gandhi and created in him an undying faith in non-violence in words and in action. The illogic of crucifixion became also the illogic of non-violence.

According to the science of *Satyagraha*, the greater the repression and lawlessness on the part of the authority, the greater should be the suffering courted by its victims. Success is the certain result of the extremest character, voluntarily undergone.¹¹

4. Gandhi's Religious Inspiration

GANDHI'S basic inspiration is certainly founded upon his religious belief even though he did not ascribe his concept of non-violence to any particular religion. But in the Crucified Christ Gandhi saw the supreme example of non-violence and the crown of Jesus' entire life and mission.

Gandhi was keenly aware of the political implications of religious beliefs, and so he combined in a unique

manner religion and politics. He wanted to transform politics and he wanted to do that in and through the transformation of political man by providing a mandate of conscience, of principled action, and by working for truth. Besides, Gandhi preferred to find God in humanity rather than in a Himalayan cave. This fact determined his concrete actions and policies. How many of his followers during his lifetime and later were imbued with this reality of God in political life is a difficult question to answer.

5. Francis' Peace

FRANCIS' withdrawal from the war with Perugia was not so much a conversion from violence to non-violence, as his great discovery that he was serving the slave rather than the Master. For Francis it was the beginning of peace with God, with himself, and with his fellow men. That peace grew when he began to relate to his fellow men as persons, brothers and sisters. This is evident from his own Testament:

When I was in sin, the sight of lepers nauseated me beyond measure; but then God himself led me into their company, and I had pity on them. When I had once become acquainted with them, what had previously nauseated me became a source of spiritual and physical consolation for me.¹²

It is significant that Francis realized divine grace enabled him to recon-

cile himself with social outcasts.

As we go deeper into the Testament we see that the Gospel was his rule of life: "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."¹³ And when he heard the Gospel on the mission of the Apostles, together with the injunction given to them: "And when you come into the house, salute it, saying: 'Peace to this house,' " he regarded these words, as well as his vocation, as a direct revelation to himself. As long as he lived, he clung to the reality of this revelation, and even at death's door he declared: "The Lord revealed to me this salutation, that we should say: The Lord give you peace."

Francis extended this greeting to everyone he met and asked his brothers to do the same. Many hold that the whole thrust of Francis' life and mission arose from the Gospel and its message of peace.

6. The Main Constitutive Elements of Francis' Peace

IF GANDHI was wedded to non-violence as "an absolute thing that he would rather commit suicide than be deflected from . . .,"¹⁴ Francis was wedded to Lady Poverty to the extent that he wouldn't have liked to see someone poorer than himself. Poverty was for him a means to be at peace with God and his fellow men because human beings are inclined

to defend anything they possess, calling it "ours" or "mine." When the Bishop of Assisi expressed horror at the hard life the little brothers lived at the Portiuncula, without comforts, without possessions, eating anything they could get and sleeping somehow on the ground, Francis replied: "My Lord, if we have possessions we must have weapons to defend ourselves. Hence come quarrels and battles which so often thwart the love of God and of neighbor. Therefore we wish to own nothing in this temporal world."¹⁵

Walter Nigg comments on this lived experience of Saint Francis:

This astonishing utterance betrays an unsurpassable accuracy of aim. A simple man with a shrewd mind saw through a problem that many intellectuals inside and outside the Church do not want to tackle. Saint Francis recognized the connection between Money-Property-Weapons-War, and drew the necessary conclusions. Christendom will never approach the abolition of wars until it thinks through these problems from the Franciscan point of view.¹⁶

Moreover, Francis could not imagine any other form of life in the light of the poverty of Christ. Francis was enraptured by the fact that the Son of God became man for our sake, and he discovered that a life of poverty alone would suffice as a faith response. During a time when the Church and secular society lived and fought for pomp and glory, Francis discovered the Gospel poverty which announced peace to friends and foes alike.

¹⁰Tendulkar, pp. 6-7.

¹¹Quoted by James W. Douglass, *The Non-violent Cross* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1968), p. 71.

¹²*The Plan for Franciscan Living: The Rule and General Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor* (Pulaski, Wis.: English-speaking Conference of Provincials, 1974), p. 33.

¹³Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁴Bose, p. 150.

¹⁵Quoted by Walter Nigg, *Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1972), p. 22.

¹⁶Ibid.



Francis learned his mission of peace to the world not, as Gandhi had, directly from the Sermon on the Mount, but rather from the radicality of the whole Gospel kenosis. Yet both Gandhi and Francis were right in holding poverty as the root of peace, because

self-imposed poverty not only prevents violence, but also makes one completely free to work in the middle of danger. Detachment in poverty is more than a means to prevent one's fellow man from suffering conscious or unconscious violence. It offers the unheard-of chance to stand without fear in a violent world . . . The poor man moves into the center of evil unafraid and unprejudiced. The poor man can enter into this center with non-violence because he has nothing to defend and he can destroy evil at the root.¹⁷

Gandhi, through his ideal of non-violence, poverty, and simplicity, moved into the center of violence in the context of apartheid in Africa, British Colonialism, and the violent and bloody partition of India and Pakistan. Francis courageously walked into the presence of the Sultan to

plead for the Holy Land for the love of God and simply preached the Gospel of peace. At first sight, it would seem that Francis failed terribly in his mission whereas Gandhi succeeded to a certain extent. But Francis' success lay elsewhere.

He helped Christendom to distinguish religious reform from wars like crusades which were intended to conquer Islam by violent means. He announced the peace of the Gospel, which is given from on high, and the victory of Christ which was achieved by his Passion. Francis was to show that the Gospel never needs force to defend the rights of God.¹⁸

One can see qualitative differences, then, in the peace strategy of Francis and Gandhi. Gandhi's peace appeal meant organization of a program of action as in the case of the fight against apartheid, untouchability, and colonialism. Francis' call for peace was personal, Christ-centered, and totally unorganized. This was the case with his peace mission to the Sultan, in the settling of quarrels between the Bishop and the Mayor of Assisi, and in calming the wolf of Gubbio.

Just as Gandhi believed in equality and universal brotherhood—on that account, it will be recalled, renaming the untouchables "Harijans" or "People of God"—so Francis too had sensed that the prevalent social distinctions between noblemen (the *majores*) and the middle-class people (the *minores*) were the cause of many and long-standing feuds. He identi-

fied himself with the *minores* and sought to see his fellow man as a "brother" rather than in a social category. There was no class system in the Indian sense, but Francis wanted to go beyond even such distinctions as there were, which divided and oppressed people. As Jesus saw the person loved by God rather than the sinner, so Francis saw a brother rather than a *maior* or a *minor*.

Francis did not want to *abolish* the class system, which would be again an organizational program; but just as he did not want to see sin in others, so also he did not want to consider social distinctions. On one occasion he courageously corrected the Bishop, and on another, he gave food he had begged to Cardinal Hugolino. It is significant that Pope Paul, in his address to the U.N. on October 8, 1965, alluded to the Franciscan spirit of equality: "The Franciscan spirit of charity enfolds with equal affection all peoples, all the classes, all the nations, no matter how antagonistic they may be towards each other."

Neither did Francis give his brothers any rank or distinction. They had to have only one Master, i.e., Christ; and they were to be brothers of one family.

Again, we have seen that Gandhi did not believe in the salvific reality of the Cross of Christ. Francis, in contrast, uttered the well known and irresistible invocation: "We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ, here and in all your churches in the whole world,

and we bless you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."¹⁹ In the Cross Francis saw God's reconciliation of the world to himself, and all through his life Francis sought to be an instrument of that reconciliation between men and God. That was why in all his peace mission he appealed for peace "for love of God."

Thus Francis' quest for martyrdom should be seen as his utmost desire to be one with Christ in the work of reconciliation among men. This restlessness received divine approval at Alverna with the imprint of Christ crucified.

The Canticle of Brother Sun, which extolled the goodness within the created realities of the world, almost ended up with the power and goodness that is so much alive within man to create peace: "Blessed are they who uphold peace, for by thee, O Most High, they shall be crowned."²⁰ This part of the Canticle evidently echoes with the peace of the Gospel as proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount, in the form of pardoning, bearing infirmity and tribulation, and suffering in the right spirit for the love of God. Francis sought self-reform for peace, and once this is achieved through Gospel conversion, peace in society is also won.

That the Peace Makers of all times must cope with suffering was therefore understood (though with different historical resonances) both by Gandhi and by Francis. The law of non-violence meant from the very

¹⁷Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Pray to Live: The Way to Silence* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Fides Publishers, 1972), p. 35.

¹⁸Giulio Basetti-Sani, O.F.M., "Saint Francis of Assisi," *Concillium* 7:4 (Sep., 1968), p. 38.

¹⁹*Plan for Franciscan Living*, p. 33.

²⁰*Scripta Leonis, Rufini et Angeli Scriptorum S. Francisci*, ed. & tr. R.B. Brooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 169.

outset conscious suffering. In the story of Perfect Joy Francis shows how far we may have to go for the sake of peace.

7. Francis' Religious Inspiration

FRANCIS, commitment to peace was one of the main demands of his evangelical life. Although Gandhi's quest for peace through non-violence took flesh as a concrete form of life, it had certain political overtones. For Francis Jesus and peace were identical, just as for Gandhi God was Truth and Truth was God. But while Francis did not lose sight of the person of Christ in his quest for peace, Truth and God did, at certain moments in Gandhi's life, become an obscure entity. Francis found no other option to reconcile the world and man to God than that of the Gospel.

Francis experienced himself as a sinner redeemed by the grace of God manifested in the poor Christ. And he wanted to live his life in gratitude to this divine magnanimity poured out on his life. He learned from Christ his Master "... who though he was ... God, did not think being God something to be clung to, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant," how to make a gift of life. As it is not necessary for God to cling to his essential nature, Francis discovered that it was not necessary to cling tenaciously to one's own existence, which rebelled against God and one's fellow men. Jesus' life revealed to him man's life with God and with his fellow men.

8. The Significance of Gandhi

"THE SIGNIFICANCE of Gandhi is that more than any other man of our century, except Pope John XXIII on a different level of politics, he has testified to the active presence of God in the world of political man and has done so after the pattern of Jesus."²¹ Poverty, in Gandhi's terms, non-possession, is a necessary aspect of being non-violent in order to bring about peace. Gandhi has lived up to the message of the Sermon on the Mount to such an extent that he puts Christians to shame. From the Sermon Gandhi has elicited non-violent resistance as a real alternative to violent force in our century.

The concept of *Satyagraha* (truth force or love force) is in fact a concrete manner of expressing non-violent resistance, and it remains one of the more effective weapons for oppressed people in their struggle for freedom and justice. This weapon of non-violence has been proved successful in India by Gandhi himself in his struggle for India's independence, by the faithful Gandhian Vinoba Bhave in his Bhoodan Movement (gift of land), by Martin Luther King in his quest to liberate his people from racial violence, and by Danilo Dolci in his non-violent revolution in the land of Palma di Montechiaro, northwest of Sicily.

By perceiving in Christ the perfect example of non-violence, Gandhi has experienced suffering as the lot of the peace makers. This is evident from his spontaneous remarks when he

saw the image of Jesus Crucified in the Vatican:

It was not without a wrench that I could tear myself away from that scene of living tragedy. I saw there at once that nations like individuals could only be made through the agony of the Cross and in no other way. Joy comes not out of affliction of pain on others, but out of pain voluntarily borne by oneself.²²

9. The Inadequacy of the Gandhian Way

THE GANDHIAN ideal of non-violence is not the same as the Franciscan Peace Movement. I say this mainly because, although Gandhi has drawn the content for non-violent resistance from the Sermon on the Mount, he failed to accept Jesus Christ as the incarnate Son of God. Furthermore, Gandhi accepts Jesus only so far as the latter embodied his ideas of non-violence. Gandhi accepted Christ only as a martyr, an embodiment of sacrifice, a divine teacher who is equal to any of the prophets, such as Rama or Mohammad. Gandhi was fascinated by the unique ideology of the Gospels, not by the Person of Christ.

But we cannot ever divorce the Sermon on the Mount from the Person of Jesus. As Joachim Jeremias says,

in every instance where Jesus speaks of insult, persecution, anathema, dishonour to the disciples, he is concerned with outrages that arise because of the discipleship itself. If you are dishonoured as a heretic, says Jesus, then you should not go to law

about it; rather you should show yourselves to be truly my disciples by the way in which you bear the hatred and the insult, overcome the evil, forgive the injustice.²³

This aspect of witness and discipleship is totally absent from Gandhi's non-violence movement.

Christians believe that man cannot on his own win peace. Peace, we see as a divine gift; and man can only co-operate with God in bringing that peace to the world. As a believer Gandhi shares God's peace—but only as a virtue or an ideal. Peace would be but a dream were it not incarnate in Jesus Christ. He is our peace, and in sharing his life we are sharing the peace of God. Such was the peace which Francis imparted as *an instrument of God*. One becomes the instrument of God by the elimination of sin which sets man against man and his God

10. A Non-violent Franciscan Peace Revolution

FRANCIS believed that the way of Christ was an effective instrument of Peace in the world. He never cared to create a public opinion or a program of action. His only program of action was to live the Gospel, to incarnate Christ without any compromise, however "rational" or reasonable. Should a Franciscan program of action be initiated, then it should follow the Gospel way, as an imitation of Christ. Father Anselm W.

Romb rightly says that Francis proposed to verify his charism in a

²¹Douglass, p. 33.

²²Gandhi, *The Message of Christ*, p. 37.

²³Joachim Jeremias, *The Sermon on the Mount* (Bangalore: Facet Books, 1975—originally published in London: Athlone Press, 1961), p. 40.

When peace is person directed, it aims at transformation of the heart. . . .

life style as literally close to Christ's as possible.²⁴

The peace of the Gospel is a gift from heaven and not of man's making—hence it cannot be created politically. Even pacifists despite their noble efforts cannot bring about the "Pax Christi" for peace comes from God. St. Francis possessed this peace. He embodied it in himself, and thus was able to reconcile quarrels between the cities of Italy by his mere presence. He spread around him an atmosphere of peace, for all that he did and said breathed peace.²⁵

This is the peace that we Franciscans have to incarnate in the world today.

Francis deeply understood the dynamism of peace within him and its impact when a person possessed it. Perhaps that was why he counseled his disciples:

While you are proclaiming peace with your lips, be careful to have it even more fully in your heart. Nobody should be roused to wrath or insult on your account. Everyone should rather be moved to peace, good will and mercy as a result of your self-restraint. For we have been called for the purpose of healing the wounded, binding up those who are bruised, reclaiming the erring. Many a person may seem to us a child of the Devil that will one day be a disciple of Christ.²⁶

Here we have in clear terms what Francis meant by peace. Therefore to

be the instrument of God's peace in the world is not only to confine oneself to the field of personal relationships, but to concern oneself also with the problems of human society: hunger, poverty, injustice, cruelty, exploitation, caste-ism, racism, and war.

The peace of Francis was person-directed. It was always aimed at the individual: the leper, the angered father (Peter Bernadone), the Bishop, the Mayor, the Sultan—even the wolf. When peace is person-directed it aims at the transformation of the heart.

Equality and justice are constitutive elements of peace. These two elements are very evident, moreover, in the Franciscan charism which calls us to be *brothers among men*. The Franciscan vocation is accomplished in and through fraternity.

The fraternity is not a reality closed upon itself; it extends itself by its own dynamism to all men, who are for us a manifestation of Christ. We must love and accept with benevolence friends and enemies, whether they come to us or we go to them (1R, 7). We must refuse to class men into ideological categories, to judge them and to condemn them according to a preconceived scheme of thought. In our contacts we should not indulge in

arguments or in proselytism, even if religious; we want to be promoters of peace without any pretention, in a courteous, joyful way (1R, 7), submitted to all the world (1R, 16; 2R, 3; Test.), practising non-resistance if necessary (1R, 14) and convinced that we are only servants of a Word which is greater than we. Our mission is to give witness, by our lucid and benevolent love, to all men we meet, of the irreplaceable value of every person.²⁷

Conclusion

IN THE MIDST of oppressive situations whether cultural or economic or political, the Franciscan is left with no other choice than the Gospel way of peace. Implanting himself in the oppressive socio-economic situation, the Franciscan is called to promote and inspire the quiet revolution of the heart. First of all, we should never be on the oppressive side. We have to appeal to the conscience of the oppressor as Francis appealed to the conscience of the Sultan, the church authorities of the Crusades, and the mute wolf of Gubbio. This appeal should be made with courage, never resorting to any armed rebellion. It has to be done in the name of God and not in the name of an ideology, because an ideology is totally alien to Francis and also, therefore, to us Franciscans. All the same we can have a powerful impact on society and its problems, just as Francis had on those of his day. Father Mario von Galli says: "He [Francis] had a lasting impact on

social and economic life, but he never became a politician."²⁸

Since the Franciscan appeal for peace is thoroughly Gospel-centered, the Franciscan mission towards peace evolves from the Gospel itself. Our mission can be realized only in the Gospel terms of being the leaven, the salt, and the light of our society. Like the leaven we have to transform man into the ways of Christ through our life, words and actions. Just as the salt adds the very essential ingredient for savor in food, so too we Franciscans should be able to add that dimension of faith, hope, and love which makes life meaningful on earth. The light of Christian goodness should be the beacon of hope and trust to draw all men to the joyful vision of God's reconciliation with all men of good will. And the seeds of peace, or better still, the seed of God's Kingdom, will grow under the watchfulness of our heavenly Father.

The reality of Gandhi and his strategy of non-violence points eloquently to the tremendous scope for Franciscan life—in India, in Africa, and everywhere in today's world. Gandhi and Francis are telling us that the living example is far more effective than all theories and sermons. The countries which responded to Gandhi's non-violence will surely find the liberating peace of the Prince of Peace in the Franciscan way of life if we live up to our vocation.

²⁴Cf. Anselm W. Romb, O.F.M.Conv., *The Franciscan Charism* (Paterson: St. Anthony Guild, 1969), p. 53.

²⁵Nigg, p. 28.

²⁶St. Francis, cited in the Legend of the Three Companions, n. 14 (James Meyer, O.F.M., ed. & tr., *The Words of Saint Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1952), p. 172.

²⁷*Eastern Exchange*, n. 16 (Oct., 1972), published by Interregional Secretariat for Franciscanism in Asia (Australia), p. 4.

²⁸Mario von Galli, S.J., *Living Our Future: Francis of Assisi and the Church of Tomorrow* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1970), p. 193.

Franciscan Studies Program

Franciscan Studies Program to Offer History of Franciscan Spirituality

HISTORY OF FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY, a survey of the spirituality deriving from St. Francis and articulated by Franciscan Masters from the 13th Century to modern times, will be offered in the Autumn 1977 Semester. This is in addition to the regular offerings in the Franciscan Studies Program given by The Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University.

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Clara, royal daughter,
Son, spouse burns
In your eyes,
The consummation
Of purest intention.

Clara, rich-poor lady,
Nuptial gift,
Priceless pearl,
Given in first embrace,
Vow of poor lover.

Timothy Johnson, O.F.M.Conv.

Clare's Song of Songs

DAVID PAUL BENZSHAWEL, O.F.M.

IN A TIME when the Church is looking into new media to spread the message of the gospel, I return to an ancient form that is old as man himself: drama. Even the Church at one time used this form for a didactic purpose in the Mystery and Miracle Plays of the Middle Ages. Since it is said that an Order renews itself best by first returning to its earliest sources to recapture the spirit of its founder, I have attempted this with Saint Clare in the form of a play. I wanted to know Clare as well as is historically possible, not only as the "little plant of Saint Francis," but in her own individuality as a person and as one of the first Franciscans. This play is the fruit of my research in attempting to get to know Clare and see her relevance for our time.

The play is actually an adaptation of the Old Testament "Song of Songs," and the script is a compilation from the early sources we have from and about Clare. These sources include Celano, the Bull of Canonization, and the letters, testament, and rule of Saint Clare. In many ways we are not as fortunate as we are with Francis in having numerous early sources available. It is a sad fact that many of the early sources for Clare have been lost through the centuries. Although work is being done on an *Omnibus* for Clare, one has to search through a lot of material just to find usable information. The only untampered writings we have from Clare are the few letters still extant. My main purpose in this play is to portray Clare's espousal to her poor Christ, which continued as a motivating element throughout her life.

I have kept the cast small and envisage the need for little if any scenery. Basically it is a verbal play that is choral in parts. This puts greater emphasis on the role of the actor and his acting. I see the Groom entering as part of the chorus and only later separating himself as the Groom of Clare. The piece can be acted both as a play and as a choral reading. If used as a choral reading, needless to say, it must have *life* to succeed. In both cases the delivery and interpretation of the line are important so that the characters are alive for the audience and believable.

Brother David Paul Benzshawel, O.F.M., of St. Paschal's Friary in Oak Brook, Illinois, holds a degree in drama and is pursuing graduate studies at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University.

Cast

Clare

3 Chorus Members

Groom

Prologue

(Each member of the chorus enters on the beginning of his speech.)

- #1: O admirable and blessed light! Noble in parentage but more noble by grace; virgin in body, most chaste in mind; a youth in age but mature in spirit; steadfast with wisdom and excelling in humility; Clare by name, brighter in life and brightest in character.
- #2: The more we study her earthly work, the greater is her splendor revealed in all her actions. While living she sparkled; after death she radiates light; she shone on earth and now is resplendent in heaven. How great is the power of this light!
- #3: Although she lived in strict monastic circles, yet her light was diffused in the whole world. She restricted herself within, yet she was manifested to those outside. Clare hid herself; and her life is known to all
- #1: Clare was silent, yet the fame of her was everywhere heard.
- #2: Clare remained in her cell, yet she was preaching to the city.
- All: Neither is this to be wondered at, for so shining and brilliant a light could not hide its own brightness, or prevent it from illuminating the house of the Lord.
- #3: This glorious light, clear alike in name and in deed, belonged to a family of no small luster of the city of Assisi. She was of knightly lineage on both sides, her father himself being a knight. Being wealthy, they owned extensive possessions including a castle in the country and a house in Assisi.
- #1: Her mother, Ortolana by name, about to bring forth a fruitful plantlet in the garden of the Church, was herself not wanting in good fruit. For although she bore the yoke of marriage and was bound by household duties, yet she devoted as much of her time as she could to divine service and was unrelenting in works of piety.
- #2: This devout woman crossed the sea with other pilgrims and, having visited those spots which the God-man hallowed by his

sacred footprints, at length returned home with joy. On another occasion she went to pray at St. Michael, and with still greater devotion did she visit the shrines of the Apostles.

#3: What more need be said? By the fruit the tree is known, and the fruit is commendable in virtue of the tree. An abundance of the divine favor preceded in the root so that the wealth of holiness might follow in the branchlet.

#1: When finally Ortolana was with child and the time of her delivery was at hand, as she prayed earnestly before the cross in a certain church, to the end that the Crucified might bring her safely through the perils of childbirth, she heard a voice saying to her:

All: Fear not, woman; for you shall in safety bring forth a light, which will illumine the world more clearly.

#2: Taught by this oracle, Ortolana directed that the new-born infant, when born again in holy Baptism, be named Clare in the hope that the brightness of the promised light might in some way be verified after the good pleasure of the divine Will.

#3: Early in her life Clare learned with a docile heart, the rudiments of faith from her mother's lips. In this way, mercy growing up with her, she showed a tender heart, commiserating the miseries of the miserable.

#1: Gladly would she stretch out her hands to the poor, and from the abundance of her house she supplied the wants of many.

#2: She deprived her own body of delicacies and, secretly sending them out by messengers, relieved the hunger of the orphans.

#3: Clare grew to love the practice of holy prayer, and so often experienced its sweetness, that little by little she accustomed herself to a life of seclusion.

#1: When, therefore, Clare began to taste the first sweetness of divine Love, she saw that the fleeting image of worldly beauty was to be spurned.

#2: And, taught by the unction of the spirit, she valued the empty things of the world according to their worthlessness.

#3: Hidden under her soft and costly garments she would wear a little hairshirt, thus dressing with the world outwardly while putting on Christ inwardly.

All: But when at length her family wished Clare to make a noble alliance, she in no way acquiesced, but feigning to postpone earthly espousals, she commended her virginity to God.

#1: Such were the manifestations of Clare's virtues in her paternal home

#2: such the first fruits of the spirit . . .

#3: such the preludes of her holiness.

#1: All unknown to herself, Clare began to be praised by her neighbors, and, the fame of her secret acts being published, the report of her goodness was noised among the people.

#2: Blessed Francis, struck by the fair fame of so favored a maiden, was not less wishful to see her and converse with her, exhorting her to contempt for the world, showing her in vivid words the bareness of earthly hopes and the deceitfulness of earthly beauty. He instilled into her ears the sweet espousals of Christ, persuading her to dedicate herself wholly to that Blessed Spouse who out of love became man.

#3: She listened willingly to his holy words, for already did she desire to hold the world and all earthly goods in contempt and to serve God alone in voluntary poverty.

All: So fervent was this desire, that she sold all she possessed of value and distributed it in alms to the poor, in homage to her poor espoused Christ.

(Members of the chorus exeunt, as Clare enters and begins speech.)

Act One

Clare: O sing to Him a new song,
Sing to the Lord, all the earth;
For the Lord is my strength and my praise,
And He is become my salvation.
With all my being I seek to embrace Him . . .
My poor Christ, my Lord and my King!
O let my heart be warmed by the fervor of His love . . .
Draw me to yourself, O Lord, and I will strive unceasingly
In the delicate fragrance of your perfume.
Your love is more delightful than wine,
Your name is an oil poured out,
And that is why the maidens love you, O celestial Bridegroom.
Bring me into your house where your right hand will be held out
to me
And I shall receive your kisses.
You alone will be my joy and gladness,
I praise your love above wine;
How right it is to love you!

Groom: *(from offstage)* Good people, come and help me in the work on this convent, for here there will dwell devout women, and our

heavenly Father shall be glorified throughout the length and breadth of His Church by the sweet odour of their conversion.

#1: *(enter while saying)* Go forward and preach the message that the kingdom of God is at hand. Take nothing for your journey, for freely you have received, so freely give, for a laborer must earn his living.

#2: *(enter while saying)* If you will be perfect, go and sell what you have, and give it to the poor . . .

#3: *(enter while saying)* You cannot serve God and Mammon, for either you will love the one and hate the other, or serve one and despise the other.

Groom: *(enter while saying)* If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny his very self and take up his cross and follow me, for if you lose your life for my sake, you will gain it.

Clare: Christ, my Lord, save me; in you, O Lord, have I hoped,
Let me be free from this confusion.
Deliver me in your justice and rescue me;
Incline your ear to me and save me.
The kingdom of heaven is reserved for the poor
Since the love of earthly riches causes us to lose
The fruits of divine Love.
I have been called to be his pattern and mirror;
Therefore I am under extreme obligation to bless and praise him,
To fortify myself increasingly in him;
To despise the world with all its pomps and vanities;
Freely to serve the Highest in abject poverty
In order that my soul may be free for His service of good.

#1: How narrow is the path that leads to this life!

#2: And the door which leads to it is equally narrow!

#3: Only a few who walk in this path enter by this door!

Groom: And even among those who follow this way for a moment,
O how few are those who persevere therein!

#1: Happy are those to whom it is given to walk in it, and
to persevere until the end.

#2: You who have entered into the way of the Lord: take heed never
to depart from it by ignorance or negligence . . .

#3: or in any way by your own fault; for this would be to inflict a
great injury upon so great a Lord, upon His virgin Mother, upon
Blessed Francis . . .

Groom: Upon all the Church triumphant and upon the Church militant,
may the Lord himself, who gave you the gift to begin this work,
also increase, enrich, and give perseverance until the end.

Clare: May the Lord show his face to me and have mercy on me
And give me his peace!
Among all the benefits that I have received,
And receive each day from the liberality
Of the Father of all mercies.
And for which he deserves incessant praise,
The chief is the benefit of a vocation.
I am most indebted to Him for it is greatest
And most perfect of all benefits!
God has convinced me that the soul of a faithful man
Is greater than the heavens,
For while all other creatures are incapable of containing their
Creator,
One single faithful soul can be his throne and dwelling.
Only those who despise all riches of the world will be the dwell-
ing place of the Lord in all his plenitude,
While earthly kings and queens,
Who in their pride would exalt themselves
Until their head is lost in the clouds of heaven
Will perish on the dung heap.

#1: Your bridegroom is the most beautiful of the children of men,
yet for your salvation He was disfigured beyond recognition; His
body was torn by flagellation, and He died on the cross amidst the
most intense sufferings.

#2: Think on this, O illustrious Queen: As a poor virgin hold fast to
Christ the poor one; tell yourself that it was for your sake that
He became abject and despised, and follow Him gladly, consenting
for His love to be yourself despised in the eyes of men.

#3: Beware of all pride, vainglory, envy, covetousness, care, and soli-
citude for earthly things. Rather be humble, prayerful, pure in
heart, and patient in time of sickness and adversity . . .

Groom: for the Lord says: "Blessed are they that suffer perse-
cution, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and also,
"You shall be hated of all men for my name's sake, but he that
shall persevere till the end, he shall be saved."

Clare: The Son of God has made himself my way!
What a great and happy exchange which consists
In abandoning the good things of earth
For those of eternity—
To relinquish one and to receive a hundred,
And to possess a joy which can never end.
In refusing the hand of royalty
And casting away all the pomps of the world,
I embrace holy love in blessed poverty,

And in spirit of deep humility
 I set out to walk in the footsteps of Jesus,
 Whose bride I am.
 Tell me, then, you whom my heart loves:
 Where will you lead your flock to graze,
 Where will you rest at noon?
 That I may no more wander like a vagabond,
 But be one of the flock of your companions.

Chorus: If you do not know this, O illustrious Queen,
 follow the tracks of the flock, and take yourself to graze close
 by the shepherd's tent.

Clare: I hear my Beloved.
 See how he comes leaping on the mountains,
 Bounding over the hills.
 My Beloved is like a gazelle,
 Like a young stag.
 See where he stands behind our wall.
 He looks in at the window,
 He peers through the lattice.

Groom: Come, then, my love, my lovely one, come.
 For see, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone.
 The season of glad songs has come, the cooing of the turtledove
 is heard in our land.
 Come, then, my love, my lovely one, come.
 My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock, in the coverts of the
 cliff,
 Show me your face, let me hear your voice;
 For your voice is sweet, and your face is beautiful!

Chorus: O Queen and bride of Jesus Christ, look each day into the mirror
 which reflects His eternal light;

#1: more and more you will see the reflection of your own face;

#2: adorn your house within and without with every flower of virtue,

#3: and put on the garment due to the daughter and bride of
 the King of Kings.

Chorus: Give to Him what you have vowed to Him. Give it with scrupulous
 care. He will know how to repay your sacrifices.

#1: Keep faithful to your divine Bridegroom to whom you have
 consecrated yourself,

#2: and be sure that your efforts will be rewarded with the crown of
 immortality. The period of trial is short; that of the reward,
 unending.

#3: With the whole strength of your soul, love Him who is infinitely

adorable. Let the thought of Him be always in your mind.

Chorus: Watch and pray unceasingly, and apply all your strength to finish
 the good work which you have begun so well.

Act Two

Clare: My Beloved is mine and I am his.
 He pastures his flock among the lilies.
 Before the dawn-wind rises,
 before the shadows flee,
 return! Be, my Beloved,
 like a gazelle, a young stag,
 on the mountains of the covenant.
 On my bed, at night, I sought him
 whom my heart loves.
 I sought him but did not find him.
 So I will rise and go through the city;
 in the streets and the squares
 I will seek him whom my heart loves
 I sought but did not find him.
 The watchmen came upon me
 on their rounds in the city;
 "Have you seen him whom my heart loves?"

#1: And who is this you are seeking . . .

#2: Tell us his name . . .

#3: What does he look like . . .

Chorus: Speak to us in our own language,
 so that we can understand you!

Clare: What can I say?
 Human language must be silent,
 for no words will ever express
 the love I possess . . .
 love for which the Savior
 consented to suffer so grievously
 for our redemption.
 That ineffable love which
 flung the Savior onto the wood
 of the cross, there to die
 an infamous death.
 For He deserves all the love of my heart;
 He has given himself entirely
 for love without reserve.

Scarcely had I passed them,
than I found Him whom my heart loves.
I held him fast, nor would I let him go
till I had brought him into my mother's house,
into the room of her who conceived me.

Groom: I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles, by
the hinds of the field, not to stir my love, nor rouse it,
until it pleases to awake.

Clare: O blessed poverty who gives eternal riches
to those who love and embrace her!
O holy poverty, it is enough to desire you
and to share in you, for God has promised the
Kingdom of heaven, eternal glory, and a life
of rest and blessedness!
O beloved poverty, whom my Lord Jesus Christ
found worthy of his love—he to whom heaven and
earth, and all creation are eternally subject.

Groom: Fear not, woman, for I will preserve the treasure
of your virginity always intact and unspotted,
for my love will be the sure protection of your chastity,
my touch will purify you more and more, and possessing me,
you will always remain a virgin!

Clare: I exult with spiritual delight!
For having preferred the contempt of the world to its honors,
and poverty to the riches that perish . . .

Groom: In heaven you are gaining an ample recompense,
and these treasures are safe from rust that corrupts
and the moths that devour;
and thieves do not break through and steal.

Clare: Nor shall I appropriate anything for myself;
but as a pilgrim and stranger
shall I dwell on the face of the earth,
gathering alms with confidence,
and be content to serve you, my Lord,
in poverty and humility.
Nor shall I be ashamed to live thus,
since for our sake
you made yourself poor in this world,
although you are rich, in order that by your poverty
we might become rich.

Groom: You are now bound to me in love,
for I adorn your breast with precious stones
and pierce your ears with rings of inestimable value,

I give you a girdle of finest gold and set on your head
a golden crown bearing the arms of sanctity.

Clare: Your power surpasses any earthly might,
your beauty is incomparable,
there is no love like yours.
Though I am feeble and fragile in body . . .
no privation or poverty, travail, tribulation,
or contempt of this world can turn me away.
Rather by your love and grace
they will all seem an ineffable delight.

Groom: How beautiful you are, my love, how beautiful you are!
Your eyes are doves . . . your face oval,
your forehead spacious, your coloring dazzling,
and your hair bright as the sun.
A celestial smile plays in your eyes and round your mouth.

Clare: How beautiful and worthy are you, my Lord;
When so great a Lord descended into the womb of a virgin,
you appeared to the world as one despised and needy and poor.
And this you did that man, who is destitute, so indigent,
so famished for celestial food, might become rich in the
Kingdom prepared for him above.
What beauty it must have been to see you lying in the manger
in the midst of the utmost poverty and wrapped in miserable
clothes.

O admirable humility! O stupefying poverty!
The King of angels, the Savior of heaven and earth,
lying in a poor manger!

Groom: Perchance then your heart will burn with the desire
to imitate me and to suffer with me.
If you also suffer, you will be glorified with me;
if you weep with me, you will also rejoice;
if you remain on the cross with me, you will dwell
with me in heaven, in the light of the saints.
Your name will be written in the book of life
for ever and ever; you will have exchanged the perish-
able goods of this world with those that are eternal,
and together we will live in unending joy and happiness.

Clare: What solicitude, what dedication of body and soul
is needed to obey all your wishes, in order to return
the talents received from you with increase.
I desire only to contemplate you more and more, my Lord,
to have no other desire than to imitate you and to be
your poor handmaid embracing her poor Christ.
In you, I can do all things, for you are my strength.

He has taken me into his banquet hall, and the banner
he raises over me is love. Feed me with your raisin cakes,
restore me with your apples, for I am sick with love.
His left arm is always under my head, and his right embraces me.

Groom: You are wholly beautiful, my love, and without a blemish.
Come, my promised bride—you ravish my heart
with a single one of your glances. What spells lie in your love!
You are my garden enclosed, my sister, my promised bride;
a garden enclosed, a sealed fountain that makes the gardens
fertile; a well of living water that streams forth from you—

Clare: Awake, north wind, Come, wind of the south!
Breathe over my garden to spread its sweet smell around.
Let my Beloved come always into his garden, and let me
taste its rarest fruits.

Groom: I come into my garden, my sister, my promised bride.
I gather my fruits, I eat my honey, I drink my wine.
Eat, friend, and drink with me . . .
Drink deeply, my dearest friend.
I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, not to stir my love,
nor rouse it, until it pleases to awake.

Act Three

Clare: I sleep in comfort, by my heart is always awake.
I hear my Beloved constantly knocking . . .

Groom: Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one,
for my head is covered with dew, my locks with the drops of
the night.

Clare: I have taken off my tunic; am I to put it on again?
My Beloved thrusts his hand through the hole in the door;
and I tremble to the core of my being.
Then I rose, to open to my Beloved, but he had turned his
back and gone! My soul failed at his flight.
I sought him but I did not find him.
I called to him but he did not answer.
The watchmen came upon me as they made their rounds in the
city.

They beat me, they wounded me, they took away my cloak,
they who guard the ramparts.

I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, if you should find
my Beloved, what must you tell him? That I am sick with love.

Chorus: What makes your Beloved better than other lovers,

O loveliest of women?

What makes your Beloved better than other lovers,
to give us a charge like this?

Clare: He is a great Lord . . . he made himself poor, although he
was rich, in order that by his poverty we might become rich
indeed.

For love . . . he was poor in the manger, poor during his life,
becoming the least of men: despised, struck, scourged with blows
of a whip, dying on the cross amidst the cruelest of pains.
Truly a great Lord, worthy of all praise, love, and honor . . .
the most beautiful of all the children of men:
such is my Beloved, such is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

Chorus: Where did your Beloved go, O loveliest of women?
Which way did your Beloved turn, that we may help you to
look for him?

Clare: Back to his mountain of spices . . . his garden where he shepherds
the flocks . . . Although alone, I am still my Beloved's and
my Beloved is mine.

Groom: Fear not, my lovely one . . . have faith in me!
You are beautiful, my love, as fair as Jerusalem.
Turn not your eyes away, for they hold me captive.
My dove, you are unique, mine, unique and perfect.
You are the darling of your mother, the favorite of the
one who bore you. The maidens look on you and proclaim you
blessed. All peoples sing your praises!

Chorus: Who is this arising like the dawn, fair as the moon,
resplendent as the sun? Return, return, O illustrious Queen,
Return, return, that we may gaze on you.

Clare: I am my Beloved's and his desire is for me.
Come, come, my Beloved, let us go into the fields
and make your earth fertile to your presence again.
I will always give you the gift of my love . . .
I would kiss you outdoors, without being ashamed,
for your left arm is under my head, and your right embraces me.

Groom: I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, not to stir my love nor
rouse it, until it pleases to awake.

Chorus: Who is this coming up from the desert leaning on her Beloved?

Clare: You have awakened me under the tree where my mother
conceived me, there where she gave birth. Beloved . . . Seal
Seal my heart to yours. For love is strong as Death . . .
love which no flood can quench nor torrents drown. Were a man
to offer all the wealth of his house to buy love, contempt

is all he would purchase; for your love is your gift, which only you can awake and stir in any soul.

Groom: Let us haste away, Beloved. Now be like a gazelle, a young stag, on the spicy mountains.

Epilogue

#1: The solemnity of Palm Sunday was drawing nigh, when the girl with great fervor betook herself to the man of God for counsel as to her retreat from the world—as to what was to be done, and how she was to do it.

#2: Father Francis ordained that on the feast day Clare, dressed out and adorned, should come to the blessing of the palms with the rest of the people, and that on the following night she was to escape to the freedom she sought.

#3: When Sunday had come, the girl, radiant in festive array among the crowd of women, entered the church with the others. The following night Clare, with a trusty companion, began her longed-for flight.

#1: But not wishing to leave by the usual door, she broke open, with a strength that astonished herself, through a wall firmed up by a mass of beams and stones. Thus, leaving behind her home, city, and kindred, Clare hastened to St. Mary of the Portiuncula, where the friars who were keeping vigil at the little altar with lighted torches received the virgin Clare.

#2: Immediately, casting aside the sordidness of Babylon, she there gave a bill of divorce to the world, and forsook her various ornaments, her hair being shorn at the hands of the friars. This is that place in which the new militia of the poor, under the leadership of Francis, took on its happy beginnings.

#3: She had chosen, with all enthusiasm of spirit and heart, most holy poverty, and she took a spouse of nobler rank than her family could have offered—our Lord Jesus Christ.

#1: May we too possess her untainted love of poverty, the virtue that was so close to her heart.

#2: Her love for it was so burning that she embraced it ever more ardently.

#3: And for nothing in the world would she ever loosen her hold upon her Beloved . . . poverty.

Chorus: Sing to him, all you peoples, a new song,
Enliven the earth with his praises,

For the Lord is our strength,
and he is our salvation.
By losing her life,
Clare gained eternal life,
together with her poor Christ.

Finis

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Models of the Church and Their Effect on Lay Spirituality

ROBERT E. DONOVAN, O.F.M.

ANY DEVELOPMENT in regard to the position of the layman or lay spirituality in Roman Catholicism depends upon (1) the self-understanding of the Community (Church) as community (i.e., an ecclesiology), and (2) following from this, the understanding of the clerical and religious states vis-à-vis the lay state.

In interpreting her mystery to herself the Church has used and is using many images and models (hierarchical society, Mystical Body, etc.), each of which influences her self-understanding and thus the theology of the laity. It is easy to see that the position of a part (the laity) depends upon one's global view of the whole (the Church). As Yves Congar points out, "at bottom, there can be only one sound and sufficient theology of the laity and that is a 'total ecclesiology.'"¹ To be fully true to the Church's nature as mystery, all ecclesiologies should include as many models and images as possible.² Unfortunately, this is not usually the case. More frequently we find one or another image stressed to

the neglect of others. For example, when describing the Church as a hierarchical society it would be almost necessary to speak about the lay state only over against the clerical and religious states.

I. The "People of God" Image

THE MOST marked attempt to reintroduce other models into the Church's self-understanding can be seen in the work of Vatican II. Aware that no development of any kind could take place in the Church without a newly formed self-analysis, the Council fathers spent a great deal of time and effort hammering out such an ecclesiology. Convinced that they should complete the work done at Vatican I, they presented the Church and the world with an ecclesiology that was complete. No longer wary of criticism, the fathers, in *Lumen Gentium*, placed the reality of the Church squarely in the realm of mystery. Unlike the fathers at Vatican I, they saw the Church more as "a mysterious and theological reality

than a merely sociological and juridical entity."³ Tracing this theme through the varied symbols and images (such as Bride of Christ, vineyard, vine and branches, etc.) used to express the self-awareness of the Church, the Fathers seized upon the model "People of God" as being most expressive of how they see, and invite all the world to see, the results of the Church today. In the model which traces the development of the Church from its pre-existence in the covenant community of Israel through its present existence as the "New People of God" to its future fulfillment in the Parousia, the emphasis is upon Church as community.

At all times and among every people, God has given welcome to whosoever fears him and does what is right (cf. Acts 10:35). It has pleased God, however, to make men holy and save them *not merely as individuals without any mutual bonds, but by making them into a single people which acknowledges him in holiness*. He therefore chose the race of Israel as a people unto himself. With it he set up a covenant . . . All these things, however, were done by way of preparation and as a figure of that new and perfect covenant . . . Christ instituted this new covenant . . . in his blood (cf. 1 Cor. 11:25), by calling together a people made up of Jew and Gentile, making them into one, not according to the flesh, but in the Spirit . . . That messianic people has for its head Christ . . . Its law is the *new commandment of love* as Christ loved us (cf. Jn. 13:34). Its goal is the Kingdom of God . . . So it is that this

messianic people . . . is . . . a lasting and sure seed of unity, hope, and salvation for the whole human race.⁴

By means of this model, the Church can no longer be viewed in any triumphalist way. She is the pilgrim and human Church ever in need of a renewal and reform until her mission, seen in the most universal terms, has been accomplished. To accomplish it she must always exhibit herself as a community, joining all those elected together by mutual bonds. The hierarchy-laity differentiation, declared to be of divine origin, is not to be dissolved, but is to be seen in a new light, with a new emphasis.

Secondly, continuing the Christocentric theme of *Lumen Gentium*, the fathers of Vatican II have chosen the "People of God" model to reinforce the intimate connection between Christ and the people and the consequent union among the people. Jesus, as the "great High Priest" who became through his death and resurrection the guarantee and mediator of the New Covenant, joins together at one and the same time man with God (through the forgiveness of sins) and man with man (through the bond of love). This is not a static but a dynamic joining; it is a joining that must be seen in the eschatological perspective of "the already but not yet." They are united; they must be united. And so, to continue the mediatorship of

¹Yves Congar, *Lay People in the Church*, trans. by D. Attwater (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1957), p. xxviii.

²For a more complete study of this see Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974).

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³Eugene Fairweather, "The Church," in *The Second Vatican Council: Studies by Eight Anglican Observers*, ed. by Bernard C. Pawley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 60. For an example of this in the text, see *Lumen Gentium* in Walter Abbot, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild Press, 1966), p. 21. All future quotations from this document shall be from this edition.

⁴*Lumen Gentium*, §9 (pp. 25-26), emphasis added.

Christ, "the baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are consecrated into a spiritual house and a holy priesthood."⁵ Working and praying, this people awaits the day when "the entire world may become the people of God."⁶

The work of this new "People of God" is that of giving witness to the very reality they constitute, i.e., the effective presence of the reign of God. They dispense this public grace by being a community. There is no place here for individualism. Called not as individuals, but as "a single people," no one person or group is the Church, but all existing together, bound to one another by a mutual need. This very principle was recognized when the fathers decided to speak of "People of God" not as referring simply to the laity but to all "the faithful, from the bishops to the simplest of Christians, who are called to share in the history of salvation."⁷ This principle was also emphasized by putting this chapter before that on the hierarchy, thus describing first what all hold in common. In this way the Council fathers made sure that no one should fail to realize the importance of the laity's participation in the priesthood of Christ.

Indeed, while explaining that "the common priesthood of the faithful" and "the ministerial or hierarchical

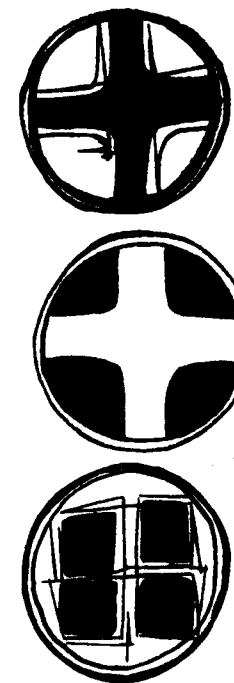
priesthood" are not to be confused, the document maintains they are to be seen as "interrelated." Commenting on this text, Aloys Grillmeier points out that, while they are different, "the common and the special priesthood are ordained to each other, by virtue of their common participation in the priesthood of Christ."⁸ While not demeaning this hierarchical priesthood, *Lumen Gentium* situates it squarely within the "People of God." It is not to be seen as something separate from or opposed to the "People of God," but as something at the service of all of God's people. Going on, the Council fathers also recognize the laity's participation in Christ's prophetic office. This participation, Eugene Fairweather rightly claims, the laity practices "not only by its witness in life and worship, but also in its common proclamation of the one faith (especially in the family, which the fathers call the domestic Church), which is one manifestation, at any rate, of the Church's infallibility."⁹ Brief mention is also made of the laity's participation in the kingship of Christ.

Throughout this treatment of the close relationship of hierarchy and laity, the fathers, without overlooking the special authority of the hierarchy, emphasize the charismatic gifts that the Spirit freely distributes "among the faithful of every rank."

"By these gifts," the document maintains, "He makes them [the faithful] fit and ready to undertake the various tasks or offices advantageous for the renewal and upbuilding of the Church."¹⁰

This just reinforces, once again, the stress on unity. In a Church which is no longer seen as primarily a hierarchical society of unequals but a community, what becomes important are not those things which tend to separate the parts, but those which tend to unite them. Thus the emphasis on the charisms in which all share, albeit some institutionally and governmentally, and the emphasis, to be found more fully detailed in chapter three of *Lumen Gentium*, that "the sublimity of hierarchical functions consists in their ordination to service,"¹¹ again show the preoccupation of the fathers with the themes of equality and service.

Moreover, by placing the chapter on the Universal Call to Holiness before that on Religious, the Council fathers once again emphasize what the whole Church shares in common before treating its particularities. Through their insistence that "it is evident to everyone that all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank and status are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity,"¹² the Council fathers have put to rest the notion that only a chosen few are called to perfection. While not demeaning the work of religious, *Lumen Gentium* is quick



to point out that "profession of the evangelical counsels" is urged on all within the Church. So, although the religious state belongs inseparably to the life of the Church, it should be seen neither as an intermediate stage "between the clerical and lay states" nor as above both.¹³ The distinction between those in the religious state and the laity or diocesan clergy is based, therefore, "on a special and more charismatic type of call." So, "religious as such possess no authority in the Church. They have another task which is of supreme importance,"¹⁴ and they are to pursue

⁵*Lumen Gentium*, §10 (p. 27).

⁶*Lumen Gentium*, §17 (p. 37).

⁷Gerard Philips, "History of the Constitution *Lumen Gentium*," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, ed. by Herbert Vorgrimler (5 vols.; New York: Herder & Herder, 1967), I, 128. Hereafter referred to as *Commentary*.

⁸Aloys Grillmeier, "Chapter II, *Lumen Gentium*," in *Commentary*, I, 158.

⁹Fairweather, "The Church," p. 67.

¹⁰*Lumen Gentium*, §12 (p. 30).

¹¹Congar, "The People of God," p. 200.

¹²*Lumen Gentium*, §40 (p. 67).

¹³*Lumen Gentium* §§43-44 (pp. 74-75).

¹⁴Philips, "History," pp. 123-24.

their task as "married couples and Christian parents should follow their own proper path to holiness."¹⁵

It must be obvious from what has been presented thus far that Vatican II was determined, especially in and through the model of the "People of God," to expand the narrow, juridical, and clerical understanding of the Church. Urged on by the laity's thirst for first class citizenship, they began to meet that demand. In their overall emphasis on an expansive view of the whole Church, they are recognizing that the laity as well as the hierarchy are the Church, the "People of God."

Finally, through this model, *Lumen Gentium* expands in a truly catholic manner the notion of the Church as community, to include the whole family of man. Improving on the thought of *Mystici Corporis* (Pius XII), the Council fathers maintain that "the unique Church of Christ... subsists in the Catholic Church."¹⁶ All those who are joined together in the visible community ruled by the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops "are fully incorporated into the society of the Church," and, "possessing the Spirit of Christ, accept her entire system and all the means of salvation given to her."¹⁷ The boundaries of the People of God do not, however, stop there. They are also "linked with those who, being baptized, are honored with the name of Christian," and are "related in various ways to those who have

not yet received the gospel."¹⁸ No longer in a polemical atmosphere, but with mutual respect and in dialogue, the people of God are reminded of its task, to be for each and all the visible sacrament of the saving unity of Christ.

The non-ecumenical understanding of the Church is thus expanded. All the disciples of Christ are called upon to spread the faith, not by deprecating any cultural or religious practice, but by healing, ennobling, and perfecting it unto the glory of God.¹⁹ They are to do this as the People of God, i.e., the historic and visible form which God's will for the salvation of man takes. "It is," as Yves Congar indicates, "the People of God that transmits through the world the offer of grace and of the Covenant; it is the community of Christians united to their pastors that is the sign and the instrument of the 'dialogue of salvation.'"²⁰ The task of the whole Church, then, is simply to be, clergy and laity, the People of God.

Through this model, then, the fathers have, first of all, emphasized the pilgrim nature of the Church; secondly, they have taken pains to bring out the Church's essentially communal nature; and finally, they have hoped to set the Church clearly on an ecumenical path. Although this model is probably the most important and the most widely used by the Council, the model of the Church as Mystical Body—or just

The laity, as well as the hierarchy, are the Church, The "People of God."

"Body"—is also prominent. Once again, this model is presented in a much more expansive, mysterious, sacramental, participatory, and less juridical way than it had been in *Mystici Corporis*. As a corollary to "People of God," the Mystical Body image is used to emphasize the same points. It, like the "People of God," is all inclusive. "The whole human race," the *Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church* states, is to "coalesce into the one body of Christ."²¹ Further, the hierarchy, laity, and religious are all called to a ministry of service in building up Christ's Body. This is to be accomplished by being a body. As recipients of the various gifts of ministry that Christ distributes to his Body, that body is called to "serve each other unto salvation, so that, carrying out the truth in love, [they] may through all things grow up into him who is [their] head."²²

The only note not totally in keeping with this new self-understanding of the Church is the frequent use of the "Mother Church" model. Though it is often used in the universal sense of Mother of all mankind, it seems in other instances to have the narrower meaning of hierarchical society. For example,

the Church can be called a mother, *Lumen Gentium* maintains, because "by her preaching and by baptism she brings forth to a new and immortal life children who are conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God."²³ Here "Mother Church" is almost identified with the hierarchy in a manner reminiscent of the hierarchical model of Vatican I.

With this rare exception, then, the "People of God" model and its corollary, the Mystical Body, definitely indicate a development in the Church's self-awareness that has affected and will continue to affect the layman's self-awareness and spirituality. The next question is now to flesh out this communal and participatory model of the "People of God." The laity together with the religious and the clergy are looking for ways to enhance the community aspect of the Church's structure so that one could describe the Church no longer "as a pyramid where the laity serve as a base whose sole purpose is to support the hierarchical and sacerdotal summits... [but] like a plant whose seed, embedded in the soil, produces not only the stem and stalk of jurisdiction and of orders, but also the overflowing life which is the flower of the plant, namely the faithful laity."²⁴

¹⁵*Lumen Gentium*, §41 (p. 69).

¹⁶*Lumen Gentium*, §8 (pp. 22-23).

¹⁷*Lumen Gentium*, §14 (p. 33).

¹⁸*Lumen Gentium* §15 (pp. 33-34).

¹⁹*Lumen Gentium* §17 (p. 36).

²⁰Congar, "The People of God," p. 205.

²¹*Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church*, §7 (p. 594).

²²*Lumen Gentium*, §7 (p. 21).

²³*Lumen Gentium* §64 (p. 93).

²⁴Ephram McDonald, "The Challenge to Change: The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity," *At-One-Ment* 9 (1967)..

II. A Teilhardian Model for Church as Community

TO ACHIEVE this end a new model of the Church as community might be helpful. For this new picture we might use some of the ideas and images of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Teilhard has left no systematic treatment of the nature of the Church, but from the general tenor of his Christology and from scattered remarks, it is possible to arrive at an idea of what he thought. For him, the Church is a phylum of Love whose axis is Rome. Historically, stemming from the Man Jesus, this phylum has appeared and grown within the Noosphere. It is not an accessory or divergent shoot but, in its trend toward a synthesis based on Love, it takes on all the properties of the leading shoot of biogenesis (or, if you will, of socialization). Moreover, it definitely exhibits the fact that it is in actual relationship with Christ, the Universal Center.²⁵ Indeed, for Teilhard the whole of the Christian Phenomenon can be summed up by an understanding of the meaning of Love:

Christ's essential message is wholly contained in the proclamation of a divine Fatherhood: put another way,

in the assertion that God, personal Being, is to man the term of a personal union. . . . The gift of the heart instead of the prostration of the body, communion transcending sacrifice, and God-Love finally attained only through Love; therein lie the psychological revelation and the secret of Christian Love.²⁶

It is within the Christian phylum, moreover, that a genuine universal (person-total) Love "has not only been conceived and preached, but has also been shown to be psychologically possible and operative in practice."²⁷

Thus it is in this phylum that the operation of personalization finds its axis. To use another image, it is an interior cone within the cone of evolution. As such it does not act as a parasitic organism but rather as a catalytic agent spreading out, impregnating and sustaining gradually the growing Mass of the world.²⁸ So we can say with Teilhard that Christ (the revelation of Love) grows within mankind through the Church.²⁹ What this means within the Teilhardian system, is that the attraction of Christ (Love-Charity), although active in the whole world, is found "revealed" in its fullness (Charity or Super-charity) in the collective reality, the Phylum of

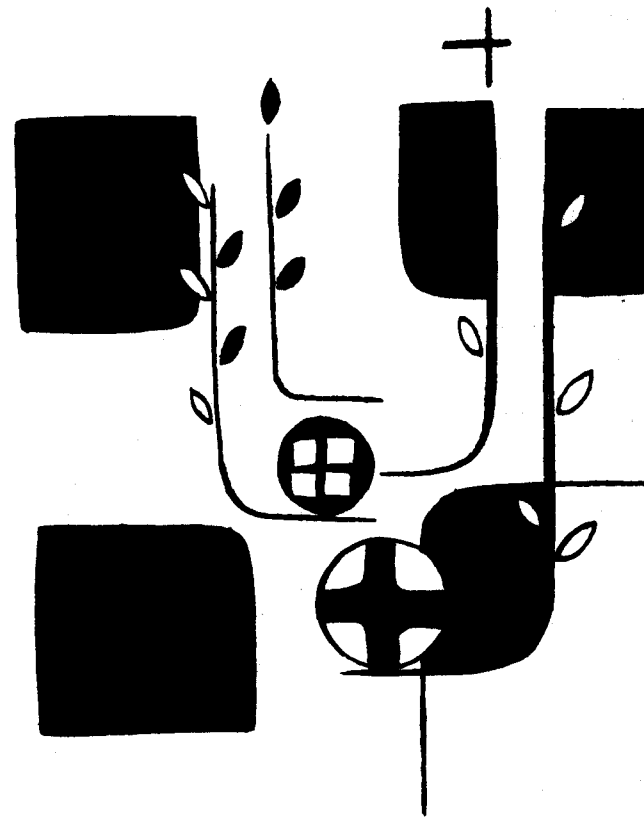
²⁵For the use of "Phylum of Love," see Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, "L'énergie humaine," in *Energie humaine* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1962), p. 195; *The Phenomenon of Man*, pp. 295-96, 298; "Turmoil or Genesis?" in *The Future of Man*, p. 215; "Esquisse d'une dialectique de l'esprit," in *L'activation de l'énergie* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1963), p. 154. For Rome as axis see Teilhard, "Letter of October 7, 1948," in *Letters from a Traveller* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 299. For a more complete treatment, see Christopher Mooney, *Teilhard and the Mystery of Christ* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 148-88.

²⁷Teilhard, "L'énergie humaine," pp. 193-94.

²⁸Teilhard, *The Phenomenon of Man*, pp. 295-96.

²⁹Teilhard, "Esquisse d'une dialectique," p. 151.

³⁰Teilhard, "Social Heredity and Progress," in *The Future of Man*, p. 34.



Love, the Church. If the world can be viewed as the process of Christ-in-genesis, so much more must this be true of the Church, which is the leading shoot of this process.

Within the Phylum of Love, then, Christ is (if I may use the term) more present as the Physical and Personal Center of the Universe. To be more specific, within the Phylum of Love one does not have to wait until death to achieve union. By the very fact that Love is more intensely

active in this inner cone, union is already achieved. Indeed, Teilhard claims that prior to death, by grace and the sacraments, Christians are already transferred into union with the Body of the Risen Christ (as a sort of foretaste of the fuller union at death).³⁰

United thus with the Physical and Personal Center of the Universe, it is the specific task of this phylum to be the forerunner in "building up the Body." Since the phylum by

³⁰Teilhard, "Forma Christi," in *Ecrits du temps de la guerre* (Paris: Grasset, 1965), p. 353.

definition is a collective and dynamic reality, it is the task of all. All the members of this Phylum of Love, this inner cone, must cooperate to move the Christ-in-genesis forward. To do this they must utilize the spiritual energy radiating from Christ—that of uniting the “forward” faith of humanity, in the immanent perfectibility of a world in evolution, with the “upward” faith of the Christian in the transcendent acts of a personal God.³¹ The laity, because of their secular ambience, should be in the forefront.

This is not to imply that to be a true Christian one must be a pioneer in research, but it does mean that one must be a pioneer in Love (Charity), which is the Teilhardian key to the future personalization of the world. For “Charity urges us to build a better world here on earth and to be in the first ranks of every campaign for the full development of mankind.”³² Indeed, for Teilhard the only correct measurement of the movement of Christianity is a measurement not of numbers but of the quantitative evolution of an act of Love. This does not mean that Love (Charity) has not always been present in the Christian phylum or that it was not present in a greater individual intensity as in a Paul or Augustine than may now be found in some individual Christians, but the total Love has become more precise

and is transmitted to ever wider circles.³³

There must be taking place, in Teilhard's view, within the bosom of the Church, a qualitative growth

of a certain Christological perspective. Through the living tradition of a faith and a mystique the Christian organism diffuses or expresses itself an ever more awakened sense of Christ present and active in the fulfillments of the world. We cannot continue to love Christ without discovering him more and more.³⁴

So, the Church as phylum must be a collective and dynamic reality.³⁵ As a manifestation of the “about-to-be-completed Body” of Christ, the relationship of its members must be seen, according to Teilhard, as more than a slightly heightened familial or friendly association. The relation must be stronger and more respective of persons. It must be like that operating among the cells of a living organism.³⁶ “To live the cosmic life, is to live with the dominating consciousness that one is an atom of the Mystic and cosmic Body of Christ.”³⁷ Rather than feeling that one is an autonomous, dominant individual, a member of the Phylum of Love must be a person (already united to Christ) open and giving.

This is to be seen, not as a lessening of the worth of each member of the phylum, but as an increase. For even to an atom who is open and

giving and not closed and dominating there is a grandeur.

As weak as I am, one part of the final success of Life depends on my diligence in exploring the world and perfecting it in me. The consciousness of this task agonizes me and at the same time is a consolation for me in my diminutive state and my obscurity.³⁸

Within this interconnected world each “atom” is important, some more than others, but each important for bringing with him that part of the world that he has helped to spiritualize. And so Teilhard can say to all Christians, “Your essential duty and desire is to be united with God. But in order to be united, you must first of all be yourself as completely as possible.”³⁹

Seen in another way, the very action of death teaches us that we shall fulfill ourselves (i.e., become fully persons) only by surrendering ourselves to Christ. This process must begin, in Teilhard's view, here on earth. As members of the phylum we must abandon ourselves to Christ, transcendent in Matter. “By baptism in cosmic Matter and in the sacramental waters we are more Christ than we are ourselves—and it is through this precise condition of the predominance of Christ in us that we are ourselves—and it is through this precise condition of the predominance of Christ in us that we may hope to be one day fully ourselves.”⁴⁰

III. A Scriptural Model of a Corporate Church

ANOTHER IMAGE that might enhance the participatory model of the Church indicated by Vatican II is that of the Church as corporate personality. Like the People of God image this corporate personality image emphasizes the close relationship of the members of the Church to Christ and to one another.

Jesus, the risen Christ, is for Paul a “corporate personality” par excellence. In fact, according to J.A.T. Robinson, the Christ Paul encountered on the road to Damascus was the “corporate” Christ. As Robinson puts it, “Since that day, when he saw Christ in the Church he was persecuting, it seems that he can no longer look into the eyes of a Christian without meeting the gaze of Christ.”⁴¹ To express this unity of Christ with Christians Paul uses the figure of the human body.

He uses the body first of all to express the idea of multiplicity in unity. Indeed, without some form of multiplicity or collectivity you cannot have a unity or a whole. As Robinson says, for Paul the notion of exclusion, whereby Israel was picked out of mankind, and a remnant from Israel, has been reversed. It is no longer the one who represents the many (as in the Servant or Son of Man figure) but the many (the Christians as members of the Risen

³¹Teilhard, “Turmoil or Genesis?” p. 224.

³²Teilhard, “Quelques réflexions sur la conversion du monde,” in *Science et Christ*, p. 162.

³³Teilhard, “L'énergie humaine,” pp. 194-95.

³⁴Teilhard, “Social Heredity and Progress,” p. 33.

³⁵Teilhard, *The Phenomenon of Man*, p. 114.

³⁶Teilhard, “Mon univers,” in *Science et Christ*, p. 84.

³⁷Teilhard, “La vie cosmique,” in *Ecrits du temps de la guerre*, p. 60.

³⁸Ibid., p. 32.

³⁹Teilhard, *Le milieu divin*, p. 95.

⁴⁰Teilhard, “Mon univers,” p. 86.

⁴¹J.A.T. Robinson, *The Body* (Chicago: SCM Press, 1952), p. 58.

Christ) who represent the one, Christ.⁴²

The concrete unity of the Christians among themselves is presented by Paul as resembling (or being) the unity among the members of a single human body. "For just as there are many parts in our human bodies, and the parts do not all have the same function, so, many as we are, we form one body through union with Christ and we are individually parts of one another" (Rom. 12:4). Christ incorporates each Christian into his Body, not as an individual but as a member, without the loss of the member's personality or integrity (unique function). Thus the meaning of the expression "one body" seems to be "single personality" (corporate) and this personality is Christ.

How can this be explained, except through the notion of "corporate personality"? As Father de Fraine says,

"Corporate personality" designates at one and the same time an individual person and the group joined to that individual. In order to distinguish the strictly individual Christ from the "extension" of Christ in the Church, we can call the latter the Mystical Christ. We must not however, look upon this "mystic person" (the one body of many members) as a collective "I" or an "impersonal Christ" having an existence apart and being made up of individual Christians as quasi-material parts. The only "I" is that of Christ, in whom all the others are present. Ultimately, in order to understand the unity of the Church,

we must never lose sight of the Adam-Christ contrast.⁴³

For Paul, in the view of Father de Fraine, both Adam and Christ are excellent examples of "corporate personality," and by his contrast of them in Romans 5:12-14, Paul wishes to show that Christ's influence is more extensive than Adam's

Humanity is a unity, a single body, made up of Adam and all individual men; whenever Adam as the representative, the first sinner, fell, all humanity in so far as it is a body, fell with him. Christ represents redeemed humanity which forms with him one single body. In so far as he has given himself for us (Heb. 2:14), he secured redemption for all those who would become his members, those who would be incorporated into his body.⁴⁴

Or, as J.A.T. Robinson puts it, "While *sarx* [flesh] stands for man, in the solidarity of creation, in his distance from God, *soma* [body] stands for man, in the solidarity of creation as made for God."⁴⁵ Christ became *sarx* (Jn. 1:14) and through the crucifixion-resurrection has enabled man to become *soma*.

Thus, through the personal influence of Christ active in all his members (the expansiveness of the individual), the whole complex of Christ—the "head" and the body—the Christians joined in the body to Christ the head—make up "perfect manhood."⁴⁶

In insisting on the reality of the identification of the individual

Christ with the group (i.e., Christians as his body), we do not intend any demeaning of the individuality of Christ, but rather an expansion of it. For, through the notion of "corporate personality," we can give explicit recognition to the fact that the term "body of Christ" is not univocal. Rather it passes from the collective aspect, Christ identified with his members, to the personal or more individual concept, Christ the intimate life of the body. To put it another way, it passes from the idea that Christ is identical with the entire body to the idea that Christ is the head, who is distinct from the body. Both facets are always present yet distinct.⁴⁷

We must maintain, in this regard, that the Church, the social body of Christ on earth, because of its close identity with Christ, is not to be viewed as an assembly of individuals separately influenced by Christ. Rather, it must be thought of as a tightly knit group capable of being personified; that is, capable of being encompassed in one individual, Christ.

We must maintain at one and the same time that the Church is a unified assembly (because it is the one Body of Christ) and that Christ exerts over all an undeniable supremacy (which, ultimately, assures it unity). There is no incompatibility in these two notions, if we keep in mind the biblical notion of "corporate personality."⁴⁸

We might sum up these applications of the notion of "corporate

personality" to Christ and the Church by quoting A.E.J. Rawlinson, who says:

The new Israel, according to the New Testament thought, is "in Christ" as the Jews were in Abraham, or as mankind was in Adam. The Messiah, the Christ, is at once an individual person—Jesus of Nazareth—and he is more: He is the representative and (as it were) the constitutive Person of the New Israel, potentially inclusive.⁴⁹

How is the influence of Christ made present to the individual Christians? Through the Spirit. This miraculous unity of fellowship which Paul experienced in his conversion was the creation of the Spirit. "For we have all—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free men—have been baptized in one Spirit to form one body and we have all been saturated with one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). The presence of the Spirit (at first experienced in physical form: wind, glossolalia, etc.) is the presence of Christ. And to be "in Christ" is to be in the Spirit. Moreover, for Paul the greatest gift of the Spirit is love (charity). "For, through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us, God's love has flooded our hearts" (Rom. 5:5).⁵⁰

For John, too, love (*agape*) was the translation of the power which was exhibited in the life and death of Christ and in his present regeneration and transformation of hearts. "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that no one who believes in him should be

⁴²Ibid., pp. 60-61.

⁴³Jean de Fraine, *Adam and the Family of Man* (New York: Paulist Press, 1965), pp. 255-56.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 256.

⁴⁵Robinson, p. 31.

⁴⁶de Fraine, p. 259.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 260-61.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 268.

⁴⁹A.E.J. Rawlinson, "Corpus Christi," in *Mysterium Christi*, ed. by G.K.A. Bell and A. Deisman (London: Eerdmans & Co., Ltd., 1930), p. 235.

⁵⁰C.H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), pp. 58-65.

lost, but that they all have eternal life" (Jn. 3:16). And for John the sign and essence of this new "corporate" community is love (charity). "I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must love one another. By this will all know that you are my disciples—by your love for one another" (Jn. 13:34-35).

Through these suggested images the model of the Church as a partici-

patory, cohesive, fraternal community is highlighted. The laity are shown to be essential to the ongoing mission and very life of the Church. The traditional need of the laity for the clergy is still present, but the reciprocity of this need—i.e., the need of the clergy for the laity, is emphasized. Neither alone is the Church but only both together, working as brothers, can make Christ present.



We Are Mirrors

We are living mirrors of the Lord,
Giving flesh and bone to Jesus' Word!
We reflect His light that shows the way
By the deeds we do and what we say.

Like the fiery prophet, Moses, we
Mirror in our countenance what he
Gained from seeing God's most holy Face:
Living in God's Presence and His grace.

We are faithful mirrors of God's love,
Lifting hearts and eyes to God above;
Leading to the mountain top the strayed,
Won to God because we loved and prayed.

Mary

MARY LOU SLEEVI

OUR DEVOTION to Mary is changing, leaving many people confused, uprooted, insecure, defensive, polarized, rallying to champion her cause. There is a fear that Protestantism is blowing into our open windows, and that in no way is its sweep so obvious as in our lagging devotion to Mary. All the "new" talk about personal acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior causes many people to latch on to their rosaries for dear life.

I believe that what the Spirit is telling the churches is that what we think of as the problem of Mary's place in our lives is really the problem of *Jesus'* place. Perhaps all the heat and argument about Mary submerges the root problem: Who do we believe *in our hearts* that Jesus is? Do we feel too unworthy, too uncomfortable, too remote, to be with Him, all by ourselves, alone? Too *unable*?

Most practicing Catholics have had no problem of a personal relationship with Mary—until the windows opened. The problem is the lack of a person-to-person relationship with Jesus. For

many Catholics, it is impossible to be as intimate with Jesus as with Mary. The disorder, then, is in our relationship with Jesus; this can and has disordered our relationship with Mary.

As the Church raises up its basic proclamation of Jesus as Lord, and as more and more people respond to Jesus directly, we need have no fear of snubbing Mary. Scripturally, she never showed a need to draw honor or attention to herself: she was too secure with Jesus. He is her total security, and she wants him to be ours. She has no need to be exalted as inseparable from Jesus; she *is* inseparable, but not in the defensive way we have seen it. On earth and still more fully in heaven, the glory of the queen is in her total union with her Son. The glory of her motherhood was not so much that his flesh was merged with hers, but rather that she allowed her spirit to be totally merged with his. We are all called to this union of spirits; Mary experienced it perfectly. Mary was full of the love and wisdom to nurture the life of her Child because *she* was, by grace, "full of grace."

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Paul calls us all to receive the gifts of love and wisdom from the Spirit.

There is a vague fear that to center our lives on Jesus is to neglect his mother—almost that we have a Catholic mandate to see that his mother is not ignored. Whatever the mandate, it has to be based on truth. The truth is that Jesus has never been a threat to Mary. The joy of her motherhood was to center her life on him; the joy of her motherhood of us will be to see us center our lives on him. This, I believe, is her constant prayer for us: simply that we *take* the Jesus she delivered for us.

The primacy of Jesus was never a problem to Mary. It is only a problem to us. Mary does not want or need the place in our affections and prayers and throne-rooms that belongs only to Jesus. I believe that in the present-day movement of the Spirit, Mary is gently shoving away those who would linger forever in the comfort and assurance of her motherly arms, saying, "Here, meet my Son."

It is sometimes said that devotion to Mary cannot be excessive, that to honor the mother is to honor the Son, because Mary always leads us to Jesus. Again, the problem is not Mary's; it is ours. Mary, scripturally, was always the background woman. Are we willing to see her there, always receding, always defer-

ring to Jesus? Even when Elizabeth praised her, she brushed it aside with her glorious Magnificat.

If we are truly open to her lead, there comes a high point in our spiritual journey when we will need only Jesus, and Mary can recede again. This does not make her diminished, but *fulfilled*.

The Spirit will teach us true devotion to Mary as we come more and more into Jesus. I believe that right relationship with Mary will follow like the dawn, and that this will speak powerfully to all our Christian Brothers. For the present, let us ask Mary to pray with us and for us that we may live to praise God, to receive and ponder and respond to his Word in our hearts, to yield to his Spirit. Let us ask her intercession that we may experience Jesus fully as she did, in all the everyday and small moments of life. We can know with conviction that our mother's intercession is powerful, because she always prays in God's perfect will. That is why she has such preeminence among us, as we intercede for one another. The only scriptural word she ever addressed to plain, ordinary, servant people—and this after intercession with Jesus—was: "Do whatever He tells you." The servants were led directly to him, to dependence on him. Mary's job was done.

The Church is looking at basics again, at the need for the word of evangelism. Its only Word is Jesus. Perhaps Mary, through the centuries, has been preparing by intercession the way for this Word, this integrity of mission. If we all share the task of John the Baptist to prepare the way of his coming—this time in Mary preeminently would take on this role. I believe that all the prayers I lavished on Mary through the

years were used to prepare the way of the lord in my own heart, so I could know he has come to live there. He wants to live there in far more glory, and she continues to pray for this, and it will come to pass.

Mary stood at Calvary, not to come down through the ages as a heroic, exalted figure, but to bear witness for all time to the ultimate truth that she believed in her heart: Jesus saves! Alleluia!



For Mary figured profoundly in the history of salvation and in a certain way unites and mirrors within herself the central truths of the faith. Hence when she is being preached and venerated, she summons the faithful to her Son and His sacrifice, and to love for the Father.

Vatican Council II,
Constitution of the
Church, 65

It was your strength . . . and the light
of your Face that saved them.

—Psalm 44

The Light of His Face

Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C.

Canto I: Bethlehem

The light of His face was scarcely
Something to blind,
To silence, to smite the heart
Down by His power. It was, after all,
A child's face only,
Had irregular paths
Of tears traced on the cheeks,
Had lips that trembled
In the cold.

Yet kings found strength to go
Back another way, post-adoration,
Fearless of Herod, careless of all that was
Except the face, the light of the face
Of the Child.

Shepherds before had come and known the light
As homely and good, face with an infant's smile
Arched for the joy of shepherds' pipes, and liking
Dancing within the cave.

It was the light,
The light of the face that spun them back to hillsides
No longer dark, blazed bright with angels' singing
Knocking off ridges, echoing down the slant
Of sheep on sided hills, shepherds glorifying,
Praising, praising strong, the light of the face.

There was no longer another task to do.

Canto II: The Temple

Waiting and fasting, fasting and waiting.
Came in the years, and years went out again
For Anna and Simeon bending weak on stick
Of prophecy bone-slender, till that day

When strength came, not not striding, riding rather
In chariot of arms, and face turned on
The cooing doves in wonder at the things
A bird can show a child, how to propel
On wing the little cage-space of a world
For one thing.

On some later day a man
Would tell the marvel that no sparrow falls
To earth except the Father's face record
In light that little life-span. Would He, too,
The man, think back to pigeons for king's ransom?
No matter.

Here the two, the vigilant fasters,
Stand sudden straight before the small face turned
Away from twittering birds to them, oh! them!

Comes canticle! The prophecy girds on sinew
There in the light of the face of the ransomed Child,

Proclaims that light revealing to all nations
The glory of His people Israel.

Canto III: Egypt

Under the hood of blanket was the light,
Light of the face of helpless fugitive
Giving somehow, some way, strength to the man
Hard striding by the mule, and the mule not needing
Goad or persuasion either, having seen
Likewise itself the light of the face that leaned
Against the breast of the girl.

The burro trotted,
Sudden Arabian steed, in the light of the face
That made of the girl an army set in array
To defend the Child, to armor Him with kisses.

Somehow the burro knew, the man had ken,
The girl understood their strength came out
From the light of the face of the Child
That they could save Him.

Canto IV: The Temple's Doctors

Never the brushed beards more relentlessly stroked
By fingers set to ease minds' need for leaping
Up from consideration to conclusion. Stopping
Never a moment, fingers tell the secret!

Light has swung in on long, dark pondering.
Light from the face, the face of the questioning Boy.

Who could bear answers, sor them, rout them, parry
Answer with answer, only can smitten sit
Before the questions, before the light of the face
Of the young questor.

Already the Savior saves
With questions, and forever. Will you also
Go away? And: woman, who accused you?
What did you speak of on the way? Whom do you
Say that I am? What have I done? Whom seek you?

Thread your beards, doctors, with your quickened fingers
Against a someday question: Do you love Me—
Love me more than these? It will need strong
Light to fell a heart down to confess it:

In all things knowing, Lord, this, too, you know.

Canto V: Cana of Galilee

Shake them, the tambourines! Let lutes be tuned
Up to bridalissimo! Bring wine
To quicken dancers' feet.

Here was rehearsal
For sitting down to banquet with the Father
One day in Heaven. Here in Galilee
In Cana was a wedding, and was Jesus
Prophesying Heaven with His handclasp,
His blessing on men's feasting oh! His laughter!

No one said it. Enough that all there knew it:
How strength to plumb the mystery of feasting
Aright came from the light of the Rabbi's face.

It was the light of His face spotlighted dancing
Out of stumble's danger, pitched the singing
Pure and sweet, reflected on the bride's cheeks
Pink of innocent dawn, and summoned water
Into roseate wine.

And all there learned it
It was His mother knew it from recall.
And the Mother of Jesus was there.

Canto VI: Calvary

The light of His face was scarcely
Something to blind,
To silence, to smite the heart
Down by His power. It was, after all,
A spent face only,
Had irregular paths
Of tears traced on the cheeks,
Had lips that would not
Curse the day.

Yet prostitute found power
To take a Cross-stand, testify her love
Stronger than jeering soldiers who remembered
Other days and her, nights in the town.
Fearless of lewd jibes, careless of all that was
Except the light of the bleeding face
On the Cross,

Magdalene, bereft of seven devils
Stood with the sinless Mother of Jesus' face.

To keep Him further company, there was
A thief, suspending shrewdness of his trade
For wisdom's favor, sudden strike on heart's
Eye long-crusted from the light, now letting
Up protesting eyelid on a day

Not dreamed of. Sudden heir to Paradise,
A thief found his long-looted essence, cried out
In ecstasy of faith from cross to Cross,
To sunset face of Christ: Remember me!

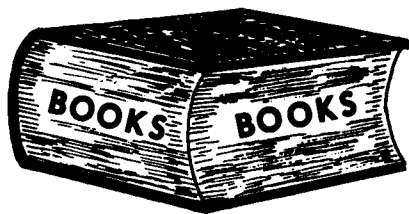
Canto VII: The Kingdom

We give you thanks, O God most kind, devising
Apocalypse to suit our piteous need.

For milk-white steeds, for angels with gold censers.
For elders bent, for each of the forty-four thousand,
Be praised, kind God!

Till strength is gathered from
Your face that our face can behold forever
Your unveiled Face,

This canto goes unfinished.



Two Prayers for Two Stones. By Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F., and Sister Regina Marie Gentry, O.P., with illustrations by Sisters M. Josella, O.S.F. and Francis Agnes, O.S.F. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. vi-58. Cloth, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Father Eugene Honan, O.F.M., Guardian at St. Anthony Residence, Boston, Massachusetts.

This is a collection of poems about Saint Francis and persons and things important to those who admire the Poor Man of Assisi. Each of the 31 poems has a short explanation giving background information, which is further enhanced by the numerous artistic illustrations.

The hope of the two authors is to provide something "stimulating and rewarding" (iii). They have done so, in my opinion. From Francis' troubadour days, through his search for knightly glory, his conversion, the founding of his religious movement, La Verna, to his last blessing at Assisi, the authors have given a

moving picture of the life and spirit of Saint Francis.

The first woman to become a Franciscan is honored in the "Hymn to Saint Clare." Its closing lines are these:

Francis, himself, did clothe you
In garments, rough and poor;
And for his dear Poor Ladies
He found a spot secure;
Our Father Francis loved you,
His daughter, young and fair;
And we, your children praise you,
Our own beloved Saint Clare [49].

In a less serious vein the authors entertain us with Brother Juniper and his antics with see-saw and the pig. The beautiful greeting, much used among Franciscans: "Pax et bonum," has an excellent illustration on p. 30. Part of this lovely poem reads:

It is a welcome warm and deep,
A verbal kiss of peace,
A cordial wish for all good things,
That love for God increase:
"Pax et Bonum! Pax et Bonum!"
Now we still repeat
The loving wish our Father made
When we our brethren greet [31].

The name for this little book comes from the event recounted in the Legend of the Three Companions, 21. The opening of the corresponding poem reads:

Two prayers for two stones
Cried the son of Peter Bernardone
One prayer for just one stone
He called as he walked alone [15].

The poems show the keen insight of the authors into the life and spirit of Saint Francis, as, e.g., this one entitled "Carceri," a gem of but seven lines:

Unity of opposites in nature
Francis' life style.
Going to the heights to
reach the depths—
Mounting high to become low—
Seeking the world-view
The better to see oneself [21].

In only two lines of the "Rule of Life" (p. 26), there is a concise summary of the three famous Gospel texts found by Francis, Bernard, and Peter when they trusted to Providence that morning at San Nicolo:

Deny thyself; take up thy cross;
Consider all the world a loss.

The last poem, "Canticle to Brother Francis," p. 57, recalls Saint Francis' "Canticle of Brother Sun." It is a litany of praise to Saint Francis and to persons and objects dear to him: the Rule, Saint Clare, Brother Jacoba, Brothers Leon and Angelo, La Verna, Brother Blindness, Brother Bonaventure, and Sister Joy of Spirit.

This work is well done. It makes for interesting and inspiring reading. There is Franciscan warmth on each page.

And Their Eyes Were Opened: Encountering Jesus in the Sacraments. By Michael Scanlan, T.O.R., AND Anne Therese Shields, R.S.M. Preface by Leon-Joseph Cardinal

Suenens. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Word of Life, 1977. Pp. xi-119, incl. bibliography. Paper, \$1.95.

Reviewed by Father Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Francis Chapel, the Northway Mall, Colonie, N.Y., and translator of many works on theology and spirituality.

In the Epilogue of their book, *And Their Eyes Were Opened*, the co-authors make this statement: "The message of this book is that the renewal of the sacraments depends on encountering Jesus in a decisive, dynamic way in each sacrament" (p. 111). This renewal, they go on to say, is not so much a matter of scholarly research, as it is of having one's eyes opened and making a decision to live consciously in the Lord's presence, both in our individual lives and in the Church.

They then proceed in the first four chapters to lay the foundation for such a decision. They do so with such clarity that one can only wish that every Catholic would read these forty pages!

The remaining ten chapters concentrate on the individual sacraments and show that each in any sacrament has the power to change the individual's life for the better. All of us need to "discover the sacraments for ourselves as individuals and as members of a worshipping com-

munity, much as the early Church led by the Holy Spirit discovered the sacraments in its midst" (p. 2).

Catholic Pentecostals are accused by some of a lack of attention to the Mass and the sacraments. This book thus fills a real need in showing that orthodox Catholic Pentecostalism cannot in any way be accused of an ecumenical fundamentalism that looks askance at the riches of Catholic tradition.

Is *And Their Eyes Were Opened* only for charismatics? Definitely not. Hopefully it will lead many others to yearn to encounter Jesus just as really as his followers did on his journeys through Galilee and Judaea.

Wheel We, Wee—All the Way Home: A Guide to the New Sensual Spirituality. By Matthew Fox, O.P. Wilmington, N.C.: Consortium Books, 1976. Pp. xiv-226. Cloth, \$10.00.

Reviewed by Father Wilfrid Hept, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Francis Chapel, Providence, Rhode Island.

There was a time when most Western philosophy and theology could be divided into that which was predominately influenced by Aristotle and Saint Thomas and that which had Plato and Saint Augustine as their champions. The former emphasized the intellect and was more cerebral; the latter emphasized the will and was more affective.

Today writers like Matthew Fox prefer to make the dichotomy between Greek and Hebraic origins. This, to some extent, presents a whole new ball game, as is evident to anyone who reads *Wheel We, Wee—All the Way Home*, subtitled *A Guide to the New Sensual Spirituality*, by Matthew Fox, O.P.

While the title is from the nursery rhyme, "This Little Piggie Went to Market" and the book jacket might mislead you, anyone who has read Father Fox's previous book on prayer, *On Becoming a Musical, Mystical Bear*, knows that the author is a serious writer about the spiritual life. This book too is not for the novice in the spiritual life. It is a serious analysis of the "new sensual spirituality."

At the expense of over-simplification, we might quote the author's answer to the question, "What then is sensual spirituality?" On page 144 he writes: "A sensual spirituality is one that praises God for creating and continuing to create the sensual experience of touch, sight, hearing, smell, taste." Pointing out the influence of such early writers as Marcion and Denis the pseudo-Areopagite, as well as later writers like the 15th-century monk Thomas a Kempis, the author paints a bleak picture of the older spirituality, which he dubs asensual. He writes that such spirituality is based on Greek philosophy and is too redemption oriented and not Hebraic and creation oriented as is the new sensual spirituality.

We need to anchor our modern spirituality in the God of the Hebrews, who is a sensual God as is evident from reading the prophets and the teaching of Jesus Christ. This theoretical part is left for the fourth and last section of the book.

The average reader will be more interested in the first part of *Wheel We, Wee, All the Way Home*. In very concrete terms Father Matthew Fox discusses the nature of ecstasies in the first two chapters. He makes a distinction between natural and tactical ecstasies. The former—such as nature, friendship, and sex—are ends in themselves; the latter—such as chant and ritual, fasting, and celibacy—are only means to an end. All of these are radical responses to life and lead us to an experience of God. "The purpose of ecstasy, like the purpose of living, is for the fun of it. We learn this in prayer and communion with the pleasure-seeking God" (p. 48). Jesus too is pleasure-seeking. One remembers the pleasure Jesus took in the mountains and gardens, the lakes and the desert, the star-filled nights, and the sunny Palestinian days where he fled so frequently to spend time with the Creator. Who can forget the pleasure of the Lord Jesus in the friendship of Martha and Mary? Many of the saints were filled with this ecstasy of joy over the things of this world. Saint Francis of Assisi found sheer joy in nature, the friendship of Saint Clare, and the companionship of his friars. All of this leads the author to avow panentheism:

"All is in God, or God is in all" (p. 77). It might be well for the reader to look up this term in a theological dictionary to distinguish it from pantheism which has been explicitly condemned as heretical.

Borrowing a term from Psalm 91 (v. 13): "You shall trample down the lion and the dragon," the author uses the analogy of dragons large and small to point out the obstacles to ecstasy for the spiritual traveler on his or her way to God. For some five chapters he discusses such interior dragons as bloated egos, exaggerated he's and she's, moralizing; and such external dragons as the institutions of big government, huge industry, communications media, as producing a false ecstasy and being detrimental to progress in the "new sensual spirituality." Finally, in an appendix, the author gives some paraphernalia for the journey, including spiritual maps, compasses, games to play along the way, and a brief bibliography.

This book will appeal to those who are already well into fun and games as the way to the supernatural. Some others involved in a Jansenistic austerity in their spiritual development might find reading this book a balancing effect upon their spiritual life. Many will find that it contains an over-emphasis on the sensual. One might wonder whether the Author does not confuse sensuality with spiritual joy. No one denies that Saint Francis and other saints enjoyed nature and natural ecstasies. They enjoyed them not as ends in them-

selves, however, but as means to an end: God. Saint Francis of Assisi became everybody's saint because he saw his God as a suffering servant as well as an exalted King, and he had the stigmata to prove it. Maybe the new sensual spirituality will produce such a saint for the needs of our times. It certainly needs such a saint to prove itself.

The Gospel of Peace and Justice: Catholic Social Teaching since Pope John. Edited by Joseph Gremillion. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976. Pp. xiii-623, incl. index. Cloth, \$15.95; paper, \$8.95.

Reviewed by Father Thomas J. Burns, O.F.M., College Chaplain at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.

Monsignor Gremillion, a thirty-year veteran of both pastoral ministry to the underprivileged and energetic theologizing on the question of social justice, has produced a collection of significant (and, in some cases, controversial) magisterial statements dealing with social justice. Ranging from Pope John XXIII's *Mater et Magistra* in 1961 to Pope Paul's Day of Peace message in 1975, "Reconciliation: The Way to Peace," Gremillion pre-

sents a panorama of Church social teaching gleaned from significant Vatican statements, sermons and addresses of Church leaders, and the decrees of the Second Vatican Council. As the title indicates, the connecting thread between all the documents is the Gospel call for justice and compassion in the dealings of the world community. Religious freedom, food production, human rights, trade, and population are a few of the moral issues discussed in this collection.

The texts themselves will prove useful to historians, researchers, and those seeking official documentation for their efforts to incorporate principles of social justice into religious constitutions, sermons, and pastoral directives. What is not as useful is the author's 138-page preface, an apparent attempt to outline an interdisciplinary history of the social justice movement within the Church. Because of the complexity of such an undertaking, this attempt might better have been relegated to a later work akin to Vorgrimler's commentary on the Vatican II documents.

The inadequacies of the introduction do not detract from the power of the documents themselves nor the service rendered by the editor in collecting them into one volume.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Champlin, Joseph M., *The New Yet Old Mass*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 111. Paper, \$2.25.

Finley, James, and Michael Pennock, *Jesus and You: Discovering the Real Christ*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1977. 2 vols., paperback: Text, pp. 223, \$3.50; teacher's manual, pp. 111, \$1.95.

Merton, Thomas, *Disputed Questions*. New York: Farrar, Straux & Giroux Noontday Books, 1977. Pp. xii-283. Paper, \$3.95.

Nauer, Barbara, *Rise up and Remember*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. viii-110. Paper, \$2.95.

Paul VI, Pope, *The Pope's Family Prayer Book*. Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. 96. Paper, \$1.50.

Vewter, Bruce, *On Genesis: A New Reading*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 501, incl. index. Cloth, \$10.00.

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A reminder to our faithful subscribers: as announced in March, we have been forced by rising costs to increase the subscription rate to \$5.00 a year. Single copies are .50 cents.

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With Light Step and Unstumbling Feet

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CONTENTS

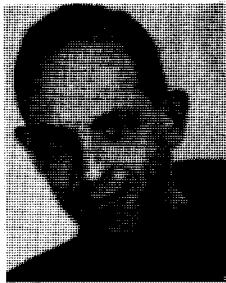
WHAT THINK YOU OF THE CHRIST?	250
<i>Review Editorial</i>	
REFLECTIONS ON CORPORATE POVERTY	251
<i>Roderic A. Petrie, O.F.M.</i>	
CHRIST SPEAKS ON LOVE	256
<i>Bruce Riski, O.F.M. Cap.</i>	
ASCETICISM—II	257
<i>Julian A. Davies, O.F.M.</i>	
FRANCIS AND IGNATIUS	263
<i>Sister Marie Therese Archambault, O.S.F.</i>	
BOOK REVIEW	270

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our September issue were drawn by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., Monastery of Sancta Clara, Canton, Ohio.



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What Think You of the Christ?

LIKE THE ANGELS of Jn. 1:51, Christology has, in the works of many recent theologians, been doing a lot of "ascending and descending." Scarcely a month goes by, it seems, without another publisher coming out with yet another "reappraisal" of Christology, another "viewpoint" on the Lord and his mission, another "reassessment" of the knowledge we claim to have about Jesus, etc.

In fact, as Father Gerald O'Collins points out (p. vii), were a Third Vatican Council to be convened in the near future, it would have to make Christology its overriding concern. This is true for the same reason that several major theologians have felt impelled, after completing treatises on the Church and other theological subjects, to return to those same Christological roots of our faith. Jesus is the cornerstone of Christianity, and everything depends on what we know about him, what we think of him, what we allow him to do in our lives.

Speculatively, the fundamental issue these days is one to which we have returned from time to time in these pages—particularly in the discussion with David R. Griffin in our April and July-August 1974 issues: a "high" vs. a "low" Christology. The former allegedly "begins" with the preexistent Word, stresses His incarnation, and sees the paschal mystery almost as an appendix to that incarnation. In addition, supposedly, it creates insoluble problems by necessitating the use of such philosophical categories as nature, person, and substance; it fosters a confusion of myth with history, and it minimizes the importance of the Lord's earthly life—his preaching and healing ministry.

This opposition between "high" and "low," "ascending" and "descending" is the subject of our editorial this month, and we shall return to it after presenting the contents and a brief evaluation of the two books under consideration.

(continued on page 278)

The Reality of Jesus: An Essay in Christology. By Dermot A. Lane. New York: Paulist Exploration Books, 1977. Pp. 180, including bibliography and index. Paper, \$3.95.

What Are They Saying about Jesus? A Report on Recent Theological Speculation about Jesus Christ. By Gerald O'Collins, S.J. New York: Paulist Deus Books, 1977. Pp. x-77. Paper, \$1.95.

Reflections on Corporate Poverty

RODERIC A. PETRIE, O.F.M.

THE VATICAN II Document on religious life, *Perfectae Caritatis*, in referring to the three vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, uses the same word consecrated by myriads of former documents: "evangelical counsels."¹ Jesus' counsel, his advice to anyone wishing to follow him more closely is that the individual be poor, chaste, and obedient. It is safe to interpret the word "follow" as addressed not solely to peripatetic disciples but also to all who would remain in their milieu and there, undergoing the necessary conversion, embrace the Lord's teachings. This is a very intimate and personal call to an individual to respond, in a way which cuts across the grain of every age's values, to the Person of God incarnate. But these same documents also hasten to point out the ecclesial dimension of these bits of advice: i.e., that one who takes to heart the advice to be poor,

chaste, and obedient does so primarily out of love for God who first loved us. "Such dedication gives rise and urgency to the love of one's neighbor for the world's salvation and the upbuilding of the Church."² Immediately, then, we are taken beyond our personal identification (let us limit ourselves to Poverty now) with the poor Christ and our personal search for holiness, to the level of mission, call, divine purpose: the salvation and sanctification of others. Poverty becomes sacramentalized in that one's poverty becomes a means to bring holiness to another. Not everyone fulfills this purpose in the Church, of course; it is a gift freely given by God to some who may as freely receive it or reject it.

Saint Paul writes, in the twelfth through fourteenth chapters of his first letter to the Corinthians, about the hierarchy of gifts which the Spirit gives and states that

¹Vatican Council II, *Perfectae Caritatis*, §1, *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. W. M. Abbott, S.J., & Joseph Gallagher (New York: Guild Press, 1966), p. 466.

²Ibid., §6 (p. 471).

Father Roderic A. Petrie, O.F.M., formerly Director of the Novitiate Program for Holy Name Province, is now the Director of its Office of Justice and Peace in Washington, D.C.

we should set our "hearts on spiritual gifts, especially the gift of speaking God's message," for "the one who speaks God's message helps the whole Church" (1 Cor. 14:1-4). God's message to the world is, of course, the Word, himself incarnate, Jesus. And Jesus' basic message was: "The right time has come and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!" (Mk. 1:15). In other words, "Reject the prevalent opinions and way of life which say that this world is all there is. Reject the temptations to get for yourself as much of this world as you can, consume it, show everyone how important you are." (These were the three classic temptations of Jesus.) But we who have the gift of speaking Christ's message are the *seers* of the New Testament; we "see" the reality of the world now penetrated by God's presence; we interpret the present times for our brothers and sisters. We, by what we say and do and by the way we live, are the prophets of the Second Coming, the future Kingdom which has already begun.

Ours is an awesome struggle. Although Jesus overcame the Prince of this world by his death, and by his resurrection has ushered us into a new life, still the struggle continues. As Satan offered the kingdoms to Jesus if he would only kneel in worship,

Satan offers them to all. We religious, the seers and prophets, have to declare clearly the eternal Kingdom. But if the message we give with our lives is an uncertain one, a contradictory sign, then confusion results. What kind of message do we wish to convey to our brothers and sisters? Let us ask ourselves what we are trying to say with our Poverty. Perhaps even more basically, do we wish to say anything at all by being corporately poor? Do we truly believe in it, truly believe that religious Poverty can say something to our world about the Kingdom of God? Some, considering the implacable demands of Poverty and their style of life, opine that rather than live a sham they should set aside Poverty and profess the middle class standards they are now living. To be poor, therefore, a community must have an agreement on what Poverty means for them. And by Poverty, what is the community trying to say to others? That they, too, should be poor, live simply? Or is corporate Poverty a means of saying something else? If so, what?

Saint Matthew's Gospel, in listing the Beatitudes, is usually translated "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (5:3), whereas Saint Luke's equivalent passage is rendered "Blessed are the poor" (6:20). Both types of Poverty, in spirit and in fact, are necessary.

The last Council points out that poverty of spirit is not enough.³ We are also called to a Poverty in fact if we are to fulfill our call to build up the Church. Individually Poverty of fact is usually observed quite well. Communally, it is a difficult goal to achieve. I have the use, the enjoyment, of a large building with a pleasant interior, good food, a comfortable room, a car I can sign out, a phone available—all the conveniences of modern American culture; and yet those things are not *mine*. They are *ours*.

I don't live at that house, though, but in an apartment with two other Franciscans and two Dominicans. When we shop for food, we find it quite an eye-opener to see how quickly money which we have helped earn is so rapidly converted into a few bags of groceries. Most of us have no idea what food costs, no idea what the telephone rates are. In some ways it is a benefit of religious community living that individuals are not burdened with the minutiae of daily life; but at the same time, we are so sheltered that Poverty becomes an unreality for us. Poverty is not a euphoric state. Poverty means going without, making do, suffering discomfort. If I have anything I want when I want it, whether it belongs to me or to us or to the Pope, then I am not



poor. And any community which can supply such a lifestyle for its members: is it poor? If we have every comfort, whether or not as individuals we can say *I* own nothing, are *we* poor? Poor in spirit, perhaps. Poor in fact, no. What can we do? Should we do anything?

If we are to take seriously our purpose of living poorly, we must be properly motivated. Ultimately, our Poverty must come from our experience with God, both individually and communally, especially as we experience him in Jesus. Poverty was the ever-present companion of God individually and communally, especially as we experience him in Jesus. Poverty was the ever-present companion of God incarnate. Paul says in Philippians 2:6-7 that God came into this world not just poor, but *emptied*.

³Ibid., ¶13 (p. 475).

When we consider the poverty taken on by God when he became like us, our minds falter! As man he lived poorly, working with his hands. He died poor—Poverty alone remained with him as his companion to the very end. We, by our Poverty, declare to all our configuration with this Jesus whom we accept as Savior and our “way” to the Father. In addition, the support we give one another in the effort to maintain personal poverty gives that effort itself a corporate, communal dimension which is exceedingly important. The religious family which as a *sine qua non* demands a would-be member make a vow to God to live poorly and then does not support that brother or sister in that vow, does not allow him or her to live it but frustrates the desire to do so. Indeed, such a community makes the vow a sham, does a grave injustice to that member of Christ, and nullifies God’s advice. There is support, usually, for the vow of Chastity. There is bountiful support for the vow of Obedience. But the vow of Poverty often enough is stillborn. Not all the blame, however, can be put on some faceless ~~them~~. The newcomer to religious life usually perceives Poverty as just part of the “bundle” one picks up: it has some importance for the individual, but the corporate implications are not understood and never develop. And those

stunted appreciations of corporate Poverty come to be the norm for the religious family. So it is that the Poverty of the individuals is not represented by the Poverty of the whole.

Poverty does not mean destitution. In his advice to Timothy on how to carry on his ministry (2 Tim. 6:8), Paul says: “So we should be well satisfied without money if we have enough food and clothing.” He is saying, of course, that the primary concern is the task of preaching God’s message and we should not be concerned with things inconsistent with that objective. Paul, as is evident from his other letters, made use of money for his voyages and to pay for his and his guard’s lodging. He mentions books that he owns and needs but has left behind somewhere, and a coat that he wants brought to him. He used what was necessary or helpful for his work. At the same time he was careful not to be a burden to those he served; so he worked as a tent maker to support himself. If we are to do a decent job, we need the necessary tools for our work. That is common sense. But we should take a serious look at what might be superfluous, inconsistent with our preaching of God’s message. Further, there is always the possibility that we might, by our lives, preach a message other than what we intend. I heard one of our friars say once:

“he’s not poor; he’s cheap.” It’s true that Poverty is not reducible to mere economics—there are other considerations. But Poverty is a state, a condition, which inevitably must entail a certain pragmatism in the use of money and things.

Let me touch a bit on this pragmatic aspect of our Poverty. Jesus was accused of consorting with sinners and other undesirables. We know that unless we get to know ourselves as belonging to that group, sinners, we will not be familiars of Jesus. We have to be who we are, and that, as Saint John points out in his first letter, is sinners (1 Jn. 1:8). You and I have undertaken to be poor. But are we considered to be poor? Are we grouped among the poor? Do we know any poor? Are we comfortable with them? Do we spend time with them or with professional people? Whom do we invite in, what invitations do we accept when we go out? There is the old saying: I’ll tell you who you are by the company you keep. With whom is our community involved? What assistance are we giving to the poor? What use do we make of our buildings? How do we deal with our employees when it comes to just wages, job security, and respect for them as individuals? Being poor determines our approach to our ministry: the poor give themselves in service; they

do not coerce nor manipulate, for they are powerless.

Perhaps the most common indicator of Poverty is insecurity. How insecure is the community? How can insecurity be introduced into the community’s life? By doing away with insurance and trusting in God? By opening the community’s dwelling to outsiders? Insecurity, for the poor, operates at various levels: economic, emotional, psychological, social, and so on. Economic insecurity is a good place to start, but that alone is not Poverty, which we have vowed to live. If we are secure, except in the Lord, are we poor?

One final point. Religious Poverty is often equated with simplicity of life. That equation is usually valid and sufficient. But simplicity of life can mean more than living poorly. Simplicity means guilelessness, transparency. Saint Francis, when he was ill, was told by his Guardian that he should sew a patch of fur on the inside of his habit over his stomach. Francis wanted a patch of fur on the outside, too, so that all would know how he cared for Brother Body. Any deceit was unbearable to him. Simplicity comes from prayer. As with Francis, the more we experience God, pure Spirit, the more we must represent ourselves to him truthfully, hiding nothing, holding nothing back. The truth about ourselves is that

we are poor creatures in great need of God's goodness. The truth about ourselves is that we are dependent on God. To imply otherwise, to pretend by our style of life that we are not needy creatures in every way and to portray a self-sufficiency is to give the lie to who we are. A corporate show of affluence, of bourgeois comfort and security, is to belie our own reality. The more poor our way of life, the more simple our life, showing our true Poverty, the more we declare to our brothers and sisters our prophetic vision of the future kingdom. And we interpret for them the value of this world, which is passing away.



Christ Speaks on Love

As I have loved each one of you
Are you to love to prove it's true
My followers you are; this light
Will glow from hearts to all in sight.

A love of friendships must be yours—
It is the kind that re-assures.
It draws the others to My Truth.
Your friendship must be real, not mute.

No greater love is there than to
Lay down one's life for friends like you!
You likewise are to do the same:
It gives Me highest praise and fame!

BRUCE RISKI, O.F.M. CAP.

Asceticism—II

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Meditating very frequently on the proposal they first uttered at profession, the friars should strive to live in perpetual penance, denying themselves especially in the discharge of their daily duties, so that they may imitate the abasement of Christ more closely and display charity toward God and neighbor more evidently.

— *General Constitutions, O. F. M., Art. 29*

ANOTHER AREA of self-denial which ought to be mentioned is denial of those imaginary satisfactions to which we may have recourse in day-dreams, or unnecessary reading or questioning. No harm will come to us from not avenging ourselves, or not flattering ourselves so much in our thoughts, or missing out on the latest scandal. And the desire to impress by speech could be indulged in less by all of us—I hesitate to say this since I deny myself so seldom that way, and also since the quiet people will be the only ones to take these words to heart and will keep on being too quiet. Then the compulsive talkers will restrain themselves for only a day or two, proceed to make up for the strait fourfold, and the last state will be worse than the first

In June we saw that asceticism demands self-denial as opposed to self-indulgence. Now, in a second pair of polarities, we can observe that it means, similarly, self-control as opposed to self-pampering. What I have in mind here is an attack on the contemporary cult of feeling and the all too human impulse we have to start compensating ourselves for the sacrifices we have taken on ourselves freely by vowing our lives to God. With regard to what I call the cult of feeling, I think we need to be reminded that our feelings are not necessarily our true self: that being true to them is often being false to oneself, and that Original Sin has worked particular havoc in this area as in so many others. There is surely something to what Karl Rahner has suggested: that our feelings are as reliable

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as those of the sick—which means, not too reliable all the time. What I am saying in the concrete is that if you think you have fallen in love, take a leave of absence from the love for a year, not from the Order. And long before that stage is reached, “I enjoy his company” is not enough reason to seek out someone—in fact, it is counter-indicative, since it is counter productive. Probably a worse reason ascetically is that “he needs me”—or “I want to help him.” This sounds terribly cynical, but I have only recently come to experience how much I can come to need those people who came to need me, and how much turmoil caring about people can stir up. Caring has its limits.

Feelings of love aren't the only ones that are spoiled these days. Group therapy experiences we have all been exposed to in varying degrees have perhaps conditioned us excessively to tell it like it is; and when we do that in a personal matter, it just never is like it is. Not only is it telling it as we see it, but the very telling (or shouting) adds to and colors the reality. Don't misunderstand me—I'm not against plain talk. One of the finest things ever said to me was that you could always tell where I stood, and I think that ought to be true of all of us. People ought to know what we care about,

what we think, where we are at, where we stand. But we surely don't have to pontificate on everything; an awful lot isn't worth fighting about, and many faults of others must simply be endured. Few of us have enough influence to change another's personality structure, and when we set out to do it because *our* feelings are rubbed the wrong way, one must suspect we aren't living the ascetical life. I am not so sure we should be silent about what annoys us, however, if it is a question of an overt activity, such as playing a stereo at top volume around midnight, or lateness, or neglect of a job. It isn't a pampering of feeling to complain about what ought not to be tolerated; it is a demand of reason. Maybe anger expressed hurts less than resentment repressed. But again, pathological honesty is just that—pathological, sick.

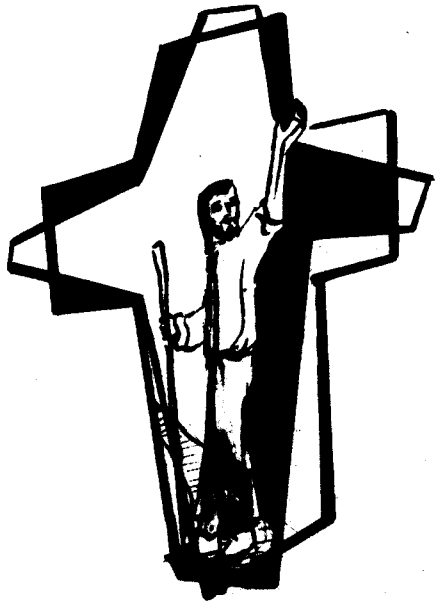
One of the enduring temptations to us religious is to take back what we have given up—we will leave aside the temptation to seek an exclusive friend to compensate for our vow of virginity—by way of concern with material goods or travel or hobbies or culture, or sport. As money comes more and more easily our way, so does the desire to spend it. We start with records, then tapes, 4-track, 8-track—and the sky is the limit. Or we like knick-knacks, and soon no one

can walk around in our room for fear of destroying what is too dear to us. Or we feel the “stage” is something people of our education ought to be familiar with, and so Broadway and Off-Broadway become our beat. Or we find out we can travel, if we can scrounge up the money; so we become a money scrounger and are off and running at every opportunity. And heaven help the community if we get the keys to a car. Psychologically it is normal to want to cushion our sacrifice as much as possible; but asceticism does mean we don't hide the sacrifice under the cushions. (It doesn't, of course, require us to put pins in the cushions either, or prevent us from enjoying what is legitimately ours to enjoy.)

Our third pair of polarities is that between self-adoration and self-immolation. I used to think the old joke about the third knot in the cord standing for obedience, since it is the hardest one to reach, was perhaps naive. In light of the personalist invasion of religious life, however, the joke does seem to be telling it like it is! One gets the impression—and I wish you superiors reading this would correct me if I am wrong—that subjects rather frequently pressure superiors for assignments they want, the ultimate weapon being, “Yes, or look for a replacement

for me.” How one could work him/herself into such a state of mind that this stance is not at all seen as out of the ordinary, is a real mystery (solved only by the fact of Original Sin—and maybe by an awful lot of previous compromise on the part of those in authority). What is particularly pernicious about such a practice is that, one suspects, it is given a theoretical rationalization under the rubric of self-fulfillment. It seems to me that giving up the ability to “call our shots,” to be our own boss, is precisely what the vow of obedience is about. And it seems the more I opt for what suits *me*, the more self-centered and selfish I become. The exhortation before the marriage ceremony talks about the surrender of personal desire in the interest of the common life; do brides of Christ make less of a commitment? Do we really believe that finding our life is the way to save it? That isn't what the Lord said.

What about service to others—ought we not to push ourselves forward if others need us? Yes, to an extent; no, if we ourselves become the judges of where our talents and needs are best to be used. We have not made a promise to do the maximum of good we perceived we could do, but we have promised to obey those who have the right to judge where we can do the maximum



amount of good. I am asking, not for blind obedience, but just for obedience. If the Provincial wants to ship me off to Buffalo to teach religion to high-school sophomores, I'll probably scream and holler that a Ph.D. in philosophy will be wasted, and I'll want to be sure he isn't shipping me out because someone whispered a naughty rumor about me in his ear (e.g., that I *want* to go there); but after it's all out I guess my promise is to obey, not to teach philosophy, and I got a degree only to enable me to do good (which I can do anywhere).

Certainly we have a right, even a duty, to express our preferences, or honest judgments, of where we will do best (re-

fusing to do so could be a cop-out); but demanding or feeling that it is so all-important that we be where it will help us best, is to have made an idol of self rather than a burnt offering. That life with God we are working at can flourish in spite of circumstances, and God certainly wants this life to develop more than we do—we won't be stunted because we have given ourselves totally.

One more area—self-immolation means giving in on daily life and regulations, not just on big matters like assignments. Actually, love or others should dictate considerable obedience, because most regulations in community are there to ensure justice and fairness. But even apart from others, doing what the routine calls for, stupid as it may seem to be, is a self-immolation which is unsensational but eminently acceptable, if it is done out of love—or out of the desire to be more loving than you are. The desire for justice and fairness ought to be a passion—well, almost a passion—in superiors; but it ought to be slumbering in us—at least as regards ourselves. Fairness will never be achieved, and if we are constantly looking to see if other are doing their fair share, we are depriving ourselves of life. If injustices are always obviously inflicted on you, I question your ability to judge. If you get the dirty end of the

stick occasionally, welcome to the club. If you find yourself building resentment because of injustice, attend to that (ask about it—maybe they think you *like* all that extra work). And here I enunciate a basic “spiritual” (or unspiritual) principle that governs asceticism and just about everything else: personal sanity is a priority item. If asceticism in any way, shape, or form is really disturbing to you, junk it — it isn't for you. In particular, we look upon the fruits of unhappiness and bitterness as indicating that your honest attempts need to be lowered to more realistic levels. I suppose I shouldn't say this in a time when we are all so tempted to be at such a low level ascetically and to keep ourselves there; but it is true, and relevant to all of us, if not now, at some time in our lives.

Perhaps the reverse side of the sanity coin is the positive precept that asceticism be *flexible*, even as life is. There are seasons in the spiritual life, and what is ripe in spring isn't necessarily ripe in autumn. Sometimes we need to be tough with ourselves, sometimes gentle — “always” and “never” don't go well with things human—and asceticism is, for all its inspiration and support by grace, a human endeavor. Rigidity, we can be sure, is one of the things that

had given asceticism a bad name. Particularly important is the need to bend our own practices to suit others on occasion, as Francis ate with the hungry friar so as not to embarrass him, and as he dined with elegant people for their sake.

It is recounted of Francis that he went to dine with a Cardinal and ate only a crust of bread. We can take several approaches to this act—claim a special inspiration of the Spirit and praise Francis, claim he was just boorish and blame him, or claim he was immature and made an honest mistake—the kind of mistake young ascetics and idealists make. I think the last is truest. And my point is that we ought not ourselves be afraid to make similar mistakes. Prudence means daring sufficiently. And we ought to risk going too far, once in a while; it is a necessary part, or almost a necessary part, of growth that we follow honest, sincere lights. You can't put a forty-year-old head on twenty-year old shoulders, and you shouldn't try too hard to do that. It really wouldn't be too bad if someone did get a little sick from fasting once in a while. The lesson of caution we have all been taught by life may not, in other words, be entirely appropriate for a younger person—at least not as appropriate as for us. And we ourselves ought to

risk a bit once in a while: not to play the hero, or to think we can take a giant step beyond mediocrity and have it made, but in response to God's inspirations. Occasionally God may be at least willing to let us try a little foolishness for him.

I have already mentioned the personal element of penance, but for religious penance must be communal as well. As a group we must imitate the self-denial of Christ and the saints. One of the reasons, if we reflect on the matter, for our interest in and attraction to community life is that we are the kind of people who are group-oriented in the sense that we want help in doing good. Nobody wants to be the only saint in the crowd, and nobody should be forced to put himself in such a position. We need the good example and mutual support of one another—I can keep quiet if you can—and give up eating between meals if you will, and talk to unlovable people if you do, and visit our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament if you come along. Perhaps your community had some crazy penitential practices you did in common—like cross prayers on a full stomach, or beating yourself with cords, or groveling at people's feet (maybe you can enlighten me here)—but I suspect

that the testing that Father Koser talks about hasn't been done, that good, solid penitential exercises have been eliminated along with some less happy ones, and that there is presently a vacuum when it comes to community penance. The vacuum has to be filled, but what fills it ought to come out of community discussion which is really communal, and really real. We ought to decide to do only what we intend to do; but we ought to make some decisions—perfect compliance will never come, and so we can't do nothing saying there is no consensus.

A final thought, which should have been the first thought, is that the ascetical foundation is, of course, Jesus Christ. In Francis and the other saints, self-denial is something embraced as a personal favor, as it were, to Jesus—not that he needs it, but they needed to give it. Jesus, as we have pointed out, did deny himself, and those who want to follow him loyally cannot but embrace a similar lifestyle. Here, as always, we must let the Lord lead us by the hand—it is his to give us the love to follow him more and more closely. The more we can bring ourselves to think of him, the more we come into contact with him by prayer, the more he will lead us.

Brothers in the Spirit:

Francis and Ignatius

SISTER MARIE THERESE ARCHAMBAULT, O.S.F.

IN THESE times we witness an intense spiritual renewal in the Church. In addition to the other movements of revitalization many religious orders have returned through study and prayer to the roots of their own commitment by scrutinizing their founder's special charism. I have come through a renewal of my own knowledge and spirit by studying the life and gifts of our founder, Saint Francis, and also have been renewed through the experience and deepening understanding of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Because the one Holy Spirit, the true source of newness, is constantly at work in these and other facets of the Church's life, I turn to the Spirit seeking a deeper unity of these great traditions left by two extraordinarily gifted men in the history of the Church, and therein a deeper unity of my own experience.

The *Spiritual Exercises*, approximately fifteen years in

formation, were completed in 1537 and were officially approved by Pope Paul III in 1548. Since then they have touched and sanctified the lives of millions in the Church.¹ Because of their unique structure, which combines inspired knowledge of the spiritual life with knowledge of human nature and experience, they are considered a work of spiritual genius. When entered seriously, the *Spiritual Exercises* can set off an inner dynamic that leads one deeply into knowledge of self, of Jesus Christ, and into the true service of Christ and his Church. They are structured into a series of contemplations and meditations which if earnestly made could gradually lead one to an ongoing process of healthy and realistic spiritual growth. The first structured section of prayer, called a "week," zeroes in on the reality of sin: in creation, in mankind; and leads one to a deeper contemplation of the real effects

¹H. Coathalem, S.J., *Ignatian Insights* (Taichung, Taiwan: Kuangchi Press, 1971), pp. 3-4

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of sin in both realms. Coathalem, a long-time authority on the *Exercises*, states that there are two main aspects to the goal of the First Week: a deep sorrow and contrition for one's real sinfulness, and a deep awareness of one's singular predilection: in spite of one's faults, God has shown extraordinary kindness and mercy.³ The result of this first week within the retreatant should be one of abiding gratitude and praise of God and and his great and singular love for that individual.

The Francis that I have met in my contemplation and study is a man who has received the grace of the first week—as outlined in the *Exercises*—in a way that, as far as I know, is unequalled in the history of the Church. In the first five years of his conversion, a time of withdrawal and of deep prayer for him, Francis was transformed by such a profound and abiding sense of his radical sinfulness that it thrust him into a state of being that was paradoxically one of great sorrow for his sin and of great joy that God loved and forgave him. This can be seen in the following passage from Celano's *First Life*:

... he sought out a place of prayer, as he had done so often, and he persevered there for a long time "with fear and trembling," standing "before the Lord of the whole earth," and he thought "in the bitterness of his soul" of the years he had spent wretchedly, frequently repeating this word: "O God, be merciful to me the sinner." Little by little a certain unspeakable joy and very great sweetness began to flood his innermost heart. He began also to stand aloof from himself, and, as his feelings were checked and the darkness that had gathered in his heart because of his fear of sin dispelled, there was poured into him a certainty that all his sins had been forgiven and a confidence of his restoration to grace was given him.³

We see this experience of Francis reflected in the all-important first-week prayer of the *Exercises* called the "second prelude," which states:

Here it will be to ask for shame and confusion, because I see how many have been lost on account of a single mortal sin, and how many times I have deserved eternal damnation, because of the many grievous sins that I have committed.⁴

Francis received the grace of this "shame and confusion" spoken of

in this prelude, to an amazing depth. This is evident in his writings, which are permeated with a sense of his real wretchedness in God's sight; it can be caught in the following two line-quotations from his *Testament*, written at the end of his life. In the beginning he says, "I, Brother Francis, worthless as I am, leave to you, my brothers . . .,"⁵ and at the end of the same document he says, "And I, Brother Francis, your poor worthless servant, add my share internally and externally to that blessing. Amen."⁶ Again, along this same line, we see in I Celano the depth and intensity of this grace within him:

He was "honored by all" and extolled by all, with praiseworthy judgement; and he alone considered himself the most vile among men, he alone despised himself most severely, for often, when he was honored by all, he suffered the deepest sorrow; and rejecting the favor of men, he would see to it that he would be rebuked by some one. He would call some brother to him, saying to him: "In obedience, I say to you, revile me harshly and speak the truth against the lies of these others." And when that brother, though unwilling, would say he was a boor, a hired servant, a worthless being, Francis, smiling and applauding very

much, would reply: "May the Lord bless you, for you have spoken most truly . . ."

Francis wrote a series of twenty-eight short statements, *Admonitions*, in which he warns his friars to face and live out this basic truth from which man tries to hide: God alone is good; we are miserable sinners in his sight. In *Admonition* 2, he states that the root of evil in man is shown when he claims that any good comes from himself and not from God.⁸ In *Admonition* 5, he asks, "What have we to be proud of?" He adds, every other creature on earth serves God better than human beings do.⁹ Throughout the *Admonitions*, Francis warns the friars in the same spirit against the many subtle ways they as "religious" are likely to be sinful. To Francis the roots of sinfulness are manifested when man turns from this basic truth: God is Good, and man is nothing but a poor sinner in his sight. This spiritual reality had been seared into Francis' soul by an extraordinary gift of grace. It is this same reality that Ignatius speaks of in the contemplation of the First Week, second exercise, where he directs the retreatant thus:

Fourth Point: I will consider who God is against whom I have sin-

³Ibid., p. 76.

⁴*Omnibus* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973), p. 250.

⁵Louis J. Puhl, S.J., ed. & trans., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* (Chicago: Loyola U. Press, 1951), p. 26.

⁶*Omnibus*, p. 69.

⁷Ibid., p. 273.

⁸Ibid., p. 70.

⁹Ibid., p. 79.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 80.

ned, going through His attributes and comparing them with their contraries in me; His wisdom with my ignorance, His power with my weakness, His justice with my iniquity, His goodness with my wickedness.¹⁰

By asking the retreatant to contrast his sinfulness with various aspects of God's goodness, Ignatius wants to lead the retreatant to this same sense of one's unworthiness and utter wretchedness. It is an esteemed grace to be received by the retreatant as pure gift. Yet this realization was given Francis in such an intense way that from his conversion to his death he lived with the paradoxical suffering and unspeakable joy of this truth. His death was, at his request, the death of a poor, wretched sinner, even though he had received the most exquisite and sublime of mystical gifts.

This stance of a poor sinner before God seems to have been the basic stance of both Francis and Ignatius; and the sense of shame and confusion resulting from this deep spiritual realization is seen to be a work of grace; indeed, it is gift. Francis received this gift of understanding in an extraordinary way during his long hours of prayer. Ignatius directs the retreatant to pray for this graced understanding. But the other side of this shame for one's

sin is a sense of joy and gratitude; this is also a work of grace. At the end of the second exercise of the First Week, Ignatius leads the retreatant to this spirit of gratitude in this way:

Fourth: This is a cry of wonder accompanied by surging emotion as I pass in review all creatures. How is it that they have sustained me in life! . . . How is it that the earth did not open to swallow me up, and create new hells in which I should be tormented forever!

Colloquy: I will conclude with a colloquy, extolling the mercy of God our Lord, pouring out my thoughts to Him, and giving thanks to Him that up to this very moment He has granted me 'life. I will resolve with His grace to amend for the future . . .¹¹

Thus, when one understands first that he is indeed a sinner and experiences the shame and confusion resulting from this, the next step is the realization that God loves him in spite of sin, or maybe even because of it. Then there is a cry of wonder that God sustains and nurtures me; above many other creatures he allows me to continue living. This understanding leads one to inestimable peace and joy and an abiding sense of praise for so great a favor to one so undeserving.

Perhaps this joyful aspect of Saint Francis has shone through

the centuries much better than the one mentioned above—his awareness of his sinfulness. This is the legendary Francis: a man walking about the countryside singing and praising God, speaking to animals, playing sticks for a violin, and in general being a joyful, carefree person. A little deeper reading of his life reveals the true reason for his joy: God's overwhelming goodness to him, a sinner, who deserved much worse. Here we see the truth expressed in the early years of his conversion:

He was afire within himself with a divine fire and he was not able to hide outwardly the ardor of his mind; he repented that he had sinned so grievously and had offended the eyes of God's majesty," and neither the past evils nor present gave him any delight . . . One day, however, when he had begged for the mercy of God most earnestly, it was shown to him by God what he was to do. Accordingly, he was so filled with joy that he could not contain himself, and, though he did not want to, he uttered some things to the ears of men. But, though he could not keep silent because of the greatness of the joy that filled him, he nevertheless spoke cautiously and in an "obscure manner."¹²

It was because of this understanding of himself as a sinner—



saved, that he was drawn to begin preaching to others, but always in a spirit of joy: "From then on, he began to preach penance to all with great fervor of spirit and joy of mind, edifying his hearers with his simple words and greatness of heart."¹³ Gradually, his attention turned from himself toward God:

Greatly rejoicing over the gift and the grace of so great a father and lord, St. Francis gave thanks with his brothers to Almighty God, who "setteth up the humble on high and comforteth with health those that mourn" . . . While they were going along the way, they talked with one another about the number and the quality of the gifts the most kind God had bestowed upon them . . .¹⁴

This same joy and gratitude grew and expanded in the life of Francis until finally toward the end of his life when he wrote the prayers *The Praises of God* and *Cantic of Brother Sun*, we

¹⁰Puhl, p. 30.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²1 Celano 6-7, *Omnibus*, p. 234.

¹³Ibid., 23; p. 247.

¹⁴Ibid., 34; p. 256.

sense that his whole being was suffused with this praise and gratitude for the gift of God himself to men as shown in all of creation. But always, even at the time of the most sublime transports he could never forget that his true being was sinful and always likely to offend God's law. Consider, e.g., this passage:

It was Francis' custom to reveal his great secret but rarely or to no one at all, for he feared that his revealing it to anyone might have the appearance of a special affection for him, in the way in which special friends act, and that he would thereby suffer some loss in the grace that was given to him. He therefore carried about in his heart and frequently had on his lips this saying of the prophet: "Thy words have I hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against thee."¹⁶

At the end of the first exercise of the First Week Ignatius sends the retreatant to the foot of the cross to speak to the Crucified One "exactly as one friend speaks to another, or as a servant speaks to a master . . ."¹⁶ This experience of meeting Christ is important even for Ignatius because he plans it early in the *Exercises* as a foundational and underlying event for the one striving after perfection. So it was

for Francis, from the beginning of his conversion to the end.

Francis' highest intention, his chief desire, his uppermost purpose was to observe the holy Gospel in all things and through all things and, with perfect vigilance, with all zeal, with all the longing of his mind and all the fervor of his heart, "to follow the teaching and footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ." He would recall Christ's words through persistent meditation and bring to mind his deeds through the most penetrating consideration. The humility of the incarnation and the charity of the passion occupied his memory particularly, to the extent that he wanted to think of hardly anything else.¹⁷

In fact, as his life progressed it seemed that Francis became totally permeated by the love of Jesus Christ, so that he loved only to think of Him:

The brothers, moreover, who lived with him knew how his daily and continuous talk was of Jesus and how sweet and tender his conversation was, how kind and filled with love his talk with them. His mouth spoke "out of the abundance of his heart," and the fountain of enlightened love that filled his whole being bubbled forth outwardly. Indeed, he was always occupied with Jesus . . .¹⁸

As the retreatant kneels at the foot of the cross Ignatius asks him

to dwell upon three questions. If asked seriously of oneself, these questions can have far-reaching effects in one's life. It was questions just such as these that Francis allowed to permeate his being until the answering of them consumed him. They are as follows:

What have I done for Christ?
What am I doing for Christ?
What ought I to do for Christ?

"As I behold Christ in this plight," Ignatius continues, "nailed to the cross, I shall ponder what presents itself to my mind."¹⁹ Looking to the Crucified One and seeing what the effects of personal sin can be, Ignatius leads the retreatant to amend his life and begin to direct all life-actions to live for this Jesus he thus comes to know.

As we look into the life of Francis, again we see how profoundly this realization of his sinfulness and essential poverty before Jesus Crucified affected him, outwardly and inwardly:

—He cast away his fine garments for a poor one in the form of a cross.

—He yielded his worldly possessions back to his natural father in order to stand before the eyes of men what he was in God's eyes.

—His experience at the San Damiano crucifix was essential

and definitive for his vocation in the Church.

—He yielded his will to the least of his brothers as a sign of his inner nothingness and poverty.

—The eventual gift of the stigmata stands as an everlasting sign of the divine ratification of his life-long sacrifice.

Thus, even a cursory reading of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius of Loyola and of the life of Saint Francis of Assisi gives a basis for comparison of the basic spiritual thrusts of these two spiritual giants. Both set the realization of one's sinfulness as the initial sine qua non, indispensable grace of the spiritual life. Both show that from this grace flows all real spiritual joy, gratitude, and praise of God. Both place the meeting of Jesus Christ as primary and essential to amendment of life. Though they lived two centuries apart, they were very close in their deepest spiritual desires. What Ignatius so brilliantly and succinctly outlines in the *Exercises* in order to lead the faithful to God, Francis lived in a way that has drawn millions to seek his same spirit. Both of these God-filled men came to seek God above everything else, and their witness and work draw us there also.

When I reflect upon the prism of my experience of God as it

¹⁶Ibid., 96; p. 310.

¹⁶Puhl, p. 28.

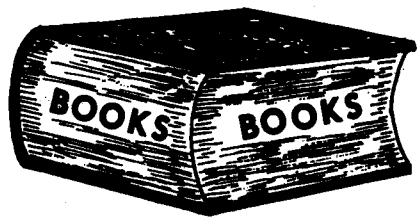
¹⁷I Celano 84, *Omnibus*, p. 299.

¹⁸Ibid. 115; p. 329.

¹⁹Puhl, p. 28.

comes through the persons of Francis and Ignatius, I see the wealth of a God who provides for his people like a "householder who brings out of his storeroom treasures both old and new" (Mt. 13:52). With the Holy

Spirit there can be no dichotomy in grace, only unity, integrity, and harmony—as there surely is, likewise, between our brothers in Christ, Francis the son of Peter Bernadone, and Ignatius the Basque from Loyole in Spain.



Encounter with God. By Morton T. Kelsey. Foreword by John Sherrill. Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 2nd ed., 1975. Pp. 281. Paper, \$3.95.

Reviewed by Father Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M., a member of the Staff of St. Francis Chapel, the Northway Mall, Colonie, New York.

As the date of copyright indicates, this is not a book hot off the press (the first edition was published in 1972). Evidently its worth is attested by this second, paperback edition. Basically, the book is a plea for attention to religious experience as a remedy for the apparent demise of recent (and not so recent) forms of religion based too exclusively on faith and on metaphysical speculation.

In the first of the book's two parts, Father Kelsey deals with the reality of spirit. After sketching the contemporary situation in the first chapter he exposes its historical roots

in the second, dealing specifically with liberal Protestantism, the neo-orthodox reaction, demythologizing, and neo-Thomism. The alternative to these viewpoints, all of which the author finds more or less defective, is outlined in the next chapter. Making extensive use of Jung's psychological categories, the author details the vision for which he has by now become so well known, according to which man inhabits two quite distinct "worlds," the physical and the spiritual. Both, he insists, are a matter of experience, not mere speculation or sheer belief. There is a good deal of historical exposition, ranging from Plato to Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade, and there is a good explanation of the true meaning of myth. After some more historical forays in chapter four (transcendental philosophy, phenomenology, Barth, Bultmann and neo-Thomism again), Father Kelsey goes on in dialogue with Jung, Freud, and the analytic philosophers to spell out his own vision in somewhat greater detail than he had done in chapter three. The dialectical method evident even in this outline is pedagogically quite effective even if it does seem somewhat repetitious.

The second part of the book is subtitled "The Importance of Christi-

anity." The methodology of its first chapter is, once again, historical, as the author shows in vivid detail the world views prevalent prior to and at the time of Christianity's founding, and then proceeds to survey the record of Christianity itself in regard to the experiential side of religion. The eighth chapter, "Relating to the Spiritual World," is deserving of special praise, as the author offers twelve rules or methods for relating to the realm of the spirit. These rules are not the figment of the author's imagination, but rather they are the fruit of a great deal of experience. An almost constantly recurring point is the need for a spiritual director, not too common an idea today. The author believes that dreams are the hidden voice of God and that we should pay attention to them. Anyone interested in making spiritual progress will find the help that he or she has been looking for in these twelve rules.

Father Kelsey is a master when it comes to giving his readers the gist of someone's thought and analyzing its strengths and weaknesses. It may be appropriate, before concluding this review, to point out the same ambiguity in this book that one finds in so much more of the author's work, especially the two later books, *Myth, History, and Faith* and *The Other Side of Silence*: viz., though he writes forcefully and eloquently of "the angelic" and "the demonic," not to mention the constantly repeated phrase "the spiritual realm," it is never clear whether these forces are or are not personal beings. It would be good to know where Morton Kelsey stands on this not unimportant issue. This book is, at any rate,

strongly recommended both for its profound philosophical analysis of western thought and for the cogency and clarity of its presentation.

Fully Alive: Decisions for an Integrated Christian Life. By William Toohey. St. Meinrad, Ind.: Abbey Press, 1976. Pp. viii-116. Paper, \$2.95.

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., M.A. (Phil., St. Bonaventure University), Coordinator of Alumni Services at St. Bonaventure University and a frequent contributor to our pages.

The title of this book refers to the purpose the author had in mind in writing it: to teach people "how to depend upon grace . . . and to receive life as a gift that will lead them to become more fully alive" (Preface).

Father Toohey, a campus minister at Notre Dame, here calls upon his readers to be mindful of the various decisions they must make for themselves in order to become more fully alive. All people living in this world must constantly make decisions with reference to the world and their place in it, but always with a view toward their eternal destiny. Yearning for God, every man is faced with daily decisions involving the world. The many kinds of such decisions furnish a convenient criterion for dividing the book's material into chapters: "Decision for Happiness," "Decision for Love," "Decision for Jesus," and so on.

Father Toohey has a rapid and easy style, and his exposition is filled with examples drawn from today's world—people from television stories, mov-

ies, plays, acquaintances he has met in different parts of the country. He refers to writings of his contemporaries as well as those of earlier writers.

This is a very readable book. There is much material for reflection and meditation as well as motivation for action. Repeated references to today's media contain an appeal to younger readers: high-schoolers, college-age students, young adults. At the same time the older adults will derive much food for thought, since the author does not neglect Sacred Scripture and some of the classical authors. Replete with examples to illustrate the principles that are enunciated, the book is not simply a theoretical work. It is aimed primarily at being a practical guide for the making of decisions. Especially interesting to this reviewer is the chapter entitled "Decisive Persons: Profiles in Protest." This is about people who had the courage to make their own decisions and in so doing to overcome "peer pressure": they failed to "join the crowd." The last chapter, "The Final Decision: For Death and Life," deals honestly and forthrightly with what is for many a distasteful subject—death.

All in all, this reader was impressed by the book. Specific scriptural passages cited seemed to possess an applicability quite in keeping with the milieu of the society in which we live today. This is a small book, but one strongly recommended to all Christian people, young and old alike. We all have important personal decisions to make every day; this reviewer thinks that this book will help us in that daily responsibility.

On Being a Christian. By Hans Küng. Trans. E. Quinn. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976. Pp. 720. Cloth, \$12.95.

Reviewed by Father Gerald M. Dolan, O.F.M., S.T.D. (Louvain), Associate Professor of Theology at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, N.Y., and Lecturer in Theology at St. Bonaventure University.

Hans Küng has given us a book which refuses to nestle comfortably in the reader's hands. Known for spirited writing and bold statement, he has written a large book which he presents as a small *Summa* of the Christian faith "for all those who, for any reason at all, honestly and sincerely want to know what Christianity, what being a Christian, really means." He writes for those "who are seeking a way to the uncurtailed truth of Christianity and Christian existence, unimpressed by doctrinal constraints on the right, or ideological whims on the left" (p. 19). To this end and with complete trust in the historico-critical approach he seeks the figure and the message of Jesus of Nazareth as these can be found in "the original Christian Documents" (p. 127). Küng speaks of his purpose:

The reader will rightly expect us to work out for him in his practice of Christianity, in a way that is both historically exact and yet up to date, in the light of the most recent scholarship and yet intelligibly, what is decisive and distinctive about the Christian program: what this program *originally* meant, before it was covered with the dust and debris of two thousand years, and what this program, brought to life again, can offer *today* by way of a meaningful,

fulfilled life to each and every one. This is not another gospel, but the same ancient gospel rediscovered for today! [p. 20].

It is fair to say that Küng has concentrated on telling the story straight. His intention and emphasis are more catechetical than deeply dogmatic. Christ's story happened in a certain place and at a certain time. How can his life touch our lives in this twentieth century? This is the crucial question which, though unspoken, intrudes through every part of this book. Why should one be a Christian? Is the question of the first major division, "The Horizon." What is the approach to God that is valid in a world where humanism has finally come to center stage. Why should be Christian in a world where science, intellect, and responsibility have contributed to man's open mind? How do we face the mysterious and the obscure? Do we have to?

A second question focuses the second division, "The Distinction." What is special about Christianity? How can we moderns approach God? And how can we do this in a world where the great world religions are recognized as a "permanent fact" (p. 89)? Küng presents some dimensions of western Christianity's re-thinking the phenomena of "other religions," in what they say in common about the human condition. He speaks disapprovingly of the recently minted Anonymous Christianity. Christianity is the critical catalyst among all religions.

What we must strive for is an independent, unselfish Christian *ministry to human beings in the religions*. We must do this in a spirit of open-mindedness which is more than

patronizing accommodation; which does not lead us to deny our own faith, but also does not impose any particular response; which turns criticism from outside into criticism and at the same time accepts everything positive; which destroys nothing of value in the religions, but also does not incorporate uncritically anything worthless. Christianity therefore should perform its service among the world religions in a dialectical unity of recognition and rejection, as *critical catalyst and crystallization point* of their religious, moral, meditative, ascetic, aesthetic values [p. 112].

The third division, "The Social Context," continues on in a heavily Christological vein. Jesus—what does he want? Who is he? (p. 177). Küng will not accept a domesticated Christ: "Jesus did not belong to the ecclesiastical and social establishment." It is particularly in this context that the reader senses Küng's rhetorical power. It is here too that one senses in a particularly acute way the ambivalence of his proposal as it refers to the identity of Jesus. One cannot but recall the heavy cadence of the phrase, "... before it was covered with the dust and debris of two thousand years," and wonder. . . . Nicea, Ephesus, Chalcedon, Constantinople, and other Councils great and small? Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Athanasius, Flavian, Leo? Is the Jesus we came to know through what was handed on to us the very one whom Küng uncovers in an historico-critical examination of the New Testament? Is it to be assumed that everything which was handed on was so fatally distorted that our search can be conducted only through the scholar's scalpel cutting through layers of accretion to lay bare the

primitive portrait of Jesus? The impression is unavoidable. Küng seeks to put distance between him and most dogmatic developments, particularly as these relate to the understanding of Christ. He is certainly critical of conciliar developments, not excluding Nicea and Chalcedon. His exegetical presuppositions seem even to exclude such developments as the Fourth Gospel, the Infancy Narratives, and the "deutero Pauline" letters. There is a sense of ambiguity. How is it possible to extol the evolution of dogma and, in the same context, forbid its development?

This book is also impatient with most of the language by which the word concerning Christ has passed through history. "Only too often behind the Christ image of the councils there can be perceived the unmoving, passionless countenance of Plato's God, who cannot suffer, embellished with some features of Stoic ethics" (p. 131). The language of enthusiasts and pentecostals falls equally under a heavy ban: "And if the Christ of the devotional objects of a Christian piety and the God beyond this world of a Christological dogmatism have no support in the Gospels, then still less does the all-too-earthly idol of ecstasies and addicts" (p. 137). Literature and poetry in their turn feel the brunt of Küng's critique.

No one today will champion the immutability of theological language. No one can defend the adequacy of any human word to comprehend the reality which God is. This does not mean that there is no content worth caring about in what has been handed on. Theological language needs always to be immersed in

the dynamic Word of God. As imprecise as this sounds in this short context it is the only test we have available to know if a theological word fits. No matter how clearly we apprehend the original Christian documents, there is forever lurking the further question: what is the source of the source?

In what is central to Küng's message I discern confusion. Who is the Jesus Küng champions? As a method for discovering Jesus, has Küng substituted a theology for a religion? Has he, influenced by an *a priori* that contemporary man cannot understand language about the supernatural, sought some middle way? I cannot put out of my mind what a controversialist of another century wrote about a theologically middle way:

The *Via Media* appeals to the good sense of mankind; it says that the human mind is naturally prone to excess, and that theological combatants in particular are certain to run to extremes. Truth, as virtue, lies in the mean; whatever, then, is true or not true, extremes certainly are false. And, whereas truth is in a mean, for that very reason it is ever moderate; it can tolerate either extreme with great patience, because it views neither with the keenness of contrariety with which one extreme regards the other. For the same reason it is comprehensive; because, being in a certain sense in the centre of all errors, though having no part in any of them, it may be said to rule and temper them, to bring them together, and to make them, as it were, converge and conspire together in one under its own meed and gracious sway. Dispassionateness, forbearance, indulgence, toleration, and comprehension are thus all of them attributes of the *Via Media* [J. H. Newman, *Lectures on Certain Difficulties Felt*

by Anglicans in Submitting to the Catholic Church (London: Burns and Lambert, 1850), pp. 304-05].

If Küng's effort has been to be as comprehensive as possible in the understanding of religious values, his effort is paradoxically the source of much of his power as a controversialist and the ever building concern on the reader's part to know as clearly as possible where the author stands. As I progressed through the book, questions—and there are many—about particular statements or claims congealed into one: "Can the Christian religion survive on the foundation—the picture of Christ—which this book presents?"

Despite its wide ranging scholarship, this book is fundamentally ambiguous. This fault is rooted in the unexamined acceptance of the contemporary technocratic mind as the paradigm for theological method. This has resulted in the substitution of message for mystery. A message may be as concise and as clear as possible, and have been framed in accordance with the most stringent canons of dispassionate examination, it may or may not attract attention. Mystery—in the biblical sense at least—speaks of God's power really present in the concrete historical moment to touch the heart and bring conversion. It is the opinion of this reader that this book, as erudite and bold as it may be, is, to use words which Newman spoke about his own *Via Media*, a paper theory.

The Prayer of Jesus. By Thomas Corbishley. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 119. Cloth, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Simeon Capizzi, O.F.M., former Assistant Professor of Mathematics at St. Bonaventure University and missionary in Bolivia.

This small book contains an Introduction and three sections (I. The experience of prayer; II. The prayer of Jesus; III. The prayers of Jesus). In the Introduction, the author gives his reason for the structure of the book: "It has seemed worthwhile to begin with a discussion of the experience of prayer as a common human activity Then, in the normal human situation, we shall turn to *speculate* on the way in which what we may call the prayer life of Jesus *may be thought to have developed* After that we shall be in a better position to appreciate the many passages in the gospels where his prayers are quoted" (p. 11, emphasis mine). Early in the book, he states: "The purpose of this book is to attempt to get behind the utterances of Jesus to his own spirit of prayer, what we may call his prayer life" (p. 7). He attempts to go back to the temporal events, the life and work of Jesus, "trying to understand it in its historical setting."

It is questionable how well the author has succeeded in his attempt to give the reader an understanding of the "experience" of prayer. He himself seems to feel he has done a poor job of it when he states: "To sum up what may seem to be a rather untidy and ill organized chapter, . . ."; but he does give a good summary of what he was trying to explain.

The author presents, in the second section, his thoughts on the mystery of the Incarnation. He refers to the "total personality of the one who—re-

maining in a special sense Son of God—was yet in the habit of speaking of himself as the Son of Man” (p. 35). He centers his attention on the humanity of Jesus. He speaks of the development of that humanity, pointing out its limitations, e.g., Jesus, “expressing ideas which were clear enough to him in ways that brought these ideas down to the level of [his disciples’] comprehension . . . could not adequately clarify his ideas even to himself” (p. 53).

In these two sections, Father Thomas Corbishley gives some thought-provoking ideas; but it is the third section that he really gives the “marrow” of the book. Here he gives an excellent commentary on the Lord’s Prayer along with comments on those prayers of Jesus related to Thanksgiving and Unity (the Priestly Prayer of Christ), as also those related to Mission and Dedication, the Prayer in the Garden, and some thoughts on the Holy Spirit. He concludes with the prayer on Peace.

This reviewer had some difficulty getting through the first and second sections and would have been tempted to lay the book aside; but coming to the third section, he felt well rewarded. It is felt that any reader will be so rewarded by that third section. The many ideas presented by the author on the topics found there will provide much food for thought.

A Call to Virginity? By Thomas Dubay, S.M. Huntington, In.: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1976. Pp. 63. Paper, \$1.95.

Reviewed by Sister Mary Seraphim,

P.C.P.A., a regular contributor to our pages as well as to The Queen and other religious periodicals, and Directress of Novices at the Monastery of Sancta Clara, Canton, Ohio.

Father Thomas Dubay presents, in this fine little book, *A Call to Virginit*y?, the Christian essence of the virginal lifestyle in the Church. Basically it is a love-response to a Love-call perceived either clearly or dimly in the depths of a young person’s conscious relationship with the Lord. This book is directed to young women of our contemporary culture who might be interested in giving themselves to God in “the most radical lifestyle imaginable.”

Father prepared this presentation in order to fill a gap in present literature on the subject. He wished “to place in the hands of vocation directors a brief but comprehensive explanation of consecrated celibacy that they can share with interested young women.” In my opinion, Father Dubay has succeeded admirably.

In his treatment, virginit

y is seen almost exclusively as a personal response to be a consecrated woman rather than as a means to an end, such as availability or freedom from marital cares. The approach is eminently positive, but Father does not shy away from meeting all the usual objections to a virginal lifestyle which our culture raises. The consecrated woman is a fully loving person whose choice, though radical, is profoundly meaningful and fulfilling. One of the interesting features of the book is its brief treatment of the various options which virginal living can take in

today’s world.

As a novice directress, I highly recommend this book to all persons who are interested in promoting religious dedication in the Church today. I believe Father has done religious life in general (and young people also) a great service in this lucid, brief, and contemporary treatment of virginal living.

We Were with St. Francis: The Legend of the Three Companions. Trans. and ed. by Salvator Butler, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. xx-223, incl. index. Paper, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Father Eugene Honan, O.F.M., M.A. (Franciscan Institute, in Franciscan Spirituality), Guardian of St. Anthony Residence, Boston, Mass.

This lovely English translation of the medieval “Legend” of Brothers Leo, Rufino, and Angelo presenting the words and deeds of Francis that they knew about, has a fine Franciscan flavor. As the three authors themselves put it in the Introductory Letter, “We have not written these things in the form of a biographical story . . . Rather, we have gathered, as from a lovely field, what in our mind were the most beautiful flowers . . .” (pp. 3-4). That’s what this is: a collection of beautiful flowers full of Franciscan fragrance. In the Introduction Father Butler tells us that the 90 or more stories that make up this book are “artlessly written up, but recorded by men who had shared the daily life of the celebrated saint” (p. xi). The title,

“We Were with St. Francis,” is a suitable one since the authors, Brothers Leo, Rufino, and Angelo, were respectively Francis’ secretary, his close friend, and his religious superior.

This is a book for those whose hearts yearn to be warmed by hearing from eye-witnesses what Saint Francis was like in his ordinary religious life. Those who would like a more scholarly and academic treatment of this work are referred by the translator to *St. Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources*, pp. 957ff. But Father Butler’s presentation is a popular one. Its style has an easy grace: the stories are pleasant, absorbing, and edifying; and the reader could pick it up at whatever story and experience a spiritual refreshment and a deeper appreciation of the founder of the Franciscan way of life.

Besides the index with proper names and geographical locations there is a topical index to the main themes of Franciscan spirituality: e.g., on pp. 212-14 under “Prayer” the subdivisions (each with many references) are “Characteristics of Francis’ Prayer,” “In Solitude,” “Manner of Praying,” and “Various Persons in Prayer.” Preachers and spiritual directors will find excellent leads in this topical index, pp. 193-220.

Each story generally has a brief introductory digest of its contents. This digest may run some few to a dozen lines and is a feature of real service to those preparing talks or writings on Franciscanism who may wish to see at a glance the gist of a story.

One of the most charming of the

stories is the one entitled "The Little Flock" (pp. 17-18). Francis is telling, for the edification of the friars, of a conversation, as it were, between Jesus and His Father in heaven. Jesus is saying to His Father, "I would like you to form and give me a new and humble people . . . Let them be different in humility and poverty from any that ever existed before *and may they be content in having only me*" (emphasis added). And the story goes on with the Father answering, "My Son, what you have asked has been done." And for that reason, Francis says, the name "Lesser Brothers" is given to the friars.

Another very moving story is the

one about the time when Francis was suffering from blindness. A friar having compassion on him asked Francis if he would like to have the Scriptures read to him. The saint answered, "Brother, every day I find so much sweetness and consolation in my memory from meditating upon the examples left by the Son of God that if I should live until the end of the world there would be little need of my hearing or meditating on any more Scripture readings" (pp. 160-61).

The reviewer highly recommends this book. Those who read and reflect on the moving lessons of *We Were With St. Francis* will find much added relish in things Franciscan.

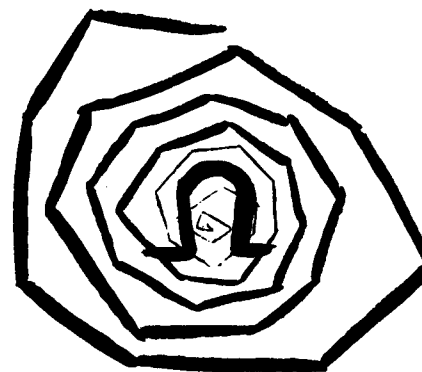


WHAT THINK YOU OF THE CHRIST?

(continued from page 250)

The "flaws" of a high Christology are lined up in O'Collins' first chapter, and suggested remedies available in a "low" Christology are presented in the second (it might have been more elegant to discuss each difficulty together with its remedy once—in the same chapter). The third chapter, at any rate, is devoted to the impossibility of separating discussions of Christ's "being" or "ontology," from those dealing with his mission, function in the divine plan of salvation, etc., precisely in

light of our own contemporary situation and it needs. Fourthly, O'Collins acknowledges the attractiveness of a purely devotional, almost fideistic, approach to Jesus such as that of Muggeridge. Surely he is right, here, in preferring a better informed, critically enlightened devotion. The appendix deals all too briefly with the fascinating subject of Jesus' imagination, as though to show by example how much both speculation and devotion have to gain by attention to concrete, flesh-and-blood



history. All in all, *What Are They Saying about Jesus?* is a very readable book, written in a breezy style that reflects its original format as a series of popular articles. (No indication is given of where the articles appeared; and, in fact, the author speaks on p. 53 of the chapter as an "article," whereas on p. 55 he speaks of the "book"). It is mainly a report, with some evaluative agreements and dissents, on the contributions of Walter Kasper, Hans Küng, Bruce Vawter, and Raymond Brown. Although more care might have been taken in its editorial preparation (fuller publication data, identification of English translations, an index, and a bibliography, perhaps), these desiderata may have been prudently traded off in the interest of lower price and wider audience.

Father Dermot Lane is Professor of Theology at Holy Cross College, Dublin, and Chairman of the Irish Theological Association. His book is much more ambitious than Father O'Collins'; it is an excellent synthesis of Christology which, with a bit of supplementary source reading could well form a fine textbook for use in

a college level Christology course. The book is replete with specific insights—some original, others repeated but ever striking—which space precludes enumerating here. It is impossible to leave unmentioned, however, the point made on pp. 10-11, that "Christ" is *not* the Lord's name—nor, we might add, a decent way to address him, any more than one would go to the Holy Father, meet him, and say, "Pope," or "Montini" when calling to him in the vocative case. The book is divided into two main parts. One deals in five chapters with "the Christ event": an explanation of the two "Quests" for the historical Jesus, an examination of the latest teaching on the Resurrection—evidence for it and theological understanding of it precisely as continuous with the Lord's public ministry and death. The other has to do with the "universal significance" of that Event; here the other five chapters provide an excellent historical survey of patristic times, through Nicea and Chalcedon and beyond; then an attempt to "reshape" Christology conceptually and to "relocate" it in the general theological outlook of Christianity and, finally, to determine its permanent significance and to reach a definite conclusion on the relation (post Luther and Bultmann) of the Jesus of history to the Christ of faith. As stated above, this is a really fine synthesis; would there were space to outline all the accurate, enlightening information it provides. As it is, we must be content simply to recommend it as highly as possible to every educated reader, and to push on to the problem at issue here.

Whereas O'Collins speaks simply

of "high" and "low" Christology, Lane distinguishes far more helpfully between a "closed low" Christology which begins and ends by considering Jesus as simply human, and a "low-ascending" Christology, which lends every possible sympathy to the contemporary concern for history, fidelity to evidence, etc., and yet finds itself forced precisely by that evidence to end up with a Christology that is quite "high" indeed. Some readers may regard this as quite a tour de force—a devious device whereby the author pays lip service to modernity while all the time intending to reintroduce traditional dogmatic claims. We do not think this is a quite fair way to put it, and yet we frankly cannot see that the Roman Catholic (leaving aside any other Christian) has any other choice.

It may be necessary, that is, to adopt modern methods if one is to get a hearing in scholarly circles these days. To many people in our day, it may be much, much more impressive to find oneself forced by the gospel evidence to admit that what the early Church said about Jesus is implicit in the Apostles' experience of him during his earthly ministry. But when all is said and done, one wonders whether it was worth all the effort. Faith, it turns out, is needed just as much in this low-ascending approach, as in the more direct, high approach which depends on the tradition of the Church.

Furthermore, Lane and—*a fortiori*—O'Collins have nowhere shown (although both have certainly and loudly claimed) either the inadequacy of

the person-nature-substance framework, or its incomprehensibility to "modern man." Lane, in fact, misinterprets the traditional notions, then when he has (as he thinks) "reinterpreted" them, he proceeds surreptitiously to reintroduce them into his own updated Christological formulations. Likewise, Lane seems not to understand fully the traditional doctrine of "communication of idioms," or why, in accord with that doctrine, it most certainly is not only correct, but also necessary to say that "Jesus is God."

In closing, we feel obliged to emphasize the positive evaluations of both these books. Both will bring you up to date interestingly and accurately on the issues facing contemporary Christology. Lane's book, in particular, will give you some really beautiful elaborations, refinements, precisions of traditional orthodox Christological dogma. But the book's very excellence serves to illustrate once again what we have seen so often in recent theological publishing: no author can be read uncritically or unthinkingly, but on the contrary, no matter how fine his work, it must be held up by the reader to the canon of orthodoxy as well as that of historical accuracy.

Where Christology in particular is concerned, there may be new and helpful ways to re-express the old, but there is no orthodox, legitimate way whatever to *un-say* that "The Word was made flesh," that in one Person there subsist two natures, and that Jesus is God.

Fr. Michael D. Mailhot, OFM

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CONTENTS

COSMIC, PSYCHIC, RELIGIOUS	282
<i>A Review Editorial</i>	
ON BEING LESSER BROTHERS	283
<i>Berard Doerger, O.F.M.</i>	
JEREMIAH	292
<i>Anthony Augustine, O.F.M.</i>	
THE CANTICLE OF THE SUN	293
<i>Antonine DeGuglielmo, O.F.M.</i>	
SAN DAMIANO	299
<i>Timothy Johnson, O.F.M. Conv.</i>	
FRANCIS: ONE WHO DARED TO SEE	300
<i>Sister Denise Marie Amato, C.S.S.F.</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	305



COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

This month's cover, by Sister Miriam, O.S.F., portrays the crucified Lord as the model of Franciscan humility and the source of Franciscan brotherliness. The other illustrations are by Sister Marie Monica, O.S.F., of the Sacred Heart Academy, Klamath Falls, Oregon.

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A REVIEW EDITORIAL

Cosmic, Psychic, Religious¹

READERS WILL doubtless recall the earlier work of Father Eloi Leclerc: *The Wisdom of the Poverello* and *Exile and Tenderness* (the latter book was reviewed in our pages in November of 1965). Now Father Leclerc has produced another overwhelmingly beautiful gem of Franciscan literature, marked as much by sober scholarship as by lyric poetry.

The author's underlying intention is to read St. Francis' Cantic of the Creatures as "a man's reconciliation with his total destiny in the world" (p. 189). He begins the project by stressing the historical circumstances of the Cantic's composition because, to accord it its due importance in Francis' life, one must realize that it was written to celebrate the assurance given Francis the preceding night, of his definitive union with Jesus crucified and risen.

The principle which governs the ensuing analysis is that, in Ricoeur's apt phrase, "cosmos and psyche are two poles of the same expressivity" (p. xi). Father Leclerc is thus able, while emphatically repudiating all forms of reductionism, to explore the psychological dimension of what always remains *also* a cosmic (exulting in ontological reality) and religious (theocentric) poem. He feels not merely entitled, but even obliged to do this, because the Cantic simply cannot be fully understood without this sort of psychological exploration. There are no objective reasons, e.g., for the arrangement of the creatures in pairs, for the order of the pairs, or for the specific values imputed to the creatures; but there are abundant, and cogent, psychological explanations for all these factors.

(Continued on page 303)

¹The Cantic of Creatures—Symbols of Union: An Analysis of St. Francis of Assisi. By Eloi Leclerc, O.F.M. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. xviii-255, incl. bibliography. Cloth, \$7.50.

On Being Lesser Brothers

The Gospel Concepts of Fraternity and Minority in the Rule of 1223

BERARD DOERGER, O.F.M.

"THE RULE AND LIFE of the Friars Minor is this: to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."¹ Francis begins his Rule of 1223 with these words, and he ends it on a similar note: "... so that we may observe the poverty and humility and the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we have firmly promised."² In the earlier Rule of 1221 Francis had stated practically the same thing,³ and in his Testament he assures us that the Most High himself made it clear to him that he "must live the life of the Gospel."⁴

The life of the followers of Francis is, then, to be a life in

the spirit of the Gospel. But what specific elements of this Gospel life did Francis emphasize for his brothers?

Many writers today seem to agree that the essentials of the Gospel life as viewed by Francis are embodied in the concepts of fraternity (brotherliness) and minority (lessness, littleness, humility). Thus Kajetan Esser writes: "This Gospel way of life in the Church contains its specific stamp in Fraternitas and Minoritas."⁵ In this same vein Esser points out that, in the very name Francis gave his followers (fratres minores, lesser brothers), he capsuled the very essence of

¹Rule of St. Francis (*Regula Bullata*), ch. 1. The English translation used in this article is from *The Marrow of the Gospel*, ed. Ignatius Brady, O.F.M. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1958).

²Ibid., ch. 12.

³St. Francis, Rule of 1221 (*Regula non-Bullata*), ch. 1 (*Omnibus*, p. 31).

⁴St. Francis, Testament (*Omnibus*, p. 68).

⁵Kajetan Esser, O.F.M., *The Definitive Rule of the Friars Minor in the Light of the Latest Research*, pro manuscripto, p. 30.

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their life and spirit.⁶

What we attempt to do in this article is to analyze the Rule of

1223 in the light of these two essential Gospel concepts of fraternity and minority.

I. On Being Brother

IN HIS analysis of the Rule of 1223, Father Esser indicates that the name Francis gave his brothers tells us much about what he wanted his followers to be.⁷ The main word, the noun, is *fratres* (brothers), and the adjective is *minores* (lesser). According to the name, then, the main element of the Franciscan Gospel life is being brother, the fraternity; minority, lessness, being little, being poor is an important but added modifier. This *minoritas* is subordinated to and directed to fraternity, brotherliness.

Unfortunately, Father Esser admits, the friars through a great part of their history have fought and squabbled and split with each other over poverty. As a result they have gambled away both the fraternity and the genuine minority of Saint Francis.⁸

1. Reception into the Brotherhood. The notion of brotherhood or fraternity in our way of life is quite prominent in the Rule of 1223. It is first of all significant

that those who wish to enter the Order are described as "those who wish to embrace this way of life."⁹ Likewise, when a brother makes profession, he promises to live according to "this way and rule of life."¹⁰ Thus there is no mention anywhere in the Rule about entering a monastery or cloister or place of any kind. Nor is profession confined to the three vows. Rather, when a person enters the Order, *he enters a way of life which he shares with brothers*, bound to them by strongly personal ties:

Should any person come to the brothers with the desire to adopt this way of life, they are to be directed to the ministers provincial. Only to the latter and to none other may the power be granted to receive new brothers. When the year of probation is ended, they are to be received to obedience, whereby they will promise always to live according to this way and rule of life [ch. 2].

2. Bonds of Brotherhood. The *common habit* that the Brothers

wear is to be a sign of their common poverty and common brotherhood and a means of recognizing another brother as they travel about the world:

And those who have already promised obedience are to have one tunic with a hood; if they wish, a second without a hood. And those who are in need thereof may wear shoes. And all the brothers are to wear clothing inferior in quality and appearance; and with the blessing of God they can quilt them with pieces of sack or other material.

And wherever the brothers may be together or may come upon any of their brothers, let them show by their behavior toward one another that they are all of one family [ch. 2].

The brotherhood is also held together by a *common cult or worship*, carried out in the closest conjunction with the life of the Church. This cult is the Divine Office (Our Father for the lay friars), including the Mass and *common fasting*.

The clerics are to recite the Divine Office in accordance with the rite of the Holy Church of Rome. . . . The lay friars, however, are to pray . . . the Our Fathers.

They are to keep a fast during the time between All Saints Day and Christmas, [etc.] . . . But whenever there is a clear necessity, they need not do any corporal fasting [ch. 3].

Another bond of the brother-

hood among the friars is the *one common superior* (the minister general). Through him and his representative in a given territory (the provincial), all the brothers are bound in obedience to the Church:

Brother Francis promises obedience and reverence to the Lord Pope Honorius and to his lawful successors, and to the Roman Church. And let the other brothers be bound to give obedience to Brother Francis and to his successors [ch. 1].

All the brothers are to be bound always to have one of the brothers of this religion as minister general and servant of the whole brotherhood, and they are to be held to strict obedience toward him [ch. 8].

Also I charge the ministers by obedience to ask of the Lord Pope one of the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, to be ruler, protector of this brotherhood, for this goal: that always submissive to this holy Church, prostrate at her feet, and firm in the Catholic faith, we may observe the poverty and humility and the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we have firmly promised [ch. 12].

A fourth bond of the brotherhood is the *General and Provincial Chapters*. The Provincial Chapter is to be an assembly of *all* the brothers of a province together with their minister. The purpose and significance of the Provincial Chapter was to afford

⁶Idem, *The Order of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1959), p. 40.

⁷Idem, *The Definitive Rule*, p. 13.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Rule of 1223, ch. 2.

¹⁰Ibid.

and facilitate a unity of outlook between the "whole fraternity" and the "fraternity in the individual provinces." The Chapters were also to serve as a moral support, giving encouragement to the brothers for their inward and outward life.¹¹

The ministers provincial are always bound to convene for this Chapter [of Pentecost], wherever the minister general shall have decreed; and this once every three years, or at a longer or shorter interval, as the same minister general may have decided.

After the Chapter of Pentecost each minister provincial and custos may, if he so wishes and it seems useful to him, call together the friars of his jurisdiction to a chapter once in the same year [ch. 8].

Other bonds of brotherhood that we find in the Rule of 1223 are the *common profession* of the Gospel way of life and the observance of the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. A final bond of the brothers was the *Rule* itself. This "marrow of the Gospel" was to guide their lives and unite them together:

The Rule and Life of the Lesser Brothers is this: to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through a life in obedience, without anything of their own, and in chastity [ch. 1].

3. Practice of Brotherhood and Brotherliness. The followers of Saint Francis must be brothers not just in name, but also in deed. If they have the gift of *working*, they must work faithfully and out of a sense of dedication to help supply the needs of the brotherhood:

When friars are blessed by the Lord with ability in some form of work, they should do their work faithfully and out of a sense of dedication. . . . As pay for their work, they may receive things necessary for bodily sustenance, for themselves or their brothers, but not money in any form [ch. 5].

And wherever the brothers meet one another on the road, they are to *show that they are all of one family*. They are to make known their needs to one another as genuine brothers and love their spiritual brothers more than a mother loves her own child. This brotherly love of the friars is to be their substitute for house, homeland, and monastery—everywhere and at all times:

And wherever the brothers may be together or may come upon any of their brothers, let them show by their behavior toward one another that they are all of one family. And if one of them is in need, he should in full freedom and trust make known that need to the other. For if a mother has such

care and love for the child born of her flesh, how much more love and care must not one have for him who is his brother according to the Spirit? [ch. 6].

Related to this love the brothers must have for one another is their *care and concern for the physically sick brother*, as well as *concern for the spiritually sick brother*. Brotherliness must also be preserved in *correcting any brother*.

And if any of them becomes sick, the other brothers are to take that care of him which they would wish to have themselves [ch. 6]. Should any brothers succumb to the temptations of the enemy and fall grievously into such sins as may have been reserved among the friars to the ministers provincial, then such brothers must betake themselves to their ministers as soon as possible, without delay. . . .

They must take care likewise not to be angered or disturbed because of the sin which another may commit, since anger and anxiety hinder charity in themselves and in others [ch. 7].

A superior too is simply a "brother among brothers," and his office is one of *service to the*

whole brotherhood. He is to give his undivided attention to his brothers, go to see them, admonish and correct them if need be, cheer them up and strengthen them. And when a brother comes to a superior for help in any matter, the superior must receive him with such brotherly goodness and kindness and approachability that the friar-subject feels like a master dealing with one of his servants:

Those brothers who are ministers and servants of the others should visit their brothers and duly admonish and correct them in humility and love. They shall never command them to do anything that is against their conscience and our Rule.

And should there be brothers anywhere who know and recognize that they cannot observe the Rule according to its true spirit, it is their duty and right to go to the ministers for help. On their part, the ministers are to welcome them with great love and kindness, and be so approachable toward them that these friars may speak with them and act as masters deal with their servants. This is indeed as it should be, that the ministers be the servants of all the brothers [ch. 10].¹²

¹²If the superior-subject relationship is this fraternal, then so, a fortiori, is that between clerics and lay-brothers. The one distinction made between the two in the Rule is in ch. 3, which distinction refers only to a friar's ability to read and is necessitated because the type of "Office" to be prayed was determined by this consideration. As Esser says, "The Church today should have greater understanding for this point in the life of the friars than the Church of the [feudalistic] Middle Ages" (*The Order of St. Francis*,

¹¹Esser, *The Definitive Rule*, p. 23.

Finally, the brothers are to be brothers not just among themselves, but to *all men and women*. The Franciscan fraternity is not to be closed within itself but open to the world in the biblical sense of being entirely dedicated to the service of the kingdom of God. The friars are to be *servants of God and his Church, examples of brotherliness to others in the world, peacemakers, preachers of penance and the good news of Christ, full of love toward all men, even their enemies:*

[The brothers] are to be as pilgrims and strangers in this world; and as those who serve the Lord in poverty and lowliness let them go begging for alms with full hope in him [ch. 6].

The brothers are not to preach in any diocese where the bishop may have refused them permission [ch. 9].

... always submissive to this holy Church, prostrate at her feet, and

firm in the Catholic faith... [ch. 12].

Now I counsel my friars, warn and beseech them in the Lord Jesus Christ that when they go among other men in the world they do not quarrel or bicker or criticize others. Rather, it is their duty to be mild, peaceful, and unassuming, calm and humble; and their words, no matter with whom they are speaking, must always be respectful of the other person [ch. 3].

Let them pursue what above all else they must desire: to have the spirit of the Lord and the workings of his grace, to pray always to him with a clean heart, and to have humility, patience in persecution and weakness, and to love those who persecute us, find fault with us, or rebuke us; for the Lord says: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. But he who has persevered to the end will be saved [ch. 10; cf. ch. 9].

II. On Being Lesser

THE SECOND element of the Gospel spirit that Francis wanted to instill into the life of his brothers was the spirit of minority: lessness, littleness, humility. This minority, to be sure, is close-

ly connected with the brotherliness that the friar must have. "We cannot be true *fratres*, unless we are at the same time *minores*."¹³ Our Gospel brotherhood is made possible, safe-

guarded, and perfected through our poverty and humility.¹⁴

1. Minority as a Basic Attitude of Mind. The minority or lessness of the friar minor must first of all be a basic attitude of mind and heart, an interior quality, which then finds expression in our exterior life. The friar must put on the mind of the poor, humble Christ. Several sentences in the Rule of 1223 describe this "lesser attitude" that the follower of Francis should have.

In Chapter 2, Francis cautions and begs his brothers "not to look down upon or pass judgment on those people whom they see wearing soft and colorful garments and enjoying the choicest food and drink. Instead each one must criticize and despise himself." There Francis is pointing out that the friars must not be Pharisees who condemn the world from their pedestal of poverty. Rather, their poverty should become the way to honest self-knowledge and self-criticism.¹⁵

This attitude of minority or lessness is later equated by Francis (in Chapter 10) with the "spirit of the Lord." This attitude or spirit consists negatively in the avoidance of all pride, vainglory, envy, avarice, the cares and wor-



ries of this world, detraction and complaint, and an attitude of superiority because of one's scholarly learning. Positively, it consists in a spirit of selfless and dedicated prayer, humility, and patience in all adverse situations and in love even for one's enemies.

This passage spelling out the minority demanded of the lesser brothers is, according to Father Esser, one of the most important passages in the Rule:¹⁶

I warn the brothers and implore them in the Lord Jesus Christ that they keep themselves free from all pride, vainglory, envy, avarice, the cares and worries of this world, detraction and complaint. And those who have no book-learning should not set their hearts on acquiring it. Instead, let them pursue what above all else they

p. 36), and practical legislation does indeed seem to have moved in this direction since Esser's book was published.

¹³Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., Talk to the Cincinnati Provincial Chapter, 1969.

¹⁴Esser, *The Order of St. Francis*, p. 30.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 26.

must desire: to have the spirit of the Lord and the workings of his grace, to pray always to him with a clean heart, and to have humility, patience in persecution and weakness, and to love those who persecute us, find fault with us, or rebuke us; for the Lord says: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. But he who has persevered to the end will be saved [ch. 10].

2. Material Poverty or Lessness: The Sister of Interior Minority. The interior poverty or minority of a friar must manifest itself in the brother's exterior life. Hence, the friars are to be poor or less in their *clothing*, their *food*, their *houses*, their *means of travel*, and their *possessions and wealth*. (They are not to have *money*, which in Francis' day was not so much a means of exchange, as real capital—only the rich and powerful of society [the *majores*] had it!).¹⁷

Yet this material poverty demanded by Francis is not pushed to some unattainable ideal; it is tempered in the Rule itself, according to the needs of the friars and the circumstances of time and place. Thus the friars are allowed a certain kind and definite amount of clothing, con-

cerning which the ministers may make other provisions. They may wear shoes in cases of necessity. The friars may have breviaries to say the Divine Office. They may ride on horseback (travel like the rich) in case of necessity and infirmity. They may accept wages for their work. And the superiors are obliged to look out for the needs of the sick and the clothing of the other friars according to circumstances of place, time, and season.

We can draw from the many instances (too lengthy to reproduce here in full) stated in the Rule—especially chapters 2, 3, and 4, but also chapter 5—as well as other instances outside the Rule (permission by Francis for churches, houses, cells, sacred vestments and vessels, tools for their trade),¹⁸ that the brothers of Francis are allowed to have the things they need for their life and work, judged according to the circumstances of time and place. But they are to have only the use of these things given to them by God, and must not appropriate and possess them as their own. They are to be as pilgrims and strangers in this world, serving the Lord in poverty and lowliness. Thus they are made rich in virtue and brought to the "land of the living":

Such indeed is the greatness of

this perfect poverty, that it makes you, my dearest brothers, heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven, so that though you are thereby in want of this world's goods you are made rich in virtues. Let this always be your "portion" here below, for it will bring you to "the land of the living." Hold fast to it, most beloved brothers, with all your soul, and desire never to have aught else under heaven, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom you have chosen [ch. 6].

3. Work and Minority. Although the friars are not to be ashamed to beg for alms in imitation of the poor Christ, they should seek their sustenance first of all by work. Yet they are to have always the spirit of minority in their work, asking for their wages "humbly as befits the servants of God and followers of most holy poverty" (ch. 5). Nor are the brothers to make any demands or legal claims for their wages, but they are to accept gratefully only what they need to live on.

4. Minority in Relation to Others. In their relationship with one another, the brothers must also strive to be "lesser," giving themselves completely in love and service to one another. They are not to "quarrel and bicker and criticize one another," but rather be "mild, peaceful, and unassuming, calm and humble," always "respectful of the other person" (cf. ch. 4). They should be as

members of one family, making known their needs to the others, taking care of the sick friars, both those physically and those spiritually sick, not from motives of superiority but out of true humility and genuine brotherly love (cf. chh. 6 and 7).

5. Minority in Superiors. For Francis the superior must also be inferior and lesser. The very name Francis uses, taken from the Gospel, indicates this. He is to be the "minister and servant" of the other brothers. He is to visit and correct the brothers "in all humility and love" and never command the friars anything against their conscience and the Rule (cf. ch. 10). In short, the superior is to treat his subject-brothers as a true *brother* and as a true *lesser* brother would.

6. Minority and the Subject-Brothers. That the superiors are to be ministers and servants of the other friars does not take away the subjects' duty of being humble and less. The subject-brothers must accept willingly and obediently the admonitions and corrections of the superiors in all things not against their conscience and the Rule. For the subject-brothers have given up their wills for God's sake in their profession:

On the other hand, the brothers who are subject to them are always to bear in mind that they have

¹⁷Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁸Brady, *Marrow of the Gospel*, p. 151.

given up their own wills for God. For this reason I strictly command them to obey their ministers in all those things which they have promised the Lord and which are not against conscience and our Rule [ch. 10].

Also, the friars are to be subject and show themselves less to those in authority outside the Order, specifically to the Bishop of the diocese where they are (ch. 9) and to the Holy See (ch. 12).

7. **Minority in Preaching.** Finally, the preaching of the friars should be stamped with their minority; that is, it should be performed without fancy rhetoric,

in a straightforward and concise manner—as simple as the Lord's words in the Gospel:

I advise and beseech that in their preaching they use words that are well chosen and chaste, to instruct and edify the people. Let them speak to them of vices and virtues, punishment and glory, in a discourse that is brief, because it was in few words that the Lord preached while on earth [ch. 9].

In these ways, then, we lesser brothers will be following "the poverty and humility and the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we have firmly promised" (ch. 12).



Jeremiah

Fingers
Entering me
Strike the strings of my soul
With blissful picking
And grating strums
Which merge within to melody
Pregnant to play
For deaf ears—

Lest I burst
Spilling sounds
Discordantly.

ANTHONY AUGUSTINE, O.F.M.

The Canticle of the Sun

A Critical Reconstruction and Translation**

ANTONINE DEGUGLIELMO, O.F.M.

I HAVE HAD occasion, recently, to read an interesting and provocative study of the *Canticle of Brother Sun* by a confrere and friend, one particularly competent in the field of Franciscana.¹ It purports to recover the original Canticle, as Francis had it written and put to music.² The end result, at least in its main point, is acceptable and merits further study by the competent. In the following pages I shall limit myself—for the most part quite severely—to an assessment of the rhythmic arrangement proposed by

the writer and, on the basis of that study, shall submit an English translation of the Canticle to the critical attention of the readers of this periodical.

The original proposals of Omaechevarría and my own assessment too, quite clearly, are based on the original (Umbrian) text of the Canticle and, to appreciate those proposals as well as my judgments fairly, one should have to make frequent reference to that text.³

All who are acquainted with the life of the Poverello are well

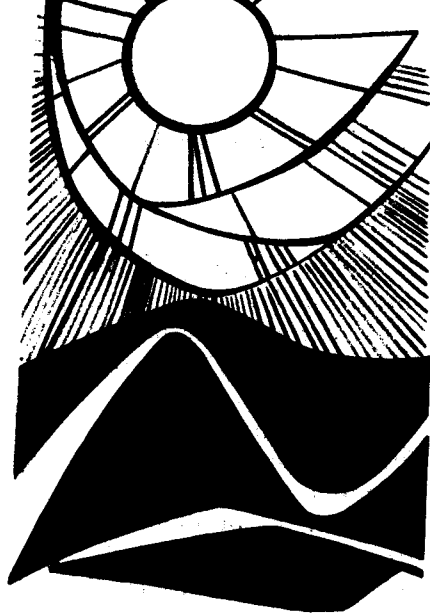
**Recent bibliography is impressive. One need consult only F. Bajetto, "Un trentennio di studi (1941-1973) sul Cantico di Frate Sole," *L'Italia Franciscana* 49 (1974), 5-62. Another example would be *Selecciones de Franciscanismo*, which has devoted a double issue to the subject: 5/13-14 (1976).

¹I. Omaechevarría, O.F.M., *Nueva interpretación rítmica del Cántico de las Creaturas* (Quaderni di "Frate Francesco" 13; San Marino, 1975) —extracted from *Frate Francesco* 41 (1974), 149-60, 203-12.

²That the presumably original composition of the Canticle might have been lost should cause little surprise. No longer extant, for example, is a canticle that Francis composed, words and music, for the poor ladies of San Damiano: M. Bigaroni, "Compilatio Assisiensis" degli scritti di fr. Leone e compagni su S. Francesco d'Assisi (Pubblicazioni della Biblioteca Franciscana, 2; S. Maria degli Angeli, 1975) 85 = *Legend of Perugia* 45.

³K. Esser, O.F.M., *Die Opuscula des hl. Franziskus von Assisi* (Spicilegium Bonaventurianum 13; Grottaferrata, 1976), 128-29.

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aware that two sections now found in the Canticle—those dealing with pardon and with sister death—are not part of the original composition. They are for the most part neglected here, and with their suppression we discover the following divisions in the Canticle:

- section one: a general invitation to praise the Lord;
- section two: cause for praise—sun and moon;
- section three: cause for praise—wind and water;
- section four: cause for praise—fire and earth;
- section five: final invitation to praise.

Strophic Arrangement

In each of sections 1-4 of the

original Canticle Omaechevarría finds, beneath the presently encumbered text, a strophe of three lines followed by an antistrophe of two lines. To arrive at this reconstruction of the original composition, however, extensive surgery is called for at two points: rather more in section two, rather less in section four.

The proposed reconstruction runs up against a formidable obstacle: the total lack of corroborating manuscript evidence. Indeed, even the *Speculum Perfectionis*, 120, confirms the text of the Canticle as we have it today.

There is nevertheless some justification for the critical surgery: section one, the well preserved section three, section four for the most part, and even the postscripts on peace and death, clearly reveal the above arrangement. The *textus receptus* of section two is cluttered with needless elements, nor is there any real reason for the last line of section four. Were that the sole basis for the surgery performed, it would still seem justified.

There is a yet more compelling reason for this critical operation: the fact, too well attested to be questioned, that the Canticle was set to music and intended for singing by Francis himself.⁴

With the same basic pattern in sections 1-4, one would expect the melody to repeat itself in each: this would presuppose a constant strophe-antistrophe, 3-2, rhythm there. The length of the individual lines might vary to some extent, as for example in the Psalms, but the pattern would remain constant.

Accordingly, despite initial misgivings doubtless brought on by previous experience in biblical criticism, I am drawn more and more to acceptance of the strophic arrangement proposed, with all the violence it may comport to the *textus receptus*.

Internal Development

The thought pattern is readily evident: after a general doxology in section one there follow three sections featuring the works of creation, with strophe stressing a masculine, antistrophe a feminine work (in the Umbrian). Francis singles out successively: the luminaries of the sky—sun/moon (stars); then the four cosmic elements—wind/water, fire/earth. He thus omits the animal world whatever the reason; it is certainly not out of aversion, his

whole life bearing testimony to his love for it.

On the other hand, it is in no way true that he neglects man, the masterpiece of creation. On the contrary, it is he who is at the center of the Canticle, the agent of the praise of God, whether in the person of Francis (body of the Canticle) or in his own right (conclusion: give praise, my fellow men, and bless the Lord).

Rhythm

Is there a pattern, even loose, of consonance/assonance at the end of the individual verses? Omaechevarría does find one.⁵ I must acknowledge that a rhyme, if it exist, is much too haphazard, even fortuitous, to be a factor in reconstructing the original composition.

Much more significant is the rhythm or meter of the lines, which lends external substance to the lyric poetry of the thought. Admittedly, there is here too a certain elasticity. But if the surgery in sections two and four discussed above is allowed, it will be possible to discern the following pattern of ictuses in my reading of the original draft of the Canticle:

- 1: Altissimu onnipotente bon signóre,
tue so le láude la glória e l'honóre
et ónne benedictióne.

⁴1 Celano 109, 115; *Compilatio Assisiensis* 66, 83, 84 = *Legend of Perugia* 24, 43, 44; *Speculum Perfectionis* 119, 123.

⁵*Op. cit.*, 4-6.

Ad te sólo, Altíssimo, se konfáno
et núllu homo ene dígnu te mentováre.
(3-3-2 :: 3-4)

- 2: Laudáto sie, mi signóre, per méssor lo frate sóle
lo quale iórna radiánte cun grande splendóre,
de te, Altíssimo, pórtá significatióne.
Laudáto si, mi signóre, per sora lúna e le stéлле,
in celu l' ai formáte claríte et pretióse et béлле.
(4-3-3 :: 4-4)
- 3: Laudáto si, mi signóre, per frate vénto,
et per áere et núbilo et seréno et onne témpo,
per lo quále a le tue creatúre dai sustentaménto.
Laudáto si, mi signóre, per sor áqua,
la quale è multo útile et húmîle et pretiósa et cásta.
(3-4-3 :: 3-4)
- 4: Laudáto si, mi signóre, per frate fócu,
per lo quále enn' allúmini la nócte,
ed ello e béлло et iocúndo et robustóso et fórte.
Laudáto si, mi signóre, per sóra nostra matre térra,
la quále ne susténta et govérna.
(3-3-4 :: 4-3)
- 5: Laudáte et benedícete mi signóre et rengратиáte
et serviáteli cun gránde humilitáte.
(4-3)

One might note, too, that the sections on pardon and death⁶ conform to this rhythmic pattern, though he does get the impression of greater improvisation or, if you will, of a less studied pattern.

To conclude, I find very compelling the fact that the Canticum was set to music by the poet himself. In view of the substantial conformity of the sections, this too would appear to

⁶"Laudato si, mi signore,
per quelli ke perdonano per lo tuo amore,
et sostengono infirmitate et tribulatione.
Beati quelli ke'l sosterrano in pace,
ka da te, altissimo, sirano incoronati.
Laudato si, mi signore, per sora nostra morte corporale,
da la quale nullu homo vivente pò skappare.
Guai a quelli, ke morrano ne le peccata mortali:
Beati quelli ke trovarà ne le tue sanctissime voluntati,
ka la morte secunda nol farrà male."

require a basic rhythmic pattern. True, this might have been modeled after the Psalms; yet the more or less evident rapprochement with contemporary responsibilities points in the direction we are following.⁷

Meaning of "per"

Before submitting our translation, a word on the meaning of the preposition "per" is in order, since it appears to be central to the understanding of the Canticum. One familiar with modern Italian, and even as a dilettante with early regional languages/dialects of Italy, will be aware that "per" is polyvalent. It is hardly surprising, then, to find a variety of translations for this word in the Canticum. Though a philological study is out of place here, the word cannot be neglected because of its impact on the explanation of the Canticum.

Other translations that are proposed do fit the context to some extent and find confirmation in early writings concerning Francis. However, not only is a like confirmation found for the meaning "for, because of,"⁸ but in addition, and principally, the context of the Canticum clearly

points to it. Francis gives praise to the Lord, and let me anticipate, for various works of inanimate nature, telling each off for the specific benefit it brings to man: light, beauty, nourishment, etc. When he has brought his list to a close, he invites all men to praise God and thank him "per" these creatures, doubtless *because of* them. It cannot be otherwise once he has inserted the invitation to express gratitude.

Thus the hymn composed by Francis is not just another version of the Canticum of the Three Young Men (Dn. 3:52-90), in which various works of creation are apostrophised and invited to praise the Lord. An independent expression of love, of praise of God for his works, by one who considered himself the lowliest of these works, it is the most powerful because it runs counter to prior and contemporary heretical views that looked upon creation as the principle of evil.

Translation

On the basis of the above, I am now able to submit a fresh English translation. It is quite faithful to the reconstructed original, but there is no attempt to recover the beat.

- 1: All High, all powerful, good Lord:
To you our praises, glory, honor,
Blessing of every kind!

⁷Omaechevarria, *op. cit.*, 17-19.

⁸For example, *Compilatio Assisiensis* 88 = *Legend of Perugia* 51.

To you alone, all high, do they belong:
Your name no man is worthy to utter.

- 2: Be praised, my lord, for brother sun,
Who ushers in the day, radiant in splendor.
Of you, all high, does he bear witness.
Be praised, my lord, for sister moon and stars;
In the sky bright, precious and fair have you formed them.
- 3: Be praised, my lord, for brother wind,
For air, for weather cloudy and fair, of every kind:
By them do you nourish your creatures.
So useful and lowly, so precious and clear.
- 4: Be praised, my lord, for brother fire,
By whom you light up the night:
So fair and gay, so hale and strong.
Be praised, my lord, for sister mother earth:
She keeps us and governs us.⁹
- 5: Praise and bless my lord, to him give thanks:
Serve him with great humility.

⁹To complete the translation of the Canticle as we have it:
(Bringing forth much fruit, tinted flowers and plants.)
Be praised, my lord,
For those who pardon for love of you
And bear weakness and tribulation.
Blessed they who bear them in peace:
By you, all high, will they be crowned.

Be praised, my lord, for our sister bodily death,
From whom no living man can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Blessed they whom it will find doing your holy will:
Them second death will do no harm.



San Damiano

O Brother Francis,
In your younger years
The cross was cold wood.

It stood in your way,
A barrier to passion.

In sterile basilicas it hung,
Fierce scepter of a distant tyrant
Hurled at sinners such as you.

Now in quiet chapel it proclaims
A more intimate, loving King.

No longer external object.
Burned to ash by interior fire
From the gaze of a crucified Lover.

Once, constricting millstone carried,
Here, a person impelling.

Poor man's mother,
This church is fertile womb.
Here is your re-birth.

Christ is the Cross.

TIMOTHY JOHNSON, O.F.M.CONV.

Francis: One Who Dared to See

SISTER DENISE MARIE AMATO, C.S.S.F.

“EYE HAS NOT seen, nor ear heard the wonders in store for those who believe.” There was a man who dared to see, dared to hear the wonders the Lord had in store for him. Saint Francis, the simple man of joy, knew what it meant to wonder at creation. He touched in the depth of his soul a fondness, an attraction, a yearning for the gifts of the Creator. Whether to marvel at the blackest beetle or rejoice in the dawn riding the shoulders of the mountain peaks, Francis praised the Mighty One for His great goodness. Neither the place, the time, nor companionship made a difference. He lifted his prayer of thanks: “How glorious the handiwork of God.”

From the sense of beauty which permeated the sight of Francis grew an appreciation for his brothers and sisters in Christ. There was even an intimate love of the leper, whom society labeled outcast and untouchable. Francis saw his Father's goodness in, and revered the gift of creation in, all he met: in all

things he touched, in all marvels he beheld.

God allowed Francis to enjoy the marvels about him, and then He began to ask him to give such a gift away. Celano explains the gradual weakening of Francis' health—the gift to be given away:

Since according to the laws of nature and the constitution of man it is necessary that our outer man decay day by day, though the inner man is being renewed, that most precious vessel in which the heavenly treasure was hidden began to break up and to suffer the loss of all its power. . . . he incurred a very severe infirmity of the eyes, according as God has multiplied His mercy to him [1 Celano 98; *Omnibus*, p. 312].

It seemed strange that someone in whom the rustle of a leaf, or a blanket of flowers, or a windy dirt road would create such ecstasy, would have to suffer such a painfully slow loss of sight. Better for a man who never noticed to lose such a gift; but for such an illness to befall the eyes of one who delighted so in, and drew such an awareness of God's

Presence in sensible reality, it almost seemed unfair.

All of creation was brother and sister to Francis. All men and women were friend to Francis. His eyes were a channel to, and a covenant with his Father, through which he was able to lift the hearts and eyes of thousands after him to see the beauty he saw. Animals, plants, birds, people—it didn't matter—they were beautiful. He saw the face of his Father in all things. One cannot but feel the closeness this man of God had with the world around him in the words of his poem, the “Canticle of Brother Sun.”

Surprisingly enough, the gradual deterioration of Francis' eyesight did not become a hindrance to his love of creatures, creation, or Creator. In fact, it enhanced that love. Francis no longer really needed physically to see the things around him, to behold the faces of those he met. He could see beyond sight. As a result of his gentle, almost simplistic wonder and love for all things, he could see all things not only in the luminosity of their own true natures, but as mediating the divine Presence. Francis no longer needed to see the waterfall; he became the waterfall and knew what total, free giving was. He no longer needed to see the sun; he knew its warmth and need for its place in

man's heart. He no longer needed to see a lamb; he became the lamb for all men even as his Master had done before him. He no longer needed to see the fields; for he knew the vastness of God's love. Francis no longer needed to “see”: he could see inside the Beauty, and it became a part of him.

Such love of God's handiwork implanted a permanent impression of it in his heart, his memory, his soul. Anywhere he went, he could stop and even though he was physically unable to see as well toward the end of his life, he had before him the images and beauty he had experienced—the faces of those he loved, those he had met. Celano mentions that Francis did not despair over the gradual loss of his sight, for even during the cauterization of his eyes he was able to praise:

My brother fire, that surpasses all other things in beauty, the Most High created you strong, beautiful, and useful [2 Celano 166; p. 496].

This was an opportunity for his flesh to suffer a little more for the sake of Christ's sufferings.

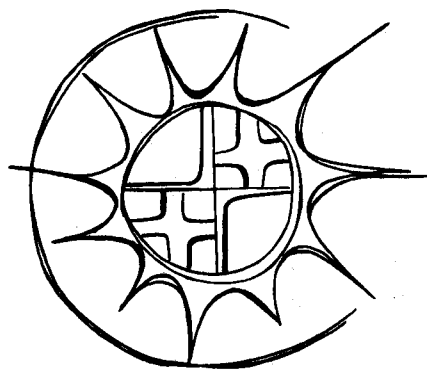
Francis left us all a key to joy and personal fulfillment: the gift of true sight, which truly goes beyond the physical. This sight was “inner sight,” God's sight, God's light so present within that we no longer need to see outwardly. How many of us ever

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notice the raindrops or snowflakes, the sheep or hillsides, the flowers or horizons? How many of us take time to glory over the birth of one of God's creatures, or the soaring of a sparrow, or the wonder of a worm? Our society today takes little time to see what beauty God has placed before us; we are more concerned with what we have and where we can go. Beauty is a fading reality in many of our lives. Will we ever be able, like our father Francis, to give back the gift of sight to our Father because we have drawn it so totally within ourselves, that even with the physical absence, the reality remains? Could we lay before our God the gift we use the most (or perhaps, the gift we waste the most)? Francis brought "seeing" into his being. Have we seen enough, marveled enough in the simple gifts of the earth's love that we could draw them so totally within?

The Blessed Francis is a model of inner vision: of one who found the pearls of the earth's womb and implanted them within himself. His inner being became a shining light. There, within him, rested the rainbow, the flower, the rock cliffs, the grass—everything made. There within his being rested the faces of his brothers, the faces of the poor, the face of his Father.

He rejoiced in all the works of



the hands of the Lord and saw behind things pleasant to behold their life-giving reason and cause. In beautiful things he saw Beauty itself; all things were to him good [2 Celano 165; pp. 494-95].

Have we not taken our sight for granted? Few of us have time in a world so bent on schedules and deadlines, meetings and appointments, to slow down long enough to "wonder." Few of us remember how to be still while nature reveals her birth pangs. Few of us have time to be conscious of existence because we are so wrapped up in getting ahead. Our sight races past the simple, free riches of life. If we can so easily pass by a moon-tinted mountain, or the dancing brook, will we not also pass by the whispers of God's Presence? Francis knew they come unexpected and spontaneously. God could come in the tree's upreaching branches or the lamb's plea. Because of Francis' closeness to the earth, God's Presence rarely

passed him by. Francis' sight was interiorized. He experienced the closeness of his Maker within himself because he loved the closeness outside himself.

It would be good for us to ask ourselves if we can risk walking "inside"; if we can dare to travel the "closeness" journey within—the windy road of spiritual sight, the inner glow of wonder. Have we met God in His outward gifts so fully that like Francis we can now begin to celebrate the

spiritual sight; or are we comfortable with racing past the true gateway to the Kingdom?

Francis' whole being was *sight*; his whole being became the Beauty. Creation walked the paths of his soul. Every man is invited by Francis to *see* thus—to experience the Beauty within, God's gentle footsteps on our inner paths. Francis saw; he suffered joyfully the conversion of outer to inner sight, the cauterization of his gift. Beauty calls us also to dare to *see* the Wonder.

COSMIC, PSYCHIC, RELIGIOUS

(Continued from page 282)

Drawing heavily upon the work of Eliade and Jung, as well as that of Ricoeur and Scheler, the author sets forth those psychological explanations in a series of chapters each of which deals with one stanza of the Canticle. He traces the odyssey of Francis beginning with the encounter with the Most High, seen in vv. 1-2 as absolutely transcendent and unapproachable, and descending in stages to the various creatures—the sun so luminous, the intermediate creatures, including first of all stars and moon, also luminous in the night, and finally Mother Earth, at the depths of which the Most High is again encountered, but this time, thanks to the Incarnation and divine Kenosis, precisely as most immanent and intimately present.

Not even a substantial indication can be given here, of the richness of the symbolism involved. Father Leclerc rightly insists, in his fifth chapter, that Francis is exploring a very special "inner world" in this poem, and that the images of this "world" cannot be reduced either to the mere material objects they represent or to the abstract ideas they may have as counterparts. This is the world of dreams, of archetypes and symbols. It is, true, the world of the libido, desire, eros—but in Francis, when he wrote this poem, these factors had been liberated from their "anarchic forms" and integrated with the "life of the spirit" (p. 210).

As Sister Denise Marie points out in her article elsewhere in this issue, then, it really was not very important

for Francis to "see" physically any longer, so fully had he integrated his profoundest self and the depths of its psychic recesses with the material realities he had come to love so deeply as epiphanies of the divine Presence.

Following the chapters on the original Canticle are two on the added verses which contain some highly perceptive insights on pardon and peace as realities that represent in human beings the self-same unity and reconciliation symbolized by Francis' spiritual odyssey through the created realm, and on Francis' approach to death as something personally and existentially liberating.

The book's twelfth chapter compares Nietzsche's "proud self-limitation" to a cosmos consisting solely of air and sun, with Francis' communion with water and earth (recall from the book's opening that these "humbler elements" are precisely man's way to encounter with

the immanent Godhead). And in his conclusion, Father Leclerc puts the challenge squarely to his readers. If the Canticle has to do, not with an outmoded cosmology, but with cosmic realities surcharged with the poetic symbolism of mankind as such, it is indeed fraught with relevance for us today. This is true in two senses: (1) we need to regain the poet's appreciation of nature; cosmic realities do have an objectively symbolic character—and (2) without surrendering our technological mastery of nature, we must direct and channel that mastery in the service of the spirit.

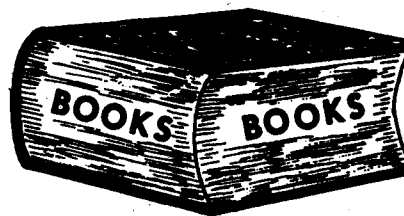
My only regret is that the book came in for review so close to the deadline for this October editorial, which is intended to complement two of the articles (perhaps all three) in this issue. I'd like to have had the luxury of a 30-day retreat with nothing but this book to think about.

Fr. Michael D. Mailand, OFM



To be a brother to all creatures, as Francis was, is in the last analysis to choose a vision of the world in which reconciliation is more important than division. It is to overcome separation and solitude and to open oneself to a universe of sharing, in which "the mystery of the earth comes into contact with the mystery of the stars."

—Eloi Leclerc, O.F.M., *The Canticle of Creatures*



Daily We Touch Him: Practical Religious Experiences. By M. Basil Pennington, O.C.S.O. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 115. Cloth, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Simeon Capizzi, former Assistant Professor of Mathematics at St. Bonaventure University, and missionary in Bolivia.

The title of this small book gives the reader "in a nutshell" what it truly contains. The foreword goes on to give a brief explanation of the title and subtitle, making it clear that the book is intended for a wider audience than those referred to as "religious." The author wants to share his experiences with "all my fellow Christians and any person who is a true seeker." "God is present to us," he states, "but are we present to Him? Daily—and many times a day—we need to touch Him, we need to experience His all-presence and be present to our true selves in Him In this book we offer a few practical exercises to help us do this."

If people will "make room for them in our busy lives, which often enough do actually make room for a lot of less fruitful, even inconsequential, things . . . they can and they will, if pursued with some fidelity, profoundly change and enrich our lives."

The book contains eight sections whose headings briefly describe

what they contain: (1) Faith Building: Sacred Reading; (2) Faith Experiencing: Centering Prayer, Prayer of Quiet; (3) Centering Prayer: Merton; Abhislick-tananda (Father Henri Le Saux, O.S.B.); Van Kaam; (4) Centering Prayer and TM (Transcendental Meditation); (5) TM and Christian Prayer; (6) Prayer and Liberation; (7) Faith Sharing; and (8) Mary: The Faith-full Woman.

The book closes with an Epilogue: A Rule of Life, that prescribes a practical means that can be used in directing our lives to attain our true goals.

The author explains several types of sacred reading that are truly Faith Building and sets forth "A Little Method or 'Technique' " of three rules to make one's faith grow—to experience a deeper union and communion with God and a desire to share it with others.

Centering Prayer—the Prayer of Quiet—is explained, as is the manner of achieving it. The notion is drawn from a popular book called *The Cloud of Unknowing*, by an unknown English Catholic writer of the 14th century. In addition, the excerpts from the three great spiritual masters listed in the third section are related to this subject.

In section four, the author gives a comparison of Centering Prayer and TM, pointing out both similarities and differences. Next he points out that TM differs from classical Christian meditation, but when it is "motivated and illumined" by Christian faith it can become Christian prayer.

Prayer is, "in its essence, liberation—making the self free to be what it really is." Much can be learned

here of the true meaning of the term "liberation."

The true mystic knows well the burning need to share his experiences with others. To some degree this need is felt by every religious person, and he can fulfill it through shared prayer—even more, a "Gospel sharing" with others, of "every aspect of our journey in faith, all of its joys and sorrows, successes and failures, its loneliness and its communality."

The last section, on Mary, the Faith-full Woman, contains much to help us better know the Blessed Mother and the role she plays in bringing her children to God through a practical faith.

The Epilogue is a beautiful summary of all the author has already said; the Rule of Life it sets forth cannot but bear fruit in the life of a serious Christian.

Catholic Pentecostalism: An In-depth Report on the Charismatic Renewal. By René Laurentin. Trans. Matthew J. O'Connell. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977, Pp. 239, incl. chronological table and bibliography. Cloth, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Francis de Ruijter, O.F.M., B.A., B.Th., a graduate student working towards his M.A. in Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University.

After we have seen several studies on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal from American sources (Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, Edward O'Connor, Donald L. Gelpi, Kilian McDonnell), we now note some European contributions: *The Hour of the Holy Spirit* by Serafino Falvo from

Italy in 1975, and this book by René Laurentin from France in 1974. The author is a well known French theologian and Mariologist. He impresses me as a questioning and investigating mind rather than a believer out to praise God. Yet such quests do not harm the renewal God is performing in today's Church and world. They may well help develop the critical sense in the Charismatic Renewal. Renewal to avoid certain pitfalls and clarify certain still dark areas. Thus they serve both experience and theological reflection on it. This book is more a work of Church history than a promotion of today's Charismatic Renewal. The inquiry is done mainly in France (p. 101), although the author has North American experience (Notre Dame, Ann Arbor, Houston, Quebec City).

In his own field (Chapter 10, on Mary) he is obviously more at ease and gives an insightful parallel between Mary's Pentecost and that of the disciples. On healing he provides repeated references to Lourdes, and keenly asks "why this therapeutic activity has become so widespread in the very country that is most scientifically advanced in the world, and why it has arisen within Catholicism, which is not at all disposed to move in this direction" (p. 106). He observes correctly that "the charismatics have as little inclination to look for medical verification of healing as they have to record tongue speaking so as to find out whether or not it involves a foreign tongue . . . The important thing, in their eyes, is that God is alive today as in the past . . . The ultimate goal of healing services is worship of God" (pp. 101, 107). The author gives a good

explanation of baptism in the Spirit (pp. 33-47) and a very long chapter on speaking in tongues (42 pages, explained on p. 60). Gifts of tongues and healing should be ordinary, normal parts of the life of every Christian community (pp. 93-94, 130-31). A reversal of rationalism and formalism is needed in many churches (pp. 132-33).

It is instructive to compare Laurentin's bibliography with the more recent one of Edward O'Connor's *Perspectives on Charismatic Renewal*, closed at December 1974, with a few works of early 1975). Laurentin's contains 319 items (19 pages), and O'Connor's 374 (29 pages). Both are annotated, while O'Connor adds an introduction and a table and Laurentin does not. Both are chronological rather than alphabetical. With respect to their linguistic emphases, I note that Laurentin has 102 French items (32%) and O'Connor 25 (7%), while Laurentin's English titles amount to 164 (51.5%) and O'Connor's 298 (80%).

Remarkable is Laurentin's stress on glossolalia: 142 items (9 out of 19), to O'Connor's 12. Must I interpret this as a hang-up of Laurentin, the more so as only 29 items serve the francophone world? The two have several other rubrics in common, at any rate, but O'Connor alone has these interesting titles: Prayer Meetings (4), Charismatic Renewal in Religious Communities (4), Charismatic Spirituality (10), Ecumenism (11), Social Action (2), Pronouncements by Pope Paul (47), by Bishops and Major Superiors (44). In addition, O'Connor's topical division seems better.

The book is recommended as a

highly useful documentation of the current state of Catholic Pentecostalism.

Sincerely Yours, Paul. By Leonard Foley, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. xii-166. Paper, \$2.35.

Reviewed by Father Richard Leo Heppler, O.F.M., Chaplain to the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in West Paterson, New Jersey.

Here is an attractive arrangement of the 124 selections of St. Paul's writings which are read on the Sundays of the year during the three-year cycle.

The selections are arranged under five headings: God the Father, Jesus, The Holy Spirit, the Church, and The Christian Life. Each selection is given a number and a heading: e.g., #6 "How God Saves His People," #34 "A Spirit-Filled Life." Then the source of the selection is given, followed by an indication of the Sunday on which the selection is read.



After the selection comes the author's commentary: sometimes an explanation of the text, sometimes a personal reflection. Both text and commentary are short.

The author tells us, "This book attempts to capture the beauty and inspiration of St. Paul's mind and heart in a systematic arrangement of the Church's Sunday selections from his

writings" (p. xii). Perhaps a more modest statement would be in order. For while preachers can get some ideas for homilies on St. Paul's writings, and all can get material for reflective prayer, it is possible that the greatest contribution Father Foley is making is to encourage us to dig into St. Paul again.

Love before the Fall. By William D. Dean. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976. Pp. 142. Paper, \$4.25.

Reviewed by Father Anthony A. Struzynski, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Theology, Notre Dame University), Associate Professor of Theology and Campus Minister at St. Bonaventure University.

Christian theology is becoming more and more empirical in its approach. This is so not because we have lost sight of the normative character of the religious experience witnessed to in the Christian Scriptures and ongoing Tradition of the Church, but because of a keen contemporary awareness of God's continual loving presence to the world and man's ability to be "experientially aware" of it. We therefore feel justified today in centering our attention on present experience from a theological point of view. Dean has done just that and offers us an interesting if popular little treatise on some new theological theory of the Christian love experience.

Dean's theory explores the meaning and value of understanding Christian love as "aesthetic love," a category that Dean feels gives new

insight into this experience and has beneficial practical results for Christian living. He explores this meaning and value in the first chapter of his book. Aesthetic love is "non-causal," "non-temporal," and "non-individual," three categories Dean introduces to further clarify his notion of aesthetic loving. They do help somewhat, but not always. "Non-causal," e.g., gets the idea across that aesthetic love is not interested in causing ethical value to be transferred from the lover to the beloved, but because causality has been used with such a narrow meaning by Dean (it is simply identified with efficient causality), it is also confusing. Such narrow defining of terms to make a point is a recurring difficulty in the book. Dean's basic point in all this is that aesthetic love emphasizes the experience of togetherness as an *inherently satisfying experience* and thus is distinguishable from the agape of Jesus and the eros of Plato. He concretizes his theory and shows its value by analyzing sexual relations, race relations, and education from the viewpoint of his theory. These examples are interesting and I think do show some real significance to his theoretical analysis.

Dean looks for precedents to his theologizing in the second chapter of his book. In chapter three he develops at length the relationship of his ideas to the more traditional theological notion of ideal love as agape. Chapter four is used to develop some theological metaphysics of "non-causal" human relations based on Whiteheadian Process Philosophy. Here again one has to remember that Dean's treatment of Whitehead may be severely criti-

cized. He has simply used some of Whitehead's ideas to suit his own purposes, and such methodology causes him to come dangerously close to distorting Whitehead. In the final chapter Dean explores the relevance of his theory to contemporary culture. In all of these chapters, within the limits of brief, popular theologizing, Dean has had something worthwhile to say whether his emphasis has been more descriptive (chapter 1), historical (chapter 2), systematic (chapters 3 and 4), or apologetic (chapter 5).

In spite of a general positive feeling about this little book, I do have two serious critical observations. The first has to do with what amounts to a very substantial section of the book: viz., Dean's distinguishing between agape and aesthetic Love. Has Dr. Dean too narrowly defined the concept of agape in order to contrast it with his concept of aesthetic love? Doesn't that term refer to the quality of disinterestedness (only very skimpily alluded to in Dean's treatment of agape) as much as the quality of instilling a value lacking in the beloved, as Dean emphasizes so much? If one emphasizes the former aspect of the agape quality of love rather than the latter, the sharp distinction between agape and aesthetic qualities of love begins to fade. One could then speak of the "aesthetic nature of agape," since it primarily refers to a moment of such real care for the beloved that all self-care is temporarily transcended and the inevitable *indirect* effect is ethical good for the beloved. Dean should have developed the notion of agape further and then gone on to distinguish this concept of aesthetic

love from it. That would have made this work more complete, and I don't really think it would have lessened the value of his contribution.

I have further criticism, however, which also has to do with precision in theological treatises. It has to do with clear, consistent distinguishing between one's theoretical abstract categories used to analyze religious experience and the religious experience itself. My understanding is that Dean believes that in reality there is the love experience that is more or less ideal. Agape, eros, and aesthetic are abstract ideas that give particular insights into aspects of this rich human-divine experience that is most generally referred to with the term love. It only confuses things when an author doesn't maintain this clarity by talking as if sometimes these terms are being used in the above manner and sometimes they refer to wholly different experiences in reality. I'm afraid that confusion is quite evident throughout Dean's book.

Finally, the unanswered question Dean acknowledges at the end of his book became more and more intense as I read through his little analysis. *How* does one become a lover in the ideal way—or, as he says it at the end of the book, how does God "lure the lovers" to be innovative, to love in such a way that they experience the present self-fulfilling meaning of true loving communion? The fact that that question became more and more intense for me (and I think it will for many readers) is a tribute to Dean. It means he has sharpened and made more enticing the mysterious element of real loving. Maybe that element is always so

unique and concrete and personal that it will always defy satisfying general theoretical analysis. Maybe... and maybe not. Dean deserves credit, however, for continuing the search in an interesting and imaginative manner.

The New Yet Old Mass. By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 111. Paper, \$2.25.

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.

The very title of this book, *The New Yet Old Mass*, tells the reader, before he turns a single page, what this publication is about. Beyond the obvious meaning—the essentials of the Mass remain the same after, as before, Vatican II—the title reflects the author's style, effectively executed, of examining the revised ritual of the Eucharistic Liturgy and indicating that what seems new is actually, in many instances, a rediscovery of old liturgical practices.

In the preface, Father Champlin describes his purpose as hopefully contributing to a deeper awareness of the mystery that is the Mass, a mystery of course that remains, notwithstanding I might add, the recent liturgical renovations—e.g., the vernacular, the more extensive use of, and prominence given to, the Scriptures.

The book is not original in the sense that it is, by the author's own admission, for the most part a

collection of articles he had previously published in serialized form for the N.C. News Service.

An effective technique utilized by Father Champlin is the quoting of a relevant passage from the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, followed by a practical commentary; e.g., on the presence of Christ in the proclamation of the Scripture readings. Likewise, throughout the book, the author continually "concretizes" the points he is making by describing practices in his own parochial experience, such as personally greeting the parishioners prior to the beginning of Sunday Mass in order to generate that spirit of community so vital for the conscious and active participation of the congregation envisaged by Vatican II.

The various components of the Eucharistic Liturgy: introductory rites, liturgy of the Word, liturgy of the Eucharist, and concluding rites, comprise the four major segments of the book. Father Champlin examines briefly each component, offering the theological meaning and historical background for each and providing practical suggestions for parish liturgies.

A salient point raised by the author with regard to establishing a sense of community in a large parish church is one indeed that reaches beyond the liturgical dimension—the author terms the need for smaller parishes as critically urgent. Perhaps, the basic problem encountered in the liturgical renewal lies precisely here: the reforms have idealized the notion of the worshipping body as "a holy people, a chosen race." Both psychologically and architecturally, are

mammoth church edifices a hindrance, rather than an aid, in celebrating the Eucharist as envisaged by the Conciliar and post-Conciliar reforms?

The importance of observing periods of silence within the liturgy is highlighted by the author, who laments that from the extreme of the totally silent Mass, we have now gone to its opposite: overly verbalized liturgies. He considers silence essential to preserve a sense of mystery vis-à-vis the Mass.

Father Champlin also emphasizes, among other things, that the third form of the penance rite is intended more as praising the Lord and seeking his mercy, than as an examination of conscience or accusation of faults, as it so frequently becomes.

The truly universal character of the prayer of the faithful (as opposed to purely subjective or parochial petitions), the suitability of a homily that links the Scripture lessons of a given Sunday to a current urgent issue, the problematic of bulletin as opposed to pulpit announcements, the significance of including monetary offerings in the presentation of the gifts, the undesirability of the congregation's joining the celebrant in the concluding doxology of the Canon are among the more contemporary misapplications or misunderstandings addressed by the book's author.

Champlin's chapter on the Our Father is particularly innovative, explaining as he does the role of this prayer as both summing up the praise element of the Eucharistic sacrifice and preparing for the reception of Communion. Similarly, his explanation of the greeting of peace

bears reflection: in extending the peace greeting to the persons around us, we are actually expressing our desire of living in peace with all men, especially those whom we encounter in daily life.

Beyond the convenience inherent in assembling under one cover the several articles composed over recent years by Father Champlin, this book possesses a value for both clergy and laity. To the former, it provides practical suggestions on ways of exemplifying the ideals of Vatican II renewal in the celebration of Mass. To the latter, the book offers the advantage of easily understandable, non-technical language and yet provides an accurate and concise explanation of various elements of the Mass and the purpose or rationale for the changes introduced in the Mass structure.

In short, this is a "how-to" book composed and written in a graceful theological/liturgical setting.

Jesus, the Living Bread: A Chronicle of the 41st International Eucharistic Congress, 1976. Edited under the supervision of James M. Talley. Plainfield, N.J.: Logos International, 1976. Pp. 159. Leatherette, 14.95; cloth, \$9.95.

Reviewed by Father Edward Flanagan, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Francis Retreat House, Rye Beach, New Hampshire. Father Edward has been active in the Marriage Encounter Movement for the past four years, and attended the Eucharistic Congress chronicled in this volume.

This is a book primarily for those

who were there—in Philadelphia at the Eucharistic Congress during the first days of August in 1976. Focusing as it continually does on the abiding presence of the Lord Jesus in the Eucharist, it helps the reader to remember that His loving presence is a continual reminder and challenge to this generation to make the Christian community a tangible reality rather than an airy abstraction.

Jesus, the Living Bread does this by following the "Hunger" themes of the 41st Eucharistic Congress and concretizing them in specific people who exemplify efforts to understand one hunger and to satisfy it. Some of them are famous: e.g., Mother Theresa of Calcutta. Others are relatively unknown: e.g., Jim and Joan Benjamin of Columbia, Md.

For one who was there it summoned forth memories and feelings of those few days in the city that W.C. Fields delighted to poke fun at: a joy-filled procession that snaked through the streets of downtown Philadelphia to give honor to the Eucharistic Lord; a tired nine-year-old boy almost tumbling out of the second deck at Veterans Stadium at a family liturgy that failed to take into account that children get sleepy after 9 P.M.; a prelate of the Church who sat *between* a husband and his wife, she formerly of Philadelphia and now of Monaco; a visit to the school in South Philadelphia which acted as a "control center" for the Eucharistic celebrations with row upon row of filled ciboria to be changed later to

the Bread of Life. There was joy in calling oneself Catholic that day.

This book is an occasion book, as the Congress itself was an occasion. The photographs themselves tell the story, although not always totally in sync with the story line. One could even make a study of hands as expressions of faith: newborn hands, gnarled hands, calloused hands, tapered hands—grasped, clasped, lifted, raised, folded.

The team of journalists who have collaborated in compiling this spiritual anthology have placed the Congress in the historical context of past Congresses, and they always keep pointing to the original congress of the Lord and his chosen Twelve in Jerusalem on the night before He died. The reader is constantly reminded of the necessity of a close personal relationship with the risen Jesus as He is present with the Father, and present to and in His pilgrim people, the Church.

Even if you were there, the book gives an overview of everything that went on at the Congress. Indeed, it was impossible to do everything and see everything there and still maintain a reverential attitude or spend time in adoration. This book fills in those gaps and places the reader at the scene. *Jesus, the Living Bread* is to be read in reflective, gentle fashion: in a time of adoration, say; or as a companion to John 6, 1 Cor. 11, 13, & 15, or Mt. 25:31ff—whether you were there or wish you had been.

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COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The drawings for our November issue have been furnished by Sister Marie Monica, O.S.F., who teaches at the Sacred Heart Academy, Klamath Falls, Oregon.

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CONTENTS

FRANCISCAN IDEALISM TODAY—I	314
Editorial	
KENOSIS	315
William J. Boylan, O.F.M.Conv.	
FASTING: NOT FOR LENT ALONE	316
Sister Angelyn Dries, O.S.F.	
TRANSFORMATION	319
Catherine Michaels	
CHRISTIAN HOPE	320
Julian A. Davies, O.F.M.	
A CHALLENGE TO FRANCISCANS	330
Bede Abram, O.F.M.Conv.	
HINTS FOR A COMMUNAL HERMITAGE EXPERIENCE... ..	334
Sister Bernadette Sullivan, S.F.P.	
BOOK REVIEWS	335



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Franciscan Idealism Today—I

IDEALISM IS, in all too many quarters, out of fashion today. Cynicism, pessimism, and even nihilism seem to be the order of the day in many segments of our post-Watergate society. It is hard for anyone, including us Franciscans, to avoid not only contact, but even contamination, with such negativist outlooks. One antidote that suggests itself is some reflection on the joyful idealism of our holy Father Francis.

Idealism may, of course, be conceived in various ways. It may be an abstract, complex, and difficult philosophical system; it may be a mere pie-eyed wishful thinking; and it may be a retreat into a purely subjective realm of aesthetic beauty. But idealism can, paradoxically, be the most hard-nosed sort of realism, and that is the kind of idealism we discover in examining the life of Saint Francis.

Consider, e.g., his "conversion." It was not by some master plan of his own, but rather in response to two dreams (visitations from the Lord) that Francis withdrew from "business" and "the world" (1 Cel. 6). Then, at St. Nicholas' Church in 1208, he and his companions opened the Gospel book to discover three injunctions which they immediately took to heart: to sell what they had and give it to the poor, to deny themselves and follow Jesus, and to take nothing on their proposed venture. As they embarked on that venture, they flaunted every dictate of worldly prudence—every purely human "ideal," and took up their abode in the cold, damp, impoverished hut at Rivo Torto. Somewhat later, we find Francis on a reckless and improbable journey to convert the Sultan and his Saracen subjects. Toward the end of his life there is his reception of the Stigmata and the extraordinary vision forty days later in which the Lord assured him of the definitive union he had attained with Him.

What emerges from careful attention, not only to these salient events, but to Francis' life as a whole, is a twofold insight: first, into the objective, experiential character of the saint's idealism; and, secondly, into its thoroughly Christic source.

1. Unlike some idealists, who would construct a vision, a system, or even a way of life out of whole speculative cloth and would want to remain in

control of its elaboration and implementation, Francis responded in every case to the Lord's initiative. In his Testament, he insists that his way of life was "revealed to him by the Most High," and in the Legend of Perugia he is quoted as saying that precisely because God had called him to walk in his way of humility and simplicity, no one was to recommend to him any other rule of life—not Augustine's, not Bernard's, and not Benedict's.

2. It was no speculative Absolute, no Platonic realm of ideas, that held Francis rapt in contemplation and colored his entire Christian life. His ideal was the "one Master": Jesus of Nazareth. No reader of this periodical has to be told about the Poverello's devotion to the infant Jesus, to his crucified Lord, or to his living eucharistic Bread. Francis, like every genuine Christian mystic, came very early to realize intuitively that Jesus is the only book in whom we read God unambiguously: that it is folly to seek union with the Absolute Spirit apart from the incarnate Word he has spoken to us.

Entrusted as we have been with the Franciscan mission of leading the world in the Son through the Spirit to the Father, we shall find ourselves faithful to that mission and fruitful in its service only if we are Franciscan idealists—only if we foster an idealism rooted, like that of our holy Father, in a life lived in the constant presence of Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life—the alpha and the omega of all existence.

Fr. Michael D. Mailach, OFM



Kenosis

Death, fleeting . . . yet ever present.
Each day, a step toward and preparation for . . .
Surrendering . . . that which you want most . . .
love most . . .
Hoping, that in poverty . . . the emptiness . . .
will be created a fullness . . .
To love the everlasting Love of God . . .
which is True.

William J. Boylan, O.F.M.Conv.

Fasting: Not for Lent Alone

SISTER ANGELYN DRIES, O.S.F.

FASTING IS an ancient practice. People have fasted for many reasons: to lose weight, to ready themselves to receive a vision as the American Indian has done, or to protest unjust social conditions. During Lent we are brought face to face with the practice, at least on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

The tradition of fasting, however, is even outside of the Lenten season a rich one within the Franciscan experience,¹ as well as in the Old and New Testaments. In reviewing these traditions, what will be suggested is a repletion perhaps of some

depleted motivation for the practice of fasting. It is one way to give "body" to some of the deepest dynamics of our life in Christ—to hunger for the Father's will and to depend on him to provide all that we need to fulfill it.

In Scripture, three words find themselves closely allied: fasting, bread, word.

On Sinai, Moses, while fasting for forty days and nights, received the word of the covenant: "I shall be your God, you shall be my people" (Ex. 34:28).² Later, the people would identify with Moses' experience in their

¹Both the Rule of 1221 and that of 1223 state that the friars are to fast "from the feast of All Saints until Christmas, and from Epiphany, when our Lord began his fast, until Easter. The friars are not bound by the Rule to fast at other times, except on Friday." Chapter 3 of the Rule of 1223 states that the fast from Epiphany is a voluntary one. Francis also kept a fast of forty days in honor of St. Michael between the feast of the Assumption and his feast.

²This and the remaining scriptural citations are from the Jerusalem Bible. Additional biblical references you may wish to consult for reflective prayer, particularly on a day of fasting, are the following: Deut. 8:1-4; 1 Kings 19:1-8; Isaiah 55:1-3, 10-11; Zechariah 7:4-14; Psalms 77:19-30; Luke 10:38-42.

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hunger in the desert and in eating the manna, the bread descended from heaven.

Some of the prophets describe their vocation as eating the word from God. The image is particularly strong in Ezekiel, where Yahweh tells him to "open your mouth and eat what I am about to give you" (2:8-3:3). The scroll which contains bitter words tastes sweet in Ezekiel's mouth. Jeremiah confesses: "When your words came, I devoured them" (Jer. 15:16). Here we see the close identification of the prophets with God's word as well as their longing to make that word their own.

The people begin to wander away from their call to be a covenant people. They begin to spend their money on that which is not bread. A prophecy comes to them through Amos that a famine will come upon them, a famine not of bread but of the word (Amos 8:11-12). They will die as a "You-are-my-people" and become a "No-people-of-mine," for they no longer sustain themselves with the word of Yahweh's covenant.

While Isaiah did not have the kind of global consciousness we have today, he did see the social implication of fasting. It was not enough to fast without remedying present social problems: "Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me—it is the Lord Yahweh who speaks—to break unjust fetters . . .



to let the oppressed go free . . . to share your bread with the hungry . . ." (58:6-7). Our fasting can be an identification with and intercession for those who lack bread.

During Jesus' forty days' fast at the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus experienced the temptation to find meaning and fulfillment in himself. To command the stones to become bread would be to deny his source of strength and nourishment, his Father's will. "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:1-3). So totally does Jesus eat of this word during his life, he becomes the bread, the Word the Father gives.

In chapter six of John's Gospel, we have the fullest development

of this concept. Again, hunger, bread, and word come together. The lack of understanding and the misunderstanding of the Jews and even of his friends causes Jesus to exclaim: "If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you" (6:53). Here, too, are obvious eucharistic overtones. Our eating of the Bread also signifies our desire to be fed and nourished by the Father's will in such an intimate way that Jesus himself becomes the life we live.

The fasting of Jesus' disciples is not to be like that of the Pharisees: they were not to wear long, lugubrious faces while fasting. On the contrary, a joyful countenance would reflect the delight and thanksgiving for the abundance of the Father's gifts. Kindness and compassion would be the fruit of their fast.

As we look at the actual experience of fasting (let us say, fasting from food for twenty-four hours), we are immediately made aware of several things. We begin to feel a sense of physical emptiness, of instinctively wanting to pick up something to fill the space. We become aware of the patterns of our eating: what we eat, what satisfies us, what is nutritional, what is "junk food." We also become aware of things we may be addicted to. This in turn leads to the consideration that in

America we have such an abundance of food—we are overfed—while in many countries people do not even have the choice to not eat: they are simply starving. The time of fasting can be one of knowing amidst emptiness what is in our inmost heart.

Another dimension of fasting is accented when the sisters or friars in a house choose to fast together. The group might decide on this to be an intercessory action for someone or something (e.g., to ask for the grace of conversion as a community, or to support someone in a leadership position who is facing a decision that can result in a direction based more affirmatively on gospel values), to express their desire to come to understand the Father's will and direction for them as a group, or to develop their consciousness about the effect of their eating/buying patterns against the backdrop of world hunger.

Fasting is not an end in itself. It must be attendant on the realization of God's tremendous love for us. But, along with prayer, the practice of fasting enables us to identify in a small way with those who do not have daily bread, and it signifies our keen hunger for God's will and our dependence on him to satisfy that hunger. It can graphical-

ly express an abandonment of ourselves totally to the Father. It can remind us that our real hunger is not for bread but for the Word. May we always hunger for this bread that with Francis we may cry, "My God and my All!" "The word is very near you, it is in your mouth and in your heart" (Deut. 30:14).

Transformation

Lord, we thank You for revealing Yourself to us daily in the physical reality which surrounds us.
 Thank You for the lessons You teach us through nature.
 You transform the earth daily;
 we need to be transformed daily also.
 You come to the earth differently in each season;
 You come to us differently at various points in our lives.
 You cause the leaves to change in autumn
 and then to fall from the trees.
 You cause the bleakness of winter
 from the barrenness of late autumn.
 You cause the purifying rains of spring
 to bring the green of hope from the winter bleakness.
 You cause the freshness and warmth of summer,
 fulfilling the hope of spring.
 Lord, as each season flows into the next,
 You teach us that what has gone before
 was necessary for the change to the present.
 Please remind us that You are the source of change
 and that we should come to You daily
 and ask You to transform us,
 as You transform the rest of Your creation.
 Let us remember that You are present
 throughout all the seasons of our lives.

Catherine Michaels

Christian Hope

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

HOPE IS THE theological virtue by which, relying on God's power and mercy, we believe he will give us grace efficacious to bring us salvation, and provide us with what we need to achieve that goal of our life. As a theological virtue, it is directed to God, and it has its foundation in our faith in his goodness. Hope for salvation, or hope in God, is frequently spoken of as "trust"; when I was in novitiate twenty years ago, Paul de Jaegher's book on that topic was the rage—the "must" book for novices in the dark night of the senses or spirit—or the dark night of December. Some of the thoughts I plan to recall here came from there; others just came.

To translate the object of hope into plain English, I think we can say the virtue of hope enables us to believe that God really wants us to be with him in heaven: that he wants us to make it and is counting on our coming to the heavenly banquet, having sent us not only the map but carfare and then some (grace) to get there.

How do we know? Let us listen for a while to Scripture. Paul tells us that "God wills that all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). The same Apostle also tells us that if God is for us, no one can be against us, that nothing can separate us from God's love (cf. Rom. 8:31, 35). And John tells us that even if our own heart rebukes us, "God is greater than our heart" (1 Jn. 3:20). According to the Lord himself, "he who eats my flesh has everlasting life" (Jn. 6:54). "Come, blessed of my Father," he invites us, "to the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning, for I was hungry, and you gave me to eat..." (Mt. 25:35).

What we are assured of is not only God's general desire for all men to come to him, but particular, special promises Jesus made to those who did the things you and I—and lots of Christians—have been doing for years: believing in him, receiving Holy Communion, performing works of mercy. If we feel obliged by our promises and secure in the promises others have made to us,

how much more so can we be as the recipients of God's promises, confident that he will keep them—that he hasn't put any maybe's into his words.

"Secure" is the key word in speaking of hope. Peter described hope as an anchor; fisherman that he was, he knew the value of a weight holding a boat where it was, even amidst rough seas. "Secure"—a word that in its roots means "separated from care, anxiety, worry." Christian hope leads us to expect salvation, renders us confident that the destination to which we are headed is there. (We describe life as a pilgrimage, and pilgrimages aren't to nowhere; even as the Pilgrim Fathers had a goal when they set out, so do we have a goal beyond the grave.) Human experience confirms the need for security—we do better in a job, when we know it is ours as long as we don't completely ruin things, and we will put up with plenty as long as we know we are wanted. Well, hope lets us know that God does want us and has a place for us.

If we start to think we are going to botch the job, then we are getting away from the virtue of hope and into the vice of despair, discouragement. We shall have more to say later about these topics, but first let us consider a couple of special promises that have been made to us.

Speaking through Saint Marga-

ret Mary, Jesus assured those who devoutly receive Communion on the nine first Fridays of final salvation. We have all done this many times over, and I do believe the promise—it is actually only a little more concrete assurance than the general one given to those who receive Holy Communion (Jn. 6:54).

Our religious superiors—at least mine, and I presume yours—said on the day of our profession after we had spoken our vows: "And I, on the part of almighty God, promise you eternal life if you do these things." And that's what we have been doing for these many years now. Granted we haven't done them perfectly, but the promise says nothing about perfect performance: it says "if you do these things."

Now, hoping does not mean—and no one in his or her right mind thinks it does—that we can do just as we please now. But it does offer us a backdrop of security against which we can work, as well as a lure of happiness to which we can relate. Hoping in our own self-improvement makes us endure many things. (Again the example of our Pilgrim Fathers comes to mind.) And in particular, hoping in a better life hereafter has made many a hard life endurable—even, in the case of the martyrs, expendable. Think of the Maccabees, of Polycarp who longed

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to be ground as wheat for the Lord, of Lawrence on his grid-iron

Jesus himself, as Paul tells us, for the glory set before him, endured the cross. Too often we neglect to look ahead to the good that lies ahead of us, and we let the pains and troubles of the present moment oppress us. But the virtue of hope carries us beyond self-pity, sets us in the direction of a better state, and thereby has at least the possibility of placing us even now in a better frame of mind. Hope does not, of course, eliminate our pains—any more than the hope of Mary at the foot of the Cross, that Jesus would rise, dispelled her sadness at seeing him suffer and die. It is no defect in our

hope if we hurt; it is only a defect if we hurt as though there were no tomorrow—if we mourn, in Paul's words, like those who have no hope. Hope is not pollyanna optimism in the face of evil; it does not blind us to the existence of pain, suffering, moral defects, resentments, unfairness. But it does put such events in perspective for those who love God; for those who love him, all things do work out for good.

Sometimes we may wonder to ourselves whether hope is really a virtue at all. A little philosophy makes us ask whether we are not perhaps inappropriately greedy in looking forward to God as *our* happiness. Shouldn't we just love him as he is, for himself, and forget that love of him makes *us* happy? In a word no. The nonsense that says that to hope is to be greedy is inhuman. What point is there in picking at our relationships and asking ourselves, Do I want to be with him/her because I care for him/her, or because I enjoy and love him/her? Separation of affection for a person into individual components isn't real. And our nature has built into it a yen for happiness and satisfaction, which is operative in all that we do. To think that to live supernaturally we somehow have to twist our nature around is to forget that the author of supernature and nature is one and the same: God almighty, all good, all loving:

Father, Son, and Spirit.

If we look to the New Testament, we find our Lord promising the Apostles a reward in heaven. The Beatitudes indicate the peace, joy, and contentment follow from their observance. The sheep and goats parable, the Abraham and Lazarus parable, the description of heaven as a kingdom—a banquet—all point to it as a place Christ tells us is a place you will want to be in. The evangelist John takes this up when he describes it as a place of light, of gold and glass; as a beautiful bride; as a gathering of people in white robes. Paul indicates that heaven is beyond our wildest dreams when he indicates that eye has not seen, nor ear heard what God has prepared for those who love him. Hope specifically in the resurrection, the Book of Maccabees tells us, in what sustained the seven sons who died rather than give up their religion. We have to build our faith on what Jesus does and says and teaches; and Jesus proposes to us hope in eternal life as a reason for following him. We can, then, feel comfortable with hope.

We mentioned earlier the enemies of hope: discouragement and despair; and if we use the word depression as well, these surely play too great a part in our lives. Hope, as a recent spiritual book has it, is "the remedy." To let the virtue

become more operative in our lives, let us look at the things that get us down and see how the virtue of hope can bring us back to joy.

First, we must cope with a lack of appreciation for our work, our efforts—even our own person. It is certainly an occupational hazard of community life that you will be taken for granted if you are reliable; you will be expected to be a saint, to be unselfish; and scarcely anyone will offer you any encouragement in the direction you are taking for yourself. Others seem to get a lot of praise, a lot of power or authority, a lot of publicity. Our normal lot is obscurity, which is fine for a little while but difficult indeed for our weak human nature to take for a lifetime.

The virtue of hope reminds us that someone does appreciate what we are doing: God, who sees and takes note of everything. It reminds us too that there will be a time of recognition—the last judgment. It reassures us that real happiness is to be found, not in anything here but only in the hereafter. We have to motivate ourselves to leave our moods; we can't just accept them and say: there they are, let them be. Hope will not eliminate a feeling of being left out, of being unloved; but it will direct us to God who is Love, and it will lessen our chances of making a

career out of self-pity.

In the second place, we need hope to cope with pain and suffering, whether these arise from the trials of life, from sickness, from separation, or from resistance and opposition to ourselves and our work. We are "wayfarers," people on a journey, and we have here no lasting city. Hope lets us realize that—that pain is not final. And hope lets us realize that being on the wrong end of a consensus (how many of you reading this find yourselves, like me, in the minority in many community decisions?) is not fatal. Hope, again, turns our minds from our own woes and miseries toward God and his goodness. The Lord has told us that he who loses his life saves it; the more we can forget about ourselves in thinking of God, the better off we are. Self-fulfillment is self-forgetfulness: the direction of our thoughts to the all-good God.

Thirdly, a big area for discouragement, at least in the lives of some I have met, is depression over one's lack of spiritual progress. It seems that after years and years of effort one should be a "bigger person" than to feel bad because someone forgot your birthday, or to get upset because your favorite football team got a trouncing. Several years ago, I spent four weeks at our Province's House of Prayer. With much time on my hands, I took to listening

to some tapes Thomas Merton had made. And I really related to one in which he said that after one has been a monk—a religious—for a certain length of time, the temptation comes along to look at yourself and say: "John, you are a second-rate religious; upper-level mediocrity is all you have to show for seven—or twenty-seven—years of being 'spiritual.'" Why not be honest with yourself: admit you want to settle for less, pick another vocation where you don't promise so much and can keep it better. Merton's response (and it is the right one) was precisely in terms of vocation. How often have we told the stories of our vocation to others, pointed out the providential interventions guiding us to where we are, and not elsewhere! It is clear God wants us where we are, and he wants us when we die, and he wants us now. He has placed no conditions on his call—just asked us if we were willing. He hasn't put us on piece work so that we would have to produce much in a big hurry to meet our minimum requirement. Certainly the all-knowing God knew what he was doing in calling us; dare we doubt his wisdom? He knew we would not be all we want to be and was willing to risk that we not be all he wants us to be; but he took the chance. Are we to deny his mercy? Certainly we have all told people to "hang in there" in mar-

riage when things don't appear to be going so well—even, in fact, if there has been some guilt involved. Is the mercy of God something only for people in the world—an attribute that serving Him renders inoperative? Then, too, did our retreat masters not tell us that God is our spiritual director: that we must let him lead us by the hand and set the pace? There is too much of the activist in all of us—too much competitiveness, too much impatience.. As Father Faber said, we want sanctity in a big hurry; if that means pain, fine, as long as the pain is quick, like that of an operation. Every love is different, and every personal relationship has its own rate of growth; forcing things is not merely bad human relations; it is also bad religion.

Besides, it is probably better that we don't know how high we score on the sanctity scale. Saint Francis had a rather low opinion of himself, as did the saints in general. Of course you say that the difference between their dim view and yours is that yours is true, not exaggerated. To this it may be replied: (first) who says Francis was exaggerating? (secondly) no one is a judge in his own case; and (thirdly) this worry about our worthiness, our lack of progress, has roots in pride and self love. We may feel like quitting the quest for holiness for about the same reasons for which

we have given up golf (I couldn't even outhit my sister!). But we have been called to a life of intimacy with God in the footsteps of Francis. Our relationship is with God, not a standard of perfection. And God has never suggested that we quit.

Too much too fast isn't always good for a person, either in secular life or in religion. Getting rich quick doesn't always work wonders for a person, and in the same way getting rich quick spiritually isn't always advantageous either. Many of the most enthusiastic religious people—zealots—have left us and are working for God in the world. Thank God you are one of his turtles—you'll get there sooner or later. And thank God, too, if you can answer the Lord: "I just like it too well to change."

Finally, what appears to me to be the big problem of discouragement, which perhaps more than any other needs hope as its remedy, is the feeling of isolation from the "mainstream" of religious life—a nostalgia that creeps over one for "What we had when we came in"—things like eating together, traveling together, recreating together—in a word, what we knew in our earliest years as religious as "community." This experience can create a real crisis of morale, as we hear our own voice "in the wilderness" wanting less rather than more freedom, less

rather than more money and independence. In these days of voting on things, it is no fun to be on the losing end of 8-1 votes. Still, we can take comfort from the fact that an awareness of the need for prayer in religious communities has become very keen—that we do have houses of prayer now, and charismatic prayer sometimes, and days of recollection here and there.

The laity, we know, is very much “into” prayer now. The problem of alcoholism has been faced in many religious communities. The new freedoms have enriched those of us who have stayed around to enjoy their benefits. Hope, then, turns our minds from our own worries and problems and the troubles in our communities, reminding us of God’s power to draw good out of it all. The Lord knows our discouragement; and surely knowing that ought to make a difference in the way we feel. If we wallow in discouragement we have somehow or other pushed God out of the forefront of our awareness, where he belongs and where we will be most comfortable with him.

We can perceive in these same recent developments in our lifestyle still another means of fostering the virtue of hope: viz., the freedom we now enjoy to share with others our true feelings about our life and about ourselves. Perhaps this is something

which has always been there, but most of us will probably agree that there prevailed, earlier, a feeling that speaking of feelings was irreligious—bespoke a lack of faith. The just man, we felt, lives by faith and commitment, and not by his feelings. That is true, but expressing a feeling isn’t denying your faith, any more than crying at a funeral is denying the resurrection, or feeling blue on a dark day is a sin of despair. Our feelings are natural things; it is what we do with them that has a religious dimension. If we make a career out of them, choose to revel in self-pity or discouragement, *then* we are failing in hope.

I have tried to set forth, in the foregoing pages, what the Church teaches about hope—and also by some references to my own experience, to highlight what I perceive as a special need for that virtue in religious life (as well as the world) today. Basically, the supernatural, infused virtue of hope gives us a security: a real trust in the Lord’s mercy and love and in his will to save us and bring us to the unending joy of heaven. Nothing of value that we have done will go without its reward. God wants us to be with him and has, moreover, invited us to take a special road to him: the path of religious life. The road is in some ways difficult, and progress on it doesn’t seem as fast as we would like; but it

is the direction God has given us, and hope trusts and knows it will be a good one. To hope solidly in these things is to root oneself firmly in one of the most prominent gospel values: one both preached and exemplified by the Lord throughout his life on earth.

The common enemy of hope in all of us is discouragement—over our own lack of holiness, the current state of religious life and the Church around us, the opposition from others, and the pains in life: death, sickness, broken and breaking human relationships. But it seems to me we find plenty of good human reasons not to be discouraged

in these situations. There are many people really working at loving God, active in supporting us in our trials. There are also an abundance of supernatural reasons for hope: the wisdom, the goodness, the mercy, and the providence of God. On the wall before me as I type this article is a banner made for me by a student at my request. It is a brown burlap fabric shaped in the form of a garbage pail, and on it, in yellow and green, are the words which every human being needs really to believe: “God doesn’t make junk.” God made you; so you had better believe you are important to him, that he wants and expects you to be with him forever.

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**The Poor Clare Federation of Mary Immaculate
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October 15, 1977

To the Readers of THE CORD:

During my studies with the Franciscans I spent one summer at the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University in New York. During this time I was deeply impressed with the fact that true Franciscan renewal springs from a return to the early inspiration and spirit of the Order as found in the early sources, now so easily accessible in the Franciscan Herald Press edition of the *Omnibus*.

But how many of us have even read or re-read these sources for reflection? At the request of Father Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., I attempted my first Franciscan play adapted from these sources. In the ensuing months of my novitiate, I wrote five more plays in keeping with the same purpose: viz., to present the Franciscan sources in an entertaining and educational way.

After nine months in the novitiate, however, I felt I was being called to something else; so presently I am studying theology for the Davenport Diocese. Also my present interest in playwriting seems to be opening up onto a broader vista of Christian themes, with a play on Creation in process, entitled "Canticle of Creation." The Franciscan plays I have written grew out of a need constructively to use my degree in Theater to help the Franciscans of all Orders, Congregations, and jurisdictions to rediscover their sources.

Thanks to some publicity given the plays in this magazine, there has been a most gratifying, world-wide response in the form of requests for copies of the plays. My hope is that this open letter will elicit still more such requests. (Note that not all of the plays were yet available at the time of the earlier notice.) All the plays are available now at the cost of \$2.00 per play to cover duplication and mailing costs. Since I wish them to be circulated as widely as possible for creative, fruitful use, there are no production rights to worry about. The plays include the following.

1. *Sacrum Commercium* deals with Francis' relationship with his Lady Poverty in a dramatic adaptation from the early source as found in the *Omnibus*.
2. *Clare's Song of Songs* treats Clare's espousal to her poor Christ in the framework of the Old Testament Song of Songs. Many early sources on Clare are used in this piece.
3. *Lord or Servant* attempts to blend the different early accounts of Francis' conversion into a believable progression of events and developments.

4. *La Verna* uses the different early sources to portray the events of Francis' reception of the stigmata—before, during, and after the actual experience.
5. *We Come to Serve* was written for the Sacred Heart Province, but depicts in more general fashion the beginnings of Franciscan life in the United States.
6. *Giles* is a one-man show based on the life and writings of Brother Giles of Assisi—a simple, joyful attempt to capture his inimitable spirit.
7. *Canticle of Creation*, which should be ready by the time this letter appears, is Franciscan in spirit, but is more properly described as an adaptation of the Genesis account of creation, in which I try to capture the sense of curiosity and wonder of our ancestors.

For copies, please include \$2.00 per play and send your request to

David Benzshawel
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A Challenge to Franciscans

BEDE ABRAM, O.F.M.CONV.

THE MEMBERS of the Order founded by Saint Francis of Assisi can stand as true symbols of peace and justice if we return to our roots. The task of Francis was to restore harmony between man and God and man and creation. The success of Francis in achieving this has won him a place of honor in the minds of many peoples throughout the history of the world since his time. If we, his followers, can tap our roots and rededicate ourselves to his spirit, perhaps we can, as a body, have a significant impact on society.

Racial tensions in America have upset the harmony of creation. Black people live in poverty as second-rate citizens not because, as some would suggest, we are lazy, but because our birthright has been taken away and is still not yet completely restored.

The devastating experience of black slavery still has its effect on black America today. Slavery has deprived black people of the freedom to seek and establish our destiny. It destroyed family life, castrated the male, and placed

undue pain and burdens on the black female. These very real effects have led some people to characterize today's black people as having loose morals, wanting to sponge off welfare, and not wanting to work. Black oppression has urged still others to state that other groups have suffered just as much as black people and have not only survived but today are successful in all facets of societal life; so "why can't the blacks do the same?" Those who argue thus have avoided the issue: that blacks were hated because we were black. We became slaves because of economics. Other groups that suffered did not have the visibility of color. When we tried to go to school or get a job, everyone knew we were black. This was not so with other groups. They were given the chance to get in the door. Black adults encounter all of the problems that all adults encounter plus the problem of racism. Black youth have the same identity problems as all adolescents, plus the problem of racism. Racism has been and still is that *extra* burden that blacks

must deal with on a day-to-day, job-to-job, school-to-school, house-to-no-sale basis.

In the past, Christianity has been such a vital force in the black experience that it is considered an integral part of our black cultural heritage. Faith in God has been both a real source of strength and courage in troubled times and a motivational factor in our fight for freedom. In the thinking of our ancestors, there was no separation of the sacred from the profane, the body from the soul. This outlook helped them to conclude that God is concerned about the condition of both soul and body—the whole person, and that he does not condone slavery.

God the Father sent his Son to destroy evil, and the task of the true Christian is to structure his life in such a way as to imitate the life of Jesus. As Christians, we must follow in the Lord's footsteps. We, too, must be against evil and avoid sin. Slavery is sinful, and so the slaves felt that they must do the Christian thing and act against it. Through this faith of people of courage, many revolts arose. The underground railroad was established, and black church bodies came into existence for the cause of freedom, justice, and equality before God and man.

Faith in justice has been the important element in the religion

of the slaves and in the movements of people such as Denmark Vessey, Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Martin Luther King, Jr., Jesse Jackson, and Ralph Abernathy. In fact, all major strides towards civil rights for the black man in America have been either inspired by or associated with religious beliefs.

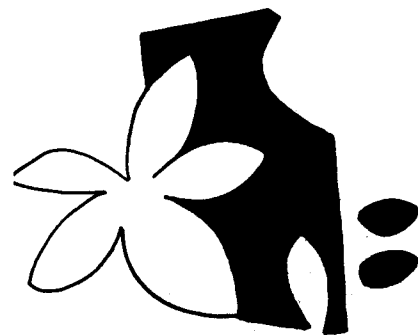
The Franciscan charism can inspire him to realize that God is acting in human history through his divine Will, which is that man take on his obligation to be responsible. This message,

which is indigenous to the Franciscan vocation, can indeed restore in man his sense of worth. It can encourage him to act towards the realization of his human dignity despite the present deprivations forced on him by racism. Part of the Franciscan vocation is to express the Will of God for man in creation. Man should so love creation, as Francis did, that he will expend his talents and his energies—himself if necessary—to try to restore and continue its harmony. The Franciscan in particular, by drawing strength from his roots, can be an instrument of peace and justice, the peace and justice so badly needed in our society.

Saint Francis believed that what he had was only for his use—that it was in reality the property of his poorer neighbor. When he encountered such a person, he

Father Bede Abram, O.F.M.Conv., a black priest and a member of the Franciscan Conventual Province of St. Anthony of Padua now serving in the Parish of St. Bartholomew in Camden, N.J., has held both administrative and teaching positions at Fordham University.

gave to him his rightful property. What a Franciscan has belongs to those in need. We have a message and plan of action that belongs to the poor, and the spirit of Francis impels us to give it for the cause of peace and justice. Let us do what Francis asks of us; while we have time, let us do good."



fering servants, the chosen ones, and our suffering can be redemptive not only for us, but for the whole human race. The suffering servant is innocent (and thus the notion of deserved punishment is nullified), but the proof of his innocence is the exaltation event. Can we speak only of the suffering of the cross without the liberation of the resurrection? Saint Paul states that without the resurrection, the exaltation event, we would all be fools to believe. Some black people will say that we are not liberated, we still suffer, there is no exaltation event—and the image of the suffering servant is therefore at best inappropriate. To argue that this exaltation event will occur when we die is to say that there is no earthly hope; yet hope on earth is somewhat essential to our Christian beliefs. To say that God does not will our oppression, that man and his exercise of free will brought it into being, will only tempt some to ask, "Why does not God intervene in our history as he did in that of the Israelites?" "Perhaps God then favors black people less than others; perhaps

there is divine racism?"

This latter questioning may seem tantamount to sacrilege to our minds; yet in fact people who suffer under racial oppression have been so burdened with it that even the existence of God, not merely his motivation, has been questioned. Short of that extreme, God's motivation has been questioned because human dignity has been so disregarded that some black people, forgetting or ignoring our religious past, see no solution to racism and have fallen into despair.

As stated earlier, Saint Francis set out to restore harmony with the whole of creation, and this is part of the task that we, as his followers, inherit. Blessed Francis was devoted to Lady Poverty; in her, he found holiness and human dignity. Franciscans cannot and will not end human poverty, but we can be instruments in showing the poor how to obtain human dignity in the midst of poverty.

The Franciscan message, based on the relationship between Saint Francis and all the creatures he invoked in his immortal Canticle, is that man is co-responsible for God's creation. Co-responsibility means that God wants man to address himself to those things which cause disharmony in creation. Man must use his freedom, not to establish disorder but good order. Man must posit those actions which

will attack the evils of racism. The Franciscan charism can inspire him to realize that God is acting in human history through his divine Will, which is that man take on his obligation to be responsible. This message, which is indigenous to the Franciscan vocation, can indeed restore in man his sense of worth. It can encourage him to act towards the realization of his human dignity despite the present deprivations forced on him by racism. Part of the Franciscan vocation is to express the Will of God for man in creation. Man should so love creation, as Francis did, that he will expand his talents and his energies—himself if necessary—to try to restore and continue its harmony. The Franciscan in particular, by drawing strength from his roots, can be an instrument of peace and justice, the peace and justice so badly needed in our society.

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Hints for a Communal Hermitage Experience

SISTER BERNADETTE SULLIVAN, S.F.P.

1. Some say we are running out of the world's resources of food and other energy needs. They conclude to zero population growth as the solution. Here in the hermitage in the woods, bread and water suffice for a day or some days. Sunlight by day, candle or simple lantern for nighttime suffices. The trees keep one cool. I conclude each well fed, housed, and clothed member of the human race ought to take a day of fasting once or twice a month. One would then prove to oneself that he or she habitually uses more than needed. The result of continued practice could be a radical change in life-style and more resources conserved to share with others. I would like, moreover, to recommend that all the Franciscans take this on, since we are an order of penance. Many positive effects could be predicted: growth in holiness, example to others. (It is understood that some could not do this because of physical limitations.)

2. Seek to penetrate the Rule for Hermitages and live it today.

3. Meet at regular times for prayer. Find a physical position that helps you pray best. Do not be discouraged if you find it hard to persevere at prayer and solitude. Find your rhythm—the Jesus prayer, scriptural prayer, or whatever suits you. Invite

all the creatures to join you in praise of the Creator.

4. Use Sacred Scripture much.

5. Avoid unnecessary association with others, even other hermits. This solitude and silence is conducive to hearing God through his Word and his creatures in the woods: birds, trees, wind, sun, and air. No newspapers, radios, television, or mail should interrupt this solitude.

6. Do some physical labor for a very short period each day. Do this whether you are fasting or not; it's good for mind, body, and spirit. (Exercise could be substituted for the labor.)

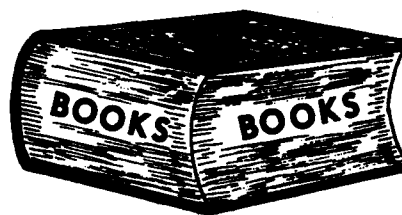
7. If sleep is an obstacle to your prayer and recollection, take a short nap each day.

8. Take as much time as you can, at least three weeks.

9. Invoke the help of Mary, the contemplative par excellence, of Francis, Clare, and all the saints.

10. Have one to two hours of instruction each day in Franciscan themes, or talk to your director/directress regarding your experience and its relation to the Franciscan charism.

11. Let your hermitage be as empty as possible, so you can be filled with the Lord. Let go of yourself, and let God fill you with his Love.



How to Find God. By David Watson. Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1976. Pp. 158. Paper, \$1.95.

Reviewed by Father Conrad Schomskes, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province currently residing at the Franciscan Retreat, Cedar Lake, Indiana.

When I first heard the title of this book, *How to Find God*, I thought it might be a book on prayer; that is, a book on finding God in and through prayer.

But it is not so much that as a book which attempts to convince the reader that God alone, particularly Jesus, can give meaning to our lives. He is the answer to sin, apathy, frustration, suffering, abuse of sex, death, and judgment.

How to Find God is a compilation of talks given by the Reverend David Watson, a Minister of the Church of England, to college students in England and elsewhere. He substantiates his arguments with an abundance of scriptural quotations, scientific data, statistics, and human interest stories, mostly in the form of testimonies for Christ. The style is easy and fast-moving.

I would imagine that most readers of THE CORD are already convinced of the importance of God in their lives. They are probably looking for more meaningful ways of relating to

Him. Still, although they might not find this book all that appealing for their own reading, they could find it fills a need for some with whom they work. For those who are still at the stage of seeking God, without perhaps even realizing it is God they seek, this book could be quite helpful. It might be a good book for those in inquiry classes and for those who were baptized but drifted away from their faith.

The Living Parish: A Believing, Caring, Praying People. By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 157. Paper, \$2.95.

Reviewed by Mrs. Margaret E. Clarke, Founder and Director of Religious Education and Music for the past nine years at St. Edward the Confessor Parish, Clifton Park, New York.

This delightful, convincing book consists of a compilation of articles taken from the nationally syndicated "Know Your Faith" series which appears in many Catholic newspapers, including the Albany Diocesan weekly, *The Evangelist*.

The author, Father Champlin, Pastor of Holy Name Parish in Fulton, New York, and a popular nationwide lecturer at workshops, conferences, etc., manages to convey in print the same warm, people-oriented concern which he is well noted for in his personal appearances.

As a lay person who has been significantly involved in the growth of a new parish from its inception, to a vibrant, living parish, I cannot

Sister Bernadette Sullivan, S.F.P., participated last July in a communal Hermitage Experience at Fayetteville, N.Y. We welcome the opportunity to help her share with our readers these "hints" which she wrote down after the experience. (It should be noted that the Sisters followed St. Francis' "Rule for Hermitages" as found in the Omnibus, pp. 72-73.)

help reading each chapter with a nod of approval as each well considered and thought-out approach and suggestion unfolds—each so convincingly workable!

I am most impressed with Father Champlin's seemingly foremost consideration which revolves around the interaction of people; I find him highly perceptive and sensitive to people's needs both individually and in group situations. This talent, combined with a generous amount of common sense provides him with the enviable ability to recognize what will work in a practical situation of parish life and the flexibility to adjust if it doesn't.

It is in this manner that he relates many personal and parish experiences in the present book, which is divided into three main sections. The first of these, entitled "Leading and Organizing the Parish," in two chapters, primarily addresses itself to pastors who are in a position of establishing themselves and their ideas in a new parish. Although this part applies most significantly to priests, it most likely would be read with interest by parishioners as well.

Section Two, the most varied and detailed of the three, is titled "A Believing, Praying, Caring People," and in five chapters covers such areas as a parish's sacramental program for First Holy Communion, Eucharistic Worship, Marriage and Marriage Encounter, Religious Education Programs, Sacrament of The Anointing of the Sick, and (with strongest emphasis) The New Rite of Penance. This, in my estimation, is the main substance of the book.

The third section, "The Larger Church and a Wider Vision," dis-

cusses in the first of its two chapters bishops and their various roles; the second (the book's conclusion) gives the author's interesting, if rather predictable, "look" at the Church and parish life in 1987.

In my judgment, the value of this book is twofold. It is both credible and practical. First, Father Champlin is most knowledgeable of the *entire contents* of all the post-Vatican II Documents of which he writes, quotes from them verbatim, and interprets them as they are written: a most refreshing affirmation of the "one Holy Catholic Church." Secondly, his "homespun" writing style, which makes constant references to specific events and situations, actually naming people, places, and dates (many from his own parish), becomes a personal approach which the reader relates to easily. Seemingly, any pastor, associate priest, sister, or lay person who is in a position of implementing any or several of the areas discussed should find this book to be an asset in his or her parish activities.

The Dynamics of Spiritual Self-Direction. By Adrian Van Kaam. Denville, N.J.: Dimension Books, 1976. Pp. 551, incl. bibliography and index. Cloth, \$14.95.

Reviewed by Father Maury Smith, O.F.M., D. Min., Program Director at Alverna, a center for human and spiritual growth. Father Maury teaches two courses at the Franciscan Institute that integrate Franciscan spirituality and contemporary psychology.

Of the many books that Van Kaam

has written, this is in some ways one of the best. More than any of his other writings it integrates spirituality and psychology in a balanced manner. True to his earlier approach, he continues to write at a highly philosophical level of psychology with little concern for methodology or praxis.

One of the book's most outstanding achievements is the in-depth discussion of spiritual self-direction in terms of growth in spiritual consciousness, unfolding of one's life direction, and initiation into the life of the spirit. The stress is on openness to the inner self and the Spirit. Van Kaam shows how one may learn to listen to the directive promptings arising in daily life.

Van Kaam is of the opinion that what we need today is qualified "group spiritual directors" and that along with spiritual self-direction this is all that most need and, in reality, will be able to obtain. There is, however, at times a need for special, one-to-one, private spiritual direction. Chapter Twenty, on the "Goals of Direction," is one of the best in the book.

As usual with Van Kaam there are many valuable insights in this book, but there are also a number of deficiencies in his approach and thought—deficiencies which can be only mentioned in a short book review. His conceptualization of the person in terms of vital, personal, and spirit, e.g., resolves itself into a kind of Manichean dualism, implying that the vital is not to be trusted and the spirit is more important than the vital. But if man is a unified whole graced by God, how can one dimension be more important than

another? This kind of thinking emerges only when one has reified one's own abstract concepts. The theological distinction that needs to be kept in mind at all times is between sin and grace, and *not* between nature and grace. It seems to me that buried in Van Kaam's thought is an implicit puritan theology of the evilness of man: a theology far removed from the very old traditions of Catholic theology, insisting on man's basic goodness.

Another underlying assumption that pervades Van Kaam's thinking is his Thomistic emphasis on the intellect. Although he claims that he has developed what the general Christian tradition of spirituality is for all in the Church, one cannot accept the claim as Van Kaam sides with only one side of that tradition—the Thomistic. Rightly or wrongly, one gets the impression that Van Kaam is simply not aware of his own narrow biases. The Franciscan approach to spirituality is absolutely unique in its simplicity: to follow in the footsteps of Christ, the Gospel. Franciscan theology has always emphasized the importance of the will. In the Franciscan contemplative and mystical approach the will reaches beyond the intellect into loving union with God experientially.

Van Kaam's solution to the problem of spiritual direction is to legitimize group spiritual direction and to develop a training program for these group spiritual directors. This approach has a great deal of merit. In fact, according to one Franciscan scholar, group spiritual direction is part of the Franciscan tradition, whereas the emphasis on one-to-one, private spiritual direction is of

Jesuit influence. But the weakness of Van Kaam's approach is what seems to be a total inability to deal with the concrete. It astounds me that he seems to have no awareness whatsoever of the contemporary psychology of group dynamics. He does not demonstrate any knowledge, either, of educational psychology in the areas of experiential learning, laboratory education, or value clarification. A group spiritual director who merely gives lectures on spirituality is doomed to failure. Learning facts and history about spirituality is not personal growth in the Spirit.

There is also a danger in Van Kaam's approach of special high-level training of spiritual directors, in that the average priest or educated layman will think himself unqualified to participate in giving spiritual direction. Even more pernicious is the risk of making spiritual direction into one more specialized science, out of touch with reality and incapable of dialogue with other sciences. We already have enough of this malady in academia. Spiritual direction, in my opinion, should be a function and not another science. Spiritual direction's primary function is to integrate the theological sciences and the behavioral sciences to serve and facilitate a person's growth in relationship to God.

There are a few other defects in this essay which, while not as important as the above, do mar what had the potential of being an excellent book. One is the boring repetitiousness of much of the book. Another is the destruction of the word "psychology" by Van Kaam. He has so generalized the term that it no longer has any specific meaning.

Most of his statements about psychology are true of some psychologists and false in regards to others. The rehash of old developmental psychology is simply tiresome. Van Kaam needs to do some homework in contemporary studies in adult developmental psychology. While he is very right in his denunciation of the faddism in the United States, he is very wrong in throwing out the baby with the dirty water: he does not seem to know the work of serious scholars in the area of transpersonal psychology.

Finally, Van Kaam mentions several times the value and usefulness of keeping a notebook, but at no time does he acknowledge the work of Ira Progoff and his intensive journal approach. If Van Kaam does not know Progoff's work, I feel he would vastly benefit from a serious look into it. Progoff has actually accomplished what Van Kaam only talks about. I do recommend both books if you can afford them; but otherwise, buy Progoff's *At a Journal Workshop*.

Rise up and Remember. By Barbara Nauer. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. viii-110. Paper, \$2.95.

Reviewed by Father James A. Steuer, Pastor, Church of the Sacred Heart, Little Falls, New York.

This book by Barbara Nauer, English professor at Loyola in New Orleans, is exactly what its publishers bill it to be: viz., a "sensitive, powerful story of despair, near suicide, conversion, and joy." Any educated

Roman Catholic who has been involved in the Church's life since the Council can recognize parts of his own life as the author spreads hers across the pages for all to reflect upon.

I recommend this book especially to priests, informed laity, and religious who have run the "liberal" route (such as myself), found it bankrupt (as I did), and by God's favor rediscovered the impenetrable mystery of the Church, but who simply cannot tie into the "charismatic renewal" which played such an important role in the author's conversion to Christ and his Bride, the Church.

The reason I single out this particular group as an audience who can profit from the book is that no matter how strong and well-founded one's objections to the "charismatic renewal" may be, he owes it both to himself and to those with whom he shares life to discover the basic dynamic at work in the movement which appeals across the board to intellectuals like the author right down to the teeny-bop set. I believe that what Professor Nauer found there, and what enabled her to overlook the patent nonsense, is what the Church herself should always offer: simple faith, the Gospel of Jesus Christ taken seriously, mutual support, compassion, a genuinely experienced sense of Church community, a sense of mission, and a sense also of the Transcendent's infusing and enlivening the immanent.

In particular, I appeal to my fellow priests, in the words of the title, to "rise up and remember," and then lead God's people to re-member. If

this is done, the more bizarre elements of the "charismatic renewal" will die their own natural death, and those elements which are genuinely of the Gospel will be able to be seen for the divine power in them.

Be My Son. By J. Roy Legere. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1976. Pp. 191. Paper, \$2.95.

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., M.A. (Phil., St. Bonaventure University), Coordinator of Alumni Services at St. Bonaventure University.

This is an unusual book. It is the story of a poverty-stricken Canadian family from which God selected an illegitimate son to favor him with special spiritual gifts. An autobiography, the work has the author presenting in a simple, unassuming way an account of his exterior and his interior life.

Roy Legere had a miserable, difficult childhood. His mother lost her first husband with three young children to care for. A year later she had a liaison with a visitor from the United States and in due time gave birth to her son, Roy. About a year after Roy's birth, the mother married again, to a man much older than herself but a person who took good care of his wife and her four children. When this man died a few years later, the mother found herself unable to take care of the three youngest children (Roy and two children born of the union). After spending a few months in an orphanage, the children were first cared for by relatives until

the mother brought them together with herself to live in extreme poverty. At times the children were ashamed to go to school or to church because of their ragged condition. The family moved from place to place, always suffering from lack of food and clothing. Their education suffered as well as their moral upbringing. When they did go to school they went to the parochial school, and Roy appreciated the kindness and interest of the Sisters. At the age of fifteen, having reached only the seventh grade, Roy left school to go to work.

At the age of seventeen Roy Legere experienced his first truly religious awareness of the presence of God. Jesus seemed to bend over him and assure him of the Father's love and His own love for him. It was during this first "visit" that Roy seemed to hear Jesus tell him that His Father loved Roy and wanted him to be His son. Roy had often been discouraged and considered himself worthless, partly because of his poverty, but especially because of his illegitimacy. This assurance of the Father's love filled him with a feeling of refreshment and joy that he had never felt before.

After a very serious illness that lasted three years, Roy recovered through the intercession of Brother Andre, a Brother of the Holy Cross who had been at St. Joseph's Shrine near Montreal for many years and after whose death great devotion toward him had arisen, especially among French Canadians. During his illness Roy had other spiritual experiences, not only of the presence of Jesus, but of the Blessed Trinity

and of the Blessed Virgin Mary. With a return to health, Roy Legere was able to get steady work, to marry, to move to the United States, and to begin to speak about the great love of God for His people that he felt was his mission in life. Continuing to live as a layman, supporting his family by working as a cobbler, a shoe-maker, and a butcher, and taking an active part in parish and civic affairs, Roy spoke publicly about God's love whenever and wherever people would listen to him.

The spiritual gifts that Roy Legere received, he felt should be shared with others. He considered himself called to bring the message of God's love to those people and those places that the priests were unable to reach. The remarkable feature of this book is the way in which the author describes the spiritual experiences with which God favored him. One is reminded of the words of Jesus to Nicodemus: "The wind blows where it will" (John 3:8). It is true that the Spirit of the Lord is given to those whom the Lord chooses and in the manner he chooses. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit" (1 Cor. 12:7); and again, "To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (ibid.).

Commanded by his spiritual director to write an account of his spiritual experiences, Roy Legere presents in his own words an account of his life. He believes that the spiritual gifts he received were not to be kept hidden but to be shared by others. This book tells the story of God's love for one of His sons. The author intends to show

that God's love extends to all of His children. This reviewer strongly recommends this book as an example of God's continual bestowal of His gifts even in the present day.

No Handle on the Cross: An Asian Meditation on the Crucified Mind.

By Kosuke Koyama. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1977. Pp. ix-120. Cloth, \$7.95; paper, \$3.95.

Reviewed by Sister Antoinette Kennedy, O.S.F., M.A. (Franciscan Studies), Member of the Formation Team and Vocation Director for the Western Province of the Philadelphia Franciscans.

Well acquainted with the spirituality of the Asian people, firmly grounded in scripture and the Christian tradition, Dr. Kosuke Koyama presents a view of ministry founded on the theology of the stigmata of Christ. Author of *Waterbuffalo Theology*, and Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at Otago, New Zealand, Dr. Koyama brings a refreshing dimension to the apostolic thrust. To be an apostle to the Asian nations is to put on the mind of Christ who redeems us by carrying the cumbersome cross with "no handle."

In this small volume Dr. Koyama covers a vast amount of material, juxtaposing the message of the gospel with the past, aggressive approach of a crusading Christianity. He develops lucidly the fact that the Southeast Asians identify, not with the technological and paternalistic mind, but with the crucified mind of one who is willing to be weak in the power of God; respectful of history;

conscious that the *shemas* of Israelite, Hindu, Islamic, Buddhist, and Confucian thought intersect Christianity precisely at the point of self-denial. In Koyama's view Jesus Christ stands at this point of intersection. Ministry to Asia, then, must have the attitude of Christ, an attitude devoid of triumphalism and replete with compassion born of asceticism. The universal Lord who carries his cross is also the glorified Lord, and Koyama articulates this in his closing chapter, "The Risen Mind."

If the reader can be patient with repetitious gimmick phrases such as "no handle on the cross," interpolations, numerous questions and exclamatory sentences, he/she will be able to appreciate the author's knowledge and sense of scripture, his respect for history and people in process. Finally, he/she will capture the truth that underlies the author's basic thesis: no matter where or to whom the message is proclaimed, all ministry has at its beginning, completion, and center the Word of God, Jesus Christ.

Saint Francis of Assisi. Watercolors by P. Subercaseaux Errazuriz, O.S.B. Introd. by Johannes Joergensen. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. xviii-198 (9"x12"). Cloth, \$25.00.

Reviewed by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., a staff artist for this review and a contemplative nun residing at the Monastery of Sancta Clara in Canton, Ohio.

The artist presents, in this handsome volume, fifty superb watercolors. They are the overflow into

creativity of the life of the humble friar of the twelfth century into that of an artist of our own time. They were prepared for with long study and a literal "following in the footsteps of Saint Francis." Remote preparation was undertaken in the Royal Art Institute of Berlin and studies in Rome and Paris. The first edition of these paintings was in 1926.

The artist's technique is known as "pure Wash" and is very difficult to handle. His brush is gentle, simple, reverent, yet spirited. I liken him, in his own field, to Johannes Sebastian Bach in the music sphere; yet occasionally there is a Tchaikovsky, such as the very emotional portrayal of Francis with the Bishop after the young son of Pietro Bernadone has stripped off his clothes; or, again, in the picture in which Francis is urging peace in the fighting city of Siena. But even these scenes of great emotional upheaval possess the control, planning, and expertise of a Bach. Yes: carefully planned were these pictures; no extra paint was allowed to flow across the areas needing all the sparkling light they could get from the spot of white paper below. Catch the light that plays in the City of Jerusalem, or around the crib in Greccio at Christmas. Were not these executed with controlled skill? Light is an important factor in many pictures, just as a particular theme is an important factor in a fugue variation for Bach. Light even plays in the background of some (taking a reverse role, one might say). I refer you to Francis leaving the party and his friends. The artist is so clever that, although our eye is drawn to the light, a secondary element in

this picture, we are more aware of the figure in shadow because of the color contrast in the costume and his intense facial expression.

The Byzantine art that is reproduced, such as one finds in the picture of Saint Francis before the crucifix at San Damiano, is well done and in true harmony with the Eastern Tradition. Some of the architecture is borrowed from later dates—for example, the sixteenth century Bernini columns; but this is rare and does not detract from the overall veracity of the twelfth-century depictions. The artist was familiar with the Italian landscape, much the same now as it was when Francis walked the Umbrian hills; we see the silver gray of the olive trees, the mist covering the hills, and the deep red poppies so common along the pathways.

There is one plate whose technique is very different from all the others. It is as though one went to a Showing by Turner and there was confronted by a Cezanne. I refer to a painting called "A Holy Welcome." The palette is limited to burnt siena, raw umber, and a blue green that takes on an almost pastel quality (Rejoice, America). Subercaseaux painted the trees and figures in this one, then scrubbed his work until the paper texture, both warp and woof, was visible as tree bark and leaf texture. This is a rare gem for this particular series and presents a delightful contrast. The character of Francis remains constant, though, and regardless of the scrub technique there is no loss of continuity with the rest of the work.

Serenity of expression is captured by this controlled brush in the picture of the Saint in ecstasy. Other-

worldliness breathes through the Saint's whole relaxed frame. The line of flying birds starts high in the picture and draws the eye in descending motion, to land with those curious feathered creatures. Then the inner eye of the beholder is drawn back upwards, as though the Saint's spirit were in ascensional motion, and we are being swept aloft with him. The puzzled expression on the peasant's face—he has happened along—is both amusing and touching. The human element is blended with the divine in this way, with the ease known only to a prayerful man. And this carries me to another point.

My Superior remarked, when the book came in and we were leafing through it together, "I'd like to have some of those enlarged and hung around the monastery." Why did she say that? Why would a young Abbess want these pictures "around"? They evoke a prayerful mood. They call forth a response in the soul, just as

painting them called forth a vocation in the soul of the artist.

There is a definite twentieth-century flavor to the water colors, although they do not flow out over the frame lines. There are "tension" pictures in this collection. Could it be otherwise in a pictorial life of Saint Francis? The colors usually remain tranquil, and tension is created by angles within the scene—I refer you to the jutting rocks and sharp silhouetted figure. Another crisis picture is almost comical. Francis is on the floor eating begged bread in poorest garb while his friars are served better food than usual. Facial expression and body position are the medium to express the emotion of the moment this time.

I recommend the book to those who want to know Saint Francis better. I recommend the book to those whose meditation on the life of the Saint has hit a routine mode. Approach Saint Francis from a new direction, a visually delightful one.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Unmarried and Pregnant: What Now?

By Ida Critelli and Tom Schick. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. vi-137, including index. Paper, \$1.95.

This short manual by founders of Birthright in Cincinnati offers both short- and long-term advice to those who fit its title. Readable chapters on where to turn, why to choose for the baby's life, whether or not to

get married, whether or not to keep the baby, combine both kinds of counsel. A second part of the book deals with the physical aspects of pregnancy, from its identification to its completion in childbirth. An appendix lists the Birthright organizations, with phone numbers, in the fifty largest population areas in the U.S.A. This is a valuable book for any priest or counselor.

Person to Person: A Handbook for Pastoral Counseling. By James A. Vanderpool. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. xii-156, including bibliography. Cloth, \$6.95.

This book is what its title says it is. Beginning with a description of the counseling process, the author proceeds to relate the process to the problems of childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle age, old age, and dying. The characteristic features of human psychology at each of these stages is carefully described, and an abundance of case illustrations shows how that psychology leads to problems which find their way to the pastoral counselor. The weakest part of the work seems to be its chapter on human sexuality, which is mostly about conscience in the sexual area. The matters raised are far too complex for the brief treatment given, and the treatment of certain conscience needs to be balanced by concern for others' rights. As part of a course in pastoral counseling, or as a course in pastoral counseling, or as a systematization of what priestly experience probably has taught one, the book is worth its price.

The Marijuana Maze. By Harold Pascal, C.M. Canfield, Ohio: Alba Books, 1976. Pp. xiii-113, including bibliography. Paper, \$1.75.

This book is a calm, documented account of the history, psychology, sociology, and criminology of marijuana—particularly of its effects. The author's convincing thesis is that marijuana is a dangerous drug (it is so classified by international organizations) despite much media propaganda to the contrary. He con-

cludes that marijuana is a problem of spirit as well as of body and mind, and that the spiritual gap or void that users seek to fill through its use must be filled in other ways, though he leaves for another book, perhaps, the description of those ways.

Prayer and Liberation. Edited by M. Basil Pennington, O.C.S.O. Canfield, Ohio: Alba Books, 1976.

This book is composed of four papers, fruits of the tenth annual meeting of the Ecumenical Institute of Spirituality, a Foreword recounting the interesting origin of that group, and an introduction by the editor. The essays "Jesus and the Oppressed," "The Dynamics of Forgiveness," "Prayer and Political Power," and "Prayer in an Economy of Abundance" all link the notion of prayer and freedom—freedom through one's personal self-surrender to God.

Growing Old Gracefully. By J. Maurus, Canfield, Ohio: Alba Books, 1976. Pp. 118, including bibliography. Paper, \$1.75.

Father Maurus gives a very positive approach to old age, one that incorporates both human and divine Wisdom. Topics like enjoying your children, aches and pains, planning your retirement, assets of later years, are treated in a readable style, replete with illustrations from the lives of people who not only have grown old gracefully, but have done so enjoyably and productively. This is a book which could help the kind of people who like self help, and also those who deal with those beginning their senior citizen status.

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A VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS

and every grace and blessing for

A HAPPY AND FRUITFUL NEW YEAR

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The cover and illustrations for our December issue were drawn by Brother Robert G. Cuniff, O.F.M., Co-moderator of the Third Order and a member of the faculty at Bishop Timon High School, Buffalo, New York.

the CORD

December, 1977

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Vol. 27, No. 11

CONTENTS

FRANCISCAN IDEALISM TODAY—II	346
<i>Editorial</i>	
EQUALITY IN THE CHURCH	348
<i>Gerald M. Dolan, O.F.M.</i>	
RECOGNITION	362
<i>Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.</i>	
A PEASANT AT GRECCIO	363
<i>Timothy James Fleming, O.F.M. Conv.</i>	
A NEW-CALENDAR PROPOSAL	364
<i>Hugoline Sabatino, O.F.M.</i>	
RANDOM THOUGHTS ON CONTEMPLATION	366
<i>Conrad A. Schomske, O.F.M.</i>	
A CHILD IS BORN	370
<i>Sister M. Thaddine, O.S.F.</i>	
INDEX TO THE CORD—1977	371



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EDITORIAL

Franciscan Idealism Today—II

THE UNIQUELY SIMPLE IDEALISM of Saint Francis, we suggested last month is our privileged means of becoming ever more firmly rooted in the experience of Jesus present in our own heart and in our world—and hence of becoming what we are meant to be, and of succeeding in our mission of bringing the world to its completion in Jesus and returning it in him, through the Spirit, to the Father.

We also suggested that an insight into the simplicity of Francis' idealism emerges only from careful attention to his life. This month, as we prepare for our Savior's coming among us, we may profitably reflect on our Franciscan ideals in a global, unified manner so as to envisage them afresh precisely in the perspective of their power-imparting Christic source. It seems helpful first to sketch an outline of the "interior" ideals—those having to do with an individual's personal transformation; and then the "exterior" ideals, which bear mainly on the social, apostolic dimension of our life.

I. The Interior Ideals

The first "interior" ideal is liberty. The Messiah's mission was often understood by the prophets—as well as by the Lord Himself and his disciples—as "setting the captives free." Paul insists, moreover, that in freeing us, Jesus "meant us to remain free" (Gal. 5:1). We are never again to be caught under the yoke of slavery. And so our own vow of obedience takes on a positive cast; in the words of Cajetan Esser, we become "engaged" by it to liberty. We can hope, through it, to attain the only real kind of liberty: one which has a concrete context (unlike the illusory "liberation" sought so widely by various segments of contemporary society), in which it is but a condition for fulfillment in union with the glorified Lord.

Poverty, the second ideal for which Franciscanism is so well known, can likewise be seen in this unified perspective as a response to the concrete experience of Jesus and the resulting impulse to imitate him. No end in itself, it sets us free to concentrate our energies upon God and the service of his kingdom.

Finally, as *lesser* brothers, little ones, we entertain the ideal of humility—not in abstraction as a false absolute, but as a living of the truth, as a constant endeavor to bear in mind that we live, not for our own fulfillment primarily, but as members of the Lord's body, to contribute to its upbuilding in all that we are and do.

II. The Exterior Ideals

Faithful pursuit of these ideals under the impetus of the "love of Christ which drives us on" naturally issues forth in a threefold type of activity long recognized as essential to our Franciscan life. First, we are to be peacemakers. Francis insisted that it was the Lord who revealed to him that wherever he went he was to proclaim God's peace. We cannot, however, just run around saying "Peace, peace." To bring real peace and reconciliation to society, we must first possess them, and to possess them we must be firmly rooted in the inner experience of the living Prince of Peace.

In the second place, we are to "heal"—to make whole and sound what has been fragmented and weakened. Although this ministry has only recently emerged, in the Catholic Church, from a long eclipse, we cannot doubt that it was an essential part of the Lord's own mission (Mt. 11:3-5). Nor are his acts of healing to be understood in purely apologetic fashion as mere proofs of his divinity; rather, they are acts of compassion integral to the very meaning of his identity and mission. Those of us called to exercise this mission can therefore do so effectively only if it springs from the depths of a life lived in the real, experienced presence of Jesus, the Creator and Redeemer who draws all things to unity in himself.

Finally, we know that our Franciscan idealism is to find expression in preaching—most obviously, in the priestly or diaconal ministry in the pulpit, but also in that "homily" or "proclamation of the Good News" which our entire lives are meant to be. Just as formal preaching can be vacuous and superficial, however, so will the testimony of our lives be hollow unless what we "preach" is an overflow of a genuine inner experience. One must have been to the mountain-top to report faithfully to others what one has seen there.

Bethlehem, both in anticipation and, later, in celebration, affords us an ideal occasion to "begin, for up to now we have done nothing." In the irresistible intimacy of the stable there, we can approach confidently and joyfully the "mercy seat"—the Lord who awaits us. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.

Fr. Michael D. Mailach, OFM

Equality in the Church:

A New Gnosticism?

GERALD M. DOLAN, O.F.M.

I HAD INTENDED to say a straightforward word about some foundational realities supporting religious life in today's church. When it came time to sit down and do it, what originally seemed rather clear—even dull—began to fall away and become confused in the din of conflicting voices. The closer I came to writing a word, the stronger became the conviction that any word of mine must be probing and tentative. Religious orders and congregations of all sorts have undertaken innumerable actions in recent times to bring their various ways of life into conformity with the injunctions of the Second Vatican Council. To have witnessed the many changes in regimen, costume, and style is to know that there must have been the dawning of something new!

There has developed in the meantime a movement to ordain women to the presbyteral and even episcopal ministries in the

church. In the Catholic community significant groups of women religious have taken a public stand in favor of such ordinations. During the "Call to Action" conference, sponsored in Detroit during October of 1976, one of the resolutions stated:

That the National Conference of Catholic Bishops initiate dialogue with Rome to change the present discipline in the western rite of the Roman Catholic Church to allow women to be ordained to the diaconate and priesthood.

In addition, such a development was proposed as a matter of justice:

That the National Conference of Catholic Bishops offer leadership in justice to the universal church by providing a process which facilitates the formation of a more fully developed position on the ordination of women to sacred orders. To be credible, this position must evolve from an open exploration of the rights and needs of persons and of the Holy Spirit

in the Church, and a collative and interpretative study of the human sciences, of the experiences of other Christian Churches, of contemporary biblical exegesis, of theological insights, as well as of pontifical and episcopal statements. The study should involve appropriate organizations of scholars, lay and religious women, especially women who believe themselves called to the priesthood.¹

And then, on January 27, 1977, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith published its Declaration *Inter Insigniores*, which communicated the negative judgment to the possibility of a female ministry bearing the presbyteral or episcopal character in the church. The Document, whose publication had been ordered by Pope Paul VI, recalls the strong tradition which has surrounded this dimension of Christian life. In addition, it brings forward two kinds of argumentation. In the historical order there is the fact that Jesus is a man and that he chose only men to be his immediate collaborators. At the same time it is remarked that his attitude toward women was so markedly different from the norm of his times as to arouse surprise and opposition. In the theological order there is

the analogy: the sacrament of Orders (Presbyterate and Episcopate) consecrates the ordained, i.e., establishes a participation in the mystery of Jesus who is Head and Spouse of the church.

This negative judgment has not been easily or quietly accepted by many. It has been accused of sexism. There are expressions of dismay that women should be excluded from serving the Christian community, particularly in areas of human concern where feminine awareness and sensitivity are so crucially needed. Isn't it a fact that women are now members of pastoral teams, and wouldn't presbyteral Ordination simply recognize a fact whose time has come? Individuals and groups of experts in the various theological disciplines are not convinced by the evidences and the lines of argument which the Roman Congregation presents. The faculty of a school of theology has termed the action a "serious mistake."² A Diocesan Sisters' Senate has written that it does not accept the pronouncement excluding women from sacramental priesthood as final.³ And Andrew Greeley has indicated that thirty percent of American Catholics favor the ordination of women.⁴

¹Cf. *Origins* (Washington: NC Documentary Service, 1976), vol. 6, p. 312.

²Cf. *The Tablet*, March 24, 1977, p. 2.

³*Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴*Ibid.*, February 17, 1977.

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The clamor of conflicting opinions—each party obviously well intentioned—was an invitation to adjust my original project. The first and fundamental question is about the mission of the church and our ability to articulate this mission in significant language. And while listening to various dimensions of the controversy, I recalled words which John Henry Newman wrote in his essay of 1859, *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*:

The religious life of a people is of a certain quality and direction, and these are tested by the mode in which it encounters the various opinions, customs, and institutions which are submitted to it. Drive a stake into a river's bed, and you will at once ascertain which way it is running, and at what speed; throw up even a straw upon the air, and you will see which way the wind blows; submit your heretical and Catholic principle to the action of the multitude, and you will be able to

WE HAVE A language problem in the church. The same words spoken by different people cause division and recrimination. Present discussion of *Inter Insigniores* is a case in point. To clarify its conviction concerning the sacrament of Orders, it states the following:

pronounce at once whether it is imbued with Catholic truth or with heretical falsehood.⁵

It certainly does seem that a stake has been driven into the river bed of American Catholic life. Can the turbulence indicate something of the quality and direction of this life? I think that it can. And more, I think that calm reflection upon some of the issues which the present controversy raises can nurture in a new way a real appreciation of the Christian Mystery. And since today's turbulence arises from powerful concerns for service and equality in the church, I propose to address myself to the question: What are the operative models in contemporary conversations about "the priesthood of Christ," Christian ministry, and Christian service? It is my hope that discussion prompted by this enquiry will help to clarify a major value for religious life today.

The whole sacramental economy is in fact based upon natural signs, on symbols imprinted upon the human psychology: "Sacramental signs," says St. Thomas, "represent what they signify by natural resemblance (*In IV Sent., d. 25, q. 2, 1, ad 4*). The same natural resemblance is required for persons as for things when

Christ's role in the Eucharist is to be expressed sacramentally; there would not be this "natural resemblance" which must exist between Christ and his minister if the role of Christ were not taken by a man; in such a case it would be difficult to see in the minister the image of Christ. For Christ himself was and remains a man.⁶

Among the various objections which have been raised against the position and the arguments of this Document, the most angry reaction has been focused upon the term "natural resemblance." There is shock and anger that an organ of the Magisterium should buy into sexist oppression of women. And there is a feeling that such argumentation can only be harmful. The intensity of feeling may be gathered from what Sister Joan Chittister, President of the Leadership Conference for Women Religious, has written:

It is my contention that the use of sexist language in the church contributes to the continuance of a negative attitude toward women; affects the psychological development of women themselves; divides the church; limits its resources and perpetuates injustice.⁷

I propose that our problem is rooted in two dimensions which have contributed powerfully to



form the modern western mind. There has been the philosophical and theological movement since the Enlightenment which has promoted a discernible, though not always explicit, flight from bodyliness. In addition, there has been the development of the technological culture whose organizational principle seeks effectively to subjugate experience to the demands of expedient control. In any realm where technique guarantees success, religion included, efficiency and control are the foci. Attention is practically focused less on the end or the goal of what is done than on the most effective way of doing what needs to be done or getting where one intends to go.

⁵J. H. Newman, *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*, ed. Coulson (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1961), pp. 74-75.

⁶*Origins* (see note 1, above), vol. 6, p. 522.

⁷Sister Joan Chittister, " 'Brotherly' Love in Today's Church," *America*, March 19, 1977, p. 233.

I have come to think that contemporary men and women are lost in a world where technology dictates political and social slogans entice them to become lost in a whirl of mental abstractions. We need to be careful lest we be betrayed into becoming simply persons who manage what they can and control others as objects and means.

And, while thinking about this, the thought has occurred: how consistent it is that, as women seek liberation from the many impediments which have bound them in tutelage for so long, the wantonness which reduces the feminine to nakedness should convince them that freedom is to be had by adopting the technological mind-set. To be man or to be woman is no longer of significance. We are to become project-oriented persons. We are in retreat from our bodies. Is it too much to say that Christian awareness is once again challenged by that ever present manichaeian and gnostic temptation to get away from what is bodily, and to seek refuge in an ideal world of technology.

If it is true that we are in flight from our bodies, it must be said that such flight betrays the human reality. The goal of equality among men and women, together with the affirmation of human worth, cannot be pursued at the price of the primordial

fact of human sexuality. And more, to be man and to be woman is integral to the relationship of God with humankind. Sexuality and bodyliness are linked to the dynamism of salvation. Ultimately it is this dynamism which is at stake and is threatened by the technological mind. If the mystery of Christ is effective in the world today, it is effective in the bodyliness of those who are related to Christ in organic unity. The aphorism with which Irenaeus of Lyons confounded the gnostics of his day, and which expresses the essence of Christianity, bears restatement: "God made himself man, that man might become God." New Testament realism may not be blurred. We are redeemed in the flesh of Christ. Because of this we may not separate human individuals from the richness of their enfleshed historical existence—even in the name of some "higher" wisdom.

We have grown used to talking about shared life and love in the gospel. Life and love are communicated through power which becomes evident in the human touch, in the charm of visible goodness, in the ring of words sounding in the ear. Bodyliness is the condition for this. And if we despise the flesh because it limits and separates, we do away with the possibility of affection and trust which bridge

the separateness of human individuals. There will continue to be communication, but it will happen on the level of intellect and be influenced by social habit and custom. The real world will give way to the notional world. Thought will give place to data and information. Concentration upon system effectiveness and technological means will cloud the ability to perceive the purpose of it all. In the long run men and women will be worth their functioning, and will be made to take their places among other things useful.

It should not be surprising that some reverberation of the technological mind be felt among Christians. In the realm of theological reflection there has been, for the sake of science's detachment, a widespread speaking of God and revelation by ever-lengthening strings of speculative propositions. In a recent lecture B.C. Butler has written about *The Data of Theology*:

The Christian tradition is not, therefore, to be simply identified with—the name "tradition" is not to signify solely—the external "monuments of tradition" and the public preaching and teaching of

the Church. Its core is an interior reality communicated, with the help of exterior means, from heart to heart. The heart of our fellowmen, the heart of Jesus of Nazareth, is to some extent accessible to us through the external indications that are within our reach. These external indications are to be interpreted in the light of our own religious experience; we speak of course in the awareness that none of us is a separate atom enjoying a totally incommunicable interior experience, but that each and all belong to a fellowship of believers that spans the continents and the ages, and that has its essence not just in external signs but in a shared life and has its source in God self-revealed.⁸

Theology must arise from a critical and objective reflection upon "God self-revealed to human faith and discernible in the human act of faith."⁹ The knowledge of God and the handing on of this knowledge can be notional and academic. Notions must be tested, however, not only according to the canons of science, but in a conformity of heart to him who is, in his own flesh, the eternal Word of God.¹⁰ There are two ways of knowing God, the one notional and conceptual, the other a knowledge of the heart, a

⁸B. C. Butler, in *The Clergy Review* 61 (1976), pp. 175-76.

⁹Ibid., p. 171.

¹⁰Cf. Vatican Council II, "Dei Verbum," ch. 1, §4. *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, O.P. (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1975), pp. 751-52.

"knowing by intimacy." It is of this that G. Philips remarks:

This latter form [of knowledge] goes beyond the concept, and so remains obscure where the concept is clear. It comes from God as infused grace that attracts the knower to the known by means of a charity that makes man similar to God. Numerous theologians draw back at this point, fearing to enter the realm of mysticism. They seem to forget that every act of faith brings with it a quasi-experience which ought to be called "submystical" and which enables us to savor the joy of contact with God the Father.¹¹

When these two ways of knowing conspire, i.e., when the academically and conceptually precise theology is not isolated from the Object of its study, and when the Object of theological reflection is within the personal experience of the theologian,

theology can hand on, in its way and its measure, spirit and life. There are two "words" to be said, the scientifically clear word which informs and makes intelligible and the direct sacramental word which, as bearing the reality of which it speaks, deepens and corroborates the other. It is because of the second word—we may call it mythical—that theology can be, in its recollection of Jesus, liberating. It is a quality of this word that it can never be altogether clear or measured. It is often spoken in poetic form, and it may be the least inadequate language with which to speak of God. When combined with a human gesture it becomes the performed word which we call sacrament. And, contrary to our first inclination, it is this world which enables discursive reasoning and scientific language to make sense.

II

DURING THE fourth century the great Athanasius took Irenaeus' recapitulation of the gospel and gave it even leaner form when he spoke of Christ as "God bearing flesh," and of the rest of men as "men bearing Spirit."¹² There is here expressed what the Second Vatican Council would proclaim concerning the relation

which those who are the church have with Jesus the Lord:

...the society furnished with hierarchical agencies and the Mystical Body of Christ are not to be considered as two realities, nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, nor the earthly Church and the Church enriched with heavenly things.

¹¹G. Philips, "Reflections on Purely Conceptual Theology and on 'Real' Theology," *Louvain Studies* 2 (1969), 265.

¹²St. Irenaeus, *De Incarnatione contra Arianos*, 8 (PL 26, 996).

Rather they form one interlocked reality which is comprised of a divine and human element. For this reason, by an excellent analogy, this reality is compared to the mystery of the incarnate Word. Just as the assumed nature inseparably united to the Divine Word serves Him as a living instrument of salvation, so in a similar way, does the communal structure of the Church serve Christ's Spirit, who vivifies it by way of building up the body (cf. Eph. 4:16).¹³

To speak of analogy is to speak of comparison, but not of the comparison of one idea with another. The comparison made here is between the reality which is Christ in his flesh and that reality which is the visible community of those who believe in him. If Jesus is in his flesh visibly the Word of God to men, the social unity which is the church, his Body, is visibly a Word of God for men. By tracing the homogeneous elements of these realities we can discover more deeply what the church is really about.

Any word which would convey what the Christian life is about must be spoken according to the measure of what Jesus said and did. Many an analytical and discursive word has been spoken and written about the Christian phenomenon, and many have yet to be said. The word, particular-

ly the human word by which God's Word becomes our word, is an instrument of power. It is not meant to lie in the pages of a book or to be stored as a magnetic impulse in a data bank. The word of which we speak is creative and receptive. The prophet perceives something, and he structures what he sees as a word spoken to others. This word which he speaks, as a prophetic word, betrays the fact that he has *seen* something. This is its power which enables the listener to receive, to accept, and to cherish this word. The believer hears God's Word in the prophetic witness and accepts it as such. God testifies about himself to the prophet so as to assist him in forming the human word capable of touching each human individual. The prophet receives insight into God and reveals the truth of a friend! We know that God is active in the hearts of all men; theologians have always spoken of an "inner light." Thus, to hear the prophet's word is not to create the meaning of what he speaks about, but to accept a handing on which gives witness to God. The ongoing drama of God's Word includes, therefore, prophetic insight and revelation, and from this the development of Tradition wherein repeated individual events are rich with

¹³Vatican Council II, "Lumen Gentium," ch. 1, §8 (ed. Flannery, p. 357).

the power of God to attract and enlighten every man and create for them the possibility of grasping his Word.

The Word which is God's revelation to men and man's acceptance is concretely, in Christ, the church. In his own flesh Jesus is the author of salvation by pure grace; the church, the community of new life established in Jesus, is the central event of revelation. The concrete church is the visible Word, the epiphany of the Word of salvation. Throughout her time the church continues in events through which the holiness already realized in Jesus the Lord is dramatically etched upon a still rebellious world.

We may more readily grasp the significance of this by considering what H. Mühlen highlights as the two hypostatic functions of the incarnate Word.¹⁴ Jesus' offering and immolation on the cross depicts and manifests that "belonging" which is his within the divine Trinity as Son of the Father. The Word is always with God (Jn. 1:1), and the translation of this in the visible register of creation is that obedience which Paul hymns in his Epistle to the Philippians (2:6-11). Jesus is also the one who "sends" the Holy Spirit from the Father to be, among those who accept Jesus' Word, the expression of what the

Spirit is within the divine Trinity: him in whom Father and Son are one. To look on Jesus is to discern two functions which are not identical and whose difference can help us express what it means for the church to be present to the world today. In the flesh of man Jesus is at once the Father's visible Word addressed to the world (cf. Jn. 1:14-18; 14:8-13, etc.), and mankind's visible word spoken to the Father! Coming into the world, he is still always *toward* the Father (cf. Jn. 14-16). In the difference of these functions and in their relatedness we find the meaning of his priesthood and grounds for correcting the overly notional concept of ministry and service which technology has made to seem unavoidable.

Recall the Statement of Vatican II cited above:

... by an excellent analogy, this reality [i.e., the concrete church] is compared to the mystery of the Incarnate Word. Just as the assumed nature inseparably united to the Divine Word serves Him as a living instrument of salvation, so, in a similar way, does the communal structure of the Church serve Christ's Spirit, who vivifies it by way of building up the body (cf. Eph. 4:16).

If the Incarnation of the Word manifests the being of the Word who is one with the Father, the

sending and manifestation of the Holy Spirit tells who the Spirit is within the divine Trinity. It is in the Spirit that Father and Son are one Lord. The New Testament tells us that Jesus received and was guided by the Holy Spirit throughout his life and that in the power of the same Spirit he was raised from the dead. Any living organism already contains in a real way the full reality of what is yet to be.

III

WHAT HAS BEEN said means, of course, that between Christ and the church there is a union so close that we can correctly speak of them as "one mystic Person." But we may not forget that in the understanding of this oneness there is an unbridgeable difference. Jesus is the only-begotten Son of God, because of whom we have been *made to be* sons and daughters of God! As we may discern Christ's priesthood in the two functions which are his, so can we trace the meaning of priesthood—the priesthood of all the faithful and the priesthood of those consecrated by the sacrament of Orders—by considering two dimensions of this "one mystic Person."

There is one unique reality which we can draw upon to be the matrix for our thought. The fact is that the author of Genesis

A living organism remains quite what it is through all the changes by which it comes to full growth. The same must be said about the saving Body of Christ. The salvation of the world is already fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus; yet this salvation is bound to the time of the church—that flesh and blood reality in which Christ the redeemer of all men comes to full stature (cf. Eph. 1:23; 4:13; Rom. 8:22, etc.).

had already perceived it when he put into Adam's mouth the words: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. 2:23). In the union of man and wife the prophets found the picture they needed to express their experience of God's covenant union with men. This union of man and woman in marriage became the principal means by which the Scriptures were able to speak of God's union with his people. And when Paul described the union of Christ and Christians, he spoke of a new Covenant in terms of a new People who are related to Christ as was the first woman to the first man—they are one nuptial body (cf. Rom. 7:1-5; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Eph. 5:22-32). Paul's struggle to express the new reality he had experienced in Christ centered upon the need to describe the relation of the church to its source and originator. Christians are

¹⁴H. Mühlen, *L'Esprit dans l'Eglise* (Paris: Cerf, 1969), vol. 2, p. 33.

related to Christ as wife to husband. Recall what he writes to the Ephesians: "Husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves *himself*. Observe that no one ever hates his own flesh; no, he nourishes it and takes care of it as Christ cares for the church—for we are members of his body" (5:28).

There is, however, distinction in this union. Jesus is the head of his body. To speak of the church as spouse is to insist on the paradoxical nuptial union in which the church remains ever distinct from him. He is irrevocably source and root from whom by the communication of life develops the totality of Christians who form one body. He is origin and archetype (cf. Col. 1:18; Acts 3:15; 5:31) because it is from him that the church coheres as one organic whole (cf. Eph. 4:15-16). The Scriptures struggle to capture the nuances of this many-hued relationship. In the Spirit the church derives *from* Jesus; she relates *to* him; she is embraced *by* him; she is an exile on pilgrimage *toward* him.

The two hypostatic functions of her Lord reverberate sacramentally in the church as her service in the world of every time. We, her members, are not so much concerned with providing services, however

needful these are, as we are with communicating life. The gospel is of life. As life is not so much a matter of transactions as it is of presence and touch. Neither is life an abstraction, and the abstractions of a technocratic age cannot communicate it. Only the flesh and blood of living men and women communicate life. In the power of Christ's Spirit all—faithful men and women of all ages and every occupation—are his Word visibly addressed to the world and mankind's visible and worshipping response through Christ to the Father. In this reciprocating action must we locate and come to understand more fully what we have come to know as the priesthood of all the faithful. The stuff of which the lives of all Christians is made betrays something of Christ's own life and light. This is quite simply to say: "By the relationship with Christ, the church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God and of the unity of all mankind."

When we speak of activities which make visible the life of the gospel, we point to whatever forms the texture of each one's life in communion with others. This is what is seen. It is in this that faith discerns the power of Christ. It is this which strengthens other men and women to speak their "Amen"—to believe and hope in Christ the Lord. In

the Church something is seen and something is believed. Grace is embodied! The man and woman who are married in Christ show forth in their struggle for fidelity the faithfulness of Jesus to the world for which he gave his life. In their way celibates who are true to their charism show forth that earnest attentiveness and full-hearted obedience to the Father's Word which identified Christ and all who have been chaste after his example. The priesthood of all the faithful is the partaking in the anointing which Jesus received in the Holy Spirit so that every good work can be a word proclaiming some dimension of Christ's fullness to the world and fostering its acceptance in truth and in love.

If faithful men and women are to be the nuptial Body of Christ, there must be some visible enfleshing of what makes this relation fast and true. It is at this point only that we may speak of that ministry for which bishops and presbyters are consecrated. This is the point where the language problem and the ridicule remarked on earlier are

particularly acute. To speak of sacrament is to speak of sign, fundamentally the sign value of Jesus' humanness. The words and the actions of Jesus give us access to the Person who thereby expresses himself. If the matrix for revealing the relationship which constitutes the church to be the Body of Christ is the imagery rooted in the nuptial union, this imagery must become manifest. It was Augustine who said that unless the sacraments had a certain likeness to what they signified, they would not be sacraments.¹⁵ It has been the understanding of the church that the one consecrated in the church to act "in the Person of Christ" receives a participation in the anointing which Jesus received in the Holy Spirit to be head of his nuptial Body. This understanding is certainly evident in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council,¹⁶ and in the Document published by the Bishops' synod of 1971 concerning Ministerial Priesthood.¹⁷ In preparation for the Synod of 1971 the International Theological Commission, in October, 1970, approved a series of propositions related to

¹⁵Cf. St. Augustine, *Epist.* 98,9 (PL 33, 363).

¹⁶Cf. Vatican Council II, "Sacrosanctum Concilium," ch. 1, §33 (ed. Flannery, pp. 11-12); "Lumen Gentium," ch. 2, §10 (pp. 360-61); "Presbyterorum Ordinis," ch. 1, §2 (pp. 864-66).

¹⁷Synod of Bishops, *The Ministerial Priesthood—Justice in the World* (Washington: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1971), part 1, §4; pp. 13-14.



the ministerial priesthood. Among them is the following:

The Christian who is called to the priestly ministry receives in his ordination not a purely external function but a new and unique share in the priesthood of Christ. In virtue of this sharing he represents Christ *at the head of the community* and, as it were, *over against the community*. The ministry is thus a specific way of living a life of Christian service in the Church. Its specific character appears most clearly in the minister's role of presiding at the Eucharist (a presidency that is required if Christian worship is to have its full reality). The preaching

of the word and pastoral care are ordered to the Eucharist, for the latter consecrates the whole of the Christian's existence in the world.¹⁸

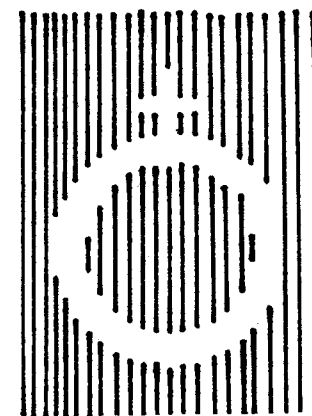
The precise question concerning the ordination of women is recent. That it should be asked today is not unexpected. The quality and direction of life in the church have been from the beginning an indication of what the response should be. More than this, the question which has been asked, together with its response, calls for an enquiry into the data which history provides *and* into the mind which gives from to the data. This is ultimately to perceive the inner harmony among the data which makes them to be not mere facts but elements and tokens which bear sense. This discovery, in its turn, calls into question certain assumptions which were ours when first this question was asked.

Among the issues which come to the fore when this single question is raised are the following. Is our language stabilized by a sense and a reason which are rooted in the reality we experience? Only when this question is spoken can we know its cutting edge. If our language is so rooted, we may confidently say that man can discern truth

in what he experiences; if our language is not so rooted, we are condemned to cynicism or to the endless futility of ever constructing experience according to our own measure. The presentiment that reality does make sense is confirmed by the doctrine of Creation. The world, created in the power of the Father's Word, cannot be without sense. And mankind—men and women—created in the image of God to be his vice-gerents of creation, is not free to change or relativize the inner logic of what has been created. It is for this reason that I have insisted that sexual identity is deeply significant for the dynamism of salvation. Christian thought insists that the relation of God to man is grace does not deny the sense of being created. And to be created is to say that one's being is "received." This fact has been most dramatically depicted in the image of creation in all its dimensions as Woman. And in the picture of the Woman who is at once virgin and mother the Fathers and theologians of the first Christian ages speak of the whole Church mediating salvation. In his commentary on the theology of the church in Vatican II, Bonaventure Kloppenburg highlights the womanliness of the church—"mystery of the Moon" is the ancient phrase

—as boldly focusing attention upon the church precisely in its relation to Christ who is Head of his Body.¹⁹

For Christian theology, to speak in this manner is to say that it is through the concrete reality of the church that God grasps the individual. In this process the church is simply the instrument. Whatever she does is done because of the fullness which she has received. It is to say that the service of mediating salvation belongs in principle to the church in its concrete reality. It is to say that whatever service is given for the good of men and women is more than the transaction which conveys it; the transaction is the instrument of a deeper mystery; the transaction is itself a visible word. To speak this word belongs to all believers,



¹⁸B. Kloppenburg, O.F.M., *The Priest, Living Instrument and Minister of Christ, the Eternal Priest* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974), p. 178—emphasis added.

¹⁹Idem, *The Ecclesiology of Vatican II* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974), pp. 19-22.

even if each one does not give expression to it in the same way. In general, the divine work of salvation for men continues along three interdependent activities: the Word of God which convokes men and women to be the church must be proclaimed; the sacraments which manifest and

convey Christ's promise of life must be celebrated; the life which the gospel enjoins must be lived. There have been various opinions concerning the interrelation of these three dimensions and their relative importance. A more precise determination must await another time.

Recognition

So short a while, Holy Child,
have you been with us,
and yet we see right through You
to the Father.

Flesh-shade on eternal splendor,
You are His bearable light.

Yours is the face we have sought
in a thousand changing skies.
These Infant cries, —
strains we have caught
under prophecy's thunder,
in unbroken silence of Bread.

Your small shoulders
are His overshadow.
If we bend low enough,
O hear it: God's heartbeat!

Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
You are here, You are come,
great beginning of our way to the Father,
His final Word.
Truly with us all is well.

SISTER MARY AGNES, P.C.C.

A Peasant at Greccio

TIMOTHY JAMES FLEMING, O.F.M.CONV.

I WAS ONE of the throng of peasants from Greccio who was captivated by that holy man—Francesco, the "poverello," they call him—on that cold Christmas Eve. There was something in his simplicity of spirit that grasped our hearts and beckoned us to leave our warm homes on that cold December night and make the long, torch-lit trek to that makeshift manger scene which his friars had set up in order to relive the Incarnation of our Lord and to become united to him and to each other by the sharing of his eucharistic presence. Francis, himself a deacon, chanted the Gospel in a most melodious voice and then proceeded to deliver the sermon. Unlike other preachers I had heard, he did not drown me with a procession of complex words whose meanings I could not comprehend, nor did he try to impress any of us with his eloquence. Instead he spoke simply, from the heart, telling us how we should rejoice that the Child of Bethlehem saw fit to be born no different from ourselves—of lowly and

humble status. The force of his words and the tears in my eyes caused a lump to begin to rise in my throat. And I'd almost swear I saw him holding the Christ Child close to his breast.

Looking into the loving eyes of that holy man, I began to come to an understanding about myself. I thought back on all the times I cursed this peasant life of mine and envied so many others who seemed better off. Now this person was telling me I had a happy state! But I came to realize he was right. It was the innkeeper, he said, who closed the door on the Holy Family, and wealthy King Herod who ordered the massacre of all those innocent babies. His words were still racing through my mind as we stamped the cold out of our feet and began to make our way back to Greccio. How strange, yet wonderful, that the Christ Child should choose to fill my heart with his love. Now with that holy man I too could pray that all men open their hearts to the Child of Bethlehem.

A New-Calendar Proposal

*(being the simultaneous dating of events After Einstein
and Before Christ, whose "coming" he prophesied.)*

lest you and I have missed him
by some antique hour-glass
I offer an advent calendar
valid till not needed

major divisions will be between stradivarian cords
minors retain the second
but it must not be uniform

the happy second will be much quicker than sorrow's
and the pensive second which goes unobserved
cannot figure on the graph

medium divisions will be the days
distinguished by their color
on an oscillating spectrum
the first day is sun yellow
streaking toward orange
the second is blue
(shades will vary from melancholy to horizon)

at least one day will be restful green
but I leave such details
to an interplanetary commission

meanwhile I'll accelerate to one hundred
and eighty six thousand
two hundred and eighty four
miles per second
to brighten up your world

for time syncopates at its end
about to swallow its tail
drinking the January days
like a Vedic hymn reversal
of September Song
or a train whose cars have been switched
in front of the engine
then smashed with the cattle puncher
against a blissful mountain
compressing their Godstuff

and even though you reach the year one
before me
you wait
till our days intertwine
like color-crepe streamers

then we kiss and sing
happy new year

Hugoline Sabatino, O.F.M.

the CORD . . . A Franciscan Spiritual Review

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Fr. Michael D. Mailach, O.F.M.

Editor

Thanksgiving Day, 1977

Dear Subscriber,

It is with genuine thanksgiving that we look back over the past dozen years of our association with this periodical. In the spirit of today's observance, we reflect with fond and grateful memories upon God's goodness to us, first of all, in providing, on the one hand, both the physical strength and the mental stamina--as well as whatever slight talent we may have brought to the task; and, on the other hand, whatever material and financial resources it has taken for us to continue publication over the years.

We reflect, similarly, with deep appreciation, upon the selfless dedication and generosity of our numerous contributors: the ever-reliable and talented artists, the competent and objective reviewers, and the many authors with their originality, candor, varied interests, and generous willingness to give so freely of their time and energy to share with us--and with you--the fruits of their contemplation and their experiences.

Finally, but with equally profound gratitude, we call to mind the unflagging, consistent support which you, our faithful readers, have given us over these years. For a brief time, in 1965 and 1966, we tried to supplement that support with paid advertising from book publishers. The venture did not prove feasible, however, and we had, in addition to whatever St. Bonaventure University was able to provide by way of subsidy, only you on whom to rely for the ever-mounting costs of printing and subsidies.

Now, unfortunately but inevitably, we find ourselves bereft of even the University subsidy. This is why, as announced earlier this year, we've been literally forced to raise the annual subscription rate to \$5.00. We continue to hope both in God's providence and in your own faithful support.

Your contribution has, however, not been limited to financial help. From time to time, in one way or another, you have let us know of your preferences, you have told us of your appreciation for one or another feature, and you have offered us your valuable suggestions. We appeal to you, therefore, to consider the "questionnaire" on this month's inside back cover and, in the event that you do have some definite preferences, to communicate them to us in one or another of the ways suggested. Thank you, and God bless you!

Sincerely in Saint Francis,

Fr. Michael, O.F.M.



Random Thoughts on Contemplation

CONRAD A. SCHOMSKE, O.F.M.

IN THE DECREE on the renewal of religious life, Vatican II encourages us to go back to the charisms and spirit of our founders. As we Franciscans do so, we find among other things that contemplation was very important to Saint Francis. To grow in closeness to the Lord, Francis spent some months each year in hermitages, such as Mt. Alverna, the Carceri, Fonte Colombo—about twenty such places in all.

These were out-of-the-way places, where, removed from the noise of the world and the press of people, Saint Francis could seek the Lord in solitude and silence. So close were these “retreats” to his heart, that he wrote a special Rule for Hermitages. He even thought seriously of living this life exclusively until, through the prayers of Saint Clare and others, he came to consider it more Christ-like to live an active, apostolic life along with that of a hermit. And so he combined the two.

When we say that Francis lived the life of a hermit—in a Hermitage—we do not mean that he lived by himself. Rather, he lived

with a couple of other friars, while spending a good portion of the day by himself, with the Lord. There were times, of course, when he went off completely by himself for days on end, just to pray and to be with the Lord.

The purpose of Francis’ quest for silence and solitude was to satisfy the longing in his heart to live in the Lord, to be totally immersed in the Lord, to be habitually united with the Lord. This passion of his to be rapt in the Lord, he summed up in the words: “My God and my All.” And this is contemplation.

This tradition begun by Francis himself has carried down through the past 700 years, as friars preserved the eremitical way of life in places called houses of recollection and *ritiri*. A *ritiro* was like a mountain retreat, where in prayer and penance friars gave themselves completely to the Lord. They were striving to calm the restlessness of their hearts by resting in the Heart of the Lord. They were seeking the Lord of peace and calm. When we speak of contemplation, this is what we

mean: resting in the Lord, being aware of his Presence within our hearts, all around us, in the Eucharist, or in others.

Some people are very conscious of God dwelling within them. The Carmelite Elizabeth of the Trinity is a good example of this. It seems as though she just could not pull her attention away from God dwelling in her soul. She had a lively understanding of the words of Saint Paul: “Know you not that you are temples of God and the Spirit of God dwells within you?” (1 Cor. 3:16). Saint Augustine, too, had sought God everywhere and finally found Him within himself.

Others are more aware of God all about them. For them the world is alive with God. Saint Francis surely felt this way, as he poured out his soul in the Canticle of the Creatures. For him, to speak of Brother Sun and Sister Moon was so natural because he saw God in them as their Father and his. It was because of the God he saw in a worm, that he could not bear to see it crushed, but would remove it to the side of the road for safety. Francis saw God in every blade of grass.

Then there are those who find God in the events of their everyday lives. Maybe John Bannister Tabb was thinking along these lines when he said, “My life is but a weaving between my God and me.”

For others, God is most alive and close to them in the tabernacle. There they behold the same Jesus born in a stable, living at Nazareth, walking the byroads of Galilee: the Jesus who wept over his friend Lazarus, who delighted in children, who was hurt when only one leper came back to thank him, who prayed that the chalice might pass from him, who suffered and died for us. Charles de Foucauld was enamored of Jesus in the tabernacle. He would spend seven to eight hours a day before Jesus there; on Sundays, as long as twelve to fifteen hours. (He must have brought his lunch with him.) So real was Jesus in the tabernacle to Saint Francis, that he could not bear to see a dirty church; and this is why, too, when he saw a church off in the distance, he would kneel right on the road to adore the Lord from there.

Again, there are those who really and truly see Jesus in their neighbor. I have heard Mother Teresa of India say, on TV, in all genuineness and sincerity, that her heart goes out to every dying infant and sore-ridden derelict, because in them she sees Jesus whom she loves.

Some people, as a matter of habit, meet the Lord in one of these ways more than another. Needless to say, they should follow the way which suits them best. Others encounter the Lord

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at one time within themselves, at another time in the world of nature about them, at another time in the events of everyday life, and at still another time in people. There are those who when alone address themselves to God within them; when before the Blessed Sacrament, they turn their attention to Jesus present there; when outdoors, they find God in the grandeur of nature; when touched by sorrow or moved by joy, they meet God in these; and, finally, when they are with people, they perceive God within these people, mindful of the Lord's words: "When you did it for one of these my least brothers, you did it for me" (Mt. 25:40), and also mindful of the fact that these people are temples of God and that the Holy Spirit of God dwells within them.

We have to find out for ourselves where and in what setting

the Lord is most real to us and then meet him there and give him our full attention. Experience tells what is best for us. Since the Holy Spirit leads each of us by a different way, there is no single way in which each one must approach God.

Elizabeth of the Trinity, we said, was especially attracted to God dwelling within her; the divine indwelling became the essence of her spiritual life. Yet she could say: "Nature seems to me full of God: the wind rustling among the trees, the songs of the little birds, the beautiful blue sky— all speak to me of Him." And again, "The sign which proves that God dwells in us and that we are possessed by His love is: that we take what hurts us not only patiently but gratefully. To reach this state, we must long for and lovingly contemplate Christ crucified. This contempla-

tion, if genuine, must infallibly lead us to a love of suffering."¹

And so we see there are various places where we encounter God. For some it may be one place exclusively; for others any one of several, depending on circumstances. We have to discover which is best for us personally and pursue it. Some, however, may question localizing God—restricting his presence, e.g., to one's own heart or to the tabernacle—since God is present everywhere. But I think we need to remember that in contemplation there is a person-to-Person relationship, growing to the point where the human person is as it were absorbed into the divine Person. We relate best to God as a Person—the Beloved, the Spouse, Bridegroom, Father, Brother. This is easier than trying to maintain contact with the Supreme Being who is somewhere "out there" or simply (even though this is ontologically true) omnipresent.

It is this close, personal, intimate meeting with the Lord, that we call contemplation. This is not something we can force to come about. The Lord makes his presence felt when and where it pleases him. What we can do, however, is try to prepare our

souls by much prayer, penance (fasting, e.g., or giving things up—especially our own will—insofar as they stand in God's way), striving to practice the virtues of charity, kindness, patience, humility, forgiveness, and so forth. The more effort we expend on these things, the more we prepare our souls and make them at least somewhat worthy to experience God's presence. We dispose ourselves to respond to God, we sensitize ourselves to him, we attune ourselves to him.

This does not of course mean that God literally "comes" to us as though he were not there before. In so far as we are in the state of grace—free of serious sin—God is always present within us. What happens in contemplation, is that God reminds us of his presence. He lets us *know* he is there. He makes his presence felt so powerfully that we become aware of him. We become more conscious of him, so that we cannot help noticing him within us, around us in nature or events, in the Eucharist, or in other people.

This is contemplation. It is as if God taps us on the heart and says: "Here I am." As we think of this, all we can say is, "How wonderful are you, O Lord!"

¹These citations are from a book called *Praise of Glory*, memoirs by Elizabeth's Superior, which is no longer available to me.

A Child Is Born

A Child is born
A Child from all eternity
Breathed in the Creator's Breast
Now clothed in flesh
rests
in a manger poor

A Child is born
Who even as He lives and
Breathes
Within the shadow cross
rests as
The blood tinged setting sun
Plays
With the Holy One

A Child is born
Within His anointed hands
Each day the chalice-mold holds
His Precious Blood
And He
Is born again
For men

A Child is born
And souls in ecstasy
Reach out to touch
And feel the manger straw
And Love
Sets all aflame
The Child's Name
is
JESUS

SISTER M. THADDINE, O.S.F.

Index to THE CORD — 1977

1. Index of Authors

- Abrahams, Pius F., O.F.M.
Book Review: *Mary's Spiritual Maternity according to St. Louis de Montford* 4:127-28.
- Abram, Bede, O.F.M.Conv.
"A Challenge to Franciscans," 10:330-33.
- Agnes, Sister Mary, P.C.C.
Poems: Ask Another Sign 3:77; The Hunter 4:114; New Hunger 6:163; Recognition 11:362; The Wandering Jew 1:19.
- Amato, Sister Denise Marie, C.S.S.F.
"Francis: One Who Dared to See," 9:300-04.
- Archambault, Sister Marie Therese, O.S.F.
"Brothers in the Spirit: Francis and Ignatius," 8:263-70.
"Francis: A Man of Tenderness," 6:185-87.
- Armstrong, Regis, O.F.M.Cap.
Book Review:
St. Francis of Assisi: The Wandering Years 5:157-59.
- Augustine, Anthony, O.F.M.
Poems: Jeremiah 9:292; Saint Francis 6:177.
- Barbara Marie, Sister, O.S.F.
Book Review: *Praise to the Lord of the Morning* 1:29-31.
- Beaudin, William L., O.F.M.
Poem: Gethsemane 3:78-79.
- Beha, Sister Marie, O.S.C.
"A Question of Vocation," 6:164-77.
- Benzshawel, David P.
"Clare's Song of Songs," 7:210-23.
Letter on Franciscan Plays 10:328-29.
- Boylan, William J., O.F.M.Conv.
Poem: Kenosis 10:315.
- Brennan, Sister M. Paula, O.S.F.
Poem: God's Smile 1:10.
- Burns, Thomas J., O.F.M.
Book Reviews:
Gadgets, Gimmicks, and Grace 5:156-57.
The Gospel of Peace and Justice 7:248.
- Capizzi, Simeon, O.F.M.
Book Reviews:
Daily We Touch Him 9:305.
The Prayer of Jesus 8:275-76.
- Centi, Paul.
Book Review: *Overcoming Anxiety* 4:124-25.
- Ciampi, Luke M., O.F.M.
Book Review: *The Story of Latin and the Romance Languages* 4:122-23.
- Clarke, Margaret E.
Book Review: *The Living Parish* 10:335-36.
- Corcoran, Cassian F., O.F.M.
Book Review: *Bible Study for the 21st Century* 4:123-24.
- Cranny, Titus, S.A.
Guest Editorial: "Mary, Hope of Christian Unity," 1:2-3.
- Daniels, Sister Magdalen, C.S.S.F.
"The Synthesis of Masculine and Feminine Elements in the Personality of Francis of Assisi," 2:36-49.
- Davies, Julian A., O.F.M.
Articles:
"Asceticism," 6:178-84; 8:257-62.
"Christian Hope," 10:320-27.
"Prayer," 6:144-51.
- Editorials:
"Community," 6:162-63.
"The Handmaid of the Lord," 5:130-31.
"Life after Life," 4:98-99.
- Book Review:
Bioethics 5:155-56.
- Short Book Notices:
Between You and Me 6:192.
Christian Morality and You 6:191-92.
Growing Old Gracefully 10:344.
How to Be Friends with Yourself and Your Family 6:192.
Imitation of Christ 6:191.
Jesus Christ, the Gate of Power 6:192.
The Marijuana Maze 10:344.
Person to Person: A Handbook for Pastoral Counseling 10:344.
Prayer and Liberation 10:344.

- Saint Anthony of Padua* 6:192.
Unmarried and Pregnant: What Now? 10:343.
- De Biase, William, O.F.M.
 Poem: A Hymn 5:142-43.
- De Guglielmo, Antonine, O.F.M.
 "The Canticle of the Sun: A Critical Reconstruction and Translation," 9:293-98.
- Doerger, Berard, O.F.M.
 "On Being Lesser Brothers: The Gospel Concepts of Fraternity and Minority in the Rule of 1223," 9:283-92.
- Dolan, Gerald M., O.F.M.
 "Equality in the Church: A New Gnosticism?" 11:348-62.
 Book Review: *On Being a Christian* 8:272-75.
- Donovan, Robert E., O.F.M.
 "Models of the Church and Their Effect on Lay Spirituality," 7:224-36.
 "Vatican II, Charisms, and the Laity," 1:20-27.
- Dries, Sister Angelyn, O.S.F.
 "Fasting: Nöt for Lent Alone," 10:316-19.
- Eller, Hugh, O.F.M.
 Book Review: *Saint Francis: Nature Mystic* 3:92-94.
- Flanagan, Edward, O.F.M.
 Book Review: *Jesus the Living Bread* 9:308.
- Fleming, Timothy J., O.F.M. Conv.
 "A Peasant at Greccio," 11:363.
- Francis, Mother Mary, P.C.C.
 Poem: The Light of His Face 7:240-43.
- Garesché, Sister Marie, F.M.M.
 Poem: Ecclesiastes 1:9 4:99.
- Glisky, Sister Jeanne M., S.F.P.
 "Francis and Women," 4:115-22.
- González, Roberto O., O.F.M.
 Poems: Two Gospel Haikus 3:67.
- Grogan, Vincent B., O.F.M.
 Book Review: *The New Yet Old Mass* 9:310.
- Heppler, Richard L., O.F.M.
 Book Reviews:
Mary, the Womb of God 5:159-60.
Sincerely Yours, Paul 9:307.
- Hept, Wilfrid, A., O.F.M.
 Book Reviews:
The Importance of Being Sick 2:63-64.
Not Without Parables 6:188-90.
Wheel We, Wee—All the Way Home 7:246-48.
- Honan, Eugene, O.F.M.
 Book Reviews:
The Birth of a Movement 4:125-27.
Two Prayers for Two Stones 7:244-45.
We Were with Saint Francis 8:277-78.
- Horgan, Thaddeus, S.A.
 "Christian Joy in Franciscan Penance," 4:108-14.
 "Conversion with Francis," 2:56-61.
 "Prophetically Living Franciscan Penance," 3:80-92.
- Hurley, Daniel A., O.F.M.
 Book Reviews:
Be My Son 10:339-41.
The Catholic Priesthood Today 1:31-32.
Integrated Christian Life 8:271-72.
- Johnson, Timothy, O.F.M. Conv.
 "Words of Salvation: Similarities between the 'Sayings' of Brother Giles and the 'Sayings' of the Desert Fathers," 3:68-76.
 Poems: Clara, Royal Daughter 7:209; Habit 2:62; San Damiano 9:299.
- Karper, Sister Mary Saraphim, P.C.P.A.
 "Franciscan Poverty: Defenselessness?" 2:4-9.
 Book Review: "A Call to Virginity" 8:276-77.
- Kennedy, Sister Antoinette, O.S.F.
 Poem: Francis 5:131.
 Book Review: *No Handle on the Cross* 10:341.
- Marshall, John F., O.F.M.
 Book Reviews:
And Would You Believe It 5:152-53.
Christian Prayer 6:188.
- Meilach, Michael D., O.F.M.
 Editorials and Review Editorials:
 "Cosmic, Psychic, Religious," rev. 9:282, 303-04.
 "The Debunkers Debunked," rev. 7:194-95.
 "Franciscan Idealism," 10:314-15; 11:346-47.
 "Of Essence, Process, and the Religious Life," rev. 2:34-35.
 "The Other Side," rev. 3:66-67.
 "What Think You of the Christ," rev. 8:250, 279-80.
 Book Review: *Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours* 5:152.
- Michaels, Catherine.
 Poem: "Transformation," 10:319.
- Nordberg, Robert B.
 "Roger Bacon and the Future of

- Catholic Education," 1:11-19.
- Olinny, Paul J., O.F.M.
 Book Reviews:
And Their Eyes Were Opened 7:245-46.
Encounter with God 8:270-71.
The Father Is Very Fond of Me 1:29.
Letters from the Desert 3:94.
- Petrie, Roderic A., O.F.M.
 "Reflections on Corporate Poverty," 8:251-56.
- Prakash, Joy, O.F.M.
 "Francis' Peace and Gandhi's Non-violence," 7:196-207.
- Regina, Sister Mary, P.C.P.A.
 Book Review: *Saint Francis of Assisi* 10:341-43.
- Riski, Bruce, O.F.M. Cap.
 "I Need Others—Others Need Me," 1:28.
 Poems: Christ Speaks on Love 8:256; Teach Us, Holy Spirit 5:141; We Are Mirrors 7:236.
- Roche, Evan, O.F.M.
 Book Review: *Padre Pio: He Bore the Stigmata* 3:94-96.
- Ruijter, Francis de—, O.F.M.
 "Francis of Assisi: Man of Reconciliation," 2:50-55.
 Book Reviews:
Catholic Pentecostalism 9:306.
- Sabatino, Hugoline, O.F.M.
 Poem: "A New-Calendar Proposal" 11:364.

- Living the Eucharistic Mystery* 5:153-54.
- Schomske, Conrad A., O.F.M.
 "Random Thoughts on Contemplation," 11:366-69.
 Book Review: *How to Find God* 10:335.
- Slattery, William, O.F.M.
 "Saint Francis and Prayer," 5:132-41.
- Sleeve, Mary Lou.
 "Mary," 7:237-39.
- Smith, Maury, O.F.M.
 Book Review: *The Dynamics of Spiritual Self-Direction* 10:336-38.
- Spencer, Thomas T.
 "Thomas Merton and St. Bonaventure University," 4:100-06.
- Steuer, James A.
 Book Review: *Rise Up and Remember* 10:338-39.
- Struzynski, Anthony A., O.F.M.
 Book Review: *Love before the Fall* 9:308.
- Sullivan, Sister Bernadette, S.F.P.
 "Hints for a Communal Hermitage Experience," 10:334.
- Thaddine, Sister Mary, O.S.F.
 Poem: A Child Is Born 11:370.
- Thom, Sister M. Thaddeus, O.S.F.
 Poem: The Eternal Gaze 4:107.
- Woodson, Sister Donna Marie, O.S.F.
 Book Reviews:
Feminine Spirituality 6:190-91.
Francis of Assisi 5:154-55.

2. Index of Subjects

- Apostolate, of the Laity 1:20-27; 7:224-36.
- Asceticism 6:178-84; 8:257-62.
- Canticle of Brother Sun (of the Creatures) 9:282, 303-04; 9:293-98; 9:300-03.
- Catholic Education, and Roger Bacon 1:11-19.
- Charisms, of the Laity 1:20-27; 7:224-36.
- Christ, contemporary views of— 8:250, 278-80.
- Christian Unity, and Mary 1:2-3.
- Church, the Christian—
 and Language 11:348-64.
 and Lay Spirituality 7:224-36.
 and Technological Mentality 11:348-62.
 Incarnational Principle in— 11:348-62.
- Clare of Assisi, St. 7:210-23.
- Community 6:162-63.
- Conversion, Francis of Assisi and— 2:56-61; 3:80-92.
- Contemplation 11:366-69.
 in hermitage experience 10:334.
- Defenselessness, Poverty as— 1:4-9.
- Desert Fathers, and Brother Giles 3:68-76.
- Fasting, perennial value of— 10:316-19.
- Feminine, and masculine in Francis 2:36-49; 6:185-87.
- Francis of Assisi, St.
 and Conversion 2:56-61.
 and Gandhi's non-violence 7:196-207.
 and Peace (Reconciliation) 2:50-55; 7:196-207.
 and Prayer 5:132-41.
 and Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius 8:

263-70.
and Women 4:115-22.
blindness of— 9:300-03.
masculine & feminine in— 2:36-49;
6:185-87.
personality of— 1:36-39; 6:185-87; 9:
303-04; 9:300-03.
tenderness of— 6:185-87.
Franciscan
Idealism today 10:314-15; 11:346-47.
Penance 3:80-92; 4:108-14.
Plays available 10:328-29.
Poverty
corporate 8:251-56.
defenselessness as— 1:4-9.
Rule, fraternity & minority in—
9:283-92.
Franciscanism, and race relations 10:
330-33.
Fraternity 9:283-92.
Gandhi, non-violence of—, and Francis
7:192-207.
Giles of Assisi, and Desert Fathers 3:68-
76.
Hermitage, hints for life in— 10:334.
Historical-critical method (scripture) 7:
194-95.
Hope, Christian 10:320-27.
Idealism, Franciscan 10:314-15; 11:346-
47.
Ignatius of Loyola, St., and Francis—
8:263-70.
Jesus Christ, contemporary view of—
8:250, 278-80.
Joy, and Penance 4:108-14.
Laity, Apostolate of— 1:20-27.
Lay Spirituality 1:20-27; 7:224-36.
Life after death 4:98-99.
Mary, Blessed Virgin.
and Christian Unity 1:2-3.
and Jesus 7:237-39.
and submission to God's will 5:130-31.
Masculinity, and femininity, in Francis
2:36-39.

Meditation (see also Contemplation)
3:66-67.
Merton, Thomas, and St. Bonaventure
University 4:100-06.
Minority 9:283-92.
Non-violence, of Francis and Gandhi 7:
196-207.
Obedience 5:130-31.
Ordination of Women 11:348-62.
Peace, and Francis 2:50-55.
Penance, Franciscan 3:80-92; 4:108-14.
Prayer 144-51.
and Francis 5:132-41.
mental 3:66-67; 10:334; 11:3
Process Thought, and Religious Life
2:34-35.
Race Relations, and Franciscanism 10:
330-33.
Reconciliation, and Francis 2:50-55.
Religious Life.
and process thought 2:34-35.
community in— 6:162-63.
corporate poverty in— 8:251-56.
vocation in— 6:164-77.
Resurrection of the body, Catholic teach-
ing on— 4:98-99.
Roger Bacon, and Catholic Education
1:11-19.
St. Bonaventure University, and Thomas
Merton 4:100-06.
Scripture, historical-critical method in—
7:194-95.
Self, denial of— (see also Fasting,
Penance) 6:178-84; 8:257-62.
Solitude, and Franciscans 10:334.
Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius, and
Francis 8:263-70.
Tenderness, of St. Francis 6:185-87.
Vatican Council II, and the Laity 1:20-
27; 7:224-36.
Vocation, Religious 6:164-77.
Women.
Ordination of 5:130-31; 11:348-62.
St. Francis and— 4:115-22.

3. Index of Books Reviewed

Armstrong, Edward A., *St. Francis: Nature Mystic* (H. Eller), 3:92.
Basset, Bernard, S.J., *And Would You Believe It* (J. F. Marshall), 5:152.
Boros, Ladislaus, *Christian Prayer* (J. F. Marshall), 6:188.
Bowman, Leonard, *The Importance of*

Being Sick (W. A. Hept), 2:63.
Butler, Salvator, O.F.M., tr. & ed., *We Were with St. Francis* (E. Honan), 8:277.
Carretto, Carlo, *Letters from the Desert* (P. J. Oligny), 3:94.
Champlin, Joseph M., *The Living Parish*

(M. E. Clarke), 10:335.
Champlin, Joseph M., *The New Yet Old Mass* (V.B. Grogan), 9:310.
Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours (M. D. Meilach), 5:152.
Corbishley, Thomas, *The Prayer of Jesus* (S. Capizzi), 8:275.
Critelli, Ida, & Tom Schick, *Unmarried and Pregnant: What Now?* (J. A. Davies—SN), 10:343.
Dean, William D., *Love before the Fall* (A. A. Struzynski), 9:308.
Doherty, Catherine de Hueck, *Not without Parables* (W.A. Hept), 6:188.
Dubay, Thomas, S.M., *A Call to Virginity?* (Sr. M.S. Karper), 8:276.
Errazuriz, P. Subercaseaux, O.S.B., *Saint Francis of Assisi* (Sr. M. Regina), 10:341.
Farrell, Edward, J., *The Father Is Very Fond of Me* (P.J. Oligny), 1:29.
Finley, James, & Michael Pennock, *Christian Morality and You* (J. A. Davies—SN), 6:191.
Flood, David E., O.F.M., & Thaddée Matura, O.F.M., *The Birth of a Movement* (E. Honan), 4:125.
Foley, Leonard, O.F.M., *Sincerely Yours, Paul* (R.L. Hepler), 9:307.
Fox, Matthew, O.P., *Whee! We, Wee—All the Way Home* (W.A. Hept), 7:246.
Gaffney, Patrick, S.M.M., *Mary's Spiritual Maternity according to St. Louis de Montfort* (P. F. Abrahams), 4:127.
Gremillion, Joseph, ed., *The Gospel of Peace and Justice* (T.J. Burns), 7:248.
Grollenberg, Lucas, *Bible Study for the 21st Century* (C.F. Corcoran), 4:123.
Haughton, Rosemary, *Feminine Spirituality* (Sr. D. M. Woodson), 6:190.
Kaam, Adrian van—, *The Dynamics of Spiritual Self-Direction* (M. Smith), 10:336.
Kelsey, Morton T., *Encounter with God* (P. J. Oligny), 8:270.
Kelsey, Morton T., *The Other Side of Silence* (M. D. Meilach—rev. ed.), 3:66.
Koyama, Kosuke, *No Handle on the Cross* (Sr. A. Kennedy), 10:341.
Küng, Hans, *On Being a Christian* (G. M. Dolan), 8:272.
Lane, Dermot A., *The Reality of Jesus* (M. D. Meilach—rev. ed.), 8:250, 278-79.
Larsen, Ernest, *Jesus Christ—the Gate of Power* (J. A. Davies—SN), 6:192.
Larsson, Flora, *Between You and Me, Lord* (J. A. Davies—SN), 6:192.

Laurentin, René, *Catholic Pentecostalism* (F. de Ruijter), 11:3.
Leclerc, Eloi, O.F.M., *The Canticle of Creatures* (M. D. Meilach—rev. ed.), 9:282, 303-04.
Legere, J. Roy, *Be My Son* (D. A. Hurley), 10:339-41.
Lussier, Ernest, S.S.S., *Living the Eucharistic Mystery* (F. de Ruijter), 5:153.
Maier, Gerhard, *The End of the Historical-Critical Method* (M. D. Meilach—rev. ed.), 7:194-95.
Maloney, George A., S.J., *Mary: The Womb of God* (R. L. Hepler), 5:159.
Maurus, J., *Growing Old Gracefully* (J.A. Davies—SN), 10:344.
McCloskey, Patrick, O.F.M., *St. Anthony of Padua* (J. A. Davies—SN), 6:192.
McNulty, Edward N., *Gadgets, Gimmicks, and Grace* (T.J. Burns), 5:156.
Mockler, Anthony, *Francis of Assisi: The Wandering Years* (R. Armstrong), 5:157.
Mooney, Patrick, *Praise to the Lord of the Morning* (Sr. Barbara Marie), 1:29.
Nauer, Barbara, *Rise up and Remember* (J. A. Steuer), 10:338.
Nigg, Walter, & Toni Schneiders, *Francis of Assisi* (Sr. D.M. Woodson), 5:154.
O'Collins, Gerald, S.J., *What Are They Saying about Jesus?* (M. D. Meilach rev. ed.), 8:250, 278-79.
Pascal, Harold, C.M., *The Marijuana Maze* (J. A. Davies—SN), 10:344.
Pei, Mario, *The Story of Latin and the Romance Languages* (L. M. Ciampi), 4:122.
Pennington, M. Basil, O.C.S.O., *Daily We Touch Him* (S. Capizzi), 9:305.
Pennington, M. Basil, O.C.S.O., *Prayer and Liberation* (J.A. Davie—SN), 10:344.
Rosenbaum, Jean, M.D., *How to Be Friends with Yourself and Your Family* (J. A. Davies—SN), 6:192.
Scanlan, Michael, T.O.R., & Anne Therese Shields, R.S.M., *And Their Eyes Were Opened* (P. J. Oligny), 7:245.
Schomp, Gerald, *Overcoming Anxiety* (P. Centi), 4:124.
Schug, John A., *Padre Pio: He Bore the Stigmata* (E. Roche), 3:94.
Shannon, Thomas A., ed., *Bioethics* (J. A. Davies), 5:155.
Talley, James M., ED., *Jesus: The Living*

Bread (E. Flanagan), 9:308.
 Thom, Sister M. Tahddeus, O.S.F., &
 Sister Regina Marie Gentry, O.P.,
Two Prayers for Two Stones (E. Honan),
 7:244.
 Thomas a Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*
 (J. A. Davies—SN), 6:191.
 Toohey, William, *Fully Alive: Decisions*
for an Integrated Christian Life (D.A.
 Hurley), 8:271.

Vanderpol, James A., *Person to Person:*
A Handbook of Pastoral Counseling
 (J. A. Davies—SN), 10:344.
 Voillaume, René, *Spirituality from the*
Desert (M. D. Meilach—rev. ed.), 2:34-
 35.
 Watson, David, *How to Find God* (C.A.
 Schomske), 10:335.
 Wuerl, Donald W., *The Catholic Priest-*
hood Today (D. A. Hurley), 1:31.

BOOKS RECEIVED

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