COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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EDITORIAL

Nomophobia

IT HAS LONG been a pet theory of mine that religious generally live in a different "time frame" from that of lay people, and I see this instanced in the diverse ways the notion of a New Year affects our thinking. For myself, anyway, although I do count birthdays—albeit with some reluctance—the advent of a new *year* has yet to arouse much more than my interest in football and a dinner with friends and family. For members of families I know, on the other hand, a new year does not only hold out a special promise, but also closes the book on the sadness and pain which occurred in the past 365 days.

Vatican II, it seems to me, injected a "New Year's mentality" into many in religion. Chapters of renewal were held, constitutions were revised, meetings and discussions were held. People actually felt that the millennium, not just a new *year*, was just around the corner. One doesn't have to be a cynic to know that "happy days" are not "here again." And valuable as continuing education, effective communication, shared prayer, charismatic retreats are, they fail to address the dis-ease in religion resulting from what I like to call nomophobia (fear of law).

The United States of America glories in being a free society and sees as the guarantee of freedom, the rule of law. "The same for one, the same for all": the formula for justice is realized by the spelling out, where experience and thoughtful awareness of society and its needs dictate, of the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Religious communities have been doing this long before the U.S.A. was a reality, though perhaps it took a Vatican II to teach us that we are as members of a community in a "free society."

I suggest, however, that law is still a frightening word to many in religion—not too long ago a chapter of ours refused to use the word "must" in describing the responsibility of each friar to make an annual retreat, and as a result many friars have made nothing like a formal retreat in years. Yet the note of obligation, responsibility, even compulsion which the word and reality of law connote are needful to make religious society work, even as they are needed to make a free civil society function. The "me" that I know so well has a lazy, selfish streak in him, and his love for God and religious commitment are not so strong that the "outside" push of law is unnecessary. (This editorial was written at the repeated insistence of our editor!) And although I can't judge anyone else's inside, every indication I have is that my fellow religious will do what is *expected* of them, what they *have* to do. It is law, whether in constitutions or statutes, which, made known and enforced uniformly without respect of persons, directs the members of the free society which is a religious community along the path of service to God and one another—and the whole world. And "service," Matthew tells us (20:28), is what Jesus was all about.

Fr Julian Davis ofm

My Heart Holds a Remnant

Heavenly Father, my heart holds a remnant—
A remnant of sin, of grace.
I am weak, Lord; I am a man.
I hang on a precipice between the abyss of love
and the abyss of hate—
a precipice of indifference.

My heart is full, Lord, full of remnants.
Pour into my lukewarm heart a flood of emptiness
That I may no longer entertain either material cares
or spiritual anxieties,
But in a complete poverty of heart
May turn to you alone as my well-spring of grace
And the fulfillment of all my inner longings.

Timothy James Fleming, O.F.M.Conv.

The Enclosure of St Clare and of the First Poor Clares in Canonical Legislation and in Practice

SISTER CHIARA AUGUSTA LAINATI, O.S.C.

This is a translation sent to us by the American Poor Clares of "La clôture de sainte Claire et des premières Clarisses dans la législation canonique et dans la pratique," *Laurentianum* 2 (1973).

The connection between the word "enclosure" and the name of St. Clare — we mean by enclosure a material separation from the world, more or less in conformity with that observed in our time — is not often accepted as readily apparent. That is due, not so much to a thorough and accurate knowledge of the historical sources and documents, as to what is referred to as the "spirit" (presumed) of St. Clare, according to which the enclosure was breached, willingly and without any difficulty, whenever a motive of charity, real or apparent, would present itself.

They often mean to repeat in short that "St. Clare, at bottom, never considered enclosure a "problem;" which seems acceptable to us only if they mean by this that St. Clare was never obliged to defend enclosure as she was for other prerogatives of her Rule, for example poverty.

The history of a soul, doubtless, is not something to be examined with curial documents. It would be quite useless to analyse it on the basis of these. There is no need to discuss it; the matter is evident.

What ought to be considered is the fact that St. Clare — she was of a mettle strong enough to know how to say "no" to a Pope, when what he proposed to her was in contrast with her profound convictions and her ideal of evangelical perfection — "bowed" to profess a Rule such as that given her by Cardinal Hugolino in 1218-1219 which, on the subject of enclosure, is at least as rigid as the norms promulgated by Boniface VIII in 1298.

Pope Boniface, indeed, with his general prescriptions on monastic enclosure, simply extended to all cloistered nuns what the Poor Clares alone had observed from 1219 onwards.[1]

It would be utterly inexplicable also that St. Clare introduced into her Rule of 1253 those same norms of 1219 on enclosure, if she had not approved of them. Neither would she have accepted that Cardinal Rainaldo, in his letter of introduction to the same Rule of 1253, said that it was her resolution "to live enclosed and serve the Lord in highest poverty,"[2] if it had not been precisely her intention "to live enclosed . . ."[3]

The eventful history of the

[1]See L. Oliger ofm. "De Origine Regularum Ordinis S. Clarae," in *Arch. Franc. Hist.* 5 (1912), 206.

[2]"Elegistis habitare *incluso corpore* et in paupertate summa Domino deservire"; see the Rule of St. Clare of 1253 in *Seraphicae legislationis textus originales,* (Ad Claras Aquas 1897), 50. All the documents which concern St. Clare have been recently published also by I. Omaechevarria, O.F.M., in *Escritos de Santa Clara y documentos contemporaneos* (Madrid 1970). In this edition see 252.

[3]On this subject Father H. Roggen is of another opinion as can be seen in the last chapter: "On the intention of St. Clare concerning her Order" of his *Franciscaans Evangelische Levensstyl (The Spirit of St. Clare,* Franciscan Herald Press, 1971).

Clearly an inquiry on the "intentions" of a person cannot be taken seriously unless it is made on the basis of authentic sources: without which one falls only too easily into personal opinion. Unfortunately the study of Father Roggen — which, by the way, is not without merit—abandons completely the sources when it deals with the problem of enclosure.

In order to support certain weighty affirmations, it is not sufficient to declare vaguely: "the sources of her life tell us . . ." (p. 77), "we are absolutely certain . . . this is not simple personal opinion" (p. 77), "There are many other departures from enclosure, even if they are not very faithfully related by the sources (ibid)," without ever citing the sources.

Using his method one does not write history, one only creates confusion in the minds of those who are insufficiently informed. If these sources exist, and if the claims of Father Roggen (which as we shall see, are explicitly contradicted by the documents that we cite) can be proved, the author would render a service to everyone and especially to the Poor Clares, in making them known to us.

In particular it would be necessary to prove the following affirmations which the sources expressly contradict:

—that the Rule of Hugolino was never accepted at San Damiano (p. 74). There exists on the contrary, explicit proof that this Rule of Hugolino (Gregory IX) was professed and observed at San Damiano as we shall demonstrate shortly.

—that Clare offered resistance to the enclosure prescriptions of the Hugolino-Gregory IX Rule and that she behaved freely with regard to them, so much so that at San Damiano, there were "many times when the cloister regulation was waived. Even if the exceptions are not reported very faithfully by the sources . . ." (Roggen, p. 77). If the sources do not make any mention of these, on what basis can one assume

Rule of the Poor Clares appears to us very clear if from the outset one begins the study of it with the required lucidity.

Before launching into the argument directly, let it be understood that in this article, for reasons of space, many questions of fundamental importance are dealt with in survey fashion.

It will suffice to say that, with the foundation of the Order at San Damiano in 1211, St. Francis felt a special responsibility towards this little plant, fruit of his apostolate, and he willingly extended to Clare and her companions the same paternal affection that he had for his Friars Minor.[4]

He gave them a little *Formula vitae*, a little rule, composed of some evangelical prescriptions which were like "milk for a newborn child" according to the expression of Pope Gregory IX in his letter to Blessed Agnes of Prague (May 11, 1238).[5] And since this little rule (formula) was not evidently sufficient in order to govern a community, the Saint added to it subsequently admonitions and counsels, orally or in written form, that St. Clare cites in her Testament,[6] and which were introduced in the "Observantiae regulares," that is to say, practically-speaking, in the constitutions in use at San Damiano, alongside the primitive rule.[7]

these exceptions?

—that her cloister was open "to persons who did not share the life of the monastery, . . . to the brothers who begged . . ." (ibid). Recourse to the Legend (Celano) and to the Process of Canonization leave no room for such an affirmation, as we shall see, and as has previously remarked Father O. Schmucki in his review of Father Roggen's book, in *Coll. Franc 41* (1971), 402.

Moreover how can one attribute a convincing historical value to the episode of the *Actus-Fioretti* concerning the meal of St. Clare at the Portiuncula, when the source, as everyone knows, is popular legend, and when this episode is expressly contradicted by the *Process of Canonisation* (a highly reliable source), according to which St. Clare never left San Damiano?

Finally with regard to the stay of St. Francis at San Damiano, if Father Roggen had bothered to cite the source he would not have fallen into such a subjective interpretation. One cannot make the sources say what they do not say!

[4]Cf. Testament of St. Clare, 8 in *Seraphicae legislationis*, ed. cit. 275 in I. Omaechevarria, *Escritos*, 280.

[5]J. H. Sbaralea, O.F.M. Conv., *Bullarium Franciscanum*, 1 (Romae 1759) 243.

[6]Seraphicae legislationis, ed. cit. 276; in I. Omaechevarria, *Escritos*, 280.

[7]See the Letter of Honorius III to the Monastery of Monticelli: December

The monastery of San Damiano is born thus, practically, under the direction of St. Francis and the Friars Minor, with a little rule and constitutions given by the Saint himself. But this little rule and these constitutions do not spread beyond San Damiano, unless at the Monastery of Monticelli in Florence where we find them already introduced in 1219, that is when Avvegnente still governed the monastery, before Agnes, the sister of Clare, was sent there as Abbess.[8]

The example of St. Clare is nevertheless imitated in many places and her way of life gives rise here and there to houses where numerous women wish to live in prayer, providing for their needs with the work of their hands like St. Clare and her companions.[9]

In 1217, in the territory of Foligno, near the "Fonte di Carpello" is born the monastery of St. Mary of Charity, which will later become San Claudio.[10]

In 1219 there exist already, the Monasteries of Monticelli in Florence,[11] of Monteluce in Perugia,[12] of "Santa Maria de Gattaiola" in the diocese of Lucca,[13] of "Santa Maria outside Porta Camollia" in Siena.[14] Ten years later there will be at least 28 monasteries.[15]

These first monasteries, set up during the years 1217-1219, and others, which — at least in their beginnings — go back to these years, all look to San Damiano for inspiration.

The Papal Legate in Tuscany in 1217, Hugolino Segni, Cardinal of Ostia, watches over this flowering of monasteries with paternal concern; it falls to him to incorporate them legally into the body of the Church. These "Reclusori" are particularly numerous in Tuscany and so the Cardinal turns to Pope Honorius for advice on how to handle the matter.

The Pope replies to him on August 27, 1218, entrusting to him the care of these houses, towards which he must show every paternal solicitude.[16]

Thus Hugolino finds himself

9, 1219 in *Bull. Franc.*, 1, 4.

[8] Ibid.

[9]*Legenda sanctae Clarae virginis*, cc. 10-11: in I. Omaechevarria, *Escritos*, 137-141; Letter of Jacques de Vitry, October 1216, loc. cit., 36.

[10] *Bull. Franc.* 1, 204, not. a; *Misc. Franc.* 12 (1910), 135.

[11]*Bull. Franc.* 1, 3.

[12]Loc. cit., 13.

[13]Loc. cit. 10.

[14]Loc. cit. 11.

[15]Cf. L. Oliger, *De Origine Regularum*, 445-46; in I. Omaechevarria, *Escritos*, 299ss.

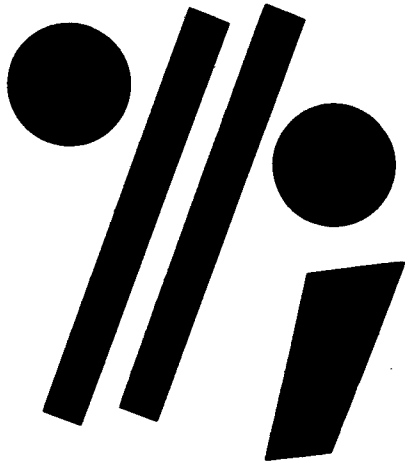
[16]*Bull. Franc.* 1,1.

practically-speaking entrusted with monasteries that take their inspiration from the way of life of St. Clare. Now this way of life not only does not have its own ecclesiastical approbation, but itself relies on the direction of an Order — that of the Friars Minor — which, for its part, has in 1218-19 only oral approval of its own rule and which finds itself in a rather difficult period.

It is true that, even outside of San Damiano, the Friars undertake from time to time the spiritual care of these monasteries of Damianites, although very irregularly;[17] but the thing at this time offers so little in the way of guarantees of regularity and security, that the first office of Visitor-General of these Damianites—save the Monastery of San Damiano—is entrusted by the Cardinal not to a Friar, but to a Cistercian.[18]

Furthermore St. Francis leaves for the Middle East in 1219 and, only the Monastery of San Damiano is entrusted to the good and reliable offices of the Friars, especially to those of Friar Filippo Longo, who played such an important role in the life of St. Clare, even before her entrance at San Damiano, as also in the history of the little monastery on Mount Subasio.

Friar Filippo will later work



hard in order to obtain from the Cardinal the charge of Visitor and will succeed. It will be St. Francis himself who will remove him from office on his return from the Middle East. However, in the disorder which arises during the absence of St. Francis, the monasteries, in general, are left completely to themselves.

This is the situation when in 1218-1219 is born the first official Rule of the Poor Clares, the Rule of Cardinal Hugolino. San Damiano has, for the moment, its little rule ("formula") and its "observantiae regulares;" but the other monasteries born successively must submit to the Rule of Hugolino.

After this clarification which traces from the beginning the two "streams" which originate, one

[17]Cf. L. Oliger, *De Origine Regularum*, 199-202.

[18]Loc. cit., 418.

with St. Francis — St. Clare, the other with Cardinal Hugolino, we must add also that, on his return from the Middle East in 1220, St. Francis accepted for the "Poor Ladies" the Rule drafted by Hugolino in 1218-1219.[19] For this reason, Celano, who in 1220 was an eye witness of it in Assisi, could write later in the *Vita Prima* of St. Francis,[20] that the institute of the Poor Ladies has its origin in a "form of life" granted by the Bishop of Ostia, who later became Gregory IX.

This Rule of Hugolino of 1218-1219, has a particular characteristic which distinguishes it from all preceding "formae" of monastic life: a *precise, severe enclosure.*

But before looking into how St. Clare professed this Rule, accepted by St. Francis, it would be a good idea to reply to another question: before the Rule of Hugolino of 1218-1219, what were the "law" and practice of enclosure at the Monastery of San Damiano?

What were the "Law" and "Practice" of Enclosure at San Damiano before the Rule of Hugolino of 1218-1219

The Order which was born with the entrance of St. Clare at San Damiano in 1211, was distinguished by a characteristic note: poverty; not only individual, but also collective.

It was under this aspect that one finds the fundamental distinction between the Monastery of St. Clare and the numerous Benedictine Monasteries scattered on the slopes of Mount Subasio or in the valley: a distinction destined to reflect on the whole monastic life, from the manner of reciting the Divine Office, to the preference given to humble manual labor.

Outside of this fundamental distinction, which permeated the smallest daily actions, the monastery could still adapt itself to the traditional monastic form. This is so true that, when the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 prescribed that each new Order which would come into existence must base itself on one of the great rules already in existence, the Order of San Damiano was able, "following the Rule of St. Benedict," to remain solidly on a traditional monastic foundation;[21] and that was carried out without in any way injuring the ideal of St. Clare.

There can be no doubt that St. Clare, at the time of her entry

[19]The Bull of Pope Gregory IX to Blessed Agnes of Prague of May 11, 1238 (*Bull. Franc* 1, 243) affirms it explicitly.

[20]Chap. VIII n. 20 in *Anal. Franc.* X(Ad Claras Aquas, 1926-1941), 18.

[21]L. Oliger, *De Origine Regularum,* 182-184.

in San Damiano conceived her monastic life as a strict form of "stabilitas loci." Not that there did not exist at that time other "types" of life, for one who aspired to live the evangelical ideal; on the contrary, just at the time when the new Order is born, in the Spoletan Valley, there is on all sides a great flowering of the way of life of the "Beguines," thus called after the name given them in Flanders and Belgian Brabant, where they were more widespread. Their presence was also very strong in Northern France, in the Rhineland and in Bavaria, and, well-known also in Italy, where they were called "bizoche."

At the end of the twelfth century and at the beginning of the thirteenth century, we see testimony multiply on the subject of these pious women, who living outside of monasteries — although quite often in a close relationship with them — organize themselves first in little groups and end up little by little, at the beginning of the thirteenth century by constituting veritable religious communities, often close, by way of inspiration, to the Franciscan ideal.

Now, the type of life embraced by St. Clare is not that of the "Beguines." If her stay in the Benedictine Monasteries of San Paolo di Bastia and of Sant' Angelo di Panzo made her feel more sharply the contrast between the evangelical poverty preached by Francis and the well-being that came with monastic landholdings, this first step proves, nevertheless, very well her intention *"to live enclosed."*

Thus with her entrance at San Damiano, it became itself an "aretum reclusorium," as her biographer calls it,[22] a "place of reclusion."

So here is Clare who enters San Damiano: "In this narrow prison, for the love of her heavenly spouse, the virgin Clare enclosed herself. There, hiding herself from the tempest of the world, throughout her life she imprisoned her body . . . In this narrow enclosure for forty-two years, she broke the alabaster of her body."[23]

And it is "in living enclosed that St. Clare began to shed her light throughout the entire world."[24] These two quotations concern precisely the year 1211 and the following.

Thus her entry at San Damiano marks the beginning of a new Order, that of the "Enclosed Women." Such is also the testimony given November 28, 1253, by "Ugolino da Pietro Girardone, knight of Assisi," at the canonization Process of St. Clare: "just as St. Francis was the first in the Order of the Friars Minor which he founded and began with the help of God, so also this holy virgin Clare, by divine will, was the first in the Order of enclosed women. This Order, she governed in a holy and perfect manner as her reputation testifies."[25]

In the Liturgy. Moreover the liturgy would not be sung either for a non-cloistered woman: "She encloses herself in a prison . . . She encloses herself as if in a tomb . . . In this prison, she opens herself only to the gaze of God."[26]

Let us note that these expressions come from the hymn: "Concinat plebs fidelium" which, in its present form, has become the hymn of the first Vespers of the Saint's Office, but which was composed by Cardinal Rainaldo of Ostia — the future Pope Alexander IV — and was part of the oldest liturgical Office of St. Clare, as it was sung in the papal chapel in the second half of the thirteenth century.[27]

In the Papal Documents. If one wishes to refer next to the official documents of the Popes that knew St. Clare personally(Gregory IX, Innocent IV, Alexander IV), they would constitute by themselves an irrefutable testimony regarding the enclosure of Clare and the Damianites.

Even a simple glance at the Bull of Canonization of the Saint reveals an explicit affirmation regarding enclosure: "How great was the intensity of this brilliant ray! This light dwelt as a matter of fact in the secret of the cloisters. . . it was kept enclosed by

[22] *Legenda sanctae Clarae virginis*, c. 10; ed. cit., 138.

[23] "In huius locelli ergastulo, pro caelestis amore Sponsi, virgo se Clara conclusit. In hac se a mundi tempestate celans, corpus, quoad viveret, carceravit . . . In hoc arcto reclusorio per XLII annos disciplinae flagellis fregit sui corporis alabastrum . . ." (loc. cit.).

[24] "Clausa manens Clara toto clarescere incipit . . ." (loc. cit., c. 11).

[25] See the *Process of Canonisation of St. Clare of Assisi* XVI, 2, that we quote in the following edition: *Il Processo di Canonizzazione di S. Chiara d' Assisi, Arch. Franc. Hist.* 13 (1920), 487-488: "Et come sancto Francesco fo el primo nell'Ordine de li frati Minori et epso Ordine con lo adiutorio de Dio ordinò et principiò, cosi questa sancta vergine Chiara, come Dio volse, fo la prima ne l'Ordine de le *donne renchiuse.* Et epso Ordine governò in omne sanctità et bonità, come se vede et rendese de ciò testimonio per pubblica fama."

[26] "Clauditur velut carcere . . . Clauditur velut tumulo . . . Patet in hoc ergastulo solum Dei spectaculo."

[27] Cf. A. Van Dijk, "Il culto di S. Chiara nel medioevo" in *Santa Chiara d'Assisi. Studi e cronaca del VII Centenario. 1253-1953* (Assisi 1954), 177 ss.

the walls of a small monastery . . . Clare lived in the shadow . . . Clare was silent . . . She lived in her solitary cell . . . And while in this enclosed retreat which protected her solitude, she broke severely the alabaster of her body, filling the whole Church with the odor of her virtues!"[28]

From the very first, all the papal documents speak of St. Clare and the Damianites as "poor enclosed nuns" ("pauperes moniales reclusae," or "moniales reclusae" or still "pauperes moniales inclusae") and it is with this term that these documents are addressed to them.

By way of example, let us cite some of the first Bulls concerning the Damianites. In the Bull of October 30, 1228, Gregory IX, speaking to the Bishop of Todi, says that "donavit divino intuitu et concessit dilecto filio fratri Ambrosio, cappellano nostro, dum in minori essemus officio constituti, vice ac nomine Romanae Ecclesiae, locum qui dicitur Cutis, cum clausura et horto, ad monasterium ibidem in honorem beatae Mariae Virginis construendum iuxta vitam et Ordinem pauperum monialium reclusarum." Equally, the Bull of November 20 of the same year was sent by the aforesaid Pontiff "dilectis in Cristo filiabus Abbatissae et conventui monialium reclusarum S. Mariae de Monticello."[29]

Even if this term was used afterwards for other religious orders (e.g. Dominicans and Augustinians) it was nevertheless unknown to ecclesiastical terminology prior to the founding of the Damianites, who were the first in the history of the Church to merit this title "poor enclosed nuns."

Likewise a letter, sent by Gregory IX between January and July 1228 to the "Poor Ladies of Assisi," has as a heading: "Dilectae filiae Abbatissae et conventui *Monialium inclusarum Sancti Damiani Assisi,*" and it is said among other things: "By inspiration from above you have enclosed yourselves in a cloister, salutarily renouncing what is of the world in order to embrace your Spouse with an incorruptible love . . ."[30]

Ecclesiastical terminology underlines also the distinction between the "Beguines" and other pious women, orientated towards the Franciscan ideal and the real Poor Clares.

Gregory IX, in order that the difference between the former and the latter be more evident even firmly prohibited, by the letter "Ad audientiam nostram" of February 21, 1241, that these pious women "quas discalceatas seu cordularias, alii vero minoretas appellant" take the habit of the Damianites, which would have engendered confusion, "being given that the true nuns (here understood, the Poor Clares), in order to render to God a pleasing service, live always enclosed."

St. Bonaventure speaks in the same way in his treatise *De expositione super Regulam Fratrum Minorum,* XI, 3: "The nuns of S. Damiano are separated, unlike all other women, from society."[31]

In the Testimony of the First Companions of Clare.

In addition to the official Legend of the Saint, over and above her liturgical Office and the documents of the curia, there are also the responses, at one and the same time artless and precise, given under oath by the companions of Clare at the Canonical Process of the latter, in November 1253, which are illuminating with respect to all the first years at San Damiano.

The fact that neither the "formula"[32] of St. Francis, nor the "observantiae regulares" which governed San Damiano in its first years, have been handed down to us, renders still more precious the testimony of the Damianites themselves, who, all, responding to the questions concerning the monastic life inside the cloister, give proof of it, one more, another less eloquently; when, as soon as it is a question of giving information on what happened outside

[28] "O quanta huius vehementia luminis et quam vehemens istius illuminatio claritatis! Manebat quidem haec lux secretis inclusa claustralibus . . . colligebatur in arcto caenobio . . . Latebat namque Clara . . . silebat Clara . . . celabatur in cella . . . Cum in angusto solitudinis reclusorio alabastrum sui corporis haec dure contereret, tota omnino Ecclesiae aula sanctitatis eius odoribus replebatur": in *Bull. Franc.* II, (Romae 1761), 81; I. Omaechevarria, *Escritos*, 109-110.

[29] Cf. also *Bull. Franc.* I, 62.

[30] "Divinitus inspiratae vos in claustris reclusistis, ut mundo; et quae sunt in mundo, salubriter abdicatis, Sponsum vestrum incorrupto amplexantes amore, curratis in odorem unguentorum ipsius . . ." (L. Wadding, *Annales Minorum,* III, ad ann. 1251, n. 17: Ad. Claras Aquas 1931, 273. In I. Omaechevarria, *Escritos,* 295.

[31] "Illae autem moniales S. Damiani prae ceteris mulieribus ad humanis consortiis excluduntur": *Opera Omnia* VIII, Ad Claras Aquas 1898, 435b.

[32] The existence of this "formula" cannot be doubted. It is cited by Pope Gregory IX to Blessed Agnes of Prague (Bull. Franc. I, 243: see next 8) and by St. Clare herself in the Rule of 1253 (cf. *Seraphicae legislationis*, 62-63) and in her Testament (276). But of the latter there has reached us only a single passage, inserted in Chapter VI of the Rule of St. Clare (62). The third letter of St. Clare to Agnes of Prague would seem also to make mention of this "formula."

the monastery after their entry at San Damiano, they remain without words and reply quietly, as did Sister Benvenuta: "Of all that she replied that she did not know anything because she lived enclosed."[33]

The same Benvenuta of Perugia, who entered the monastery in September of 1211, first year of the Order, affirmed that she had always lived at San Damiano with the Holy Mother, from that time till the death of Clare, that is to say for forty-two years (which was repeated by many other witnesses), and she added that St. Clare showed from the first days of her monastic life a great humility, to the point of personally washing the feet of the "serviziali" when the latter re-entered from the outside.[34] Sister Filippa of Gislerio says the same thing in a more detailed manner.[35]

When the "elemosinarii," that is to say the begging friars of the monastery, brought back the bread that they had begged, St. Clare rejoiced more for the crusts than for the entire loaves.[36] And the fact the begging friars already existed in 1213, is demonstrated clearly by the episode of the jar of oil filled miraculously. This fact definitely goes back to the year 1213, as a matter of fact, "two years after she (Sister Filippa) came, with St. Clare, to live at S. Damiano."[37]

"... Once, there being no more oil at the monastery, the Blessed Clare called a certain friar of the Order of Friars Minor, who used to go begging for the sisters, by the name of Bentevenga, and asked him to go begging for some oil. He requested her to prepare a jar for him. Then Lady Clare taking a jar ... put it on a little wall, which was near the door of the house so that the aforesaid friar could take it ..." Omitting what comes immediately after, let us turn only to the last sentence: "(The witness) questioned as to how she knew these things, replied that, as she was in the house then, she had seen Lady Clare place the empty jar outside, then bring it back in full."[38]

[33] "Response de tucte queste cose, che lei non le sapeva, perché epsa stava renchiusa": *Process* II, 15 (450).

[34] *Process* II, 3 (448); cf. also *Legenda sanctae Clarae virginis*, c. 12, (143).

[35] *Process* III, 9 (454).

[36] *Process* III, 13 (ibid).

[37] "Fu circha lo secondo anno da poi che vennero ad abitare nel monasterio de Sancto Damiano;" *Process* I, 15 (445).

[38] "...Una volta essendo manchato l'olio nel monastero ... epsa beata Madre chiamò uno certo frate de l'Ordine Minore, lo quale andava per le elemosine per loro, chiamato frate Bentevengha, et disseli che andasse ad cerchare de l'olio, et lui respose che li apparechiassero el vaso. Allora epsa madonna Chiara tolse uno certo vaso ... et puselo sopro uno certo murello, lo quale era appresso lo uscio de la casa, ad ciò che lo predicto frate lo togliesse ... Adomandata in quale modo sapesse questo, respose che, stando epsa in casa, vidde quando epsa madonna trasse fore lo vaso voito et reportollo pieno" (ibid).

It is not possible to attribute with certitude to this brief period (1211-1219) other very important testimony of the Process, as for example the existence of a "place where one speaks to the sisters"[39] or where strangers used to present themselves in order to ask of Clare the sign of the Cross which obtained their cure. The episode of the "Sarrazins" would also give positive support: but it is a very late episode, going back definitely only to 1240.

In conclusion we can say with certitude:

(1) that in 1211 and years that follow, San Damiano presents itself as a "place of strict enclosure," where St. Clare, on entering, "encloses herself;" where there are nuns who live "enclosed" with St. Clare, and who attest that they have not gone out from it during the forty-two years of her monastic life.

(2) that besides these nuns, there are "serviziali" who go out from the monastery and re-enter it;

(3) that there are friars charged with collecting alms;

(4) that, in order to pass things back and forth between the outside and the inside, one does not open the door of the monastery, but there is a little wall near the door of the monastery on which one places what must be taken on both sides.

These few but unquestionable points permit us to affirm that San Damiano, from the beginning, is born as a monastery of strict enclosure, even if it was not yet a question of an enclosure closely regulated, as it was a little afterwards, by canonical norms. It would not be exact, certainly to read it in its details in the light of the subsequent legislation, but one can no longer deny that enclosure existed firght from the beginning of the Order. In reality, for those who are acquainted with the state of the monastic enclosure of the other Orders before it was canonically imposed on them, the enclosure in force at San Damiano seems very rigid.

(to be continued)

[39] "Loco dove se parla alle Sore": *Process* IV, 20 (463).

The Role of Franciscan Religious in Ecumenism Today

CHARLES V. LAFONTAINE, S.A.

WHAT ROLES should Franciscans be playing in ecumenism today? This question is frequently asked but not so very often adequately answered. Here, one more attempt will be made to give what are only suggestions at best, not definitive answers or completely satisfactory solutions by any means. Our initial question rests on a number of assumptions regarding the general relationship between professional religious and ecumenism, both in theory and ir practice. These require some explanation.

The second assumption underlying our initial question is that Roman Catholic religious men and women should be outstanding ecumenical practitioners. To be a religious today is to be inherently ecumenical. The term "ecumenical" is understood here in its widest sense as describing the reconciling, healing, unifying mission of Christians in general, and professional religious in particular. To be a religious, then, is to be a "repairer of the breach," one who strives to overcome human alienations and works to build genuinely human communities in which justice, peace, and unity reign. It is also to be a co-worker with God, according to the pattern set by Jesus Christ, in the catholic mission of at-one-ment, making human beings one with God, with themselves, with one another, and with their world. That is the basic ecumenical task, and religious are called to be its foremost exemplars.

A third assumption involved in our initial question is that every apostolic work performed by religious communities is basically ecumenical in some way or another, to one degree or another. Because those works are performed by religious, they are also by that very fact essentially ecumenical; that is, they are in some way unifying, reconciling, curative. Not only are all Roman Catholic religious called to be ecumenical, but they also have the responsibility of expressing their ecumenical vocation in and through the apostolic works they perform. That is to say, no apostolic work of any religious community should fail to reflect the essential ecumenical dimension of being both a Christian and a religious mission to today's world.

Granted these assumptions, is there anything more specific that Franciscanism can and should be doing ecumenically today? Our discussion will revolve around certain "code words" as follows: Prayer, peace, poverty, prophecy, preaching, healing, and hospitality.

In the thirteenth century, the medieval Church was involved in a sometimes bitter controversy over the relationship between prayer and action in the Christian life. The battle raged on several levels: between higher clergy and lower, between ordained ministers and the laity, between bishops and theologians, between Christians drawn to contemplation and those for whom action seemed more attractive. At the time of Saint Francis, the pendulum in the controversy had already begun to swing toward action as the primary emphasis in the Christian life. Prayer, of course, was not neglected but was rather seen in the context of action; it was not seen as opposed to action, but its complementary role often appeared as definitely subordinate to action.

Such a development affected all ranks and classes in the Church, particularly those Christians we would call "religious" today. The first Franciscans, for example, were mendicants, highly mobile, flexible practitioners of God's Word in the marketplace. For them, prayer, worship, and contemplation were to be practiced as a part of and as a complement to their wider mission in the worldly forum. The early Franciscan conception of the relation between prayer and action thus brought the first friars into immediate, often intimate, though always prayerful contact with the aliens and strangers of their day. Their mission, within whose context intensive prayer was effectively and fruitfully practiced, could be said to have been a call to the alien of their day. Commitment to the gospel took them into places where the stranger, the other, dwelled. Daily practice of the evangelical counsels brough them into contact with those who did not fit into the conventional categories of medieval Europe, whether socially, culturally, economically, or religiously. The disadvantaged, the lower classes, Arabs, the poor, Muslims were thus no strangers to Francis and his first followers.

From that ethos and experience there also later arose various

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images of Francis himself: Francis the Peacemaker, Francis the Poor Man, Francis the healer, Francis the Preacher, Francis the Prophet, Francis the Gracious Host. All these symbolic expressions pointed to the basic Franciscan vocation, namely to confront alienation in Church and society with the gospel call to repent, to turn from what divides to what unites. The early Franciscan mission was thus to go to the "other" and, through apostolic flexibility and personal mobility, to open to the alien all the evangelical possibilities for authentic friendship with self, with others, with nature, and with God. To the poor, the sick, the disadvantaged, the laity, the uneducated, belligerents, unbelievers, women, wanderers and waifs, their quite colloquial message was: "Get in tune with yourself, with others, with nature, and with God. Be truly at-one."

The early Franciscans, of course, did not experience the Reformation and its consequent divisiveness for the Church. Yet they acted as reforming, prophetic agents in their own day as they prayed and worked for peace and justice in Church and society, addressed social ills like poverty, participated in healing the psychologically and emotionally alienated, provided living and growing space for strangers and wanderers, raised the consciousness of the religious ignorant and apathetic. Basically, then, the early Franciscans were authentically ecumenical in the modern, wider sense explained above. As far as possible, given the medieval context, they worked, and struggled for unity and integrity in the people and institutions of their day. Their problems are, of course, not necessarily ours; but their stance and at least some of their solutions can and should surely be ours.

Franciscans of the late twentieth century, that is, after the Reformation experience, must sort out the locus and the modes of alienation existing in the modern world. Their ecumenism will not be confined merely to healing the divisions within the Christian Church, though it must necessarily begin there. Some Franciscans, like the Society of the Atonement of which I am a member, are called to focus on the resolution of these specific, post-Reformation difficulties. But that is not all there is to ecumenism and being ecumenical in this the late twentieth century. Modern Franciscans should seek, not carbon copies from the past, but rather contemporary equivalents of the motivating ideals and apostolic expressions espoused and practiced by Francis and his first followers. Franciscans in the late twentieth century, regardless of their religious jurisdiction, or—now—their Christian denomination, must continue asking questions like these in order to be both faithful to their rich heritage from the past and credible to people in our age:

1. Do I take the prayer of Jesus: "That all may be one . . . that the world may believe" very seriously in my spiritual life? Have I let my prayer and work become alienated, one from the other? Do I pray for other Christians and their churches? Do I appreciate the spiritual gifts of other churches, try to learn about and from them, perhaps even appropriate their insights into my own spiritual life? Is there anything I can learn from other Christians outside my own church about the Word of God, the love of God and neighbor, the worship of God?

2. What do I really know about other Christians who do not belong to my church, about those who are adherents of other world religions, about unbelievers? Do I make any attempt to educate myself or seek opportunities for experiences with these religious or non-religious "others"? Do my speech, my writing, my reading reflect deep sensitivities to the religious or non-religious "other"? Have I sorted out my biases and prejudices towards others, particularly those antipathies which are concretely expressed in my daily life? How do I handle diversity, legitimate and otherwise, in my religious community and in my church? Have I allowed my commitment by vow to alienate me from others? Have I let my profession of vows become divorced from my daily life and life-style?

3. Is my work an equivalent in modern terms of one or more of the early Franciscan expressions? Does it address one of the basic alienations which the Franciscans were founded to confront? Do the style and form of my work contribute to my unitive, ecumenical mission, or are they still further alienating? How do I act and react towards the social, cultural, psychological, religious, and sexual stranger, alien, wanderer? How do the institutional modes of my work reflect the ecumenical mandate (e.g., in colleges, schools, hospitals, retreat houses, prisons, journalism, and the myriad

apostolates in which Franciscans engage)? Have I or members of my religious community attempted to become involved in formal ecumenical agencies on any level (where, for example, are the male Franciscans in the bilateral ecumenical dialogues; where are the female Franciscans in local councils of churches, ecumenical campus ministries, ecumenical curriculum and textbook-planning committees)?

Questions like these are merely "starters." The quandary underlying all of them is how to be Christian, Franciscan, and ecumenical today. Or better: is it possible for a Christian and a Franciscan to refrain from being ecumenical in the late twentieth century without ceasing thereby to be both Christian and Franciscan?

Joseph Beholds the Fulfillment

HUGOLINE SABATINO, O.F.M.

"NOW LOOK at the sky, and count the stars if you can. So shall be your descendants" (Gen. 15:5). Father Abraham's descendants as stars, and I called a father by the Holy Spirit! Now I pass on the Promise, gift entire, in this awesome birth "whose origins are from of old" (Mic. 5:2). "No, it is a fact; your wife Sarah is to bear you a son, and you are to call his name Isaac [laughter]" (Gen. 17:19). Laughter of my people's joy, a man born to the world. Sarah's ancient womb quickened anew in my virgin wife; and I join in Mary's Psalm, "The childless woman abides in his home as the happy mother of children. Alleluia!" (Ps. 113:9). "There shall once more be homesteads of shepherds resting their flocks" (Jer. 33:12). Alleluia! "David shall never want a man to sit on his throne" (Jr. 33:17); "and I will give an everlasting name" (Is. 56:5) to those who are eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. Alleluia!

"THEN, AS the sun was going down, a trance fell on Abram; indeed a great and awful gloom fell upon him. Then the Lord said to Abraham, "Know of a surety that your descendants shall be immigrants in a land not their own, where they shall be slaves, and be oppressed for four hundred years" (Gen. 15:12). Not Isaac is his name to be called, but Jesus (Savior). I see a cloud of smoke and a tongue of fire leading this child through the slaughtered form of covenant victims, through a path fraught with horror whose end I cannot see. "As for yourself, you shall join your fathers in peace" (Gen. 15:15).

"SHOULD YOU build me a house to dwell in? for I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the Israelites out of Egypt, even to this day, but I have been making my abode in a tent as a dwelling" (2 Sam. 7:5). Bethlehem—Bread-house. I have built him no house in our ancestral town; in my father David's home not even a rented room for the child and his mother. Foxes have holes and the wild birds have nests, but the Son of David lays his head here in a manger where ox and ass alone own him as King (Is. 1:3). May he pitch tent as of old in our midst, for the ark now is gone. There stands no house of God built by David or Solomon—only Herod's temple, that den of thieves which treasures only gold. And shall I ransom at the price of pigeons him who remains wholly the Lord's? But it is I who must be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me (2 Sam. 7:14). I must teach him zeal for his Father's house, before I point out the flaws. This example I must give: we'll go up to Jerusalem and fulfill the law.

"I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites; say to them 'At twilight you shall have flesh to eat, and in the morning plenty of bread to satisfy you, and thus shall you know that I am the Lord, your God" (Ex. 16:12). Bethlehem. Lehem—bread. Strangely the word plays on my mind. I must provide bread for this boy and his mother by the sweat of my brow. True Father of your people, let me not fail. I will spare no effort. If I had to, I would turn the very stones into loaves when he asks for bread. But that is my easiest task—it is not on bread alone that a man lives. I must teach him

"everything produced by the command of the Lord" (Deut. 8:3), that he may live. Father, give us daily such bread so that for your glory I may say, "There is no ordinary bread in my possession, but there is holy bread" (1 Sam. 21:4). May I daily nourish the Hope of Israel, in this fragile form, with your bread and with your word. "You must always have Presence-Bread set out on the table before me" (Ex. 25:30). Fulfill in us this command. Amen.

"FOR THE LIFE of the creature is in the blood, and I direct you to place it upon the altar, to make atonement for you; for it is the blood which as the life makes atonement" (Lev. 17:11). While angels sing Hosanna, the first angel's words, whispered in my dream, now strike knell: "It is he who is to save his people from their sins." O my people, how often have we been saved? Patriarchs, judges, and Kings delivered us from Egypt and the nations, and prophets freed us from idols; but who has freed us from our sins without sprinkling of blood? Only by blood of bulls, sheep, and doves are we saved from sin; and I shall call his name Savior. In eight days it is I who must shed first drops of this blood of atonement. Though I am not of the priestly tribe, I offer in advance these drops to God most high and rejoice—yes, rejoice: the sins of my people shall be washed away. Hosanna in the highest.

Adonai, accept these thoughts which scatter like sawdust in the wind.

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, bless your Son.

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, bless your Son.

The Liturgy of the Hours in Our Franciscan Life Today

BERARD DOERGER, O.F.M.

WE HAVE NOW been using for a while the four-volume English version of the revised Divine Office, more appropriately entitled *The Liturgy of the Hours*. This revision had been undertaken at the request of the Second Vatican Council and was promulgated in Latin already in 1971. The General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, which now prefaces the first volume of our English set, has also been in publication in English translation since 1971.

My suspicion is that some—even many—of our friars have not read thoroughly this General Instruction, and my belief is that we are missing much in praying the Liturgy of the Hours if we have not read, studied, and meditated on this "remarkable document," as one liturgiologist calls it."[1]

This General Instruction, similar in form to that of the Roman Missal, contains a theology of the Divine Office, an explanation of the structure and purpose of the individual Hours, and, besides the rubrics for saying the Hours, many guidelines and suggestions on how to say them with great spiritual profit.

What follows is the first in a series of reflections to appear in successive issues of THE CORD, in which I shall try to situate the Liturgy of the Hours in our Franciscan way of life today and to comment on the general Instruction, with some practical suggestions and applications to our Franciscan spirit and life.

[1]William Storey, "Parish Worship: The Liturgy of the Hours," *Worship* 49 (1975), n. 1, P. 6. As mentioned above, this document can be found in vol. 1 of our English set. The English text and a thoughtful, thorough commentary can be found in a booklet published by the Liturgical Press (Collegeville, Minn., 1971) by Father A.-M. Roguet, O.P. (Note that the section [§] numbers in text, in the following pages, refer to this Commentary.)

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I. Francis and Franciscan Legislation on the Divine Office

Francis and the Divine Office

I BELIEVE WE all know that the Divine Office held an important place in the life of Saint Francis. He gladly recited it with his brothers, whether in the mountains or on the road, but especially in churches.[2] And though he was "simple and ailing," he tells us in his Testament, "I wish always to have a cleric who may recite the Office with me, as it is prescribed in the Rule."[3] In a letter to the Chapter of the Order, Francis goes so far as to say that he did not hold as Catholics or as his brethren those who refused to observe the prescriptions of the Rule on the Divine Office.[4]

Francis, however, was not content with the mere external fulfilling of the obligation to recite the Office. In the same letter to the Chapter he exhorts his friars to a truly spiritual recitation of the Office:

> Therefore I pray and beseech with all my might . . . that the clerics say the Office with devotion before God, not attending to melody of voice but to consonance of mind, so that their voice will be in harmony with their mind and their mind be in tune with God; and thus they shall please God by the purity of their mind and not tickle the ears of men by the melody of their voices.

From these few references, I believe we can draw these conclusions regarding Francis and the Divine Office:

1. The Divine Office held a high and important place in Francis' own spiritual life.
2. The Divine Office was a means of binding Francis and his brotherhood closely to the Holy Roman Church.
3. The Divine Office was considered by Francis as *the* community prayer of his brotherhood and as an expression of and means of promoting this brotherhood.
4. The Divine Office was to be recited spiritually by his brothers, i.e., with the inner spirit in harmony with the external expression and thereby also truly in tune with God.

[2]2 Celano 197 (*Omnibus*, p. 520); Mirror of Perfection (*Omnibus*, p. 1228).

[3]Testament of St. Francis (*Omnibus*, p. 69).

[4]Letter to a General Chapter (*Omnibus*, p. 107).

The General Constitutions and the Liturgy of the Hours

OUR REVISED General Constitutions (*Plan for Franciscan Living*) continue the spirit and concern of Francis for the Divine Office in the three sections of Article 17:

> 1. All the friars shall celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours as the Rule enjoins.
>
> 2. The Liturgy of the Hours is the common prayer of the friars. Ordinarily, it should be recited in common wherever the friars live together or wherever the friars get together. The friars are free to pray the Office of the "Our Fathers" as provided in the Rule.
>
> 3. The common Celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours is not attached to a specific place but to the brotherhood. Still, a church or oratory is ordinarily to be preferred both because it is a holy place and because in it the witness of prayer is better given the People of God.

In the introduction to Chapter Two of *The Plan for Franciscan Living*, in which the above articles are contained, we find these comments:

> By its very nature and by the consistent choice of St. Francis and his Order, the liturgy receives the place of eminence in life with God. It is not difficult to make this statement; the difficulty lies in translating it into personal and living attitudes.
>
> The sore point of this difficulty is precisely that liturgical prayer can easily turn into formalism and can decay into routine and dehumanizing habit. The solution is continuous and strenuous effort to make the liturgy a personal prayer, a "prayerful" prayer, and not simply the recital of formulas and the execution of rituals. All this presupposes study, reflection, meditation, will to understand, personal and subjective penetration into the matter, and above all, love.
>
> Let no one be mistaken: as long as the Eucharist, the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, penance, orders, the Divine Office, the other parts of the liturgy have not acquired in our lives the personal and subjective values which they should possess; as long as we have not fully "subjectivized" this "objective" prayer—we shall not be Franciscans.
>
> This is the criterion (not the only one, but still an infallible and secure criterion) of our personal and community Franciscan quality.[5]

From the above it should be clear that the Divine Office must hold an important place in our lives as friars, even today. It is at the same time also evident, I believe, that the simple formal recital of the Hours is not sufficient. The Liturgy of the Hours must become a true prayer, a "prayerful prayer" which unites our minds and hearts to God. This presupposes "study, reflection, meditation, will to understand, personal and subjective penetration into the matter, and above all, love." Let us then turn to some further study and reflection on the role of the Hours in our lives.

[5]*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. 67, citing Constantine Koser, O.F.M., *Our Life with God* (Pulaski, Wis.: Franciscan Publishers, 1971), p. 125.

II. The Theology of the Liturgy of the Hours

BY THE "THEOLOGY" of the Liturgy of the Hours is meant the theological truths that give meaning and purpose and value to the praying of the Hours. There is no attempt or claim in the following treatment, of giving a thorough treatise of such a "theology." What is offered are five considerations about the Hours based on the General Instruction, which seem to this author to be the most important and inspiring in this area.

The Liturgy of the Hours Is a Continuation of and Joining in Christ's Prayer to the Father.

JESUS, OUR High Priest and Mediator with the Father, has introduced into the world the praise of his Father. In him, the God-man, the praise of the Father finds the most perfect expression in human words, gestures, and thoughts. And Jesus not only prays *to* the Father, but he prays *in the name of* all mankind and *for the good of* all mankind (§3).

The Gospels tell us how often our Lord prayed both in private and in public with others. Indeed, we can say that his whole life was a sacrificial prayer to the Father—a prayer which has been heard. And it is a prayer that is still going on, for Jesus continues to intercede for us (§4).

What the Lord did, he also commands us to do: "Pray," "ask," "seek"—"in my name." Thus the Church carries out this command of Jesus in the Mass, in other forms of prayer, and "in a particular way" in the Liturgy of the Hours, the official prayer of the Church.[6] She continues the prayer of Christ to the Father and also offers up that prayer in union with him, the Lord of all men and the one Mediator, through whom alone we have access to God (§§5-6).

As members of his Body, we share in his sonship and priesthood; when the Body prays, obviously the Head prays in and through it. Our Head and High Priest, Jesus Christ, prays for us,

[6]Vatican Council II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, §83 (ed. Flannery, p. 24).

prays in us, and is prayed to by us:

> [Our] Christian prayer draws its dignity from its sharing in the filial relationship of the Only-Begotten Son to the Father. The prayer he expressed in his earthly life with his own words in the name of and for the salvation of the entire human race, he continues to address to his Father in the whole Church and in all her members [§§6-7].

The Liturgy of the Hours Is the Community Prayer of the Whole Church.

BECAUSE OUR voice of prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours is one with that of our Lord, it is also one with that of his Body, the Church (§7). The Office, like other liturgical services, is not just a private function, but it pertains to the whole Body of the Church (§20). It is the *public and communal prayer of the Church* (§1), which manifests this Church and also has an effect upon it (§20).

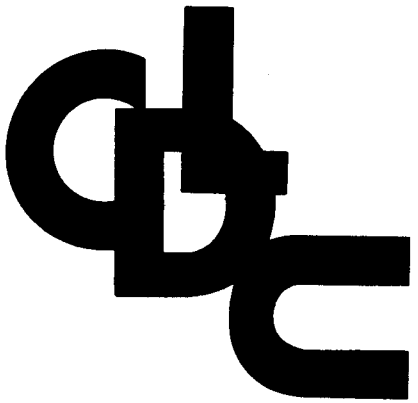
Thus when we pray the Hours we represent the Church (§28), we cause the universal Church to be present (§20), we pray in her name and carry out one of her main duties: "to pray continually and never lose heart" (Lk. 18:1; §1). The conciliar Constitution on the Liturgy speaks of these principles thus:

> All who take part in the Divine Office are not only performing a duty for the Church, they are also sharing in what is the greatest honor for Christ's Bride, for by offering these praises to God they are standing before God's throne in the name of the Church, their Mother.[7]

As representatives of the Church we offer to God through, with, and in Jesus the prayer of praise and thanksgiving owed to our Creator by his creatures, who are totally dependent upon him (§6). In the name of all creation we acknowledge God as the Creator of all, who alone is good, and we thank him for everything we have and are—for all that exists, and above all for himself (§15). We also express the hopes and prayers of all the Christian faithful and intercede before Jesus and through him before the Father for the salvation of the whole world. And since this voice of intercession is not only that of the Church, but also that of Jesus Christ, it has a unique effectiveness (§17). Thus the General Instruction can say: "The Church community exercises a true motherhood toward souls who are to be led to Christ, not only by charity, example and works of penance, but also by prayer" (§17).

In the Liturgy of the Hours, then, we become united sith

[7]Ibid., §85 (pp. 24-25).



Jesus our Head and with his Body the Church—and through them with all mankind and all creation. We become one with the hungry child, the lonelygrandmother, the worker in field and factory, the addict and alcoholic, the housewife and young student, the atheist and communist, the birds and beavers, the stars and stones. We become the voice and spokesman for all creation, singing out to our Father in joyful adoration and praise and thanks, but also crying out for mercy and forgiveness and help in our need and distress.

The Liturgy of the Hours Unites Us with the Church in Heaven.

SINCE WE ARE united with Jesus and his Church in the prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours, we are also joined in the canticle of praise which is sung throughout all ages in the halls of heaven. The Liturgy of the Hours is a foretaste of the heavenly praise sung unceasingly before the throne of God and the Lamb, as described in the Book of Revelation" (§16).

We are united with Jesus, already glorious in heaven, who is there in his humanity and who is preparing a place for us. We are united with Mary, who by the privilege of her Assumption, is also present, body and soul, in heaven. We are united with the choir of angels, who surround the throne of God and continuously sing "Holy, holy is the Lord of hosts! All the earth is filled with his glory!" (Is. 6:3). We are united with all the saints from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, who, though still awaiting the glorification of their bodies, stand before the throne of God and cry out their praise (cf. Rev. 7:9-10).

The Liturgy of the Hours Consecrates Time.

THE GENERAL Instruction points out that the particular characteristic of the Liturgy of the Hours (according to tradition) is that it should "consecrate the course of day and night" (§10). Indeed, one of the chief purposes of the revision of the Divine Office was to make it possible for the different Hours to be related to the time of day at which they are prayed (§11).

The Hours of the Office are to consecrate or sanctify time—but not time in general, as Father

Roguet points out in his Commentary,[8] nor even the day taken as a block. The Hours are meant to sanctify certain specified times of the day: the morning, the evening, midday, the time before we go to bed, etc. They are to be high points in our day by which we move in the direction of fulfilling the urging of Christ to pray always and the exhortation in Hebrews to "offer God an unending sacrifice of praise" (13:10).

Father Roguet also has a section in his Commentary on the Instruction which he entitles "Can the Liturgy of the Hours be Considered as a Sacrifice?" Speaking of those who celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours, he says that they are doing *something sacred*, and to do something sacred is a wide but real definition of sacrifice. He continues:

> What is the material reality that the celebration of the Hours thus transforms into a sacred reality? It is time. The celebration of the Hours is the *consecration of time*. This confirms yet further the view that it is not merely a dose of prayer to be consumed, no matter how, within twenty-four hours. It is the regular, ordered, and rhythmical consecration "of the whole course of the day."
>
> What kind of "time" are we talking about here? We do not mean an abstract and empty measurement, nor something mathematical and impersonal. Time in this context is something concrete, living and personal. It is historical time, which is above all cosmic time following a rhythm of days, nights and seasons. It is biological time, following a rhythm of organic life with its phases of activity and rest. In reality, the time that we are consecrating in the Liturgy of the Hours is *ourselves*.

Next month, in Section III of these reflections, we shall explore further the consecration of time in the individual Hours, and there draw some conclusions of a practical nature concerning their recitation.

The Liturgy of the Hours Helps to Sanctify Those Who Recite It Worthily.

A FINAL POINT we wish to discuss this month is the role of the Liturgy of the Hours in our own sanctification. In treating this point, I think it is important to consider first a principle enunciated by Dietrich von Hildebrand:

> It is not from what we undertake with a view to our transformation, but from the things to which we devote ourselves for their own sake, that will issue the deepest formative effect upon our habitual being.[9]

The author goes on to specify the Divine Office as one of the acts that we should perform, not *primarily for the sake of our own transformation or sanctification, but rather as a response to God's goodness and presence, for his* glorification. Our growth in holiness will flow then from our devoting ourselves to the Liturgy of the Hours for its own sake—for the glorification of God and the salvation of the world.

The General Instruction points out various ways in which praying the Liturgy of the Hours helps to sanctify those who devoutly recite it.

1. A *dialogue* is set up between God and man, through the readings from Scripture and the psalms and other prayers, by which man's sanctification is achieved (§14).

2. The *Christian life* (our faith, hope, and love) is *nourished* from the table of sacred Scripture and the words of the saints, and this life is *strengthened* by prayer (§18).

3. The Liturgy of the Hours also becomes a source of devotion, abundant grace, *nourishment for personal prayer,* and inspiration for *apostolic activity* (§§19 & 28).

4. The Liturgy of the Hours *consecrates the day* and hence *all our human activity* (§11).

5. The Liturgy of the Hours *extends* to the different hours of the day the prayer of praise, the memorial of the mysteries of salvation, and the foretaste of heavenly glory which are embodied in *the Eucharistic celebration*, the center and culmination of the whole life of the Christian community. The Liturgy of the Hours is also an *excellent preparation for the celebration of the Eucharist* (§12).

We close this section with an appropriate series of observations by a renowned master of the spiritual life whose wisdom transcends the passage of decades since he first penned them:

> It is above all during the Divine Office that we consecrate our whole being to God and to souls, and I am more and more convinced that God's greatest graces are given to those who are most generous at these moments. When we are closely united to him during the Divine Office and the Holy Mass, in his relations with his Father, with the Blessed in heaven and the faithful souls on earth, we realize those sublime words of his Sacred Heart: "I pray that all may be one as you, Father, are in me, and I in you; I pray that they may be one in us" (Jn. 17:21).
>
> We become so to speak one

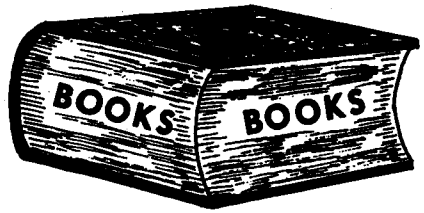
[8]Roguet, p. 93.

[9]Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Transformation in Christ* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1948, pp. 142-43.

with him, when we take upon us, with him, all the sorrows, the sighing, the sufferings of the Holy Church and intercede in the name of all, full of confidence in his infinite merits. When we act thus habitually, we go out of ourselves, we forget our own little sorrows and annoyances and we think much more about God and souls. In return, God thinks of us and fills us with his grace.

. . . the more I see of religious, both men and women, the more I am convinced that the great cause of their troubles is that most of them think too much of themselves and too little of Jesus and souls. If they could once and for all go out of themselves and consecrate their whole life to Jesus and souls, their hearts would become wide as the ocean; they themselves would fly upon the path of perfection: "I will run the way of your commands when you have enlarged my heart" (ps. 119: 32).[10]

[10]Columba Marmion, *Union with God* (London: Sands & Co., 1935).



Teilhard: The Man, the Priest, the Scientist. By Mary and Ellen Lukas. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 360, inc. index. Cloth, $10.00

Reviewed by Brother Robert E. Donovan, O.F.M., Ph.D., Chairman and Assistant Professor in the Department of Theology, St. Bonaventure University.

Teilhard de Chardin is, I feel, one of the more influential and seminal thinkers of twentieth-century Catholicism. His ability to yoke a love for science with a love for the mystical made him a prophet—not appreciated by his own. Yet his voice has been and continues to be heard because he speaks to the human condition. As an important personage in the century, he deserves to be known as well as possible. This new biography is thus a welcome addition to our knowledge. It reads well and indicates a great deal of research. I found it enjoyable and easy reading.

The emphasis of this biography by two journalists is on the social life of Teilhard. The Lukas sisters spend a great deal of their work detailing the various companions of Teilhard, companions that we discover are more Jesuit than not and more feminine than not. The reality of Teilhard's struggle with the institutional Church is highlighted by reports of conversations between him and his supporters. His courage in the face of attack and his all too human need for human comfort and intimacy are clearly portrayed— perhaps too clearly. At least I for one was not really interested in the supposed jealousy of two women whom the authors claim were vying for Teilhard's attention. Yet as a sort of "inside Teilhard," the book achieves a fair amount of success.

Unfortunately there is a great deal more to Teilhard that is not really made clear by this biography. As I have indicated above, Teilhard has made a great, original contribution to the theological enterprise of the century. This contribution is mentioned, of course, but not at all as fully described as it should be. Teilhard's enthusiasm and desire to bring together the "forward" faith (of mankind in its own perfectibility) with an "upward" faith (in the Christ-Omega) is never fully explained.

There is a second problem I had with the book: it ends very abruptly. Teilhard is one of many great figures of history whose influence is mostly posthumous, and that widespread influence is not at all mentioned by this biography. Some tracing of this influence on Vatican II, e.g., would have been welcome.

But even with these lacunae the biography is interesting and has added to my knowledge of Teilhard. So I do recommend it.

Days of Praise. By Robert C. Broderick. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. vii-367. Plastic, $5.50.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D., Associate Editor of this Review.

Days of Praise is both a prayer-book and a book about prayer. We find in it not only a meditation for each day of the year, but also an instruction on how to meditate and how to pray from and with the Bible. The meditation themes are a dozen, one for each month of the year. Topics covered are both the traditional theological virtues—with which the book begins—and other, varied subjects such as "education for life," "peace," "human and spiritual goals."

A second section of the book reproduces some of the famous prayers and thoughts of the heroes of faith—the saints—from Ignatius of Antioch through Bernard of Clairvaux to Francis of Assisi and Francis de Sales. Also included in this section are some of Newman's beautiful reflections, Chesterton's keen observations, and a collection of thoughts and prayers concerning Mary, the Mother of God.

Part Three of the book, described as an appendix, begins with a brief explanation of biblical prayer both in the Old and in the New Testament, and then cites the most famous prayer of each. A list of themes of each of the 150 Psalms is most helpful to anyone praying the Breviary—or trying the Psalms by himself. The last prayer explained in the book is "Amen"; and we can indeed say "Amen" to this splendid book, which is recommended to anyone who wants to be serious about prayer.

Who Should Run the Catholic Church: Social Scientists, Theologians, or Bishops? By George A. Kelly. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1976. Pp. 224, incl. index. Cloth, $8.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard J. Mucowski, O.F.M., Ed. D. (State University of New York), Assistant Professor of Psychology at Siena College.

Apologetics in the old sense of the term is not dead. George Kelly uses this most traditional Catholic form of debate to take on sociologists and psychologists whose positions appear to be at the root of some contemporary attempts to undermine the traditional role of the bishops as teacher of Catholic doctrine.

In the six chapters which make up the core of this book, Kelly deals with basic sociological notions about man and society, questions which social scientists raise with regard to the nature of man and institutional religion, tension between a believing community and the historical experience of the teaching Church at specific points in time, some of the problems which Catholics have with the recent claims of developmental psychology, and who should direct the Catholic Church.

The author's argumentation is clear. His understanding of sociological and psychological development as he expounds it is good but occasionally facile. The questions which Durkheim, Weber, or Piaget dealt with as social scientists were related to specific functions of organized religion or personal development. Who, however, should teach in the Catholic Church? What is a sin? When is the best time to allow a child to go to confession? These questions are not directly of concern to the social scientists.

Kelly is correct when he says, "Church leaders, therefore, must learn how to be guided by scholarship without handing the decision-making process over to scholars" (p. 186). He rightly puts the burden of running the Catholic Church on the shoulders of the episcopacy. He further encourages that episcopacy to assume its responsibility to understand what the social sciences have to offer them, but not to relinquish their responsibility as teachers and successors of the Apostles.

This book is well written. It easily engages its reader in such a way that the "liberal" Catholic will want to argue with its presentation of the case against social science. But Kelly does a good job of getting the reader to understand where Catholics are today in the midst of the various teachings of the social scientists. More importantly, he calls on bishops to be informed teachers.

The book is well documented with notes for each chapter. It contains a table of contents and an index. The language and theoretical content of the book is pitched at the college level reader whose own critical reading may be challenged in terms of past catechesis and learning acquired from the social sciences. The bok is therefore recommended for readers with some background in the social sciences as well as religious studies and/or theology.

BOOKS RECEIVED

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Hofinger, Johannes, S.J., *You Are My Witnesses: Spirituality for Religion Teachers.* Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. 112. Paper, $2.95.

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L'Engle, Madeleine, *The Irrational Season.* New York: Seabury Press, 1977. Pp. viii-215. Cloth, $8.95.

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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THE CORD is a review devoted to Franciscan spirituality and published monthly with the July and August issues combined, by The Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. Subscription rates: $5.00 a year; 50 cents a copy. Second class postage paid at St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778, and at additional mailing offices. U.S.P.S. publication number 563640. Please address all subscriptions and business correspondence to our Business Manager Father Bernard R. Creighton, O.F.M., at the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. Manuscripts, Books for Review, and Editorial Correspondence should be sent to the Editors, Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., or Associate Editor, Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., at our Editorial Office, Siena College Friary, Loudonville, N.Y. 12211.

The 1977 Inter-Province Assisi Program

THIS YEAR our consciousness of what we were actually doing in Assisi has become more clear. We were indeed pilgrims and strangers. We became even more aware that to be a pilgrim means to be free of the luggage of our own comfortable and accustomed existence. It is to be dependent on others and to be open to the unexpected. The pilgrim cannot be self-indulgent nor taken up with externals. He does not travel from home for vacation in order to see new things and places. He rather moves in some way towards that place from which he already spiritually lives, toward his home. He comes not to vacate, but to confront; not to see, but to listen. In short, the pilgrim journeys towards a place which is holy. He is motivated by faith, and by his vision of what God has manifested in that place. Thus it is the glory of God that irresistibly draws him to a dialogue with that place, person, or thing. The pilgrim lets the place become transparent wherein God and man have encountered each other. The pilgrim is challenged to integrate and situate that moment of grace and decision particular to that place into his own life.

The empirical method of our pilgrimage was rather simple. We would go to a holy place and there tell a holy story. The spoken word gives life and form to that place and again makes it holy. The place is thus sacramentalized and becomes transparent as the word taken either from Francis or the earliest experiences of the friars is spoken and calls us to a contemplative attitude. The pilgrim-friar allows a place significant in the pilgrimage of Francis to be significant in his own. He enters into that "traditio" of experience. But in order to do this, the pilgrim-friar must already have some sense of his own story if he is to grasp the holy story, enter into it, and thus move from it into a deeper identity and more vital message.

To be a pilgrim in Assisi is to contemplate in the most immediate way the core symbols of Franciscan life. These are places, persons, or things (e.g., the Portiuncula, Saint Clare, the San Damiano crucifix) associated with the life of Christ in Francis. These symbols call forth from

Assisi has become more and more in recent years a place of pilgrimage for friars throughout the world. In July of last year there were, simultaneously, three groups of American friars and students in Assisi. They were led by Joseph Doino, O.F.M., for St. Bonaventure University; Damian Isabell, O.F.M., for older friars in formation work and other ministries; and Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M.Conv., for younger friars in formation and in preparation for solemn vows. The following reflections on this type of Assisi experience flow from the group led by Father Wayne.

us a response. The pilgrim-friar cannot remain indifferent to these symbols if he is either pilgrim or friar. If he cannot identify at least in some way with the experience which the symbol reveals, he will have to ignore it or run from it.

Symbols make the past present and point toward the future. The pilgrim-friar comes to Assisi to deepen his identity with the past experience of God (heritage) and clarify his interpretation of reality according to the message incarnate in these Franciscan symbols (vision). To be a pilgrim in Assisi is to find both roots and wings.

In the first part of our pilgrimage we concentrated on places important in Francis' own personal pilgrimage. We were called to be intent on what was going on in his life in that place. What do we see in that place, or what do we hear from the different written sources? What moments in our own life can be associated here? What is the message for the world to hear? Then we turned to the symbols of persons, other Franciscans. We studied the sites and visited them—sites associated with Saint Clare, Blessed Giles, Saint Anthony, Saint Margaret of Cortona, Saint Bonaventure, Saint Bernardine of Siena, Saint Joseph Cupertino. How are their lives Franciscan? How do their stories intersect with the story of Francis? Where does our own personal story fit into the stream of Franciscan life?

The last days of the program were spent without any movement from place to place. It was a time to concentrate and intensify our own personal and internal pilgrimage. The point of departure for this part of our journey was the vowed life. What do these stories of persons and places reveal to us about our own life of poverty, chastity, and obedience? How does the very experience of pilgrimage itself challenge us in these areas of our vowed life? To conclude, we scattered to find time alone in the solitude and fraternal atmosphere of various Franciscan hermitages. It was a time for each friar in prayer and dialogue with fellow friar to decide what he is to do with all that he has seen and heard.

Assisi is simply not a nice place to make a retreat. Yes, there are nice sunsets in the Umbrian valley, and San Damiano is rather quaint. It is easy to understand why the romantic tourist would like to settle in Assisi. It is, however, an experience of trembling to enter Assisi. The pilgrim-friar comes because somehow he knows he must. He must enter into Assisi and there confront his own story with the story of Francis.

Assisi is not the place for one who does not know something of his own story. To make a pilgrimage there requires a prior decision in faith that God has called from the friar to share something of the grace and charism He gave to Francis. It is that which makes the difference between the pilgrim to Assisi and the tourist. Indeed, this raises the question: Is the friar who comes as a tourist to Assisi truly a friar?

The Friars of the 1977 Assisi Program

The Liturgy of the Hours in Our Franciscan Life Today—II

BERARD DOERGER, O.F.M.

HAVING completed our discussion of legislation and general theology regarding the Liturgy of the Hours, we turn, this month, to some more specific aspects of that sacrifice of praise: viz., the consecration of time the role of music and silence in its offering.

III. The Main Characteristic of the Liturgy of the Hours: The Consecration of Time

THE OFFICIAL title now given to the prayers we formerly called "the Breviary" or "Divine Office" is "The Liturgy of the Hours." This phrase brings out much more clearly the main purpose or characteristic of these prayers: namely, "to consecrate the course ('hours') of day and night," "to sanctify the day and all human activity."[1]

We have pointed out above that one of the chief reasons for revising the Divine Office was to make it possible for its different parts to be related to the time of day at which they are prayed. The Church, we might suggest, is not just interested that we pray for a certain *amount* of time each day or that we pray a certain number of prayers, but that we pray at certain *specific times of the day.*

The General Instruction indicates two important advantages of praying the Hours at a time which corresponds to their true canonical time: (a) the whole day is thus truly sanctified and consecrated, and (b) the Hours can thereby be recited with greater spiritual advantage (§11).

[1]The General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours, §10. Note that section numbers (§) and page numbers in text refer, unless otherwise specified or evident from the context, to this document, as found in the booklet containing a commentary by A.-M. Roguet, O.P. (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1971).

Father Berard Doerger, O.F.M., teaches Latin and German at St. Francis Seminary, Cincinnati. He has done graduate work in Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University and participated in the Hermitage Program at St. John the Baptist House of Prayer in Jemez Springs, New Mexico.

The Hour of Lauds

ACCORDING to the General Instruction, "Lauds is designed and structured to sanctify the *morning*, as is clear from its parts" (§38). The Instruction goes on to quote Saint Basil the Great, who characterizes our morning prayer of Lauds as the prayer that "consecrates to God the first movements of our minds and hearts."

> No other care should engage us, [Basil continues,] before we have been moved with the thought of God, as it is written, "I thought of God and sighed' (Ps. 76:4), nor should the body undertake any work before we have done what is said, "I say this prayer to you, Lord, for at daybreak you listen for my voice; and at dawn I hold myself in readiness for you. I watch for you" (Ps. 5:4-5).

The canonical time for the Hour of Lauds is, then, the morning—or perhaps more accurately, *the beginning of the day*, daybreak, as the light of a new day dawns. We celebrate in this Hour the *rising of the sun* and the new day, which symbolize the *resurrection of Christ*, who is, as the Canticle of Zachary puts it, "the rising sun" (§38). Father Roguet therefore remarks that this Hour is a triumphant one, which looks to the future, not only of our day, but of the life of the world. This Hour of Lauds often has missionary overtones, he adds (p. 103); like John the Baptist, we are called "to go before the Lord to prepare his way."

How Saint Francis, who wrote the Canticle of Brother Sun, must have delighted in reciting this Hour of the Rising Sun!

> Most high, all-powerful, all good Lord!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> All praise be yours, my Lord, through all that you have made,
> Who brings the day and illumines us by his light.
> How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendor.
> O God most High, he is a sign to us of you![2]

The Hour of Vespers

THE OTHER hinge on which the daily Office turns is the Hour of Vespers (§37). This Hour is celebrated in the *evening*, when the day is drawing to a close, so that we may give *thanks* for what has been given us during the day, or for the things we have done well during it (§39).

In this Hour, says the Instruction, "we also call to mind our *redemption*," through the prayer that we offer like the evening sacrifice of incense. This "Evening sacrifice," explains the General Instruction, may be understood also in a deeper spiritual sense of the true evening sacrifice which was celebrated by Jesus on the eve of his Passion

[2]St. Francis of Assisi, "Canticle of Brother Sun," *Omnibus*, p. 130.

and which he offered on the next day as the sacrifice "for all time to his Father by the raising up of his hands for the salvation of the world" (§39).

Likewise in his Hour of Vespers we sare reminded of the truth dear to the Eastern Churches that Jesus Christ is "the Light of our Heavenly Father's sacred and eternal glory," The evening star (Venus) that appears as the sun sets is a symbol of the above truth, and at its acceptance we "sing to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (§39).

Vespers, then, is basicallly the hour of the "evening sacrifice" and of the Eucharist—not so much in its strictly sacramental meaning, but in its meaning of *thanksgiving* for all the gifts received during the day.

Would that at the recitation of this Hour of Vespers our hearts might be filled with the spirit of thanksgiving that animated the heart of Francis in this prayer from the Rule of 1223:

> Almighty, most high and supreme God, Father, holy and just, Lord, King of heaven and earth, we give you thanks for yourself. Of your own holy will you created all things spiritual and physical, made us in your own image and likeness, and gave us a place in paradise, through your only Son, in the Holy Spirit. And it was through our own fault that we fell. We give you thanks because, having created us through your Son, by that holy love with which you loved us, you decreed that he should be born, true God and true man, of the glorious and ever blessed Virgin Mary and redeem us from our captivity by the blood of his passion and death. We give you thanks because your Son is to come a second time in the glory of his majesty and cast the damned, who refused to do penance and acknowledge you, into everlasting fire; while to all those who acknowledged you, adored you, and served you by a life of penance, he will say: "Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt. 25:34).
>
> We are all poor sinners and unworthy even to mention your name, and so we beg our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, in whom you are well pleased, and the Holy Spirit, to give you thanks for everything, as it pleases you and them; there is never anything lacking in him to accomplish your will, and it is through him that you have done so much for us.
>
> And we beg his glorious mother, blessed Mary, ever Virgin, Saints Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and all the choirs of blessed spirits, Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones and Dominations, Principalities and Powers; we beg all the choirs of Angels and Archangels, St. John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, Saints Peter and Paul, all the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Innocents, apostles, Evangelists, Disciples, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, blessed Elias and Enoch, and the other saints, living and dead to give thanks to you, the most high, eternal God, living and true, with your Son, our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter for ever and ever. Amen.[3]

The Middle Hour and the Hours of Tierce, Sext, and None

THE FORMER "little hours" of Tierce, Sext, and None are still retained in the Liturgy of the Hours and are especially recommended for those who lead a contemplative life and those who take part in retreats and pastoral gatherings (§76).

If these Hours are said, they should be said at the corresponding canonical time (9 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m.) and not lumped all together into one. It was precisely to avoid this that the "Middle Hour" was introduced. This Middle Hour amounts to choosing one of the "little Hours" which corresponds most suitably to the actual time that the Hour is being celebrated. Presumably, the majority of priests and religious and faithful will use it.

The temporal characteristic of this Middle Hour, as the name indicates, is that it comes *between* the morning Lauds and Evening Vespers. Its purpose—and that of any of the "little hours"—is to offer the opportunity for a breathing space in God's presence while we are in the midst of our work. It also helps to sanctify this work without interrupting it too much. Thus, this prayer is an effort to imitate the Apostolic Church, says the General Instruction, which, "from the earliest times... even in the midst of their work, dedicated various moments to prayer throughout the course of the day (§74).

Applicable, I believe, to the spirit of this Middle Hour and the "little hours" are the words of Saint Francis in the fifth chapter of the Regula Bullata: "The friars to whom God has given the grace of working should work in a spirit of faith and devotion and avoid idleness, which is the enemy of the soul, without however extinguishing the spirit of prayer and devotion, to which every temporal consideration must be subordinate."

Also pertinent are these words from the Rule of 1221:

> At all times and seasons, in every country and place, every day and all day, we must have a true and humble faith, and keep him in our hearts, where we must love, honour, adore, serve, praise and bless, glorify and acclaim, magnify and thank, the most high supreme and eternal God, Three and One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator of all and Saviour of those who believe in him, who hope in him, and who love him; without beginning and without end, he is unchangeable, invisible, inde-

[3]Idem, Rule of 1223, *Omnibus*, pp. 50-51.

scribable and ineffable, incomprehensible, unfathomable, blessed and worthy of all praise, glorious exalted, sublime, most high, kind, lovable, delightful and utterly desirable beyond all else, for ever and ever.[4]

The Hour of Compline

THE HOUR OF Compline is described by the General Instruction as "the *final* prayer of the day to be said before going to bed" (§84).

In as far as this Hour encourages an examination of conscience and penitential prayers (§86), it is a *prayer of contrition* for faults committed during the day. It is also a *prayer of confidence* in God as this is the theme of the psalms chosen for this Hour (§88). Again, it is a *prayer of commending our lives* into God's hands during the hours of sleep. This latter from of prayer is expressed in the Responsory "Into your hands" and the Canticle of Simeon, "the culmination of the whole Hour," according to the General Instruction (§89).

In view of what is said about the character of this Hour of Compline, it seems to this writer that it has a rather *personal* or private character about it. Hence it would be better said privately by individuals immediately before going to bed rather than as a community prayer—unless all in the community retire soon after the recitation of Compline. It might be added that this prayer does not have to be said before midnight if one is accustomed to staying up beyond that time.

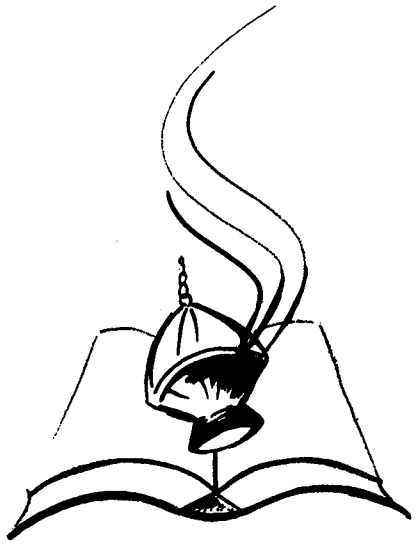
The Office of Readings

THE OFFICE of Readings corresponds to our old "Matins," which was theoretically a night office. The present Office of Readings, however, is no longer characterized, as are the other Hours, by the time at which it is to be said. Hence, this part of the Liturgy of the Hours is not strictly an "Hour" at all, and it may be recited "at any hour of the day, or even in the night hours of the preceding day, after Vespers" (§59).

What characterizes this Office of Readings is its *content*: readings. Its purpose therefore is "to present . . . a more extensive meditation on sacred scripture and on the best writings of spiritual authors" (§55). But since our reading should be accompanied by and directed to prayer, the Office of Readings contains an invitatory, a hymn, psalms, and other prayer formulas (§56).

The General Instruction also encourages those who lead a contemplative life and others on special solemn occasions to retain the nocturnal character of the

[4]Ibid., p. 52.



office of Readings by celebrating it as a Vigil Office (cf. §§70-77 for details).

We followers of Francis, who—like Francis—have promised to live the Gospel life, should not need much encouragement in reading and meditating on the sacred scriptures as did our holy Founder.[5] The words of Francis to Bernard of Quintavalle: "Let us take the Gospel-book in hand, that we may seek counsel of Christ," should characterize our own approach to the reading of the scriptures in the Office of Readings. We should also heed our holy Father's admonition as he interprets the words of Paul to the Corinthians, "The letter kills but the spirit gives life":

> A religious has been killed by the letter when he has no desire to follow the spirit of Sacred Scripture, but wants to know what it says only so that he can explain it to others. On the other hand, those have received life from the Spirit of Sacred Scripture who, by their words and example, refer to the most High God, to whom belongs all good, all that they know or wish to know, and do not allow their knowledge to become a source of self-complacency.[6]

Some Applications and Conclusions

FROM WHAT has been said above concerning the "consecration of time" as the main characteristic of the Liturgy of the Hours, we would like to draw the following applications and conclusions.

First, in reciting the Liturgy of the Hours, we should try to preserve as far as possible the *genuine relationship of the Hours to the time of day* (§29).

Secondly, in accordance with this general principle, it would seem contrary to the spirit of the Revised Liturgy of the Hours to join the Middle Hour to Lauds or to join Compline to Vespers as a general policy. Such a combination would not be preserving the genuine relationship of the Hours to the time of day and would seem to be governed

[5]2 Celano 102-08, *Omnibus*, pp. 446-51; for what follows, 2 Celano 15, *Omnibus*, p. 375.

[6]Admonition 7, *Omnibus*, p. 81.

generally well chosen for the particular Hours, but perhaps their melodies are not too well known. Most of these hymns, however, can be sung to other known melodies by checking the melody name and metric indication printed in red at the bottom left of each hymn and then finding other known or familiar melodies that have that same meter. For example, any LM metric humn can be sung to the melody of "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow," or "Jesu, Dulcis Memoria" or "Come, Holy Ghost" or almost any "O Salutaris" melody. Most of the other metric melodies can be adapted in a similar way. It is really quite easy to make this substitution of melodies and thus to enable the community to use the hymns that are in the Liturgy of the Hours volumes. (This procedure also eliminates the need for more than one book to pray the Office.)

V. The Role of Silence in the Liturgy of the Hours

IN THE PAST, especially in communal celebration of the Divine Office, there was never any time for periods of silence. The Constitution on the Liturgy had already set down the general rule that in *all* liturgical functions "a reverent silence should be observed at the proper time" (§30, p. 11). The General Instruction goes on to specify when these periods of silence may be introduced into the Liturgy of the Hours: (a) after the Psalm, once the antiphon has been repeated, and (b) after the Reading, either before or after the Responsory (§202).

The General Instruction indicates also the *purpose* of this period of silence: "to allow the voice of the Holy Spirit to be heard more fully in our hearts, and to unite our personal prayer more closely with the word of God and the public voice of the Church" (§202).

The Instruction does, however, caution prudence in introducing these periods of silence, stating that "care should be taken that such a silence neither deforms the structure of the Office, nor upsets or bores the participants" (§202). Hence, there seem to be need for each community to determine the length of this period of silence so that the silence truly fosters the prayer of that particular group. This length will probably vary in each community, depending on the age, background, etc., of the individuals involved. We should, however, avoid just a "token" period of silence which would not really allow the "voice of the Holy Spirit to be heard more fully in our hearts" or allow us "to unite our personal prayer more closely with the word of God and the public voice of the Church."

The General Instruction adds that in individual recitation of the Hours there is even more opportunity to pause and meditate on texts that might strike us. It mentions that the Office doesn't lose its public character because of such pauses for personal reflection (§203).

In the small community mentioned above, we agreed on about a one-to-two minute period of silence after each Psalm before the Psalm-prayer, if there is one. We had a somewhat longer period of silence following the Reading, before the Responsory. We also decided to have a five-minute period of silent prayer and reflection before we began the Hours of Lauds and Vespers and a similar period of silence at the end of these Hours. This practice we sort of copied from the Taizé community, who have a fifteen-minute period of such silent prayer before and after their public recitation of community morning and evening prayer. Our community heartily commends this custom. Such a period of silence, especially before the Office, gives one time to compose oneself and to reflect on what one is about to do as he/she joins in the prayer of Jesus and his Church and of the heavenly choirs of angels and saints.

January, 1978

Dear Subscribers,

We want to express our sincere thanks to all of you who responded so promptly and helpfully to the Questionnaire we published last month.

Your replies seem to indicate that we should sharpen our focus more specifically (to the extent that we *can* get the material) upon Franciscan spirituality, with biblical and general Christian spirituality the "runner-up" subjects.

The apparent lack of duplication of subscriptions to other Franciscan periodicals leads us to believe that we should do more reprinting of outstanding material than we've done in the past, so as to make it available to you in our own pages.

We shall attempt to serve your needs as best we can along these lines, and, again, we thank you for your interest and help.

THE EDITORS

The Symphony of God's Universe

Seated on a stump,
At the edge of a forest,
Looking out over a distant meadow,
I sensed the symphony of God's universe.

There was the symphony of sound:
the rushing of the wind,
the rustling of the trees,
the singing of the birds—
All blending into one.

There was the symphony of color:
the flowers of the field—violets, buttercups, forget-me-nots,
the birds of the air—bluejays, cardinals, yellow-streaked warblers,
the greening of the bushes—light,dark, in-between,
against a blue sky with white fluffy coulds—
All blending into one.

There was the symphony of growth:
seeds opening, buds bursting, leaves spreading,
each silently teeming with life—
All blending into one.

I felt enraptured by the harmony of it all,
All these sounds, these colors, this growth,
Each creature perfectly attuned to its own notes,
Giving forth at the nod of its Lord.

O! this glorious symphony: God's universe!

CONRAD A. SCHOMSKE, O.F.M.

The Enclosure of St Clare and of the First Poor Clares in Canonical Legislation and in Practice—II

SISTER CHIARA AUGUSTA LAINATI, O.S.C.

This is a translation sent to us by the American Poor Clares of "La clôture de sainte Claire et des premières Clarisses dans la législation canonique et dans la pratique," *Laurentianum* 2 (1973).

The Rule of Hugolino Accepted by St. Francis and Professed by St. Clare

In 1238, Pope Gregory IX sent a letter to Agnes of Prague in which he says among other things:

"When Clare, our beloved daughter in Christ, Abbess of the Monastery of San Damiano in Assisi, and some other devout women — when we occupied still a lesser post — having abandoned the vanity of the world chose to live together under a regular observance, the blessed Francis gave them a little rule (formulam), which, as is fitting for new-born infants, was more mother's milk than solid food . . . and you, having composed a rule, using the aforesaid little rule and using some chapters of the rule of the Order of S. Damiano, have sent it to us in order that we might confirm it with apostolic authority.

Now we do not believe it to be advisable, for different reasons and after mature reflection, to put into effect what you have asked of us.

First of all because the Rule of the Order, composed with vigilant care, accepted by St. Francis and confirmed subsequently by our predecessor, Pope Honorius of happy memory, *was professed also by the said Clare and by her sisters,* after the same Honorius — with our recommendation — *had accorded them a Privilege of exemption.*

Next, because the same (Clare and her sisters) — putting aside the abovementioned little rule (formula) — observe in exemplary fashion this Rule since their profession till the present.

In the third place, because, being established that this Rule must be everywhere uniformly observed by all those who profess it, if one attempted to act otherwise it could give birth to some serious and intolerable scandals; especially because all the other sisters, seeing the integrity of the Rule thus violated, could —

because of the confusion which would be born from it — be shaken in the observance of it: may such a thing never happen!"[40]

This passage from the letter of Gregory IX is very important, not only for the history of rules — since there are explicit references to the "little rule" of St. Francis, to the Rule of 1219 confirmed by Pope Honorius and to the "Privilege of exemption," which is nothing other than the "Privilege of Poverty"—but because the Pope points out to Agnes that *St. Clare and her companions—putting aside the little rule given them by St. Francis—have professed the Rule of the Order* (that of 1218-19), after having obtained the Privilege of exemption; and since the day of their profession till 1238 observe it in exemplary fashion.

We possess this Rule of Hugolino of 1218-1219 in its full text confirmed by Honorius III: the oldest known copy is that of 1228, of the Monastery of Santa Engracia of Olite.[41]

Actually there is nothing in this Rule which contradicts explicitly the program of poverty of St. Francis and St. Clare, because it neither forbids nor imposes possessions: better still, apart from a brief allusion, it does not even occupy itself with the problem of poverty, since, as we know, Cardinal Hugolino, who composed it in 1218-1219, had at hand the letter of Honorius previously cited, of August 27, 1218, when the Pope, in entrusting him with the monasteries, told him that, if the women who joined together as a community did not wish to possess anything and, in other respects were obliged to have a dwelling and a chapel, the Cardinal himself ought to accept the habitation and the chapel as the property of the Holy See, and not as the property of the monastery.[42] Thus in itself the problem presented itself as already resolved.

Certainly the fact that a Rule presented to St. Clare and to her companions says not a single word on the subject which St. Francis had made shine before their eyes as the pearl of the new

[40] *Bull. Franc.* I, 243.

[41] Published by I. Omaechevarria in *Escritos*, 216-232; the editions of the *Bull. Franc.* I, 263 and 394 are of a later date.

[42] *Bull. Franc.* I, 1.

evangelical Order, poverty, was sufficient motive for Clare to ask in addition to it an explicit document, in which the ideal of total poverty found its canonical form, in order that it would be able to become like a chapter added to the Rule that they were to profess. And this "Privilege of poverty" is justly added to the Rule. The latter is not only, as is often thought, a negative document, on the contrary it clears up in a positive way the silence of the Rule of 1219 on the subject of the possession of goods. So true is this that, if San Damiano possesses it since the time of Innocent III, it has this Privilege confirmed in 1228, at the beginning of the pontificate of Gregory IX, that is to say at the moment when the Rule of 1219 takes greater effect. At the same time, other monasteries, like Monticelli in Florence[43] and Monteluce in Perugia[44] ask for jointly with the Rule, the same "Privilege of poverty" and obtain it in the same form procured by St. Clare.

And now this letter of Gregory IX to Agnes, repeated with similar words by Innocent IV in 1243[45] affirms that St. Clare abandoned the little rule of San Damiano and professed the official Rule of the Poor Clares, from 1219 with the "Privilege of Poverty." It is probable that the "observantiae regulares" continued to survive, in certain respects at San Damiano.[46]

What St. Clare promised on the subject of enclosure in adopting the Hugolinian Rule confirmed by Honorius III

With the Rule of Hugolino St. Clare professed the strictest enclosure hitherto known by the monastic orders.

Only the Cistercians, some years before, in 1213, had had severe norms of enclosure, but these were not absolute.[47] The enclosure established by Hugolino for "the poor enclosed nuns of St. Mary of S. Damiano" is, on the contrary, absolute and perpetual: it forbids all exits — save in the case of a new foundation; it prohibits all entries — unless by explicit authorization of the Holy See; it reviews in detail each regulation concerning the custody of the enclosure itself. We shall reproduce some of the most significant passages of it.

The Rule, in the editions of 1239 and 1245[48] begins with this

[43] *Chronica XXIV Generalium Ordinis Minorum*, in *Anal. Franc. III*, Ad Claras Aquas 1897, 175-177.

[44] *Bull. Franc.* I, 50.

[45] Loc. cit., 316.

[46] Cf. with regard to this L. Oliger, *De origine Regularum*, 209.

[47] Loc. cit., 206.

[48] *Bull. Franc.* I, 263 ss. and I, 394 ss.

absolute prescription: "The nuns must live enclosed throughout their lifetime, and after they have entered in the enclosure of this Religion, taking the regular habit there, let permission or the faculty to go out be no longer granted them, save in the case when some would go away to another place in order to plant or establish this same Order. And at their death, the nuns as well as the 'serviziali' who have made their profession will be buried within the enclosure."

Even the draft of 1228, of the monastery of Santa Engracia of Olite,[49] contains those same prescriptions. Only, they are preceded by two other paragraphs.

"Let all the sisters keep silence, so that it is not permitted them to speak neither between themselves nor with others, except those who must do it by reason of their responsibility and their office . . .

"When a person, religious or lay—whatever be his dignity—asks to speak to a nun, let the Abbess first be informed about it; and if the latter consents, she who goes to the parlor must always be accompanied there by at least two other nuns, delegated by the Abbess in order to listen to what the first will say and all that will be said to her.

"And this must be strictly observed by all, healthy or sick, so that it will never occur that they speak, either among themselves, or with others, unless there are at least three."

As for the entry of persons in the monastery, the general principle firmly prohibits the Abbess and her sisters from admitting therein "anyone, be he religious or lay, and whatever be his dignity." Only the Roman Pontiff can permit entry therein to those who, authorized by the Holy See, attend to the community in a special way.

Nevertheless, "those who, in case of necessity, must enter the monastery in order to carry out work demanded by the circumstances, are exempt from this law." The same holds true for a cardinal who would like to visit a monastery of the Order. He is to be received with respect and solicitude. "But let him be implored to be content with an entourage of one or two reliable companions."

"If, on the occasion of the blessing of an Abbess or for the solemn profession of a Sister, or still for another reason, permission has been granted to a bishop to celebrate Mass inside (the enclosure), he is to content himself with as small a number as possible of assistants and ministers of excellent reputation. And this concession is to be accorded only very rarely.

[49]Previously cited; see note 41.

"For all that let absolutely no one (nun) — be she sick or healthy — speak to anyone, unless in the above-described manner. Let them be very attentive especially that the persons, to whom permission at one time or another is granted to enter the monastery, be such in their words, morals and clothing, that they edify those who see them, so that all occasion of scandal be excluded."

On the subject of the Chaplain, his entry is permitted for the same cases that we find again explicitated in the Rule of 1253 (Chap. XII), save that the presence of another person accompany him within the monastery is not prescribed.

As for the entry of those who must prepare a grave or accomodate it, the prescriptions are the same.

It is laid down that there be a parlor, and that the latter serve also in order to hear the confession of the nuns.

It is laid down also, with a great deal of precision, "that through an iron grille, where they receive Holy Communion and follow the liturgical action, no one may speak, except by way of exception, when a reasonable motive, dictated by necessity, makes it useful to grant this concession; but may that be only in rare cases. To these iron grilles (that is to say the choir grilles) let them put on the inside a curtain, so that no one may see into the exterior part of the chapel. These choir grilles will also have a wooden door equipped with locks and a key of iron, that must remain always locked, and may not be opened except for the abovementioned cases, and when the word of God shall be preached to them. It must be done in the chapel by a qualified person, estimable as much for his orthodoxy and his reputation, as for his learning."

▲

The prescriptions concerning the entry of the Visitor and the manner of making the visit follow. After which the Rule speaks of the door, of its custody, of the portresses, with regulations analogous — except for some points of detail — to those of Chapter XI of the Rule of 1253.

And just as this Rule opened with a general prescription concerning the enclosure, so also it is with a prescription concerning the enclosure that it closes.[50]

In 1243, in response to certain new doubts of Agnes of Prague, Innocent IV opposes not only the same reasons as Gregory IX, but he adds that in 1243 St. Clare still observes this Rule of Hugolino confirmed by Honorius III.[51]

[50]See in I. Omaechevarria, *Escritos*, 232.

[51]*Bull. Franc.* I, 316.

In practice does the life at San Damiano really confirm these words of the Pontiffs?

That is to say, was the enclosure of the Rule of Hugolino really observed in San Damiano?

From the documents we shall state with certitude some of the exits of the nuns of the monastery of San Damiano, at the very least between 1219 and 1228.

Agnes, the sister of Clare, is sent to the monastery of Florence. Around the same time, Pacifica of Guelfuccio is sent to the monastery of Vallegloria in Spello, where she stays for a year: she testifies as a matter of fact that she was always in the monastery during more than forty years "save one year when, designated by this blessed Mother, she lived at the monastery of Vallegloria in Spello, in order to form the sisters of the aforesaid convent."[52]

A Sister Balvina, who was at San Damiano, was Abbess of this same monastery of Vallegloria.[53] Another Sister Balvina testifies that she lived at San Damiano with St. Clare for thirty-six years, "except a year and five months in which by command of the aforesaid Lady Clare, she lived at the convent of Arezzo."[54]

These are, according to trustworthy sources, the only definite cases when nuns, who were not "serviziali" went out of San Damiano. It is a matter in each case of founding or "forming," that is to say of setting on the way to the observance of the Rule, new monastic communities; and this is with regard to the "active" enclosure, the only exception provided for by the Rule.

We know how later popular legends have embroidered very imaginative scenes on St. Clare, and especially how they have given a concrete realism to the spiritual relationship between St. Clare and St. Francis. Thus for example, in the *Actus-Fioretti* is inserted the famous episode of the meal of St. Clare at Santa Maria degli Angeli, [55] an episode which, from the first reading, for whoever has some familiarity with the sources of the Order, presents itself as a popular development of certain themes treated of by the official Legend of the Saint, just as for those of St. Francis. In any case, the popular legend has nothing to do with the historical facts certified by reliable documents.

The case of the entries in the monastery presents itself as apparently different. At first sight, the enclosure called "passive" would seem more vulnerable than the "active" enclosure.

We read as a matter of fact that a certain Brother Stephen

[52] *Process* I, 14 (445).
[53] *Process* I, 15 (446).
[54] *Process* VII, 11 (469).
[55] *Fioretti*, chap. XV.

cured by St. Clare, after having received from the Holy Mother a sign of the cross, "stayed for a short time to sleep in the place where the blessed Mother used to pray, then awakened, he ate a little and left cured."[56]

That is really, the only case — before the last hours of St. Clare's agony—when someone, who was not the Chaplain, would seem to have entered effectively at least in the little choir of the nuns.

As for the famous sermon of St. Francis, which consisted in a Miserere recited in the middle of a circle of ashes, after which "St. Francis rapidly went out,"[57] we are not obliged to believe that the saint entered in the enclosure, since the Rule (even that of 1253) prescribed that the choir grilles could in certain opportune cases, be cleared of the curtains used to prevent the nuns from being seen: among others, when someone, remaining in the extern chapel, would preach to the nuns.

We must admit nevertheless that, as much for this episode, as for the preceding one (that of Brother Stephen) we cannot say anything of great importance; because the primitive arrangement of the places at San Damiano —in spite of numerous studies— remains quite obscure as to what concerns the possibility of communications between the little interior choir of the nuns and the extern chapel.

Also it is extremely difficult to determine the real value of the expression: "place where the blessed Mother used to pray."

In any case, we cannot rely on this expression in order to demonstrate that, in practice, there did not exist any enclosure, at least passive. We could indeed oppose to all this that at least, in this episode, it is not a question either of the entry, or of the exit of the brother, so that there could very well be meant by this expression a place exterior to the choir itself, whatever be the spot. The grille through which the Damianites received Communion still exists and is authentic; consequently there must have been also there—wherever it was —a possibility of communication between the two sides, the one on the inside and the other on the outside. We could oppose to it also other reasons, amongst which the entries in the entourage of someone, or with a legitimate dispensation, would not be the

[56] "El frate dormi uno pocho nel locho dove la sancta Madre soleva orare; e da poi resvegliato, mangiò uno pocho et partisse liberato": *Process* II, 15, (450).

[57] *II Celano* chap. 157, n. 207, in *Anal. Franc. X*, Ad Claras Aquas, 1926-1941, 249.

last. Being a matter of an isolated case, this cannot under any circumstances give the norm, more especially as the ambiguity of the sentence concerning the place where St. Clare used to pray, joined to the difficulties inherent in the lay-out of San Damiano, renders this testimony unsuited, either in order to deny total enclosure at San Damiano, or in order to affirm it.

In any case, against this sole instance, explicit testimony rises up according to which strangers, in order to speak to St. Clare and her nuns, have access to a determined place, that is to say "to the place where one speaks to the sisters,"[58] called elsewhere (in the same Process of Canonization) more explicitly still, "parlor."[59] Taking into consideration all the positive elements already brought to light in the preceding paragraph it therefore seems to us that we can say, with a strong likelihood of exactitude, that the practice of enclosure at San Damiano must not have been in contrast with what the Damianites professed in accepting the Rule of Hugolino confirmed by Honorius III; it must have been, on the contrary, a putting into practice of the norms itself of the Rule.

Enclosure in the Rule of St. Clare of 1253

The motive for which St. Clare abandoned the Rule of 1219. professed by her after the concession of the "Privilege of poverty," was simply that this Rule was, at a given moment, modified in a way incompatible with the "Privilege of poverty" itself.

Already Pope Gregory IX, in conceding possessions to one or the other monastery of Damianites[60] and obliging to it—under pain of excommunication—the monasteries which tried to rid themselves of it not to alienate the property accorded to them,[61] had in practice specified in the sense opposed to that of St. Clare, the silence of the Rule composed by himself "when he still occupied a lower office."

Yet, as long as this explicitation was made by special Bulls to the different monasteries, concerning hence, particular houses and not the Order, the thing could still have the aspect of particular concessions, and St. Clare was not directly concerned.

But when Innocent IV, August 5, 1247, officially promulgated for the entire Order a new Rule, in which that of Hugolino was only a guideline and appeared entirely recast,[62] and the observance of which he enjoined on all the nuns of the Order of San Damiano,[63] St. Clare obviously could neither accept it nor profess it, because this Rule was in evident contradiction with her own ideal and that of St. Francis. Indeed it granted the right to receive and possess freely rents and property, without limitation, save that of having a procurator in order to deal with the business of the monastery and that of having to render an account of the administration to the Visitor.[64]

In relation to the Rule of Hugolino-Gregory IX, that of 1247 appears indeed like *another* Rule, which has nothing to do with the substance of the Franciscan spirit, although certain prescriptions are drawn from the actual Rule of the Friars Minor.

St. Clare responds to this Rule by proposing her own to the same Innocent IV. It will only be approved August 9, 1253, two days before the death of the Saint, after endless entreaties and petitions.

Contrasts could not be lacking for the Rule of St. Clare of 1253 is, as far as its spirit is concerned, directly opposed to that of Innocent IV of 1247. In substance St. Clare keeps before her eyes the Rule of 1219, that she has previously professed and draws from it for her new Rule, not only the guideline (inserting into it some prescriptions from the Rule of the Minors, some exhortations of St. Francis and something from the primitive little rule of the Damianites), but also *the prescriptions on enclosure and on its custody,* whereas she uses nothing from the Rule of 1247 and acts with regard to it, as if she was totally ignorant of its contents, all along the line. (However the actual chronological priority of the two Rules has never been studied).

We could almost say that the Rule of 1253 is the *positive development in the Franciscan sense* of the Rule of Hugolino of 1219, that St. Clare opposes to the negative development of Innocent IV. Without a doubt the Rule of 1219 and that of 1253 are profoundly different; but they are not opposed to each other like those of 1247 and of 1253 because at bottom St. Clare, in that of 1253, fully explained what she had previously professed with the Rule of Hugolino and the Privilege of Poverty. It is as if the Rule of 1219 underwent in 1253 "a poverty bath," which specified each of its prescriptions in the key of this evangelical counsel.

This is not the place to pursue a comparative study of these two Rules, of 1219 and of 1253, nor

[58] *Process* IV, 20: ed. cit. 463.
[59] "Parlatorio": *Process* IX. 6. éd. cit. 473.
[60] Cf. e.g. *Bull. Franc.* I, 81, 89, 199, etc.
[61] loc. cit., 259-260. [62] loc. cit., 476.
[63] August 23, 1247: loc. cit., 488.
[64] loc. cit., 482.

to research what in this latter is taken directly from the Minoritic Rule and the counsels of St. Francis.

What concerns us here is to underline two points:

a) What, by its nature, escapes formulation in the sense of the evangelical counsel of poverty, passes just as it is from the Rule of 1219 to that of 1253. Thus, *the strict enclosure, previously professed by Clare, passes unchanged into her Rule of 1253*, save that it receives some additional restrictions (e.g. the Chaplain must be accompanied when he enters the enclosure; the door of the choir grille must be locked with two keys instead of one.)

b) In the Rule of 1253, enclosure is dealt with in a somewhat fragmentary manner, and its norms are not spelled out by St. Clare with the same vibrant ardor as those on poverty.

With regard to its undeniable fragmentary character, we must say that the Rule of 1253 is composed proceeding from that of 1219, taken as a guideline; but within the shorter structure of this latter, are introduced entire chapters from the Rule of the Minors, as is also a chapter coming from the Saint herself. These new texts are introduced right in the middle (chap. VI-VII-VIII-IX-X), breaking the original thread which, in the context of the theme of enclosure, bound Chapter V "On silence in the parlor and at the grille" and Chapter VI "On the custody of the enclosure" (we indicate the numbers of the chapters for the sake of accuracy, although in the original Bull there was no sub-division.)

Whence, in the Rule of 1253 — to the advantage of poverty and charity, which hold there the central place — a certain fragmentation in the form with respect to enclosure, which constituted on the contrary, a harmonious whole in the Rule of Hugolino.

There are also certain imprecisions in the Rule of St. Clare. For example when the Saint wishes to summarize in short from a more explicit norm: "Infirmae vero praedictae, cum ab introeuntibus monasterium visitantur, possint singulae aliqua bona verba sibi loquentibus breviter respondere." This ambiguous sentence from Chapter VIII, which would seem in itself a contradiction to the norms of Chapter XI, forbidding entrance to strangers, does not affirm that there was a possibility for just anyone to visit the sick, but ought likely to be explained by the parallel norm of Innocent IV: "The doctor and the surgeon for reason of serious illness are exempted from the law which forbids entry into the enclosure, these, however, must not be admitted alone, but accompanied by two trustworthy persons, members of the monastery . . ."[65]

The sentence in latin also lends itself to an interpretation of general character, according to which the "introeuntibus monasterium" can be all those who in the Rule of Hugolino, taken up by St. Clare herself (chapters XI-XIII) have licence to enter, be it by permission from the Holy See, be it for the reasons enumerated in Chapters XI-XII.

Moreover, the fact that St. Clare is unaware of other elements of enclosure, foreign to the Rule of Hugolino-Gregory IX, but already introduced in that of Innocent IV of 1247 — e.g.: the turn—,[66] is a proof that the Saint does not draw up in her Rule a new text for enclosure, but that she accepts or elucidates, or even summarizes the norms of Hugolino, professed by her for a long time beforehand.

When the illness of Clare worsens, numerous are the Cardinals and prelates who visit her on her sick person's pallet.[67]

At the bedside of the dying Saint we find Friar Rainaldo, the confessor of the monastery. At the end, when Clare is in the throes of death, is verified the only case truly certain of entry, not authorized by the Rule, of "strangers" at San Damiano: Friar Juniper, Friar Angelo, Friar Leo are near the dying Saint's bed. Pope Innocent IV is in Assisi and the Rule "bullata" that the Saint finally holds in her hands, carries as a heading the note autographed by the Pontiff: "For reasons known to me and to the Protector of the Monastery, let them behave thus. S(inibaldus Fieschi)."

Thus the intervention of Innocent IV justifies the unusual procedure of the papal chancery. But the authorized exception "manu propria" by the Pontiff, permits us also to say that the entry of the three faithful companions of St. Francis—only case truly certain of the entry of strangers in the enclosure of San Damiano—constitutes the legalized exception which confirms the rule.

Conclusion

What we have said up to here, although more briefly than the subject would have required, authorizes us to conclude that, if St. Clare did not consider enclosure a problem, it was only because the latter never constituted a problem: enclosure was for her an effective and lived reality which, from the one time to the other, instead of being weakened, was reaffirmed and

[65] loc. cit., 467.
[66] loc. cit., 481.
[67] *Legenda sanctae Clarae virginis*, c. 44: éd. cit. 177-178.

made precise by the canonical documents.

The defence of poverty has perhaps put a little in the shadow the feelings of St. Clare with regard to enclosure. But to affirm that the Saint submitted to it instead of favoring it, would be equivalent to believing that St. Clare would have submitted, and not favored, a poverty which was, for the sake of the Damianites, many times reaffirmed by the documents of the Holy See.

In the present state of historical research on the origins of the Order we must objectively admit:

1) that the Saint founded a cloistered institute even before canonical documents, external to the Franciscan circle of San Damiano, had legalized its institution;

2) that when these documents were submitted for her approval, the Saint accepted without any protest the norms concerning enclosure: acceptance which is equivalent to approval, because when the saint did not approve she appealed and obtained an explanatory document;

3) that not only the Saint accepted, to the point of professing them, the norms of a severe, strict enclosure, but, when it is a question of rewriting her Rule according to her own spirit, she does none other than take up again the norms previously accepted and professed, and inserts them in it.

What we have just set forth, is what the sources demonstrate, without forcing them in any way.

On the contrary, to maintain that St. Clare submitted to enclosure as an imposition foreign to her spirit or still that she "never considered this problem" —Intending by this that she was indifferent to it, provided that charity and poverty in her Order were safeguarded — means to raise a series of question marks. not easy to resolve.

If the Saint had had the boldness not to accept what seemed to her unacceptable in the light of exigencies of a greater evangelical perfection, why would she have bowed so docilely to norms concerning enclosure, when she would have considered them as contrary to her spirit and to the physiognomy of her order? Why would she have accepted and professed a Rule like that of Hugolino-Gregory IX, which presents itself as a hymn to strict enclosure? And especially, why would she have transposed the norms of Hugolino into her own Rule, the same one that she kissed before her death and that she recommended to her daughters in the centuries to come?

If the Saint had wanted to determine differently the character of her Order with respect to enclosure, nothing would have prevented her from doing it, since

nothing and no one was able to prevent her from changing what she wanted to change, as much in the important things as in those of lesser importance, as long as the physiognomy of her Order corresponded to her desires, for the present and the future.

Historical reasons place St. Clare in the very first rank in the struggle for the defense of Franciscan poverty and gave to her words a vibrant and passionate resonance which the norms prescribing enclosure, taken up from the Rule of Hugolino do not have, certainly, and cannot have. But we ought not to interpret this to the detriment of what has always been *one of the most characteristic marks of the Order*, as much during the lifetime of St. Clare as after her death: the enclosure of the "poor enclosed nuns of the Order of St. Mary of San Damiano."

If, in the final analysis, beyond all documented testimony, an appeal is still made to a so-called *spirit* of St. Clare, which in the name of charity—on the basis of the Franciscan "sequela" of the gospel—would go beyond all cloistral barriers and overstep them easily, it would then be necessary to understand each other on the value that enclosure had for St. Clare, since for her, seven centuries before *Venite Seorsum*, to be enclosed simply means to love more, more profoundly and more intensely, the human reality itself.

Enclosure is not for St. Clare the means of avoiding the exercise of charity, but the means of exercising it in a more profound manner in the heart of the Church, in the heart of the whole human race.

No expression seems to us clearer in this regard, than the phrase ascribed to Sister Angeluccia in the Canonical Process, and that shows us how the charity of the Saint sprang forth towards God on behalf of every creature, of every blade of grass: "When our Holy Mother sent outside the begging sisters, she used to exhort them to praise God each time they would see beautiful trees in blossom and in full leaf; and she wished that they do likewise at the sight of men and other creatures in order that God be glorified by all and in all."[68]

Even if we did not have other testimony on the significance that enclosure had for Clare, this phrase, it alone, would suffice in order to demonstrate what value the Saint attributed to this institution, and what it was for her in reality. Far from being a means of fleeing creatures, enclosure is only the means of loving more profoundly, in God, and with a

[68] *Process* XIV, 9: éd. cit. 485.

special, particular love each creature throughout the world.

"In solitude, where they are devoted to prayer, contemplatives are never forgetful of their brothers. If they have withdrawn from frequent contact with their fellowmen, it is not because they were seeking themselves and their own comfort, or peace and quiet for their own sake, but because on the contrary, they were intent on sharing to a more universal degree the fatigue, the misery and the hopes of all mankind." (*Venite Seorsum* III)

The Royal Palm

Late-afternoon sun tints the bursts of cloud,
puffy explosions floating mysteriously at eight thousand feet.
The palms wildly toss their crowns in the early-evening breeze.
Sturdy and resolute, they snake up from the earth in graceful arcs,
poised, not for the kill but in prayer,
their dancing branch crowns clapping in joy,
or is it fear?
"Awake, O Lord, why are you still sleeping?"

See how nature reflects our own selves—
our joys, our anxieties.
The palm has its own meaning—but
the onlooker finds a self-reflection in its frantic waving,
its jubilant, carefree swaying.

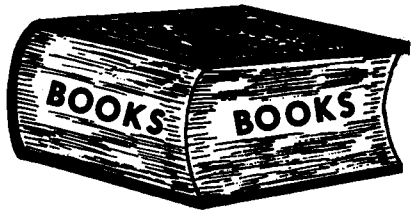
Is there any end to the possibilities of dialogue with our God?

He fashions a world in which He speaks to us,
a world through which He touches our deepest recesses.
And with this world He calls us forth to rest in His company—
not as with a stranger, but
with someone who has already communicated how
deeply He knows us.

After all, has He not surrounded us with a world that
bridges the chasm of our ignorance of Him?
Has He not given us a language in which the depths of our own selves
come to light of day,
to sharing?

Wave on, palms. Clap with the rivers, and announce the
glorious message from the end of the earth to the other.

PAUL ZILONKA, C.P.



Evangelical Perfection: An Historical Examination of the Concept in the Early Franciscan Sources. By Duane V. Lapsanski. Vol. 7 of the Franciscan Institute Publications Theology Series. St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1977. Pp. xii-302, including bibliography. Paper, $11.00, including postage and handling.

Reviewed by Father Regis Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., Ph.D. Cand., Dunwoodie, New York. He resides at St. Conrad's Provincialate, White Plains, N.Y.

In the December, 1976, issue of THE CORD, this reviewer wrote of Duane V. Lapsanski's book, *The First Franciscans and the Gospel:* "It is hoped that the author will translate and publish his scholarly *Perfectio evangelica: Eine Begriffsgeschichtliche Untersuchung im fruhfranziskanischen Schriftum* as he has indicated. It will be a distinctive service to the English-speaking members of the Franciscan family, and *The First Franciscans and the Gospel* will then be seen as an introduction to a much more scholarly and important work." Happily, Dr. Lapsanski has completed that arduous task and has made an outstanding contribution to the field of Franciscan research in the United States.

As the original title suggests, this work is a study of the concept of evangelical perfection in the early Franciscan sources. The author examines this key element of the Franciscan way of life and traces its development through the pre-Franciscan apostolic movements, the writings of Francis himself, and the early biographies of the Poverello. The book's strength is the manner in which Dr. Lapsanski uses these early sources. His research manifests an accurate understanding and appreciation of the texts, their histories, structures, and literary genres. The examinations of the Encyclical Letter of Brother Elias and the *Sacrum Commercium* are most deserving of attention, for there is a dearth of information on these important sources of the Franciscan tradition.

The publication of Dr. Lapsanski's work was made possible by the Franciscan Institute under the direction of George Marcil, O.F.M. The format, printing, and binding are of excellent quality. Unfortunately, the translation of the writings of Saint Francis which is used is that of Benen Fahy, O.F.M., which is found in *Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources.* This reviewer was disappointed that a more accurate and critical translation was not used, since the Fahy translation leaves much to be desired. Otherwise this publication is excellent.

This reviewer is grateful for this addition to Franciscan scholarship and hopes that Dr. Duane V. Lapsanski will continue to research, write, and publish works concerning the Franciscan heritage. *Evangelical Perfection: An Historical examina-*

tion of the Concept in the Early Franciscan Sources is an outstanding example of the quality of his gifts and talents.

Growing Together in Marriage. By J. Murray Elwood. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 175. Paper, $2.95.

Reviewed by Jack and Carol Egan, an Encountered couple, who have been married twelve years and are the parents of two children.

Growing together in Marriage is an interesting and inspiring series of essays on a topic of perennial interest. Seasoned with stories of the real-life struggles of couples, the book covers every aspect of married life: dreams, feelings, growth, love, children. Communication and its barriers are an important theme. An entire chapter explains in plain prose transactional analysis. The central role of love—unselfish love—is also (as would be expected) a persistent theme; and the covenant vs. contract approach is stressed.

One of the special features of the book is a mini-questionnaire that couples, married or contemplating marriage, can give to one another in the area of their expectations regarding roles, responsibilities, priorities in marriage. Special too in the book is its raising of questions about marriage the way people ask them today, a good case in point being the chapter on children. Father Elwood exposes the myth of group marriage or swinging singles as the wave of the future and indicates the folly of the "uncertain togetherness" of those living together without benefit of clergy.

Carefully and clearly written, *Growing Together in Marriage* is recommended for all married couples, whether or not they have made marriage encounters. It will also be useful in premarital instructions, and its concrete, tangible suggestions and illuminating insights can be a great help to the marriage counselor.

Bread from Heaven: Essays on the Eucharist. Edited by Paul J. Bernier, S.S.S. Ramsey, N.J.: Paulist Press Deus Books, 1977. Pp. ix-170. Paper, $1.95.

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

In the Introduction to this book, the editor informs us that there has been greater development in Eucharistic theology in the two decades since Vatican II than occurred in the previous four centuries. For priests, religious educators, and others who want to keep abreast of these latest developments in Eucharistic theology or to deepen their knowledge of a Eucharistic theology based on celebration rather than confection of a sacrament, these essays fill a real need in this age of paperback theology.

The articles were not chosen haphazardly, but were commissioned by *Emmanuel* magazine to present a holistic and dynamic view of the Eucharist. There are six contributors: Edward Kilmartin, S.J., Eugene A. LaVerdiere, S.S.S., John Barry Ryan, Joseph M. Powers, S.J., Ernest Lussier, S.S.S., and George McCauley, S.J., who cover such varied topics as "The Testament of Christ," "Eucharist and Community," "Archaeological Witness to the Eucharist," "The Presence of Christ in the Eucharist," "Christ's Presence in the Liturgy," and "The Basis of the Sunday Mass Obligation," among others.

The essays concentrate on a theology that is active rather than passive. The essay "Eucharist and Community," by Edward J. Kilmartin, S.J., is an example of this dynamic approach to Eucharistic theology, concentrating on St. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians. The author sees Paul's views of the Eucharist as "making demands on the social and moral behavior of the community." To point out that the celebration of the Eucharist reveals and contributes to the growth of the body of Christ in the measure that the community is not a foreign body, but truly the body of Christ, the author analyzes 1 Cor. 10: 14-33 and 11:17-34 and relates them to the Gospels. The reader gets the distinct impression of a shift of emphasis from the "ex opere operato" aspects of the sacrament to the requirements on the part of the recipient for meaningful celebration of the Eucharist.

To this reviewer one of the most interesting essays was entitled "Archaeological Witness to the Eucharist" and written by Ernest Lussier, S.S.S. Of special interest is the quotation and comment on two large fragments of the sepulchral inscription of Abercius discovered by Dr. William Ramsay in 1833 and now in the Lateran Museum in Rome. For those who are looking for confirmation of the early tradition of receiving the Eucharist in the hand, this essay contains a poem of the 4th century which says, "Take the honeysweet food of the Savior of the Saints; eat with joy and desire, holding the fish in your hand." The author discusses the fish as symbol of Jesus and the Eucharist.

These essays presuppose that the reader is well grounded in the doctrine of the Eucharist as real presence, the doctrine of the Mass as a sacrifice, and transubstantiation as a workable formula for faith in the previous two realities. Without such previous background the reader is likely to feel the authors do not sufficiently stress these realities, especially in the essays "The Presence of Christ in the Eucharist" and "Christ's Presence in the Liturgy." Like many anthologies, this one has a certain unevenness of writing and lack of continuity of theme despite the editor's assurance that his avowed purpose was to avoid these deficiencies.

Still, it is to be hoped that the book will help its readers enrich their knowledge of the Eucharist and through this study to make each Eucharistic celebration a lived experience of their Christian life.

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Shorter Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Tenderly I Care. By Albert J. Nimeth, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. 124. Cloth, $3.50.

Father Albert Nimeth has given us

an insightful and readable book about love and its power and limits in human relationships. "Caring" means respecting the uniqueness of every human being, paying attention to the messages he non-verbally sends out, risking hurt through your own empathetic suffering with him in his difficulties. "Caring" means allowing a person to grow, and to grow at his own pace. "Caring" means praying that he will stamp his approval on God's blueprint for him, and not vice-versa.

Father Nimeth's message—and it is at bottom that of Jesus himself—is enhanced by the layout of the book book with its appropriately chosen photos of real people and full-page blow-ups of banner slogans about caring.

Tenderly I Care is a gem, a wonderful gift for a friend, a wonderful gift for a counselor, a wonderful gift for any person who is ready to answer Jesus' call to "love one another as I have loved you."

You Better Believe It: A Playboy-Turned-Priest Talks to Teens. By Kenneth J. Roberts. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. 208. Paper, $3.95.

This series of mini-conferences, punctuated by full-page photos and scriptural citations, is a new style apologetics book—and an excellent example of that genre. Questions are raised about the Church, God, Christ, Mass, and Confession; and they are answered in a contemporary idiom which appeals to both mind and heart. The sustained treatment of the Sacraments as "Power Symbols" and the observations on the Mass as "the Same Old Thing" are outstanding. *You Better Believe It* is a book from which any Catholic can derive profit.

Watering the Seed: For Formation and Growth in Franciscanism. By Luke M. Ciampi, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. 126. Cloth, $5.95.

This is a book of twenty short conferences for Franciscan Tertiaries, which can be equally helpful for their moderators in their search for formation material.

After situating Franciscan life in relation to Francis and his approach to life, Father Ciampi treats of the various aspects of the spiritual life: two particularly fine chapters on involvement and commitment, and other helpful discussions of suffering, fraternity, poverty, undiscriminating love, mission to the poor, love of and loyalty to the Church, apostolate, peace-making. What he brings to these topics is a fresh way of viewing them, an abundance of concrete examples, and a clear, readable text. Without being overly subtle, moreover, he is careful to make the proper distinctions and strike the happy medium throughout—whether in relation to loyalty to the Church, to suffering, or to the apostolate.

We hope that the next edition of *Watering the Seed* will be in paperback, to assure it even wider accessibility. It is recommended to every reader seeking fresh expression of the Franciscan ideal.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Doherty, Catherine de Hueck, *Sobornost: Eastern Unity of Mind and Heart for Western Man.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 110. Paper, $2.45.

Nimeth, Albert J., O.F.M., *Tenderly I care.* Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. 124, including numerous photos and drawings. Cloth, $3.50.

Roberts, Kenneth J., *You Better Believe It: A Playboy—Turned-Priest Talks to Teens.* Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. 208. Paper, $3.95.

ORDER AND DISORDER

THE COINCIDENCE OF OPPOSITES IN THE HISTORY OF THOUGHT

The Thirteenth Conference on Medieval Studies

The Medieval Institute
Kalamazoo, Michigan 48003

The conference consists of nine sections, each devoted to a major segment in the philosophical/theological tradition. It includes backgrounds in Greek and Latin thought and their consequences in modern literature of Spain, Italy, France, Germany, England, and America. But the core of the conference is of course the development of the doctrine of the coincidence of opposites in the Middle Ages.

Readers of this periodical will perhaps be especially interested in the Conference's fourth section, on St. Bonaventure, St. Thomas, and Dante, with papers to be delivered by Father Zachary Hayes, Dr. Ewert H. Cousins, and Dr. Susan Potters.

For further information, you may write either to the Conference's organizers, Marion L. Kuntz and Paul G. Kuntz, Georgia State University, University Plaza, Atlanta 30303, or to the Medieval Institute at the above address.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS.

Except for the drawing on page 78, by Mr. Joseph Miles, the drawings for our March issue have been done by Sister Mary Raphael Fulwider, O.S.F., Chairman of the Art Department at Maria Regina College, Syracuse, New York.

the CORD

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Not My Will, but Thine . . .

WE KNOW THAT the Crucifix was, with the Crib and Ciborium, a focal point of Francis' prayer life as well as of his entire life-style. The Crucifix urges us, his followers, to redirect our thinking to the Lord's sufferings and to close the gap which exists in our lives between the kinds of things we think about and the life-style we actually embrace. Edward Leen points out that sympathy with the suffering Christ means embracing the philosophy behind that suffering: that love is willing—even wants—to suffer for the beloved.

Over seven years ago, in these pages (September of 1970), we noted the existence of a piety-structure vacuum. The approach of Passiontide reminds us that it is still here. Ash Wednesday was a good start, but what happens after that is, as we are witnessing these past couple of weeks, largely a matter of personal choice. Some communities opt for fast days or for special devotions of some kind; but a real experience of a season of penance intruding upon the sameness of every day is still a need of our time.

What can we do about the call of Jesus to a closer following of him in his sufferings? Try a return to the simple obedience, suggested by the life of St. Elizabeth Seton. Do the will of God, the way God wills it and because he wills it. What is the will of God? What we are directed to do by those over us, the responsibilities of our apostolate and community, and the call of charity. Not included is "what we want to do," because that shifts the focus of our life from God to self. To restore a sense of what Lent is all about, then, let us suspend our efforts to get God to bless our desires and try instead to give him what he desires: our obedience, which is to say, our heart.

D. Julian Davis ofm

Religious Life in *The Last Western*

JORDAN HITE, T.O.R.

WHAT RELIGIOUS community is under the surveillance of the CIA, repudiated by the Vatican, and a part of the inner circle of the Supreme Pontiff, His Holiness, Willie Brother? According to Thomas Klise in his novel, *The Last Western*,[1] the answer is "The Silent Servants of the Used, Abused, and Utterly Screwed Up."

The Last Western is not primarily about religious life but is a lerger work describing the destructive tendencies of western society in the 21st century. Those tendencies are readily identifiable as problems we encounter today, as well as the perennial problems of human existence. The novel is full of the incidents that remind us of the sinfulness and goodness of the world in which we live. It is a world of war, race riots, political treachery, and oppression of the weak, alongside great love, compassion, and holiness. The Church comes in for its share of criticism through the description of insensitive, political-type Church leaders.

The main character of the story is Willie Brother, whose parentage includes Indian, Black, Oriental, Irish, and Mexican ancestors, so that he is as it were universal man. He is a poor, innocent man who becomes a baseball star, and then a priest, bishop, and finally, Pope.

The story begins by describing the childhood of Willie, who was raised in poverty in the southwestern United States. At school Willie was the slowest student, simple and unwise in the ways of the world, but an excellent athlete. An example of the simplicity that marks Willie's life occurs when he is held back from making his first Communion because he couldn't understand why God made His Son die.

When Willie was in high school, he played on the baseball team and developed a pitch that no one could hit. He was then

[1]Thomas Klise, *The Last Western* (Niles, IL: Argus Communications, 1974).

Father Jordan Hite, T.O.R., L.L.M. (George Washington University), J.C.L. (St. Paul University, Ottawa), teaches Canon Law and is Director of Formation at St. Francis Seminary, Loretto, PA.

signed to a major-league contract to play in New York. After several games of sensational pitching, his success aroused jealousy in his teammates, and they, along with the owner, tried to persuade him to allow batters to hit the ball to make games more interesting. Willie refused and left the team. He returned home, only to find his family had been killed in a riot. He ran in panic from his home until he fell exhausted along the road and was picked up by two bearded men driving a beat-up truck. The men took him to their home, a community of strange, bearded men who dressed in patchwork tunics. These men, who nursed Willie back to health, were known as "the Silent Servants of the Used, Abused, and Utterly Screwed Up." The saga of Willie continues until his tragic death at the close of the novel. With this episode, however, the reader is introduced to the Servants.

The story of the Servants, who appear intermittently throughout the novel, is at different times a serious, humorous, thought-provoking characterization of religious life. I hope in the following pages, without doing too much violence to the loose, open-ended approach to "religious life" as lived by the Servants, to discuss their way of life—focusing on their origin, spirituality, and mission. Their name is a clue to the meaning of

each area. They are Servants in the biblical sense of the word, whose prayer and spirituality are marked by silence, and they minister to the poor and lowly.

Origin and Structure

THE SERVANTS used as a Rule of life the Scriptures and a volume called the *Guidebook*, which in the loosest sense of the word could be considered a constitution or set of constitutions such as those used by religious orders and congregations as we know them. The Bible was referred to as "Hints," and the *Guidebook* as "Lesser Hints." The Servants regarded all books except the Scriptures as treacherous, and even the *Guidebook* was looked upon as a changing list of suggestions, trustworthy only to the degree that the suggestions might inspire a deed of love. The *Guidebook* is described as a collection

of history, sayings, news clippings, recommendations, bits of poetry, and occasional jokes. The section on the origin of the Servants traces their beginning to Second Isaiah and Jesus, referring to the Sufffering Servant and to Jesus' acceptance of that role. As in much of the *Guidebook* itself, however, later commentary disputes or contradicts the original statement, so that several Servants consider their beginnings and history to be trifling and that no one knows who the founder is. The section closes with the question, "Who is the real founder?" followed by a number of answers referring to Jesus. The question of who the founder is, is left dangling, although many of the Servants apparently feel Jesus had a central role.[2]

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[2]The entire history is set forth below as it attempts to trace the origin of the Servants. It is at the verv least a unique history:

The Society traces its origin to Second Isaiah and is represented in the figure of the Suffering Servant, prefiguring J....

In the early Christian ages Origen refers to certain "asininities of the Roman pontiff" and offers views on diverse subjects which according to Bl. Peter the Mad (1228-1264), give evidence to his (Origen's) founding of the Society. In modern times the title of founder is variously ascribed to:

Claude of Liverpoo, *burned at the stake for destroying the writings of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux and Albert the Great and more than half the theological library of the University of Oxford;*

Henri de Grote, *imprisoned (1721) for inscribing certain unseemly words on the rose window of Chartres;*

Gerge L. Cross (1799-1851), *English convert poet and proponent of the theory of personal papacy;*

Milton "Gunner" Felder, *American pacifist Air Force general executed in 1986 by joint court martial of the armies of India, China, Russia, and the U.S.A. for multilateral treason and author of the book* Kamikaze Kristianity.

Since the Society considers its history trifling and since no exact records exist, no one knows who the founder is.

And no one cares, someone had added in orange ink.

The final entry on this page was a question lettered boldly in green poster paint: BUT WHO IS THE REAL FOUNDER?

Underneath, written twenty-eight times in twenty-eight different ways—penned, penciled, typed, scrawled, scrolled—were the words JESUS, CHRIST, J, HIM, THE LORD, and in one case THE SPIRIT [Ibid., p. 133].

This loose, non-definitive approach that recurs throughout the *Guidebook* is not a model for writing a constitution, but in its own way it raises several important questions. The Servants are are one with all religious who follow the Gospel as the basic Rule of life, with Jesus as their model. In addition, most religious emphasize some particular gospel charism that is usually connected with their founder. Both the history of religious life and contemporary attempts at renewal bear witness to the varying ways in which religious communities see Jesus as their model. The Christ model is one that can never be exhausted; and this is precisely why all communities can claim Jesus as their model, whether they follow some particular gospel value or spiritual principle such as servanthood, penitence, or humility; or whether they emphasize a specific practice or apostolate such as nursing, teaching, or Eucharistic devotion. The Servants, by giving Jesus a central role and claiming him as "probable founder," bypass some of the difficult questions that are raised by trying to renew religious life in accord with the charism of the founder. These attempts to identify the true spirit of the founder have sometimes produced discussion leading to greater unity, while at other times they have caused division and separation. Although the origin of a community and the charism of its founder cannot be considered "trifling," the Servants show a certain wisdom in deemphasizing the immediate historical circumstances and personalities related to the beginning of the community, so that the community can live and grow according to its call at any specific moment in history. The difficulty for all religious is in trying to distinguish the ongoing charism from the accidental historical circumstances.

The commentary in this section of the *Guidebook* as well as in others is done historically, which helps emphasize that a constitution must be a "living" document that is constantly reviewed and changed to match the needs of the Church and the community at a particular time in history. Both Church law and the constitutions of religious communities have tended to take the approach that if legislation is done well, the law should last a long time, and the process won't need to be repeated in the near future. Although the Church does not presently have a structure that provides for ongoing review and renewal of its universal law, religious communities can easily, by periodic use of chapters or other communal gatherings, stay abreast of contemporary developments. It is this constant review and renewal that can keep a constitution living.

The organizational structure and daily life of the Servants is given in sketchy fashion. At one point the Servants are pictured as living two distinct life styles: one is a monastic life style as lived by a base community, and the other a very individual life style lived by the Servants on assignment, who return to the base community after completing their mission. Later, the monastic life is abandoned, and all the Servants are on assignment. The Servants have both male and female members, including married couples and families with children. The openness to members from any state of life is similar to that of many Christian communities or households existing today as the latest development in the attempt by groups of Christians to live the gospel life.

While at the monastery the Servants communicated by sign language, except at the celebration of Mass, which was the only time they used their voices. Each day included an hour of silent praise in common in the morning, evening Mass,and late-afternoon Scripture reading. During the day the Servants worked on the monastery farm.

The "habit" of the Servants is described as a tunic made of a gunnysack and rags patched together. There is no mention of vows or promises, although it is quite apparent the Servants are poor. Since married couples may join, there is obviously no requirement of celibacy. The Servants have a leader in the person of Father Benjamin,[3] a wise and holy man, but there is no promise of obedience, and the concept of authority in the Servants is not really dealt with.

Spirituality and Prayer

THE MISSION and spirituality of the Servants are closely intertwined. The chapter of the *Guidebook* entitled "Purposes of the Society" contained a list of words and phrases, all of which were crossed out except the word "substituting." Substituting means that the Servants would take the place in jail of those who were poor and oppressed, like the Mercedarians and Trinitarians, who had as their apostolate the taking of the place of slaves and prisoners.

One aspect of the spirituality of the Society is the emphasis on silence. They maintained silence except to celebrate liturgy, much like many of the strict monastic

[3]Father Benjamin is regarded as "more or less head of the community" (Ibid., p. 132).

orders who maintain silence except at Mass and Office. For the Society, silence is closely related to listening. One of the recommendations in the *Guidebook* states that Servants should listen not only with their ears but with their hands, feet, stomach, legs, and whole body. In other words the whole being should be tuned in to God, and silence is certainly a means which can dispose one to this kind of total listening. The Servants also had a distrust of words, observing that "men have created a false world with words, which they use to cover up their sin. Better the language of deeds of loving and serving those who have been crushed by the words of the world." This is a warning against those who by their words intentionally lie or create false hopes, as well as a warning that because of our weakness we often fail to live up to our promises. We must be careful of all words: those we speak and those that are spoken to us. In the end, it is our deeds that will speak loudest, and the Servants are well aware of this axiom.

The Servants occasionally held "listening" services which began with a reading from the Scriptures or the *Guidebook*, or perhaps a story, followed by a period of twenty to thirty minutes of silence, after which they would share the fruits of their contemplation, called "dona." These "dona" were obviously viewed as gifts from God to be shared with the community. The format of the listening prayer is very similar to that used by many in shared prayer sessions.

The *Guidebook* observations on the listening prayer note that in true listening "the listener opens his spirit to the Loving One," so that once self-will has been set aside, and God in his love can speak, the listener may be certain that he hears the voice of God rather than his own voice. This observation expresses the crucial question in all discernment: "Am I hearing the voice of God or am I hearing my own voice?" The Servants are made aware that when they are making an important decision, a selfish part of them may suggest "false deeds for the sake of pride or guilt removal or vengeance or for the satisfaction of desires that go back to the time before love spoke." We often arrive at this point in our own lives when we question whether we have heard God or ourselves. We question if our contemplated action is "for the kingdom" or whether deep inside we are acting because of pride, ambition, or guilt. The *Guidebook* doesn't offer an answer, but only serves as a reminder that in quiet it is possible to hear what God is saying more clearly, and thus avoid a selfish decision.

The section concludes with the admonition that listening has nothing to do with "the lying and insanity of hearing voices" as some foolish people believe, although one must be ready to hear God in ways not previously experienced. This admonition points out clearly that there are many people who think they have heard God or that God has given them a word, but in reality they have received nothing. On the other hand, as we listen to God we can't define, structure, or limit his dealings with us, and we must be ready to accept his word in the way that he offers it to us. As the issue being discerned becomes more serious, as in the decision to sacrifice one's life, the Servant is advised that "the purest listening is required," and a Servant must answer an inventory of fifty-five questions that help him to get at his root motivation so he can make an honest decision.

The *Guidebook* also contains a reflection on the meaning of life and death. An observation by a child Servant which was apparently given shortly before he died in substitution activity during the Vietnam War offers a style of wisdom that only a "little child" could have. As he contemplates death, he meditates on fear, dependency on God, love, hate, death, and resurrection in the following way:

> Once one stops counting on God, one has no choice but to count on oneself. When that comes to nothing, one counts on others. When finally that gives way, one stops counting altogether. It is then that life can begin.
>
> Fear is the only enemy. Who can love God who fears him? But God has to start with something. This enemy of man is sometimes a useful tool, especially in the beginning.
>
> Should we hate any creature? No. Not even the evil one.
>
> Life is without limits except as we make them. All our possessions are limits. Some would call death a limit but it is rather only a kind of staging, a regathering. We do not understand it at all except in X. This morning, at death-point, I am down to my last possession, my body, which was given to me by others and which is now being taken away. Still am I not part of limitless life? Assuredly, that part of me which knows this, that part of me which loves, remains after death, and even as you read these words, brothers and sisters, I live. Gentle peace to you all.[4]

From this observation we learn that even though fear is an evil and blocks true love of God, God can begin his work in us by helping us to see that fear is keeping us from him, and that true love "has no room for fear; rather, perfect love casts out all

[4]Ibid., pp. 395-96.

fear" (1 Jn. 4:18).We must have faith that God never gives up on us, and can reach into our most negative attitude or difficult stumbling block and touch it, heal it, and use it as a means of drawing us closer to him.

In addition the observation offers a kind of three-step process that often brings us to a deeper trust in the Lord. If we are not trusting and do not rely on God, we try to rely on ourselves. When we find ourselves inadequate and lacking, we look to others. Finally, when others can't meet our needs, we seem to be left with nothing, and it is in this state that we can come to a realization of our dependence on God. This is a process we tend to live through many times, because somehow our trust and confidence in God, after a period of time, seems to turn into trust and confidence in ourselves or others, until God convicts us of our mistake. It is when we are brought face to face with our littleness that we are led to trust God anew and to begin a newer and deeper life as his children.

Finally, as the child Servant faces death, the realization comes that neither life nor death can be understood, except in Christ, and that death is birth into the fullness of life. There is a yearning to be liberated from the purely earthly body in order to enjoy the complete freedom that comes only in the resurrected life. This is reminiscent of the longing of Saint Paul "to be freed from this life and to be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23).

Mission

THE MISSION of the Servants is to minister to the "Used, Abused, and Utterly Screwed Up." Their work is summarized in a *Guidebook* entry that states:

> The Servants will always choose the way of serving the poor, the lonely, the despised, the outcast, and miserable and the misfit. The mission of the servants is to prove to the unloved that they are not abandoned, not finally left alone.
>
> Hence, the natural home of the Servants is strife, misfortune, crisis, the falling apart of things. The Society cherishes failure for it is in failure, in trouble, in the general breaking up of classes, stations, usual conditions, normal routines that human hearts are open to the light of God's mercy.[5]

This *Guidebook* entry is closely related to the description of the Christian mission given by Jesus in Mt. 25:31-46. Jesus spent his time with the poor, the unloved, the outcasts, and tried to make us understand that they are his special people and are, in fact, an incarnate extension of himself. Religious communities have always espoused a life of poverty, and many have dedicated themselves to serving the poor and outcast. The history of religious life shows that great needs, such as educating the poor, providing care for the sick, shelter for the homeless, and proclaiming the living word to those who haven't heard, have often prompted the founding of a religious community. The call to serve the poor still provides a sharp tool to enable religious communities to evaluate their mission, so that they may serve where they are most needed. The struggle to remain faithful to the ideal of poverty is one that has provided constant discussion, disagreement, and renewal, and Franciscan history bears witness to this. The statement also has a tone of Marxism because it looks toward the breaking up of class distinctions. Yet the Church has approved and continues to approve witness against those who use class, status, race, or economic control to oppress people or limit their freedom.

Although the notion of breaking up classes is closely associated with Marxism, the particular methods used by the Servants are much closer to the nonviolence of Gandhi. The Servants not only bear with evil, but are counselled to submit to it and to receive it into their own being, as did Jesus, because absorbing evil into goodness can destroy evil. This is explained in Recommendation 40. which states:

> When the treachery of the world seems unbearable and the lies of men prove more powerful than the force of love, then to the most treacherous submit thyself, and in the presence of themost mendacious, stand as Christ before Herod, saying nothing and inviting death that the foul enemy might be drowned in the blood of thine innocence. Thus for a time the Lie will be crushed, and even fools shall see their defeat.[6]

This method of service is extended by a *Guidebook* entry

[5]Ibid., p. 150.

[6]Ibid., pp. 331-32.

that says, "To distrust even a known enemy serves the kingdom of death." It is this principle that finally leads Willie as Pope to trust that he can be reconciled with those who hate him, and results in his death.

The Servants also take seriously their commitment to confound the worldly powers. One Servant, who was a pacifist, signed papers making him a member of four different armies. On another occasion some members of the Servants were brought before the "Congregation for Preserving the Purity of Doctrine" and asked to take an oath of allegiance and swear belief in traditional Church teachings. They willingly signed the oath, but only to show they considered such an act to be meaningless. The fact that the Servants appeared to be a religious community approved by the Church was a source of embarrassment that led them to be declared "canonically irregular."

The truth is that the Servants *are* irregular, unusual, even weird, but they were obviously meant to be that way so as to highlight the fact that many times following the gospel provokes the same reaction. There is an element of being a Christian and a religious that does classify us with Saint Paul, as fools for Christ. This doesn't mean that everything foolish is for Christ, because He is also Wisdom, and many times the Wisdom is understandable even though mysterious. But there are also times when we can't understand, so that we appear to be foolish, even to ourselves.

Conclusion

THE SERVANTS are hardly a model for religious communities, but their portrayal does stir up many of the fundamental questions. The characters and incidents of the novel are drawn in such a way that they are open to various interpretations, so that the questions about religious life can be as varied as the reader's experience. There is a quality to *The Last Western* that allows the religious to stand outside the most important questions, much as King David did when the prophet Nathan told him the story of the rich man taking the precious lamb of the poor man. When David in his indignation recognized the injustice of the act, Nathan said to him, "That man is you." Likewise in the events of the novel the reader can often see that those brothers and sisters of the Silent Servants "are us." Or it can be said, "That is a question our community should face," or "There is a risk I must take really to live the gospel." It is in raising the questions in this manner that the author of *The Last Western* gives his readers a deeper appreciation of religious life.

Conversion of the heart

TIMOTHY JAMES FLEMING, O.F.M. CONV.

AT ONE TIME, when his friars were exceptionally vehement in their arguments as to what constituted true evangelical poverty and the Franciscan ideal, Francis managed to slip away to a wooded area not far from the Portiuncula. He cherished such places of peacefulness where he could come into close communion with God, and he wished that more of his brothers would be able to appreciate opportunities like this to be in the presence of their Lord.

As he sat in the stillness, he pondered. It sometimes hurt him when he thought that the brothers viewed these ideals as mere concepts, rather than a natural, flowing lifestyle. After all, what was poverty if not the fleeing of the unencumbered soul to the bosom of God? What else could man want? What else could he possibly claim? Wasn't everything that man possessed merely on loan to him from God and his creation?

"If there is something I can claim for my own," Francis mused, "I have to find out. I have to know so that I will not be encumbered in my striving for union with God, and so that I can share this knowledge with my brothers."

"What can I claim?"

"Food? Or clothes? No, both of these are a generous gift to me from Mother Earth who produces them in her bounty, asks me to use them only as necessary to sustain my proper health and warmth, and will eventually reclaim through her natural processes of decay, so that she will be able to produce more for men yet to be born."

"Well, what about building, or money, or material goods? These too were fashioned by man from the resources of Mother Earth. They were on earth before we arrived and will be in the hands of other men when we pilgrims are called into other lands."

"Shall I pride myself, then, on my intellect and my talents? But I have none—other than those God has blessed me with in this life. And in due time I will have to give a full accounting for my respectful and proper use of this loan."

"What about my works of charity and love? Surely I ought

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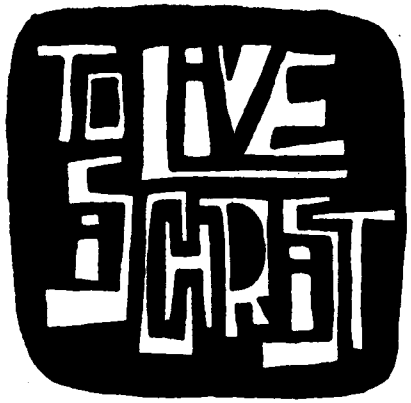

to get some credit, shouldn't I? Yes, credit is due me for choosing good rather than evil. But I mustn't forget that the opportunity for doing good, the impetus for doing good, and the grace needed to bring the act of good to fuition are all provided by God."

"Well, what is there that is really mine? There must be something that doesn't spring from the terrestrial domain of Mother Earth or fall under the heavenly guardianship of Brother Sun. There has to be an element I can really cling to and say: 'This is really mine. It wasn't given to me by God. I didn't take it from any of his created beings. I didn't even get it from my brothers. But I wanted it; I worked for it; I put my claim on it. It is totally and unquestionably mine!' "

And as he searched his heart, Francis discovered the only thing any man really possessed as his own. This very thing hindered him from fully possessing God. What he saw didn't take the form of a thirteenth-century royal banquet, or a knightly horse, a bag of gold coins, or even a degree from one of the great universities.

"No," Francis mused, "The only things that are totally mine and that I can claim full responsibility for are my sins. And as long as I selfishly cling to them, no matter how much I strip myself of externals, my heart will never be able to experience that emptiness which is necessary in order that I may be filled with the Love that is God. For without an initial conversion of the heart, a conversion of the senses is futile."

And so he ended a conversation in solitude. And as that sylvan scene became enveloped in a blanket of darkness, it seemed as though the emptiness of the woods were filled with the outpouring of a heart running over in love—the heart of a poor, simple man clothed in a coarse, grey tunic, whose whole being cried out in its abundance: "My God and my All."

The Liturgy of the Hours in Our Franciscan Life Today

BERARD DOERGER, O.F.M.

WE CONCLUDE our discussion of the Liturgy of the Hours this month with some considerations regarding rubrics, the obligation of reciting the Hours, and communal recitation.

VI. Some Rubrics and Options in the Liturgy of the Hours

I THINK most of our friars are fairly well acquainted now with the basic structure of the revised Liturgy of the Hours. Far from intending to restate here all the rubrics pertaining to the Hours as contained in the General Instruction, I would like to present only some of them which do not seem to be too generally known—or at least to be widely observed or used.

The Introduction to the Whole Office

The Invitatory, "Lord, open my lips," etc., and the 94th Psalm or its substitute should begin Lauds or the Office of Readings, whichever is said first in the day.[1] The Invitatory Psalm *may*, however, be omitted if Lauds is the first Hour said (§35). My personal opinion is that it generally should be omitted, especially when the opening hymn is of an invitatory character (e.g., "Sion Sing," or "All You Nations"); otherwise we end up with much repetition of ideas and an unbalanced invitatory section of the Hour.

Antiphons

The antiphons, which are meant to assist in praying the psalms and turning them into Christian prayer (§§110 & 113), are said at the beginning of each psalm and *may be repeated after*

[1]The General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours, §35; all section numbers in text refer to this document, as published in the booklet with commentary by A.-M. Roguet, O.P. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1971).

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the psalm (§123). The antiphon may also at times be repeated *after each verse* of the psalm, especially if it is *sung* in the vernacular (§125).

The *phrases from the New Testament or Fathers* that are found before each psalm may be used *in place of* the antiphons, if desired (§114).

If the antiphon is repeated, it comes *before* the period of silence and the psalm-prayer, at least as §202 implies, and not after the psalm-prayer as our English printing of the Liturgy of the Hours indicates.

Psalm Prayers

The psalm prayers, which "sum up the aspirations and emotions of those saying the psalms and interpret them in a Christian way" (§112) are *optional.* When they are used, they follow a short silence that is observed after the psalm has been completed (§112).

Readings

A *longer Scripture reading* may be chosen at the Hours of Lauds and Vespers. This longer reading may be taken from the Office of Readings or from the passage read at Mass, and especially from biblical texts left unread for various reasons. Other more suitable readings may also be chosen on occasion (§46).

Those who act as readers should *stand in a suitable place* for the readings (§259).

In the Office of Readings, there is a twofold arrangement. The first is a *one-year cycle* that is found in our present Liturgy of the Hours volumes. The second arrangement, for optional use, is a *two-year cycle* found in a "supplement" (§145). This "supplement" is not found in our present English publication of the Liturgy of the Hours, but it can be found in the back of the *Prayer of Christians* (pp. 1653ff.). The *Christian Readings* series published by the Catholic Book Company as a supplement to *The Prayer of Christians* followed this two-year cycle. This *Christian Readings* series with its biblical and other readings can still be followed in the Office of Readings, as it seems to fulfill all the requirements of §§161-62 of the General Instruction.

A brief homily may be added to the readings at Lauds and Vespers (§47).

Responsories

The responsory after the reading, which is "a kind of acclamation" and allows "the word of God to penetrate more deeply into the mind and heart" (§202), is *optional* (§49).

The Benedictus and Magnificat Canticles

These canticles should be accorded the same solemnity and dignity that is given for the hearing of the Gospel: i.e., *stand* (§138). Also, the sign of the cross is made at the beginning of these canticles (§266).

The Invocations and Intercessions at Lauds and Vespers

There are two ways of saying these prayers: (a) the priest or leader says both parts of the intention and the community adds the invariable response printed in italics after the introduction (or there may be a silent pause); or (b) the leader says only the first part of the intention and the community says the second part— in this latter case the invariable response is not used at all (§193).

It is permissible to add special intentions during these prayers (§188).

The Presider or President of the Hours

A priest or deacon, if present, should normally preside at the celebration of the Hours (§254).

The one who presides should, however, do only those things which the liturgical norms require of him (§253). That is, he should begin the Office with the introductory verse, introduce the Lord's Prayer, say the concluding prayer, and greet, bless, and dismiss the people (§256). Someone else should begin the hymns, recite the antiphons, etc.

If there is no priest or deacon present, the person who presides is only one among equals; he does not enter the sanctuary or greet and bless the people (§258). The principle involved here is that enunciated in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal: "Everyone in the eucharistic assembly has the right and duty to take his own part according to the diversity of orders and functions. In exercising his function, everyone, whether minister or layman, should do that and only that which belongs to him, so that in the liturgy the Church may be seen in its variety of orders and ministries" (§58).

Memorials

On days when memorials are celebrated, either obligatory or optional, the same rubrics hold, namely:

a. The psalms and antiphons are from the current weekday, *unless* proper antiphons are indicated in the Proper (§235).

b. If any other parts of the Office (Invitatory, antiphon, hymn, readings, etc.) are proper for any of the Hours, these parts should be used. If these parts are not proper, then these parts may be taken *either* from the current weekday *or* from the Common (§235). This choice is up to the leader of the Office, if it is said in common. If the choice is for taking all these parts from the weekday, then the only prayer pertaining to the memorial would be the concluding "oration" or

prayer. This latter procedure is often the less complicated one to follow.

c. At the Middle Hour on memorials, *everything,* including the final oration, is from the weekday (§235).

Combining the Hours with Mass

The Hours of Lauds and Vespers and the Middle Hour may be combined with the Mass; cf. §§94-97 for details and options. This combination should be done, however, only "in special cases, if the circumstances require it" (§93). The reason seems to me to be that such a combination exaggerates the length of the liturgy of the Word section of the Mass in proportion to that of the Eucharist; it also diminishes the special characteristic of the particular Hour being celebrated.

VII. Obligation of Praying the Liturgy of the Hours

IN HIS Commentary on the Liturgy of the Hours, Father Roguet gives an excellent treatment, I believe, of the concepts of obligation and freedom and how they apply to the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours.[2] One of the things he points out is that in the past the most marked characteristic of the "breviary" was that it was *obligatory*—that to miss a single "Little Hour" or its equivalent was considered by moralists to constitute an objectively serious sin.

This insistence on obligation, says Father Roguet, let to a stress on the *quantity* of prayer (a daily dose that had to be gotten in each day) and frequently caused a nagging worry of "getting the Office in," which destroyed any joy in saying it. Such stress on the quantity often led also to a neglect of the *quality* of prayer, and, since there was no "obligation"—apart from common sense—to say the Hours at the appropriate times, they were frequently lumped together, making it rather difficult to say them intelligently and with devotion.

"Happily," Father Roguet continues,

> we do not find this "mentality of slavery" in the new Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours. Obligation is mentioned but in a discreet way and as the corollary of a whole doctrine of the prayer of the Church.... Instead of being presented in terms of compulsion as if it emanated from an arbitrary and overriding law, the obligation is expressed in terms of an essential need.

This "obligation in terms of an essential need" is spelled out along these lines by the General Instruction:

a. The public and communal prayer of the people of God is rightly considered among the *first duties* of the Church (§1). Jesus has commanded us to pray as he did himself (§5).

b. This obligation to pray pertains to the *entire Body of Christ*, to the whole people made up of the baptized (§7).

c. Yet, this example and command of the Lord and his apostles to persevere in continuous prayer "are *not to be considered a mere legal rule. Prayer expresses the very essence of the Church as community*" (§9).

d. If this prayer is distributed over certain Hours of the day, it is in order to obey as far as possible the command of Jesus to "pray without ceasing" (§§10-11).

e. The obligation to pray is more especially the role of those who by their ordination, their mission, or their vows, are more directly and personally consecrated to the good of the whole Church (§§28-31). "The Church deputes them to the Liturgy of the Hours in order that at least through them the duty of the whole community may be constantly fulfilled" (§28).

The following specific points are then made by the General Instruction:

a. The obligation is *not just* to say an undifferentiated *block of prayers*. "They are to recite the whole sequence of Hours each day, *preserving as far as possible the genuine relationship of the Hours to the time of Day*" (§29).

b. All the Hours do not have the same importance and hence the same obligation. The Hours of *Lauds and Vespers* are the two hinge Hours of the Office and are the most important. These Hours *should not be omitted,* "unless for a serious reason" (§29).

c. The *Office of Readings* is above all "the liturgical celebration of the Word of God," and because it makes us "more perfect disciples of the Lord and wins us a deeper knowledge of the unfathomable riches of Christ" it *should be carried out "faithfully"* (§29).

d. That the day may be *completely* sanctified, we should *"desire* to recite the *Middle Hour* and *Compline"* (§29).

I would conclude this section by emphasizing again that the obligation of reciting the Liturgy of the Hours is not a mere legal

[2]Roguet, commentary, ibid., pp. 133-37.

obligation or reciting a certain quantity of prayers but an obligation that springs from our vocation as baptized members of the Body of Christ and as professed members of the Order of Saint Francis. It is an obligation to *genuine interior* prayer in which we unite our minds and hearts to God and to a form of prayer that approaches continuous prayer as we sanctify the whole course of day and night through the various Hours. Francis and our Plan for Franciscan living make the same demands.

VIII. Communal Recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours

WE HAVE noted earlier that Francis considered the Divine Office as *the* community prayer of his brotherhood and a prayer that, when said in common, expressed and fostered this brotherhood. Our General Constitutions and the Minister General in his letter of April 20, 1975, reiterate this insight of Saint Francis and urge that the Liturgy of the Hours "should be celebrated by the friars together."

The reasons for celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours in common are not, however, confined to our Franciscan values and tradition and legislation. The Liturgy of the Hours of its nature is a community prayer and a communal prayer. It is a community prayer in as far as "it pertains to the whole Church" and in as far as "it manifests the Church and has an effect upon it" (§20). It is a communal prayer (said with others, in common) in as far as its origin is in the communal prayer of the early Church when the community of the faithful gathered together in prayer "with several women, including Mary the Mother of Jesus, and with his brothers" (Acts 1:14—§1).

Father Roguet traces the historical reasons that led to the Divine Office being celebrated more often in private than in common (p. 87). He also points out that the principle of private celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours has never been considered as normal by the Church, and still less as ideal. By reciting his Office privately, the priest or religious is making up for the fact that he is not able to celebrate it in common.

Thus it is not surprising that we find the General Instruction speaking frequently of the communal nature of the Liturgy of the Hours and of the celebration of that Liturgy in common (cf. §§1, 9, 20-27, 33). The two ideas of community and communal prayer are, of course, closely related: "Celebration in common shows more clearly the ecclesial (community) nature of the Liturgy of the Hours" (§33).

For many centuries the communal prayer of the Church was considered as a prayer belonging to clerics in sacred orders or to religious who were specifically deputed for the task of praying it. In the General Instruction for the Revised Liturgy of the Hours there is a new and insistent emphasis that the Liturgy of the Hours is the public and communal prayer of the *whole* people of God. In this respect, there is a return to the custom of the early years of the Church when the whole community of the faithful gathered together for prayer.

Besides the theological foundations that support this concept of the Liturgy of the Hours as the communal prayer of the whole Church (cf. Section II of this article, in the January issue), the Instruction recommends repeatedly the participation of the laity in this public prayer of the Church. In §20, it recommends that the Chapter of Canons say the Liturgy of the Hours "with the participation of the people."

Pastors are encouraged in §§22 and 23 to celebrate the more important Hours in common at their parishes. Communities of religious are urged to celebrate the Hours with the people (§26). (Our General Constitutions reiterate this in Article 16.) And any groups of the laity gathered together for any reason are encouraged to celebrate part of the Hours together (§27). Even families in their homes are mentioned as fit sanctuaries for the celebration of certain parts of the Liturgy of the Hours (§27). "As often as the communal celebration may take place with the presence and active participation of the faithful," the Instruction insists in §33, this *is to be preferred* "to individual and quasi-private celebration."

Were our Franciscan communities and parished to take the lead in thus making the Liturgy of the Hours a truly communal prayer of the whole people of God, then surely Francis, the "vir catholicus et totus apostolicus" would be proud of us!

We close our study on the Liturgy of the Hours in our Franciscan life with the words of Pope Paul in his Letter promulgating that revised Liturgy:

> May the praise of God reecho in the Church of our day with greater grandeur and beauty by means of the new Liturgy of the Hours . . . . May it join the praise sung by saints and angels in the court of heaven. May it go from strength to strength in the days of this earthly exile and soon attain the fullness of praise which will be given throughout eternity "to the One who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb" [Rev. 5:13].

As a Mother, Comfort Us

Praise to you, my God,
  First Person of the Trinity,
You allow us to call you Father.

Praise to you, my God,
  Only Son of the Father,
You allow us to call you Brother.

Praise to you, my God,
  Spirit of the Father and the Son.
What shall we call you?

To a Spirit we cannot speak;
  You are Wisdom—you are Love—
But you are Person above all.

You are Wisdom
  Who built herself a house;
Who set her table and mixed her wine (Prov. 9:1-2).

You are Wisdom overshadowing a woman
  To be the home of the Son
Who would fill the thirsty with new wine.

You have come to show your Wisdom
  Through a woman, mothering the Son—
Mary has become your image.

Come, O Wisdom:
  Build your home within us
To dispense the wine of your Love.

Through you we have been born again.
  As a mother comforts her child
You will comfort us (Is. 66:13).

Through you we have been cleansed of sin;
  Clothed with dignity,
And returned to the Father.

Help us to understand your ways
  So far removed from our pettiness.
Counsel our doubting minds
  Which seek security in idols.

Strengthen our weak wills
  To know and follow your guidance;
To be your true children,
  Holy and pleasing in your sight.

Praise to you, my God—
  Father and Son.
Praise to you, my God—
  Holy, eternal Spirit—
Allow us to call you Mother.

Sister Barbara Marie, O.S.F.

Francis' Understanding of Penance

SISTER MARY MCCARRICK, O.S.F.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI was a man of God, a mystic. He was taken up by the love of God, and he lived his life in response to God's love. As a mystic, he had an experience of God that was in one sense totally personal and unique; but Francis was also a man of the twelfth century, much like other men of his time.

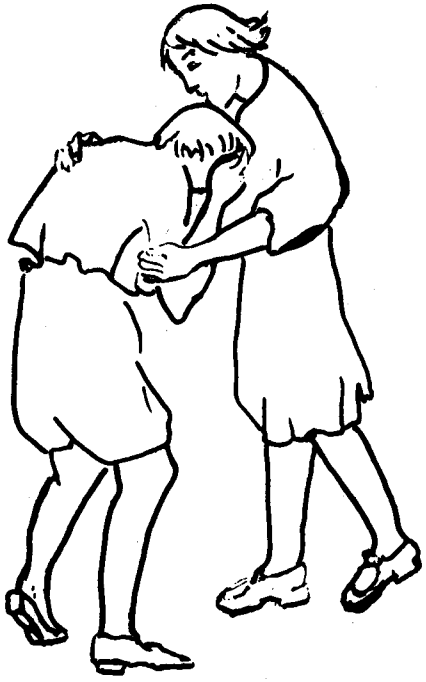
In recent years, Franciscan scholars have tried to get in touch with Francis, the medieval man, by using such disciplines as economics, sociology and psychology to understand something of the Weltanschauung of twelfth and thirteenth century Italy. Affirming the belief that we will understand more of Francis' mind as we understand more of his world view, this paper employs some tools of modern linguistics to investigate Francis' linguistic world-view as it is expressed in his use of the word "poenitentia" (penance). By considering the context of "poenitentia," the verbs with which it is used, and the spatial emphasis of the medieval Latin vocabulary, the paper concludes that in the medieval mind—in Francis' mind—penance is a physical as well as a spiritual reality.

The Context of the Word "Poenitentia"

OF THE eighteen times the word "poenitentia" appears in Francis' *opuscula*, eight times it refers to the practice of sacramental or extra-sacramental confession of sins, as when Francis, giving instructions on the confessions of women, says that the friar priest should allow the absolved woman to "do penance where she wishes" (1 Rule, 12). In considering confession in the lives of the brothers, Francis exhorts the sinner to "do penance for his sins" (1 Rule, 13) and permits the brothers to confess to one another if no priest is available (1 Rule, 20). In other places Francis also considers the situation of brothers confessing within the fraternity, dealing with confession to brothers who are not ordained and do not have "authority to impose a penance" (Letter to a Minister Provincial) and admonishing those who are ordained to "impose penance with mercy" (2 Rule, 7). It is self-evident that in each of the above cases the word "poenitentia" means either the act of confessing sins or the act of performing penances imposed by a confessor, both obviously physical realities.

In two other places (Letter to All Custodes and Letter to All the Faithful), Francis sees "poenitentia" as preparation for the reception of the Eucharist. Perhaps this would indicate that sacramental penance is meant here, also.

Another clear indication of the physical nature of penance is found in the "Letter to All the Faithful." After proposing the importance of penance and the Eucharist, Francis goes on to exhort the faithful to "perform worthy fruits of penance," which include loving one's neighbor, judging charitably, acting humbly, giving alms, fasting, avoiding sin and vice, and visiting churches, since "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; this is what we have all promised God." In this letter it is evident that Francis does not conceive of a change of heart except in conjunction with the concrete actions that flow from and support this attitude of heart. "Poenitentia" as used here clearly has a physical component.



The Linguistic Relativity Theory and Vocabulary

THE APPLICATION of the linguistic relativity theory to the verb forms used with "poenitentia" further indicates the physical dimension of the word. This theory holds that each language or language family has an inherently unique world view, and the language which one speaks not only flows from this world view but in some way determines it. This hypothesis tells us that we say what

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we mean and mean what we say in a very radical way.

For example, the word "poenitentia" is used with the verbs meaning "to make," "to do," "to enjoin," and "to accept" (*agere, facere, iniungere, acci pere*) The theory would hold that it is no coincidence that penance can be "made," "imposed," "done," and "accepted"—that on the contrary the use of these verbs indicates that the writer does and is indeed linguistically bound to conceive of penance as a physical reality.

The Linguistic Relativity Theory and the Lexical and Grammatical Pattern of Medieval Latin

IN APPLYING the linguistic relativity theory to the general lexical and grammatical patterns of medieval Latin, we can further conclude that it would be difficult under any circumstances to conceive of any spiritual reality without reference to a physical reality since medieval Latin is a spatial language—i.e., a language which conceives of abstractions in reference to the concrete. The more a language relies on metaphorical reference to the concrete to explain a non-physical reality, the more it is classified as a spatial language. In Latin, for instance, the word "educo" (educate) is a metaphorical physical reference, "lead out." A non-spatial language, on the other hand, can conceive of ideas without any reference to the physical world.

If we relate this to Francis' understanding of "poenitentia," we see that his language does not readily allow him to conceive of a change of feeling toward God without a physical dimension. Bound as he is by the limits of his language, Francis cannot speak of the spiritual without reference to the physical; so he cannot think of the spiritual as independent of the physical.

"Poenitentia's" Linguistic Similarity to "šûb"

SINCE Francis is considered a truly biblical man, it is interesting to take a little time aside to note that his concept of "poenitentia" is linguistically linked with the Old Testament Hebrew word for penance, "šûb," rather than the Septuagint translation, "metanoia." While Cajetan Esser, O.F.M., equates Francis' notion of penance with the biblical word "metanoia" in his *Origins of the Franciscan Order,* a linguistic look at the situation would indicate that this similarity must be far from exact, since Old Testament Greek is a highly non-spatial language. "Metanoia" itself is an example of the non-spatial character of Old Testament Greek. It translates most nearly to the English phrase, "change of mind," and, while it can be used in context with actions, in itself it expresses a change of thought, feeling, or opinion that is without a physical component.

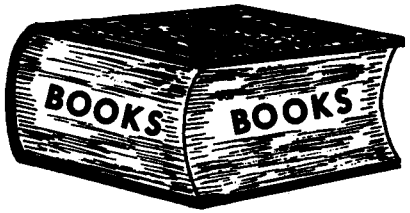
A word that comes closer to Francis' "poenitentia" is the Old Testament Hebrew word for penance, "šûb," which means "turn back" and is used most often in a non-religious context, as when a person leaving another person or place turns around and heads back toward the place of origin. The word is used, most commonly in the prophets, to indicate the turning of a man toward God and the change of disposition inherent in such an action. Old Testament Hebrew was an overwhelmingly spatial language, and "šûb" itself embodies that spatial character since it conceives of a change of disposition in terms of the physical reality of turning around. According to the linguistic relativity theory, then, Francis is bound to understand penance in a way that is closer to the Old Testament Hebrew than the mindset of the Septuagint because of the relative spatial and non-spatial qualities of the languages involved.

The Value of Such a Study

WHILE THE foregoing study sheds only a little light on a single word in Francis' writings, it may also be of some value to others in suggesting that the area of linguistics might offer many insights into Francis' Weltanschauung.

Further, it can serve to remind us of the danger of equating the mindset of any one period of history with that of any other era. We must allow Francis to be a man of his time and enter respectfully into his reality if we are to understand his words.

Personally, this serves to remind me of the truth of Jesus' words, "By their fruits you shall know them" (Mt. 12:33). If I live a life of penance it will be evident in what I do as well as what I think and say. Jesus' call to repentance, like Francis' call to "do penance" (*facere poenitentiam*), is a challenge to change not just my ideas but my life.



The Great Mysteries: An Essential Catechism. By Andrew M. Greeley. New York: Seabury Press, 1976. Pp. xx-163. Cloth, $8.95.

Reviewed by Father Thomas J. Burns, O.F.M., College Chaplain at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.

Ever since Bishop John Neumann introduced his *Kleiner Katechismus* to the faithful of his Baltimore parish in the early 1840's, the search for the ideal American Catholic catechism has led theologians, catechists, and particularly members of the hierarchy on a merry chase that is accelerating madly in the post-Vatican II Church. Father Greeley's *The Great Mysteries* may not satisfy the hierarchy, but it may certainly excite the catechists in its attempt to explain the truths of the Faith to those immersed in the American cultural experience.

The strength of this work, and it is a substantial strength, is the author's explanation of key Church doctrines in a palatable fashion for an audience that is more phenomenally oriented than historically oriented. The young semi-Christian critic who has repudiated original sin as a meaningful category in modern thought might be more apt to accept Father Greeley's patient explanation that original sin is "the tendency [that] keeps humankind from being all that it can be" (p. 62). The believer who questions the excesses of Marian piety might be assuaged by Greeley's contention that Mary was "God's self-revelation through femininity in its perfection" (p. 119). The groping contemporary who repudiates the hypocrisy of the man in the pew might find personal challenge in Greeley's observation that the Eucharist is not "the performance of certain actions but rather a style of performing all actions, a style of generous, celebrating joy" (p. 85). In an imaginative and pastorally motivated effort, the Chicago priest-sociologist has attempted to explain traditional credal formulations in terms of human experience, by demonstrating that the verbal kerygma of the Gospel is a reality that can be sensed, experienced, revelled in to the great advantage of mankind.

The premise of this work is commendable, but there are at least three serious criticisms of the presentation and the ideology underlying the work.

1. *Literary style.* There is an inexcusable amount of repetition that wears heavily upon the reader. It is no exaggeration to say that the first three pages of each chapter are nothing more than lists of generalized assertions about the human situation, a pattern that is followed to the very last chapter. One of the oft-repeated raps against Father Greeley has been his tendency to take a little Irish stew and make it go a long way, and this book does little to rebut such a reputation. Moreover, the proposition of the entire book is clearly defined by the third chapter, which leads one to suspect that what might have been a good idea for an essay was not sufficient to carry through twelve chapters to the bitter end.

2. *Methodology.* While Father Greeley's effort to find meaning in aged formulations is commendable, his tendency to *create* meaning is questionable. No one would argue, for example, that the traditional question, "Why did God make me?" can be discussed in different terminology by asking, "Is there any purpose in my life?" However, perhaps to fill out the book, Greeley sometimes connects sociological observations with doctrinal formulations in a subjective, arbitrary way. The most glaring example is in chapter ten, where Greeley tackles the question, "Is Mary the Mother of God?" by considering the question, "Can we find our sexual identity?" To do justice to Greeley, one must admit that his treatment of Mary is imaginative and thought-provoking (as well as a prelude to another book, *The Mary Myth*), but the omission of any historical development of Marian cult and doctrine raises serious questions about the book's claim to be a catechism—a claim that is clearly stated on the front cover.

3. *A Catechism?* This claim of catechetical status raises the third serious criticism: Is *The Great Mysteries* in fact a catechism? This is a question which is actually braoder than the scope of either this review or Greeley's work, and it would be grossly unfair to criticize the sociologist when a professional norm for one-volume catechisms has never been universally proposed or discussed. However, assuming that the function of a catechism is to introduce or reinforce the essence of the Christian Catholic Faith (as far as this is possible in the printed medium), this reviewer would propose that any catechism be an inter-disciplinary presentation of the kerygma (the saving history of Jesus Christ) and its understanding and formulation through the history of the Church. *The Great Mysteries* seems to confuse exposition (catechetics) with explanation (apologetics), putting more emphasis on the latter. Put another way, Father Greeley's presentation is perhaps lacking as an outline of essential developments, but it is more than adequate as as interpretation of those developments for the discerning modern reader. The book would be an excellent companion to either a bread-and-butter catechism or (preferably) personal instruction in the story of salvation history and Christian community. To ask this work to stand on its own two feet as a self-contained summary of the essential Christian faith might be to impose on it too stringent a demand.

The Power to Heal. By Francis MacNutt, O.P. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 254. Paper, $3.95.

Reviewed by Father John Lazanski, O.F.M., Vice-Rector, St. Anthony's Shrine, Boston, a member of the Association of Christian Therapists.

This book presents the author's probings, positions, pragmatic perceptions, practices, and problems in exercising the power of prayer for healing in the name of Jesus. In his search to make sense of the harsh fact that people are burdened by real evil which is not lifted by teaching, preaching, and will-power, the author finally found someone who had a strong faith that Jesus Christ would heal people if we asked. He found this simple concept congruent with the literal interpretation of Gospel passages that speak about Jesus healing crowds and with elements in Christian tradition that teach original sin is very real, we are all wounded, and man though basically good still has evil within and outside himself that is beyond his own power to overcome. The Gospel addresses this human situation in the person of Jesus the Healer. Jesus freed people not only from sin, but also from bodily sickness. And the Gospel speaks of this power to free and heal as being passed on to the Church. Jesus never put a time-tag on this commission. "He gave them power and authority over all devils and to cure diseases, and he sent out to proclaim . . . and to heal" (Lk. 9:1-2).. The seventy-two came back rejoicing at healings and exorcisms: what they had seen was the power to heal and to tread underfoot the whole power of the enemy (Lk. 10:17-24). Experience convinces. The book discloses the author's rediscovery and experience of impressive healings by the power of Jesus Christ released through prayer in the past eight years.

The most important lesson learned was that people are not completely healed by prayer, but they are improved. Healing is a process, requiring time, more or less power and authority in the healer, which results in differing degrees of healing. Deep or long-seated pathologies require soaking prayer, persistent, repeated prayers, not just one. If some healing is started, further prayer leads to more healing. Discernment is needed here to find out what God is doing. And higher levels of healing do not necessarily mean the sick will be completely healed. Identifiable levels of physical healing include (a) cessation of pain, (b) removal of the side-effects of treatment, (c) stabilization of sickness without full healing, (d) return of physical function without healing of illness, (e) true bodily healing. Knowledge of these levels frees the healer from intellectualism and fundamentalism and releases him to be part of the mystery of God's healing love.

Healings also differ in the extent to which they demonstrate clearly or less visibly the supernatural intervention of God. The author lists these levels of divine activity in physical healings: (a) purely natural forces are released in prayer, by the power of suggestion, Christian love, or the laying on of hands, (b) through spiritual and emotional healing one releases physical healing because of the close interrelation of body, mind, and spirit, (c) the natural recuperative forces of the body are speeded up by prayer—the most common type of healing, (d) healing is accomplished through natural forces, but in a manner out of the ordinary, (e) praeternatural forces or evil spirits are involved, and (f) the creative act of God, or a miracle in the strict sense, takes place—the rarest type of healing.

Although every Christian has a potential for healing, there are persons with the special gift of healing, which is developed through learning and experience and openness to being used by God. And with a candor that is pleasingly disarming and cultivatingly human, the author discloses the struggles with the shame of negative, as well as the glory of the positive reactions, the seductive near truths of false spirituality, guilt and compassion encountered in the healing ministry; and he recounts his coming to terms with these issues.

He grapples with the complex mystery of sickness and suffering and the limitations of three positions in response to these themes, and he attempts a solution by calling on Christians *to change their attitude* about sickness from seeing it generally as God's will—their share of the cross to be endured and embraced as *a blessing sent by God*—to seeing that *God, in general, wants to heal sickness*, either through medicine or through prayer, because *it is a curse* upon our fallen world. Far from being a blessing, at least ordinarily, it is ultimately caused by forces of evil, partly cured in this life through the resurrected Jesus, and partly only after death.

The final chapters dealt with the need for larger healing services, simply because there are simply too many people needing healing to minister to them all, one by one—and also with the rather frequent phenomenon of "slaying in the Spirit" or, preferably, "resting in the Spirit," where people fall down "under the power." The occurrences of this phenomenon are mentioned, as are its benefits and the need to maintain an awareness of the importance of its spiritual purpose.

The appendices especially apply to healers, admonishing them to be mindful of the vitally important difference between *logos* (the word of God as objective, general principle), and *rayma* (the word of God addressed to us to act upon)—as also of the constant need to seek out God's guidance before proclaiming His will in regard to healing, so as to avoid anguish in the sick and their relatives. Blessings for oil (non-sacramental) and for water for the sick are included. For Catholics belief in healing is still weak, and it is really important that priests do more to build up both their own faith and that of the people.

The Power to Heal promises to be (1) to healers, a balanced and reliable resource, (2) to priests and ministers, a challenge to rediscover and appropriate their healing powers, and (3) to the faithful, a dream coming true, that the Church has the real power to heal their wounds, not only in spirit, but also in mind and in body.

The Spirit of God in Christian Life. Edited by Edward Malatesta, S.J. New York: Paulist Deus Books, 1977. Pp. v-149. Paper, $1.95.

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

In recent years, Catholic theologians, conscious of the free workings of the Holy Spirit in other channels of the Church than the hierarchy, have presented scholarly essays on the theological developments on the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church. It is therefore not surprising that Francis Sullivan, S.J., and some of his colleagues as the Institute of Spirituality of the Gregorian University in Rome should present a series of essays on the and role of the Holy Spirit among Christians. These essays, based largely upon St. Paul's letters, were contributed by Barnabas Ahern, C.P., Francis Sullivan, S.J., Robert Faricy, S.J., and Antonio Queralt, S.J., and edited by Edward Malatesta, S.J., under the title, *The Spirit of God in Christian Life.*

Those Catholic charismatics who are familiar with Francis Sullivan's two brochures from the Gregorian University Press, "The Pentecostal Movement" (1972) and "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" (1974), will relish this scholarly treatment of glossolalia. This essay, "Speaking in Tongues in the New Testament and in the Modern Charismatic Renewal," is both interesting and informative. On p. 26, Fr. Sullivan srites, "The question, therefore, comes down to this: is modern glossolalia really the same phenomenon as Corinthian glossolalia? . . . What I propose to do is to compare what St. Paul says about speaking in tongues with what modern tongue-speakers are experiencing." He seems to conclude that neither St. Paul nor modern tongue-speakers consider these gifts as primarily the gift of speaking unlearned foreign languages. He maintains that praying in tongues is a gift for use primarily in private prayer. Recently Fr. Sullivan was a member of the team that addressed the first National Conference for Priest Charismatics in Dublin, Ireland. This essay would be a good introduction to this important scholar in the charismatic renewal movement.

The book is by no means directed toward charismatics exclusively. It will interest the many Christians looking for serious theological thinking on the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in their lives. These essays, "The Law of the Spirit of Holiness," "Speaking in Tongues in the New Testament and in Modern Charismatic Renewal," "Nature, Social Sin, and the Spirit," and "Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit," make difficult reading but give a rich reward of insight into the role of the Holy Spirit according to some present day theological thinkers. The last essay especially gives new insights into "what revelation shows us of the various connections between the action of Christ and his Spirit."

One of the great values of a book of this kind is that it highlights the fact that interest in the workings of the Holy Spirit in our times is not for the spiritual "elite," but is the concern of serious scholarship in various fields of theology in important university centers throughout the Christian world.

BOOKS RECEIVED

George Augustin, S.M., et al., *Gospel Poverty: Essays in Biblical Theology.* Trans. by Michael D. Guinan, O.F.M.; Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. xvii-150. Cloth $6.95.

Habig, Marion A., O.F.M., *The Franciscan Crown.* Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. 52. Cloth, $1.75.

Lacomara, Aelred, C.P., ed., *The Language of the Cross.* Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. vii-149. Cloth, $5.95.

Lynch, Flann, O.F.M.Cap., *Come, Take up Your Cross: The Practical Responsibilities of Christians Today.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 95. Paper, $2.95.

My God and My All (A Comprehensive Book of Prayers). Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, rev. ed., 1976. Pp. 288. Leatherette, $2.95.

Pesch, Otto, *Questions and Answers: A Shorter Catholic Catechism.* Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. 89. Paper, $2.95.

Wright, John Cardinal, *Words in Pain: Meditations on the Last Words of Jesus.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 79. Paper, $2.95.

Note: We are pleased to report receipt also of paperback editions of the following books from Consortium Books, Box 9001, Wilmington, NC 28401. They are uniformly priced at $4.95 each.

Bowman, Leonard, *The Importance of Being Sick: A Christian Reflection* (reviewed Feb., 1977, p. 63).

Fox, Matthew, *Whee! We, Wee: All the Way Home—A Guide to the New Sensual Spirituality* (reviewed July-August, 1977, p. 246).

Grollenberg, Lucas, and John E. Steely, *Bible Study for the 21st Century* (reviewed April, 1977, p. 123).

Satge, John de—, *Down to Earth: The New Protestant Vision of the Virgin Mary* (listed February, 1977; to be reviewed in the future).

BOOKS RECEIVED

Delaney, John J., ed., *Saints for All Seasons*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978. Pp. x-205. Cloth, $7.95.

Francis, Mother Mary, P.C.C. *Variations on a Theme*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. viii-100. Cloth, $5.00.

Hart, Patrick, O.C.S.O., ed. *The Monastic Journey*. Kansas City, MO: Sheed Andrews & McMeel, 1977. Pp. xi-187, incl. bibliography. Cloth, $8.95.

Merton, Thomas, *The Collected Poems of Thomas Merton*. New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1977. Pp. viii-1046, including Index. Cloth, $37.50.

Moorman, John R. H., *Richest of Poor Men: The Spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. 110. Paper, $2.95.

O'Flaherty, V.M., *The Grace of Old Age*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. 64. Paper, $1.95.

O'Reilly, Sean, *Our Name Is Peter*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. xii-144. Cloth, $5.95.

Schomp, Gerald, *Parent/Child/God: Bringing You Closer Together*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. iv-185. Paper, $2.75.

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.

the CORD

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A REVIEW EDITORIAL

Richest of Poor Men

READERS familiar with Bishop Moorman's monumental *History of the Franciscan Order* (a 641-page work of impeccable scholarship that traces the Order's development until 1517, published in 1968 by the Oxford University Press) will hardly be surprised by the competence he brings to the writing of this modest little distillation of Franciscan spirituality. With unerring accuracy and a sure grasp of his material, as also with masterful choice of data and elegance of style, the author gives us a truly invaluable addition to the corpus of popular Franciscana.

The book begins with a deft portrayal of Francis as a man "of two worlds." So evident was the presence of the "other world" in Francis' demeanor, that he was actually at times a fearsome person—wholly uncompromising and adamant about the ideal to which he had been called.

The book's longest chapter is its second, which delineates Francis' relationship to God in a most succinct and systematic way. First, Francis saw the Father as the creative Source of all, deserving especially of adoration and worship. He saw the Son as teacher and model, in particular of poverty and obedience. (Bishop Moorman covers the saint's Marian devotion, quite appropriately, in this section of the chapter.) And The Spirit was in turn, to Francis, the personification of the intratrinitarian Love, the interpreter, advocate, and comforter making possible and attractive the journey through the Son to the Father.

Thirdly, the author deals with Francis' attitude toward the Church—and here again he is admirably systematic, covering first the saint's humble submissiveness in contrast to the Cathari and Waldenses, then his respect for priests and church buildings, then his devotion to the Bible, and finally his love for the Eucharist.

In a chapter entitled "The Four Foundations," Bishop Moorman shows forcefully how for Francis the above beliefs and devotions implied a practical response in daily life. Evincing the same economical orderliness as in the preceding chapters, he divides his considerations on that

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Richest of Poor Men: The Spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi. By John R. H. Moorman. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. 110. Paper, $2.95.

practical response into four headings: humility (not just an attitude, but one with very concrete applications—working, begging, and tending the lepers); simplicity (and here the author deals well with the tension created by the desire and need felt by the friars for formal education); prayer (meaning both the divine Office, with regard to which Francis later relaxed his initial rigor, and contemplative prayer, which the saints preferred to the recitation of set formulas); and poverty (seen as positive in its real-life context, something to be *enjoyed*), with regard to which Francis was the most realistic of romantics.

The final chapter is on "Obedience and Joy." For Francis, obedience was what held the whole structure of his life together—the safeguard of all the other ideals, against subjectivist deformity. And his joy was profound and radiant, not jocular or frivolous.

There is, in truth, much more of Francis and the early sources, especially Bonaventure and Celano, than of Bishop Moorman in this book. The author's own contribution is nonetheless superb, both in his organization of the material and in his summation and deft interpretation of the lengthy quotations and anecdotes. This popular presentation may not add very much if any *information* on Francis for readers steeped in the saint's life and teachings; but it will surely serve them well for reflective meditation. And it would be difficult to think of any other systematic presentation of Franciscan spirituality that would be as complete or as attractively written as this one, with which to introduce the beginner to Francis' ideal.

Fr. Michael D. Meilach, ofm

I leant two playing cards,
One against the other,
To build a card house.

I sang,
Another sang in harmony,
And our melodies leant one against the other.

A friend had a sorrow,
And I leant my sorrow against it—
Thus Jesus meets Mary.

SISTER MARY VICTORIA, F.M.D.M.

Archbishop Lefebvre and the Franciscan Charism

PATRICK MCCLOSKEY, O.F.M.

READERS of THE CORD may wonder about the connection of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, leader of an international group of Catholic traditionalists, and the Franciscan charism. Archbishop Lefebvre is not a Franciscan, nor in his recent controversy has he ever quoted Saint Francis. Yet his case vividly illustrates the cornerstone of Francis' following of Jesus Christ. This article will summarize the Lefebvre controversy through February, 1978, and will relate this controversy to Francis' charism.

I. Lefebvre—an Overview

ARCHBISHOP Marcel Lefebvre was born in November, 1905, in Lille, France. He entered the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and was ordained a priest on 21 September, 1929. Consecrated a bishop in 1947, in September, 1955, he was appointed Apostolic Delegate in Dakar, Senegal. He also served as head of the Archdiocese of Dakar. From January to August of 1962, he was Bishop of Tulle, France; then he retired. At this point a chronology of his recent actions may be helpful.

1970. Lefebvre's Priestly Fraternity of Pope Pius X was approved for six years; he established his own seminary at Econe, Switzerland.

1974. Two appointees of Pope Paul conducted a visitation of the Econe seminary in early November. Later that month Lefebvre issued a Credo affirming his adherence to Eternal Rome, Mistress of Wisdom and Truth, and rejecting the Rome of neo-modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies which were clearly shown at Vatican II and in the reforms coming from that Council. He said those reforms "spring from heresy and end in heresy," and he urged his followers to "categorically reject the Council." Lefebvre said he believes and practices the faith prior to the Council and waits for "the true light of Tradition to dispel the shadows that darken the sky over Eternal Rome."

1975. In May the local Bishop in whose Diocese Econe lies withdrew his permission for Lefebvre's seminary. In June and September, Pope Paul appealed to Lefebvre to make an act of submission. In October, the Vatican Secretariate of State informed the worldwide episcopate of this controversy. In December, Lefebvre said he would not submit to the "subversion which currently reigns in the Church."

1976. May 24, at the consistory for the creation of 22 new cardinals, Pope Paul criticized both those who reject Vatican II and those who have put themselves in a position of "preconceived and sometimes irreducible criticisms of the Church." Pope Paul criticized Archbishop Lefebvre by name. June 29, without canonical permission Archbishop Lefebvre ordained 13 priests at Econe. July 24, Pope Paul suspended him from the public exercise of his priestly ministry. August 15, Pope Paul again appealed in writing for Lefebvre to submit. August 29, Lefebvre celebrated a widely publicized Tridentine Mass for 6,000 people in Lille, France. September 11, he met with Pope Paul at Castelgandalfo. October 11, Pope Paul wrote to him once again, and in December that letter of October 11 was made public.

1977. January through May, Archbishop Lefebvre continued to celebrate the Tridentine Mass and administer confirmation throughout Europe. On June 6, he told 800 people in Rome that something has radically changed in the church. He said he has always been obedient to the Holy See, but "reconciliation with the new direction of the Church is impossible for me. In conscience, I say no." On June 8, Pope Paul said at a general audience that Christ admits the possibility of excluding from fraternal communion "anyone who after repeated appeals has shown himself to be resistant." June 27, at a consistory for the creation of four new cardinals, Pope Paul referred to Lefebvre's intention to ordain more priests in two days. "We firmly deplore these ordinations. In this way he is emphasizing his personal opposition to the Church and his activity of division and rebellion in matters of extreme gravity, notwithstanding our own patient exhortations and the suspension he has incurred." On June 29, Archbishop Lefebvre ordained 14 more priests at Econe. In July he dedicated a chapel in Dickinson, Texas, for

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the celebration of the Tridentine Mass. In November, he dedicated the U.S. headquarters of his Pius X Fraternity and a chapel in Oyster Bay, New York.[1]

Confusing the issue in the case of Archbishop Lefebvre is easy enough. He protests many of the so-called Vatican II developments (some theological speculations about Jesus and some liturgical deviations) that also distress Pope Paul and many Catholics throughout the world. Lefebvre also objects, however, to Vatican II's teaching on religious liberty and to Pope Paul's attempts to normalize Church-State relations in communist countries. Archbishop Lefebvre particularly decries the replacing of the Tridentine Mass of 1570 with the *Ordo Missae* of 1969. In June of 1176 he referred to the Tridentine Mass as "the Mass of the Church, the Mass of tradition, the Mass of all time."

II. The Issue

POPE PAUL has tried to make the issue quite clear. On May 24, 1976, he told the cardinals that some Catholics under the pretext of a greater fidelity to the Church and the magisterium, systematically rejected the teaching of the Council itself, its application, and the reforms stemming from it. Thus, said the Holy Father, "Discredit is cast upon the authority of the Church in the name of a tradition, to which respect is professed only materially and verbally. The faithful are drawn away from the bonds of obedience to the See of Peter and to the rightful bishops; today's authority is rejected in the name of yesterday's."[2] At that time Pope Paul asked if Lefebvre and his followers had not placed themselves outside communion with the successor of Peter and therefore outside the Church.

Lefebvre and his followers believe the Church is in danger because of Vatican II's reforms and so feel they have a duty to disobey in order to preserve certain traditions. Which traditions? Pope Paul told the cardinals:

> It is for this group, not the Pope, not the college of bishops, not the ecumenical council, to decide which among the innumerable traditions must be considered as the norm of faith! As you see, venerable brothers, such an attitude sets itself up as a judge of that divine will which placed Peter and his lawful successors at the head of the Church to confirm the brethren in faith, and to feed the universal flock (cf. Lk. 22:32; Jn. 21:15ff.), and which established him as the guarantor and custodian of the deposit of faith.[3]

Pope Paul said that he believes many of Lefebvre's followers—at least in the beginning—were in good faith. He understands their attachment to forms of worship or of discipline that have been a spiritual support for them. The Pope invited these "traditionalists" to find that same support in the renewed forms coming from Vatican II.

In his letter of October 11, 1976, Pope Paul reminded Archbishop Lefebvre that he, Paul, has spoken out repeatedly and forcefully against the same deviations in the faith and in sacramental practice that Lefebvre has decried. But Pope Paul also pointed out the contradiction in Lefebvre's position: He criticizes the lack of respect for authority in the Church; yet he refuses to work under the authority of Pope Paul and in union with the bishops throughout the world.

Archbishop Lefebvre asks for the right to celebrate the Mass according to the Tridentine reform and for the right to train future priests at Econe and in other seminaries set up by himself. Pope Paul said that behind these requests it is necessary to see the intricacy of the problem, "and the problem is *theological.* For these questions have become concrete ways of expressing an ecclesiology that is warped in essential points."[4] Pope Paul told Lefebvre:

> In practice you are claiming that you alone are the judge of what tradition embraces.
>
> You say that you are subject to the Church and faithful to tradition by the sole fact that you obey certain norms of the past that were decreed by the predecessor of him to whom God has today conferred the powers given to Peter. That is to say, on this point also, the concept of "tradition" that you invoke is distorted.[5]

Perhaps Pope Paul reached the high point of his letter when he said:

> Tradition is not a rigid and dead notion, a fact of a certain static sort which at a given moment of history blocks the life of this active organism which is the Church, that is, the mystical body of Christ. It is up to the Pope and to councils to exercise judgment in order to discern in the traditions of the Church that which cannot be renounced without fidelity to the Lord and to the Holy Spirit—the deposit of faith—and that which, on the contrary, can and must be adapted to facilitate the prayer and the mission of the

[1]Some of the material for this section was obtained from the *1978 National Catholic Almanac,* ed. Felician Foy, O.F.M. (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1977), pp. 115-17.

[2]Quoted in *Origins* 6:62; we have capitalized *Church*, as it is not capitalized in this English source.

[3]Ibid.

[4]*Origins* 6:417.

[5]Ibid.

> Church throughout a variety of times and places, in order better to translate the divine message into the language of today and better to communicate it, without an unwarranted surrender of principles.
>
> Hence tradition is inseparable from the living magisterium of the Church, just as it is inseparable from sacred scripture.[6]

Pope Paul told Archbishop Lefebvre that nothing decreed by Vatican II or in the reforms enacted to put the conciliar decrees into effect "is opposed to what the 2,000-year-old tradition of the Church considers as fundamental and immutable."[7] After acknowledging the difficulties Archbishop Lefebvre may have in accepting certain actions of the Council, Pope Paul said, "It is the ecclesial sense that is at issue."[8]

Indeed the ecclesial sense is at the crux of the Archbishop Lefebvre case. What is the tradition of the Church? Who discerns and authenticates tradition in the Church?

Archbishop Lefebvre distinguishes between Eternal Rome and the neo-modernist Rome led by Pope Paul. Lefebvre professes rocklike adherence to the Church "as it always has been."[9] In his book, *Challenge to the Church,* Yves Congar notes that the Popes to whom Archbishop Lefebvre appeals to justify his actions (Pius V, Pius IX, Pius X, Pius XI, and Pius XII) would never have admitted such a distinction.[10] Yet in a 1976 interview with the Italian weekly *Europeo,* Archbishop Lefebvre said: "It is not I who have activated a schism. It's the Church of Rome, the Church of the Council, which has separated itself from Christ."[11]

Commenting on Lefebvre's statement that the pope must be united to the Church not only in space but also in time, "the Church being essentially a living tradition," Congar asks:

> Did life, of which the Holy Spirit is the supreme author, cease in the Church in 1962? Is life lacking in the Catholic communion ratified by the 2,500 bishops who surround the successor of Peter?[12]

Tradition is the rallying cry of Archbishop Lefebvre and his followers; yet Congar counters:

> Tradition isn't the past; it isn't old habits kept up by *esprit de corps*. Tradition is actuality, simultaneously handing on, receiving, and creating. Tradition is the presence of a principle at every moment of its development. We don't accept the break. The Church never stops innovating, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, but she takes from the roots and makes use of the sap which comes from them.[13]

In criticizing Lefebvre's view of the Tridentine Mass, Congar says that tradition includes the notion of adaptation and that the Mass, preserving always the essential identity with the sacrifice of Christ, has been adapted many times over the centuries since it was instituted. "It is an error," says Congar, "to absolutize history, howsoever venerable it may be."[14]

[6]Ibid., 6:418. [7]Ibid. [8]Ibid.

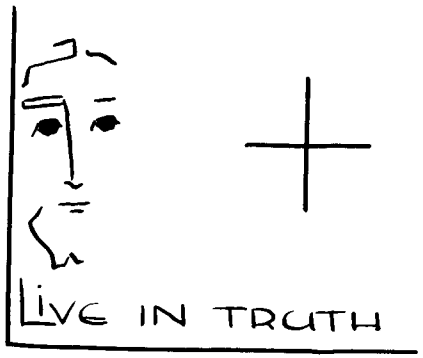
[9]Quoted in Yves Congar, O.P., *Challenge to the Church: The Case of Archbishop Lefebvre*, trans. Paul Inwood (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1976), p. 15.

[10]Ibid. [11]Quoted by Congar, p. 36.

[12]Ibid., p. 48.

III. Saint Francis

THE CONTRAST between Archbishop Lefebvre and Saint Francis could hardly be more obvious. Francis' following of Christ accepted the imperfect Church of his day and its reform*able* ministers as still the Church of Jesus Christ and still the ministers of the Word of God and the Bread of Life. Francis stands out from many 12th and 13th century reformers because of his ability to live out the Gospel and yet not arrogate the right to judge others before God.



In the Rule of 1221 Francis told all the friars not to be upset or angry when anyone falls into sin or gives bad example; then he immediately added: "The devil would be only too glad to ensnare many others through one man's sin."[15] In the Rule of 1223, Francis warned the friars not to condemn those who wear soft and colorful clothes and enjoy luxuries in food and drink: "Each one should rather judge and despise himself" (ch. 2). Later he advised the friars not to be angry or upset because a friar has fallen into sin, "because anger or annoyance in themselves or in others makes it difficult to be charitable" (ch. 7).

In the Testament Francis said

[13]Ibid., p. 57.

[14]NC News story, quoted in the *Catholic Telegraph* (Cincinnati, 9/10/76), p. 14.

[15]Chapter 5. Further citations from Francis and Celano are taken from the translation and numbering in the *Omnibus of Sources.*

he has such faith in priests who live according to the laws of the Church of Rome that if they persecuted him he would still turn to them for aid. Indeed, Francis said that if he met the "poorest priests of the world" he would not preach against their will in their parishes. Francis refused to to consider their sins because he could not see the most high Son of God except in the Eucharist which they minister to others.

When Bernard of Quintavalle was giving his goods to the poor, the greedy priest Sylvester complained that he had not received a fair price for the stones he had earlier sold to Saint Francis. Celano tells us, "Francis smiled, seeing that the priest's soul was infected with the passion of avarice." The Poverello then filled Sylvester's hands with money. Sylvester was so inspired by Francis' way of life that he soon joined it (2 Celano 109).

IV. The Friars

THE FOLLOWERS of Saint Francis have not always been so wise. Sometimes they have lacked the "ecclesial sense."

When William of St. Amour attacked the Franciscan idea of poverty as being a tradition not found in previous papal or conciliar pronouncements, Bonaventure responded with his *Apologia Pauperum*. Much of Bonaventure's thinking was accepted in the papal bull *Exiit qui seminat* of Nicholas III (August, 1279) which said the Franciscan way of life was the way of perfection Christ revealed to his apostles. This way of life, said the Pope, was inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Peter John Olivi became interested in the limits of a pope's power. He cannot, said Olivi, dispense a Franciscan from his vow of poverty.[16] Olivi's *Lectura super Apocalipsim* expressed the fear that a future pope might upset the decision of *Exiit*. Were a pope to depart from his predecessors' doctrinal decision, Olivi here suggests, such a pope would automatically fall into heresy and cease to be the true head of the Church.[17] Olivi, feeling that St. Francis' Rule, having been authenticated by popes, could not be changed by future popes,[18] thus clearly rejects today's authority in the name of yesterday's.

The issue of Franciscan poverty came to a climax under John XXII (1316-1334). In *Quorundam exigit* (October, 1317) he said decisions about the habit and provisions for the future were at the discretion of superiors. "Poverty is great; unity is better; obedience is the greatest good if it is preserved intact."[19] In *Quia nonnumquam* (March, 1322) he set aside *Exiit*'s strictures regarding discussion of the Rule and affirmed his right to alter his predecessor's decree. In July of that year, the Franciscan general chapter meeting in Perugia adopted an encyclical letter claiming the Franciscan idea of poverty was settled by *Exiit*, had been received into law, and was now therefore immutable.[20] Again we see a lack of ecclesial sense in the followers of Francis. *Ad conditorem* (December, 1322) returned to the friars the dominion of their goods and reasserted more strongly John's right to alter his predecessor's decrees. In *Cum inter nonnullos* (November, 1323) John condemned two theses: that Jesus and his apostles owned nothing, individually or in common; and that Jesus and his apostles had no right of using, giving, selling, or exchanging the goods they had.

In 1328 Michael of Cesena, Bonagratia of Bergamo, and William of Ockham fled Avignon and accused John of heresy in *Ad conditorem* and *Cum inter nonnullos*. Thereafter they refused to consider John the true pope and were excommunicated (for their refusal to recognize *today*'s authority.

V. Conclusion

THE SIMILARITIES of this episode in Franciscan history and the Archbishop Lefebvre case are obvious. In both cases those opposite the pope have believed he had guided the Church into serious error. The 12th-century canonists had entertained the idea that a pope could become a heretic and so cease to be pope.[21] In referring to the "neo-modernist Rome of Pope Paul

[16]Quodlibeta Petri Joannis Provenziali, 1, q. 18, fol 8ra, quoted in Brian Tierney, *The Origins of Papal Infallibility 1150-1350* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), p. 105.

[17]Tierney, p. 126; Congar, p. 32, gives several examples of popes who changed the decrees of their predecessors.

[18]Tierney, p. 127.

[19]Quoted in M. D. Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty: The Doctrine of the Absolute Poverty of Christ and the Apostles in the Franciscan Order, 1210-1323* (London: SPCK, 1961), p. 214. In pp. 208-46, Lambert covers John XXII's role in this controversy.

[20]Ibid., p. 229.

[21]Gratian's *Decretum* (dist. 40, c. 6) taught that the pope is not immune from human judgment if he strays from the faith. The Decretists saw Lk. 22:32 ("that your faith may not fail") as referring not to future popes but to the whole Church. Cf. Tierney, pp. 29-35.

VI," Archbishop Lefebvre has practically applied this same line of reasoning to the present case.

Pope Paul has complained that in the Lefebvre controversy "today's authority is rejected in favor of yesterday's." Behind this dispute there are several questions basic to systematic theology: Who judges the tradition of the Church and what should be accepted? What is the role of the pope in this process? What is the role of the individual bishop? What if a single bishop acts against the world-wide episcopate in peace and communion with the successor of Peter?

Indeed the "ecclesial sense" is at the basis of the Spiritual Franciscans' dispute over poverty, of the Lefebvre case, and of Francis' following of Jesus Christ. This "ecclesial sense" demands a spirit of dialogue and charity and, above all, obedience—qualities that Francis never lacked. Archbishop Lefebvre and his followers have, however, left them behind some time ago. Thereby they clearly and negatively illustrate the cornerstone of Francis' following of Jesus: belief that the Church he saw, whether sinful or not, was still the Church of Jesus Christ.

Pieta

Overshadowed
By a mournful noon
And the ambiguity
Of temple glory
Rending within—
You sob
From a heart throbbing
A piercing prophecy—
As with outstretched arms
You embrace a son
With Nazareth love—
And wonder what became
Of kingly Bethlehem.

Anthony Augustine, O.F.M.

A "Lost" Song of Francis

ANTONINE DEGUGLIELMO, O.F.M.

IN A PREVIOUS contribution to this publication[1] I made reference to a presumably lost canticle that Francis had composed, words and music, for the poor ladies of San Damiano.[2] In point of fact, however, it appears that the song is not lost, just unknown to most of the Franciscan world. Thus in 1941 it was quoted by the then minister general, Leonardo M. Bello.[3] Very recently it was brought to the attention of Father Giovanni Boccali, when in 1976 the president of the Poor Clare Federation of Umbria pointed it out to him. On pursuing the matter, he became acquainted with two codices in the Poor Clare monastery of San Fidenzo Novaglie near Verona: the one of parchment from the early 14th century, in language akin to that of the Canticle of Creatures; the other of paper from the early 16th century, in the Italian of the period. He has published a preliminary study,[4] nonetheless quite thorough, promising the definitive study at a later date.

It will of course be impossible to go into the matter at any length until the critical edition of the song is available. For example, even in a cursory comparison of the two versions published by Boccali and presented earlier by Bello one will notice uncertainties in the readings. Nevertheless, the text should certainly be brought, as soon as possible, to the attention of our Franciscan public in the States and in Canada, since they are completely unaware of it. The

[1] "The Canticle of the Sun: A Critical Reconstruction and Translation," THE CORD 27 (1977), 293-98; p. 293, note 2.

[2] M. Bigaroni, *"Compilatio Assisiensis," dagli scritti di fr. Leone e compagni su S. Francesco d'Assisi* (S. Maria degli Angeli: Pubblicazioni della Biblioteca Francescana, 2, 1975), 85 (=*Legend of Perugia*, 45).

[3] *Regola e Costituzioni Generali dell'Ordine di S. Chiara* (Roma, 1941), xxiii.

[4] G. Boccali, "Parole di esortazione di San Francesco alle 'poverelle' di San Damiano," *Forma Sororum* 14 (1977), 54-70.

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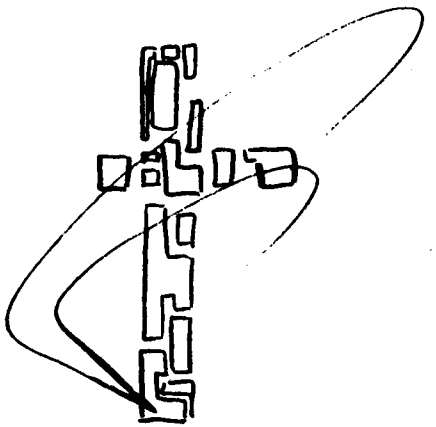
uncertainties that do exist hardly affect the substance of the song, in that they regard minor, even negligible, points that are cleared up in large part by the later Italian version.

I have been fortunate enough to have had a photocopy of the original Umbrian text. Outside of a few conventional abbreviations which I have resolved, it is the text that now follows:

1: Audite, poverelle, dal Signor vocate,
ke de multe parte et provincie sete adunate:
2: Vivate sempre en veritate
ke en obedientia moriate.

3. Non guardate a la vita defora
ke quella dello spirito e miglora.

.....



4. Io ve prego per grand amore
kaiate discrecione
dele lemosene ke ve da el Segnor.

5. Quelle ke sunt adgravate de infirmitate
et laltre ke per lor suo adfatigate
tute quante lo sostengate en pace.

6. Kamulto vederi cara questa faiga[5]
ka cascuna sera regina
en celo coronata cum la vergene Maria.

One will have noted the perfect rhyme in the first three verses. In verses 4 and 5, however, the rhyme is freer, and in the last verse it is approximate.

Again, it is clear that there are two distinct parts to the song, as I have indicated: the first consists of three verses of two lines each; the second, of three verses of three lines each.

A final point that need hardly be made, evident in the English translation I now submit: the present song is but a pale reflection of the Canticle of Creatures. It is far from the lyric heights attained by that masterpiece. In comparison it will be found to be flat indeed. Rather than poetry, it is best described as an exhortation put to music.

[5]In an oral communication I. Omaechevarría, O.F.M., insists that the form *faiga* is an impossibility in Francis' time, when the intervocalic *t* was still being preserved. In point of fact, the text quoted by Bello presents the variant *fadiga*.

1: Listen, poor ladies called by the Lord,
from many regions and provinces come together.
2: Live always in truth
that you may die in obedience.
3: Look not to the life without:
that of the spirit is better.

.....

4: I pray you with great love:
do use wisely
the alms the Lord gives you.
5: Those laid low by illness—
those, too, whom they harry—
bear all in peace.
6: This toil you will find dear indeed:
for each shall be queen,
crowned in heaven with the Virgin Mary.

If we turn to the *Compilatio Assisiensis (=Legenda Perusiana)* and study carefully what is said there regarding the setting and the contents of the "lost" canticle, we shall find startling coincidences. I shall italicize these in the following quotation, submitted in my own translation:

> Likewise in those days and in the same place, after he had composed the praises of the Lord for his creatures, Francis put together some other holy words with music, to bring added comfort to the poor ladies of the monastery of San Damiano, especially since he knew them to be deeply grieved over his illness. His sickness making it impossible for him to comfort them personally and to visit them, he bade his companions announce those words to them.
>
> As always, then too he wished to make his will clear to them briefly: they should be of one mind and should converse in charity, one with the other, since they had been converted to Christ by his example and preaching when the friars were yet few. Their conversion and conduct were a source of joy and edification, not only to the religious band of friars from whom they had sprung, but to the universal Church as well.
>
> Hence, since blessed Francis was aware that from the beginning of their conversion they had led, and were still leading, much too confined and poor a life, he was constantly moved to pity for them.
>
> Therefore in the same words he urged
>
> —that, *as the Lord had gathered them from many regions* for the practice of holy charity, holy poverty and holy *obedience*, thus should they live always and die in them;
>
> —that they should cheerfully and thankfully *use the alms the Lord was giving them* for the needs of the body; especially that they should exercise patience, *not only the healthy among the ladies in the work they were enduring for their sick sisters, but the latter themselves in the infirmities and needs they suffered.*"

Once the points of contact[6]

[6]One has perhaps noted the coincidence, too, with the section on pardon

are pinned down, it is a short step to acknowledging that the two passages deal with precisely the same song. In fact, on the basis of the evidence, a critic of the old school might go so far as to say that the second was created to fill the void indicated by the former. The song would indeed be a very early writing, but composed after the time of Francis to plug up the gap in his writings. This is in itself a distinct possibility, bolstered perhaps by the paler poetic color of the song in comparison with the Canticle of Brother Sun. At the present writing, though, it remains only a possibility: the probabilities lie in the other direction.

in the Canticle of Brother Sun:

"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."

Francis' Empirical Approach to Spiritual Direction

SISTER ST. MARGARET APPELL, O.S.F.

RECENTLY, THE empirical approach to spiritual direction has been given much attention. Investigation into the Franciscan sources determines its origin in Francis.

Experiencing and deepening our relationship with God and his creatures convinces us that his Spirit of Love can inflame and change our lives as it changed Francis' life. The goal of this experiential approach to spiritual direction is "to enable another to relate consciously to the Lord and to let the Lord relate to him, to grow in that relationship and to live its truth."[1]

Francis came to be the master of this process, for he constantly saw each encounter with creation as the sign or symbol of its reality, the Lord. He observed, reflected, prayed, and communicated his encounters in word and example. Francis did not speak specifically to us about spiritual direction; rather, he became a parable. His challenge to us is to translate his approach into our lives.

The first section of the goal of experiential spiritual direction denotes a relationship. God always initiates this relationship, inviting us to respond; but we need help to respond to the pleasure of his company. Thus Francis "prayed devoutly that the eternal and true God would direct his way and teach him to do his will."[2] To enter into the mystery of life, we must learn to be still and listen to the things, events, and words outside ourselves. We must be attentive to

[1]William A. Barry, "Spiritual Direction: The Empirical Approach," *America* 134, #16 (April, 1976), 356-58.

[2]1 Celano 6 (*Omnibus of Sources*, p. 234). Other citations from Francis and Celano, etc., will be given in text with page references to this *Omnibus*.

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what God has done and is doing in our lives and discern what response is elicited. Really to get to know another person, we must put ourselves near and ask the person to reveal himself.

The second aspect of the goal is growth: growth in knowing who the Lord is through experience. Francis looked for places and events that evoked an intimate union with his Lord. These places and events become marked as "significant" for Francis: meeting places where God's call and Francis' response became one in Christ. Francis' first significant meeting place with the Lord was solitude and silence. The Lord called, and Francis found him, either in a cave, in a church, or (later) in his own cell. Other significantnmeeting places where the Lord revealed himself to Francis in special ways were nature, Scripture, the Incarnation, the cross, and the Blessed Sacrament.

Francis' journey began with his "withdrawing from public to solitary places" (2 Celano 9; p. 369). Again,

> Francis learned in his prayer that the presence of the Holy Spirit for which he longed was granted more intimately, when he was far from the rush of world affairs. Therefore he used to seek out lonely places in the wilderness and go into abandoned churches to pray at night [Bonaventure, *Leg. maj.*, X, 3; p. 707].

His heart was always drawn to the Lord in nature; the gift united Francis to its Maker:

> In every work of the artist he praised the Artist; whatever he found in the things made he referred to the Maker. 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. "He who made us is the best," they cried out to him. Through his foot prints impressed upon things he followed the Beloved everywhere; he made for himself from all things a ladder by which to come even to his throne [2 Celano 165; pp. 494-95].

One of the most revealing meeting places for Francis with the Lord was in the Word. The Lord drew him there for the foundation of his community; for direction, support, and encouragement needed for the brethren to "put on Christ," he continued to draw him there. Thus, according to Francis, "that man would easily move from knowledge of himself to a knowledge of God who would set himself to study the Scriptures humbly" (2 Celano 102; p. 446).

Francis experienced and entered into the Paschal Mystery through his love for Jesus in the Incarnation, in the Cross, and in the Blessed Sacrament:

> . . . returning now to his native city, [he] appeared crucified, when though he had not yet outwardly completely renounced the world, Christ had spoken to him from the wood of the cross in a new and unheard of miracle. From that hour on, his soul was melted when his beloved spoke to him. A little later, the love of his heart made itself manifest by the wounds of his body. And from then on he could never keep himself from weeping, even bewailing in a loud voice the passion of Christ which was always, as it were, before his mind [2 Celano 11; p. 371].

Francis challenges all his followers to grow in this relationship, "and so we must hold fast to the words, the life, the teaching and the holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rule of 1221, 22; p. 49).

Through these meetings and experiences, Francis acquired the art of contemplation, the simple, loving, experiential awareness of God. He responded to what God said and did, to such a degree that "All his attention and affection he directed with his whole being to the one thing which he was asking of the Lord, not so much praying as becoming himself a prayer" (2 Celano 95; pp. 440-41). To develop our prayer life, then, we must be as real as we can be before God. We can't simply say "yes," but we must undergo real change.

The third facet of the goal concerns living its truth. Our task is to take the parable of Christ and translate him into our lives. This is the work of the Spirit, however, whom we must allow to permeate our whole existence. Like Francis, "filled with the spirit of God," we too must never cease "to glorify, praise, and bless the Creator and Ruler of all things in all the elements and creatures" (1 Celano 80; p. 296).

Father Ignatius Brady observes that although "Francis possessed by experience a true insight, in reality a whole theology of the Spirit working in us . . . we should be hard put to find a commentary on the Rule that truly shared his vision!"[3] In our century,

[3]Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., "St. Francis and the Holy Spirit," talk given at Francis Hall, St. Bonaventure University, during the Summer of 1976.

Francis' simple way of discerning the Spirit could be renewed. This encounter is experienced in dialogue, as Francis discovered. The Lord resides in the depth of each person; and Francis, descending into this depth through silence and solitude, got in touch with his Lord. Thus there arose an intimate relationship marked by awe and wonder as the Word spoke of the Father's intense Love and that Love became experienced Reality! The evolution of the Son's response to this Love—to do the will of the Father—became experientially present in Francis' center. It was no longer an intellectual understanding, but a true presence within his depth.

Because of this deep experiential relationship that was formed, Francis went often to his center to engage in dialogue—to be caught up in that flame of Love which is the Spirit. Francis became one with Jesus and could say, with Paul, "It is now no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me." Francis began to live Jesus' own dialogue with the Father and could thus say, with Jesus, "Abba—Father!" The Spirit enkindled the relationship into a unique event in human history. Francis became the dwelling place of the Trinity; in his depth he experienced and participated in this loving dialogue. Not cold theory, but burning experience moved him to urge his followers: "We should make a dwelling-place within ourselves where he can stay, he who is the Lord God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (Rule of 1221, 22; p. 49).

The Spirit thus became Francis' director, and through intimate dialogue the Will of the Father became fact in his life. In his Testament, he shares this relationship:

> The The Lord gave me the grace to begin to do penance, in a new life under his guidance .... He led me among the lepers and tore me out of my old self.... He gave me a living faith in churches [and in the Church], in priests [and in the Son of God whom I see in them], and the Eucharist [and all that surrounds it], and in God's words as spirit and life. He gave me brothers who joined me because the Lord so inspired them. He then opened the Gospel to me as our own way of life, the marrow of which under his guidance we adopted as our Rule. Through him we come to peace of heart, and thus our prayer for you is: The Lord give you peace.[4]

Francis challenges us to become one with Jesus, to be centered and thus to reflect and to articulate this experience of the Trinity in our lives. He calls his followers to look and to listen to what is around them. After observing and reflecting on God's beauty and grandeur, the Poverello himself burst forth in praise—in "The Praises of God" and "The Canticle of Brother Sun." But it is this same relationship that the Lord ignites in us by calling us to contemplation—to that long, loving, and leisurely oneness with the Trinity. The Lord calls us to walk as his disciples: "Without me you can do nothing," true; but "I can do all things in him who strengthens me." To be true disciples, profitable servants, we must be eager to learn from the Master. Here again Francis is our living guide and model, showing how a life of prayer is a life lived in union with Jesus Christ:

> Prayer was his sure refuge in everything he did; he never relied on his own effort, but put his trust in God's loving providence and cast the burden of his cares on him in insistent prayer .... 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 [Bonaventure, *Leg. maj.*, X, 1; p. 706].

To summarize what has been said: Francis experienced the Lord in silence and solitude; this relationship was deepened by meeting the Lord through his creatures and in his Word. The Spirit perfected the process through Francis' dying and rising in Christ as he reenacted the Paschal Mystery.

Experiences are to be shared, and so we find Francis sharing his with his brothers after they returned from a journey:

> They rejoiced greatly at seeing their kind shepherd.... They then gave an account of the good things the merciful Lord had done for them;... they did not hide from him the least thought or the first impulses of their hearts .... The blessed father, embracing his sons with exceeding great love, began to make known to them his purpose and to show them what the Lord had revealed to him [1 Celano 30; p. 253].

We may conclude, then, that Francis did indeed exemplify to an outstanding degree the empirical approach to spiritual direction, challenging his followers by his example as much as by his words to become transparent instruments of God's love. He looked, listened, reflected, and acquired a deep relationship with his Lord and Master.

[4]Ibid.

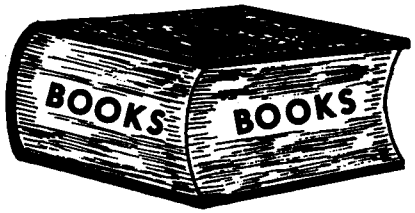
Along Pilgrim Pathways

We walked
my friend and I
along Pilgrim Pathways
sharing
yet each absorbing
into the interior recesses of self
that flow of water, myriad-patterned,
tumbling, frolicking, rushing
over rocks, around tree limbs,
inside narrow banks ridged with
wooden foot-bridges,
small boys beside, with
fishing nets in hand,
sun sparkling, laughing, reflecting
into clearness of stone-strewn riverbed;
the movement of water
quickly, rapidly, smoothly, quietly,
yet always ceaseless
the mighty pull towards ocean
that force unseen, felt so strongly,
no choice given and none asked,
merely *to move towards*
whatever the obstacle,
large or small, around or over,
channeling through, seeping slowly,
dripping steadily, onward, onward,
curves, barriers, cascades,
all not withstanding, onward,
onward into ocean,
to merge, become obliterated,
all separateness lost, swallowed into vastness,
long journey ended for microscopic element
fulfilled in that moment of entry,
all struggles, efforts, obstacles surmounted,
no memory now of all that was before,
pleasures, yes—and service
seen in gristmill swirl and splash
in gladdened refreshment offered,
wandering mid loveliness, all seasons, times,

all this as only prelude, only part of journey on the way,
leaves all behind, forever constantly in present;
the mystery is always, the need, instinct,
the final merger into long-desired ocean
long journey over, all blessings, hopes
fulfilled, forever effortless future
as part of surge and swell
of that mysterious force, unending,
unexhausted, untrammelled,
soft and stern, laughing or storming
in blue sun sparkle or in grey-black thunder,
all is vast, all is endless,
all is power, majesty, and beauty.

so, too, our lives move
along Pilgrim Pathways
bumbling, tumbling, tracing eddies,
seeping through earth's channels,
storming over obstacles, stopping to delight
those who walk beside us, pause and ponder,
sometimes serene in sunlight,
sometimes muddy, troubled, fearing,
yet always deep within us
that nameless Name, that ever-blessed Call:
"Come to Me, Come to Me, Flow into Me.
Merge your tiny droplet into My vast ocean
of peace, security, beauty, love, and mercy.
Move in Me in fearless sustained surge and swell,
part of My fury, part of My gentleness,
radiant as sun sparkles, moisture-sprayed,
rainbow bright, all is ease and joy."
all is forever mystery merged
smallness into one vast whole
all longing surfeited, all pain forgotten,
all joys intensified
i now am YOU, Mysterious God,
Who draw me ever onward,
onward into Parousia.

MARIGWEN SCHUMACHER



Opening to God: A Guide to Prayer. By Thomas H. Green, S.J. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 110. Paper, $2.45

Reviewed by Father Thomas J. Burns, O.F.M., College Chaplain at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.

A legitimate comparison can be made between the spate of diet-and-exercise books that have appeared in American bookstores of late, and the large numbers of introductions to the spiritual or contemplative Christian life. Just as Americans in general are growing to realize that good eating habits are not merely a matter of corporeal maintenance, but rather an investment in future health and well-being, so too the reflective Christian believer is now becoming hungry for a life-style of prayer that promises to cement a personal relationship with God for years to come.

At the risk of gross oversimplification, we may suggest that a book like Thomas Green's *Opening to God* can be judged on the same grounds as a proposed salutary diet: (1) does it work? (2) is it safe? and (3) does one need a doctor's prescription?

Happily, Father Green's introduction to prayer is a sound prescription for the believer who perceives from within a desire and a need for prayer. It was the needs of those he served as spiritual director, those who "cared enough about learning to pray, or continuing to grow, to seek direction and to share with me their inner lives . . . it is for them that this book is written" (p. 23).

Opening to God provides a twofold discussion of prayer—what is it, and how does one undertake it? With regard to the first part, Father Green is cautious to instruct his readers that by its very nature as a personal encounter with God and an experience of grace (p. 31), prayer is described better than it is defined. The beginner, then, is encouraged to draw from the experiences of the saints and the mystical accounts of biblical personalities. Nowhere does the author imply that a stronger prayer life is the fruit of mere improvement technique or procedure.

In the second part of the work, an introduction on "how to pray," any temptations toward either a Pelagian or a mechanistic attitude toward prayer are quickly dispelled by the author's precise terminology. One can speak of "technique," Father Green maintains, only in regard to "coming to Quiet" to hear the Lord's voice, and in reference to "disposing ourselves to encounter the Lord" (p. 60). And even these disciplines are performed only with the grace of God. The author goes on, then, to discuss the use of the Scriptures and the development of the rational and imaginative powers of the human psyche as means of disposing the believer toward communion with God.

To return to the checklist proposed earlier, is the proposed spiritual regimen safe? The answer of this reviewer is, Yes. In addition to dispelling common misunderstandings, the author bases his instructions on the centuries of experience of Christian mystics, and he proposes as the "stuff" or substance of meditation and contemplation the life of Christ in the Gospels. The novice who pursues such advice will more than likely draw strength from the tradition of the Church. Secondly, does someone need a doctor's advice to undertake this plan? Father Green seeks to answer many initial questions and to provide a blueprint for elementary efforts at daily prayer. While he does not flatly state one way or the other whether one should or should not have a spiritual director, his own history as a pastor and mentor seems to imply that a personal confessor and/or spiritual director would be very helpful, particularly as one progresses in spiritual maturity into new and sometimes disorienting spiritual experiences that call for interpretation and theological grounding.

And, finally, does Father Green's program work? Since the author does not presume to suggest what God will or will not do for the prayerful Christian, this question cannot be, in the strict sense, answered. But it is fair to say that Father Green has provided a useful pastoral book that can be comfortably and confidently put into the hands of nearly all segments of our Christian communities when our confreres approach us with

the apostolic request, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Climb along the Cutting Edge: An Analysis of Change in Religious Life. John John Chittister, O.S.B., Stephanie Campbell, O.S.B., Mary Collins, O.S.B., Ernestine Johann, O.S.B., and Johnette Putnam, O.S.B. New York: Paulist Press, 1977. Pp. xiv-304, including appendices, glossary, and index. Paper, $7.95.

Reviewed by Father Dominic J. Unger, O.F.M.Cap., a frequent contributor to various theological journals who is currently serving as associate at St. Charles Borromeo Church in St. Louis.

This work studies renewal in one segment of religious women, the Federation of St. Scholastica, an association of Benedictine women from over twenty priories in North America. The five Sisters collaborated in the work, each writing a specific chapter: on life prior to renewal in 1966; on the dynamics of change; on the theological and ecclesial milieu of the Vatican II period; on the development of Benedictine monasticism among American women; on the personal attitudes toward the renewal within the past decade.

In general the book is written in a smooth and readable style. It is full of good observations about things that needed change and/or that have been changed. And yet, there are rather disturbing elements for one who reads with a critical eye in the light of conciliar and papal literature of the past fifty years. It is difficult to write a short review of such a study, particularly in view of the many opinions and statistics given. I must be selective.

A number of generalizations do not hold up upon careful weighing of facts and documents. To give one instance, only one who has not read the papal documents, especially of Pius XI and Pius XII, can make the statement that bishops, priests, laity, and religious had to wait (after Vatican I) till Vatican II to have the topic of their presence in the Church explored with full seriousness.

The Sisters, including all the delegates to the pre-chapters and chapters on renewal, fail to present an accurate and adequate understanding of the specific nature of religious life, for example, when a high majority voted that religious life is the Gospel life, no more and no less, but rejected the thesis that religious are called to special holiness because of the vows, or that religious life is not a superior way of life. Whatever the early Benedictine tradition might have been about the essential elements of religious life, the Church has clarified and authenticated religious life as the Gospel life lived in community under the three Gospel counsels consecrated by public vow. Other forms of Gospel life, to be sure, are possible, but they will not be accepted by the Church as true religious life. Remarks about consecrated celibacy and about the Church's laws on enclosure leave much to be desired.

The biggest flaw in the study is an inadequate concept of the Church. From Vatican II the Sisters got the idea that the Church is a communion (I would say, a charismatic communion). Though they are aware of the fact that the Church is also a hierarchical community, they sidestep that as a criterion of values in religious life, and appeal to their experience, with which the directives of the Church do not always agree. They could, therefore, vote by a high majority that the Church's Hierarchy does not have universal and absolute authority to interpret their lives as Benedictines. They failed to make a simple distinction. The Hierarchy itself, led by Pope Paul VI, asked them to review their lifestyle and present a revised, updated set of directives. So the Hierarchy did recognize their authority to make this kind of interpretation of their lifestyle. The Hierarchy, however, reserved to itself the authority to give the *authentic* interpretation of that way of life. That right the Hierarchy cannot disown, because Christ gave to the Pope and the Bishops, and to them alone, the universal authority to interpret authentically the Gospel of Jesus for the salvation of groups as well as individuals.

As a Franciscan I must object strongly to the majority vote that priests do not deserve special respect. Saint Francis insisted on respect for all priests, even though sinners, because they alone have the power of giving us the Body and Blood of Christ. The objective dignity priests receive through ordination is not their merit but God's gift. To respect them, as good Catholics have always done, is to revere God's gifts.

This study can be helpful to others for renewal both in a positive and in a negative sense. In a positive sense there are many observations that are valid. In a negative sense, one does not renew religious life by opposition to the Hierarchy. Only through the Hierarchy's approval can one be a "religious" according to the twentieth-century Church.

On Genesis: A New Reading. By Bruce Vawter. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. 501, including index. Cloth, $10.00.

Reviewed by Father Stephen C. Doyle, O.F.M., S.T.L., S.S.L., Professor of Scripture and Biblical Preaching at Pope John XXIII Seminary, Weston, MA, and author of a series of tapes on the Gospel of John (NCR) and Covenant Renewal in Religious Life. *Fr. Stephen is now working on a book entitled* Living in the Renewed Church with St. Paul.

In 1943, apparently with a little prodding from his confessor, Augustine Bea, S.J., Rector of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Pius XII issued the Magna Charta of Catholic Biblical Studies, "Divino Afflante Spiritu." The ground where angels fear to tread, closed since Pius X and the Roman Curia's over-reaction to Modernism, and their inability to distinguish it from legitimate scholarship, was now open to Catholic exegetes. Pius XII did not permit, he demanded that scholars take into account the intention of the author and literary forms in order to arrive at the correct meaning of Scripture.

As scholars went about their work, they immediately found themselves at odds with some of the turn of the century decrees of the Biblical Commission which Pius X had declared

were binding in conscience, and must be adhered to "in the same way as to the decrees which appertain to doctrine, issued by the Sacred Congregations and approved by the Roman Pontiff; nor can they escape the stigma both of disobedience and temerity nor be free from grave guilt as often as they impugn these decisions in word or in writing"! Hardly language to make biblical scholars feel that they were about the work of the Church, in spite of Pius XII's Magna Charta. Freedom, yes, but at what price?

The dilemma was solved by a 1948 letter of the biblical Commission on the composition of the Pentateuch and the question of the literary forms of the first eleven chapters of Genesis. Rather, "they relate in *simple* and *figurative* language adapted to the understanding of a less developed people, the truths presupposed for the economy of salvation, as well as the *popular* description of the origin of the human race."

With only a slight detour set up by "Humani Generis" in reacting to some of the theories of Teilhard de Chardin, scholars were now able to raise their heads above the trenches without fear of getting shot. Students of the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem, the Biblical Institute in Rome, and the department of Semitics at Catholic University, let by some rather extraordinary professors, were able to bring Catholic biblical scholarship into the twentieth century. But from the ivory towers of scholarship to the pew was a long distance. Men like John McKenzie and Bruce Vawter were able to bridge that distance and help us to overcome our reaction to the Reformation's insistence on Scripture, and to become a biblical people. Here were the roots of the Council, the men who prepared the way of the Lord, the prophets of the fifties.

Bruce Vawter's pioneer work, *A Path through Genesis*, was published in 1956. Along with the contemporaneous *The Two Edged Sword* of John McKenzie, it was the salvation of every seminarian who secretly suspected that the Bible was more than a collection of proof texts to beat the "adversaries" over the head with. Sixteen years later it is a fascinating exercise to re-read Vawter's *A Path through Genesis* and compare it to his *On Genesis*, aptly subtitled *A New Reading*. Back then, the steps were tentative, the conclusions guarded. There was still too much effort in reading Catholic doctrine into the intention of the biblical author. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the treatment of "original sin" (which term originated in Augustine's battle with the Pelagians, was canonized in Trent's combat with the Lutherans, and is found nowhere in either Old or New Testament!). In 1956 there seems to be a preoccupation to show that the traditional doctrine of "original sin" is rather clear in Genesis. In 1977: "In sum, the traditional doctrine of original sin is not to be found in Genesis, though, as we have said, the assumption that lies behind the doctrine definitely is" (p. 90). In 1956 the effort was to show that Catholic exegesis is not at odds with Catholic theology. In 1977 there is the assertion that Catholic theology may need some exegesis: "It remains for the theologians to redefine the doctrine in such a way as not to historicize unduly the myth of Genesis or create out of Romans 5:12 a new myth of Adamic origins for all of mankind" (ibid).

In other words, as brave and prophetic as was the work of Vawter in 1956, exegesis was still tinged with eisegesis. We were still trying to get the biblical authors to say what we believed rather than hearing what they intended to say.

There are other variations from 1956. Both volumes were intended for popular consumption, but the present one is certainly more scholarly. Hopefully this is not only an indication of the author's more mature and unfettered thought, but of the level to which popular interest in the Bible has been raised in such a short period.

In addition, future shock has hit the biblical world. All of the texts of Qumran have not yet been published, and as Vawter notes, we now have to take into consideration the two-year-old discoveries of Ebla in Syria which one scholar has compared to the hypothetical rediscovery of the Graeco-Roman civilization. From the tentative conclusions that have been released, Vawter is able to cast further light on the world of the patriarchs.

Way back in 1943, Pius XII declared: "No one will be surprised, if all difficulties are not yet solved and overcome . . . We should not lose courage on this account; nor should we forget that in the human sciences the same happens as in the natural world; that is to say, new beginnings grow little by little, and fruits are gathered after many labors. . . . Hence, there are grounds for hope that those [difficulties] also will be constant effort be at last made clear, which now seem most complicated and difficult." Vawter's new reading of Genesis is tangible evidence of the prophetic words of the pope. It is a splended and up-to-date commentary, indicating not only where scholars are on Genesis, but also where the Church is on the Bible.

Naturally, all the evidence is not yet in and there is still room for scholarly disagreement. Vawter has opted for Haag's interpretation of Gen. 2-3. It can be argued that L. Hartman's interpretation based on the Canaanite fertility cults with the sexual motif explains more of the mythical language. And if there is some dependence on Gen. 1 on the Sumero-Babylonian Enuma Elish, as Vawter maintains, then does not the *Sitz-im-Leben* of the Enuma Elish at the time of the Babylonian captivity of the Jews deserve further consideration? The theological skirmish between Nabonidus, an adherent of the Moon God Sin, versus the priests of Marduk, both of whom were proclaiming their god to be creator, certainly sheds light on the origin of Gen. 1 and the role of God in creation-redemption.

On the whole, Vawter has done a splendid job of analysis of sources, materials, literary forms, and intentions of the author. It is not the definitive work, but that will not be accomplished until this and many more generations pass away. Meanwhile the author has given us a work that flows not only from his own scholarship and experience, but also from faith. He shows us how, not only to find what the word of God means in the words of men, but what it means to the believer. He respects

the first book of the Bible for what it is, a call and an invitation to faith. Vawter has the rare talent of showing that real faith cannot but be strengthened by real scholarship.

Love Is for Living. By Carlo Carretto. Translated by Jeremy Moiser. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1977. Pp. 158. Cloth, $6.95.

Reviewed by Father James A. Steuer, Pastor, Church of the Sacred Heart, Little Falls, New York.

To be asked to review one of Carlo Carretto's books is not unlike being asked by the M.C. at Gettysburg if one would like to "say a few words," Lincoln just having completed his address. I am tempted to say merely, "Try it; you'll like it!"

The book is truly excellent. Carretto not only writes of interesting realities but writes interestingly of them. He is a master of the *right* word. A possible key to prepare the reader for what is to come is a sentence from the introduction: "Once we realize we are poor, weak and empty, we can start again and give our lives a new direction." Because we are all, indeed, poor, weak and empty, this series of meditations aims right at the human heart and beautifully articulates what goes on there.

There are a few chapters which are simply brilliant. Chapter three, entitled "The Call to Faith," is destined to be a classic. Using Abraham as the paradigm of all who hear and respond to God's call, Carretto gives a penetrating account of how one hears the call and knows his vocation in life along with what to expect in the process of responding. Anyone working with young people especially, who are wrestling with identity, meaning, etc., would be well advised to commit this chapter to memory.

The entire book is provocative, but two other chapters clamor for special mention. Chapter eight, entitled "It is Not Good That Man Should Be Alone," has within it the most persuasive reasoning against birth control, natural or unnatural, that I have ever heard. Carretto sneaks up behind the reader in this one and no matter what the reader's point of view on the question, he simply will have to deal with sentences such as "'the person who decides to have no more Children has left the trajectory of God's explosiveness and is like a rotten branch waiting to consummate its uselessness on the bonfire." Overdone, you say!? Read it in context, and see if you still think so.

Carretto's chapter on "The Fire of Purgatory" is also outstanding. His description of its reality, meaning, and purpose would, I believe, satisfy the world's finest theologians and the most simple of the faithful.

Love Is for Living is for reading.

The Truth Will Make You Free: Letters to the Little Brothers. By René Voillaume. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. viii-152. Paper, $2.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph. D., Head of the Siena College Philosophy Department and Associate Editor of this Review.

This rich book is divided into two parts: a treatise on contemporary problems of adaptation in religious life in the light of the principles of Christianity in general and the spirit of Charles de Foucauld in particular, and a series of observations on the topic of "the Gospel and politics."

In Part I, the longer part of the book, Father Voillaume, General of the Little Brothers, reminds them that love of Jesus Christ, communion with him in deep Eucharistic prayer are what is primary. Work among the poor, material poverty, suffering, brotherliness derive their value from the love of Christ. Faith and the certainties it offers must not be replaced by mere worldly intelligence or by the latest theological fashion. The Gospel is good news to man, and all are called upon to witness it and the Person of Jesus by life and word.

The letters express the author's deep faith and his concern for the weakening of that faith by humanist and Marxist pressures. Especially poignant are the letters from Vietnam in December of 1972, when bombings there were resumed. Another fine letter pays tribute to Jacques Maritain, who lived out his last days with the Little Brothers near Toulouse, and to Maritain's reverence for Truth.

Part II of the book reminds the Little Brothers of the priority of their mission to bring Christ's Gospel of freedom within the heart of men. The entire Gospel perspective—not just part of it—directs man to seek first the kingdom of God, but not only the kingdom of God. Intelligent, reflective participation in political efforts to better mankind are called for, but no one should tie himself to any political ideology. We must resist the temptations to "absolutize the relativity of politics" or "avoid the difficult demands of human reality and bury our heads in contemplative expectation of the Kingdom" (p. 144).

The Truth Will Make You Free is excellent spiritual reading for any religious, perhaps especially those who today are seeking to work out programs in the area of Peace and Justice.

His Way: An Everyday Plan for Following Jesus. By David Knight. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. x-246. Paper, $3.50.

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 able guide to spirituality for the lay person. The author is correct in contending that there is an abundance of material for the spirituality of the priest and the religious but a dearth of such material for the lay Christian.

To prepare the reader to embrace a spiritual program, Father Knight shows that all too often being a Christian in the world today means little or nothing. Many pagans lead lives of higher morality, and they worship their gods more sincerely. A vast number of modern Christians observe what the author calls "civil religion," the acceptance of the values, standards, and ethical code of the society in which one lives.

But for those Christians who are hungering and thirsting for holiness, this book offers a three-step program consisting of Prayer, Conversion, and Community.

Prayer here means a daily period of mental prayer wherein one learns to encounter Jesus, to communicate with him, to grow in knowledge of him, and to express one's love for him. The key that opens the door to such prayer is the reading of Scripture. Directions on how to make this prayer of encounter are clear and practical.

Conversion consists in putting on the mind of Christ. This involves a change of outlook which leads to a mode of conduct in conformity with the Gospel. The prayerful Christian, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, realizes he cannot compromise with the spirit of the world. And in time he comes to see that he is called upon to transform society. The task seems overwhelming in the face of so much evil.

For such an undertaking one generally needs the support of a faith community, a group of people with the same spiritual purpose and ideals. Few people are so self-sufficient as to be able to stand alone in the face of constant opposition. Most need other dedicated persons to encourage them to continue being the light of the world. Faith communities should have their origin and roots in the Mass. But if one is unable to find community in the family or in church-related groups, he will have to be a solitary prophet, at least until he finds support from others.

The special characteristic of lay spirituality is martyrdom. The early Christian was a witness to Jesus Christ as Lord. But the word *witness* means martyr. In the days of the infant Church there were no Religious. Most of the people were lay people like our Blessed Mother. And the Gospel was intended for them, not for an exclusive few. To be a Christian meant to be willing to be a martyr. Many were martyrs. The others had to be ready to die if forced to choose between life and Jesus.

Today we have two brands of spirituality: that of the Religious which is based on renunciation of the world by the three vows, and that of the lay person based on the willingness to risk everything for the sake of the Gospel.

The chief requirement for the spirituality of martyrdom is freedom from fear which paralyzes action. And the way to gain such freedom is to be willing to embrace the cross every day.

His Way is a solid and sensible presentation of lay spirituality. The material is abundant and well organized. Interesting examples illustrate the thoughts. The reader is challenged to grasp the grace of the moment and to take the first step toward Jesus and to leave the rest up to him.

One of the highlights of the book for me was the explanation of the difference between lay spirituality and religious spirituality. I would like to see *His Way* in the hands of all lay persons who are serious about spirituality, and within easy reach of all who give spiritual direction.

SUMMER 1978

FRANCISCAN GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND IN NEW SPIRITUAL DIRECTION PROGRAM

CALENDAR

Registration	Monday, June 26
Classes Begin	Tuesday, June 27
Modern Language Exam	Friday, July 14
Final Exams	Saturday, August 5

ACADEMIC YEAR OFFERINGS

THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES M.A. Program may be pursued during the Summer, Autumn, and Spring Semesters. The required number of course credits can be obtained in two Summer sessions and the intervening academic year, or in six Summer sessions.

COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1978

FI 500 ***Bibliography***
1 cr. hr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: MW 10:20-11:25, Library Seminar Room. This course is required of all new degree candidates. It must be taken in the first summer session attended.

FI 501 ***Sources for Franciscan Studies I***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 303
This course is a prerequisite for 503 and 504

FI 503 ***Early Franciscan Texts***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 308
Prerequisite: 501

FI 504 ***Life of St. Francis***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 302
Prerequisite: 501

FI 506 ***Survey of Franciscan History***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D.Phil.Oxon.: 10:20-11:25, Room 303

FI 508 ***History of Franciscan Thought***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 302
Required for students in tracks one and two.

FI 511 ***Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts***
2 cr. hrs., Dr. Malcolm Wallace, Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 308

FI 522 ***Franciscan Values***
2 cr. hrs., Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., S.T.L.: 8:00-9:05, Room 302

FI 541 ***Psychodynamics and the Franciscan Tradition***
2 cr. hrs., Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D.Min.: MWF 7:00-9:00 P.M., Room 302

FI 550 ***History of Franciscan Spirituality***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M., M.A.: 11:30-12:35, Room 302
Required for students in track three.

FI 553 ***Contemporary Franciscan Documents***
2 cr. hrs., Fr. Joachim Giermek, O.F.M. Conv., S.T.L., M.A.: 11:30-12:35, Room 308

FI 563 ***Introductory Techniques of Spiritual Direction***
2 cr. hrs., Fr. Peter Damian Wilcox, O.F.M. Cap., S.T.L., S.T.D. Cand.: 8:00-9:05, Room 308

FI 599 ***Independent Research***
1-2 cr. hr., for advanced students by special arrangement.

FI 699 ***Master's Thesis***
6 cr. hrs., for advanced students by special arrangement.

Students planning to pursue the program through the year should begin their studies in Summer session.

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

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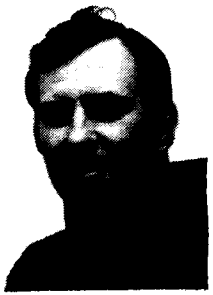

Tokenism

IT IS A PARADOX that the word *token* can stand for two very different kinds of things: a very meaningful symbol of one's affection, loyalty, and commitment, on the one hand; and empty going through the motions, on the other. To the former class belong the small gifts that we who are pledged to poverty can give to those important in our lives, whether it is a card, a banner, or an object that we have made with our hands, or a small box of candy for a hostess. To the latter class, unfortunately, belong poorly attended community exercises, whether these be prayers at non-prime times, or meetings where everyone watches the clock and only the professional talkers speak up. It is to the latter kind of tokenism that I wish to address myself this month.

In January we called attention to the dis-ease in religion we styled nomophobia, fear of laws. Tokenism, the fulfillment of the letter of the law without entering into its spirit, is perhaps another strain of this dis-ease. Many of the religious who were not "liberated" right out of religion by the wave of permissiveness that swept many of our friaries and convents, did get used to a lot fewer formal demands being put on them by the community. They now seem to resent claims on their time, and person-claims which the newer perspectives on community have rediscovered must be made. Grudging participation in community affairs and cynicism about those in authority are symptoms of this tokenism. Many religious, moreover, have through dint of both apostolate and greater freedom built themselves empires (or at least kingdoms or duchies), interest in which so consumes them that their appearance in community on selected occasions hardly comes through as meaningful giving. Superiors, too, sometimes encourage tokenism by selective enforcement of community demands and by not really giving the community an *effective* say in matters which newer constitutions say should be shared decision. Again, some constitutions are themselves at fault, for talking a lot about shared decision making and not specifying the areas where such responsibility can be shared.

What is to be our response to the dis-ease of tokenism? First, note that tokenism, like its opposite, formalism, is a characteristic of the giver, not the gift. With Saint Francis, we must seek healing within ourselves, recall our motivation for being religious—to serve God—and go about our community responsibilities with as much of ourselves as we can muster. And with Saint Francis, we must not be too quick in judging others; what we regard as a "token" may be all that our brother or sister can now give. On a community scale, we need to have honest evaluations of community dis-eases, evaluations in which all participate, both on the diagnostic and on the therapeutic level. Like the common cold, tokenism will probably be with us from time to time; but a genuine sharing of the good will and dedication we bring to and develop in religious life can certainly help to make us basically healthy communities.

D. Julian Davis ofm

The Poverello

I look at the frost-filled grass
so humble in its verdant splendour,
I look at the towering trees
so simple in their wonderful strength,
I look at the sky above
so pure and clear in its vast expanse,
the silhouette of the poverello
comes alive in loving canticle.

This little man in his humility,
poverty
and simplicity—
Francis of Assisi captured
the beauty
the goodness
the meaning
of all that have come to be;
Praises of God he burst into song
the Beauty
the Goodness
the Wisdom
that
only faith can see
only poverty can possess
only love can fathom
the sole object of the soul
conquered by divine Love,
marked by the seal
of covenant with the Son of Man
in the solitude of La Verna.

ARTEMIO T. RAYMUNDO, O.F.M. CAP.

The Mystic Francis and his Vision of Creation

SISTER JO THERESE SANFELIPPO, O.S.F.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI is acclaimed as one of the great mystics of the Church. He is identified as the poor man of Assisi, the man of peace and the one who truly followed Jesus. Francis is often identified with the love he held for all of creation. In paintings and sculptures throughout the ages, his image has been portrayed as one who was in harmony with the entire world.

But Francis's vision of creation was greater than what many of us understand it to be. St. Bonaventure tells us this about it:

> [Francis] sought occasion to love God in everything. He delighted in all the works of God's hands and from the vision of joy on earth his mind soared aloft to the life-giving source and cause of all. In everything beautiful, he saw Him who is beauty itself, and he followed his Beloved everywhere by his likeness imprinted on creation; of all creation he made a ladder by which he might mount up and embrace Him who is all desirable. By the power of his extraordinary faith he tasted the goodness which is the source of all in each and every created thing, as in so many rivulets. He seemed to perceive a divine harmony in the interplay of powers and faculties given by God to all his creatures and like the prophet David he exhorted them all to praise God [*Leg. maj.*, IX, 1].

This passage is perhaps the most explicit testimony we have, to Francis's mystical experience of God in all of creation. It also contains an account of the itinerary Francis followed toward his Creator. The vision, moreover, permeated the total person of Francis as he grew in his relationship with the Godhead. The following pages are an attempt to show that creation, through the eyes of Saint Francis, played

Sister Jo Therese SanFelippo, O.S.F., a graduate student at the Franciscan Institute, teaches high school art at St. Mary's Academy, Milwaukee. *Citations for this article have been taken from Marion 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).*

an important role in his journey to the Father, and that his spiritual awareness and growth were in constant relation to the total creation of which he saw himself as a part.

Who is the mystic, and what are some of his characteristics? The mystic is a person inflamed with a love of God; he hears and sees a call different from those of other people. He is open to receive new messages of wonder. The mystic has come to see the love of God and so refuses all things contrary to that love. He realizes a new vitality that urges him to search for Truth. He retreats from the ordinary daily life in order to let happen the operations of the Holy Spirit, and he sees new power pouring into his person—power that is not of himself. The powers of love and the powers of pain are exploited to their fullest, and there is an unmistakable call from the Godhead to let the old self die and the new emerge. There is a joy that is carried in the heart of the mystic that expressed itself in song and praise. The mystic also uses symbols to share the divine reality with others. He exists, not solely for himself, but rather as a witness to God's presence in all things. His aim is wholeness.

Society has seldom looked kindly on the needs and experiences of the mystic. Consequently the mystic leads an adventurous life—one raised to a level beyond that of the ordinary and so marked by a higher degree of tension. Life is intense, and perception is keen. The mystic needs to retreat, if only for a short time, in order to allow the greater Reality of the Godhead time to manifest Himself. It is natural to find the mystic leaving the turmoil and constant changes of daily life and entering into communion with the special Treasure he has found. It is necessary for him to go away and be alone with It. This gives the relationship the time and presence it needs to develop; and during this precious period of time the mystic attains a new consciousness of the intimacy, beauty, and love present in his communion with the Spirit.

Francis of Assisi possessed many of these characteristics. We know from the biographies that he burned with a passionate desire for Jesus, his Beloved. St. Bonaventure tells us that he "seemed to be completely absorbed by the fire of divine love like a glowing coal." The moment he heard the love of God being mentioned," Bonaventure continues, "he was aroused so immediately and so deeply moved and inflamed that it seemed as if the deepest chord in his heart had been plucked by the words" (*Leg. maj.*, IX, 1).

This desire for Jesus did not awaken fully developed, as it were, overnight. It was not a

simple or easy experience for the young man who had been the envy of all the youth of Assisi. We know from the writings of Francis's biographers that he loved the Umbrian countryside and often took time to enjoy its beauty. Thomas of Celano describes the youth as one who "squandered and wasted his time . . . in strange doings . . . in songs . . . [and] all kinds of foolishness" (1 Cel. 2). It is quite obvious that the world was no stranger to Francis, nor Francis a stranger to the world.

But then God intervened—and the story changes. Francis suffered an illness that gave him time to ponder things he had never taken time to think about. He stubbornly got up one day with the help of a cane, and "he began to look about at the surrounding landscape with great interest. But the beauty of the fields, the pleasantness of the vineyards, and whatever else was beautiful to look upon, could stir in him no delight" (1 Cel. 3). The young man who once loved the created gifts now could only despise them and think them foolish.

It is this turn of events in the life of Francis that urged him to think about what should be of real importance to him. Through the visions and dreams of glory he meets the Lord and somehow suspects that if he asks for direction from Him, it will be given to him. He has found a precious treasure and a sacred truth. Now he longs to know what he should do in order to seek his Lord. Where shall he go to meet Him?

The Albigensians were present in Assisi and their teachings widely known. They believed that the world with all its visible signs was evil, ruled by the devil himself. They saw all material objects as detrimental to mankind.

Francis, however, was not greatly influenced by this teaching. He followed the traditional trend of thought regarding wooded areas and mountainsides, believing as did his compatriots that God was to be found in out of the way places. We see in the early Franciscan writings that Francis left the city repeatedly because he was in search of a Reality he knew would be present to him in his own solitude. He went directly to the fields and vineyards to seek the Lord who was calling him. In fact,

> Francis left the town one day to meditate out-of-doors and as he was passing by the church of San Damiano which was threatening to collapse with age, he felt urged to go in and pray. There as he knelt in prayer before an image of the Crucified, he felt greatly comforted in spirit and his eyes were full of tears as he gazed at the cross. Then, all of a sudden, he heard a voice coming from the cross and telling him three times, 'Francis, go and repair my house. You see it is all falling down.' Francis was

> alone in the church and he was terrified at the sound of the voice, but the power of its message penetrated his heart and he went into ecstasy [*Leg. maj.*, II, 1].

It is important to look at the prayer that Francis is said to have uttered before the image of the Crucified Lord. Francis knows this is a time of darkness of mind for himself. He knows, too, that he has been touched by the fire of God's love. He is confident that Love promises to reveal Himself. He longs to know what to do. The mystical experience that sends Francis into ecstasy happens out of town in an old abandoned church. The prayer is one of a pilgrim beginning the spiritual journey. There is a call to enter the caves of the heart and see what is hidden there. The Lord calls Francis to walk into the tomb toward the Light of Truth who is Jesus Himself. The holes within the earth and the crevices begin to take on a different meaning for Francis as he begins to see them as reminders of the action of Love that redeemed him centuries ago. In his prayer for guidance, a prayer uttered many times during his lifetime, Francis begs for the right kind of faith, for firm hope in the Lord, and for perfect charity. He asks for the ability to know the things of God and the courage to live in accordance with His will. He asks for the grace to see the spirit of the Lord moving in his life. Francis finds himself invited to enter into the Paschal Mystery which makes him one with the Father and fills his heart with joy and his eyes with new vision.

The realization that God lived in his created world and that all things were a mirror of the Love of the Beloved moved Francis to seek the Lord in remote places. "Francis learned in his prayer that the presence of the Holy Spirit for which he longed was granted more intimately, when he was far from the rush of worldly affairs. Therefore, he used to seek out lonely places in the wilderness and go into abandoned churches to pray at night" (*Leg. maj.*, X, 3). It was obvious to Francis that if he were to meet the Godhead, he would have to do it away from the daily routine of his life and in moments of quiet prayer. Because of this,

> he would frequent hidden places as more suitable to prayer and he often would withdraw from public to solitary places where he was often admonished by a visitation of the Holy Spirit. For he was carried away and enticed by that perfect sweetness which poured over him with such abundance from the very beginning that it never departed from him as long as he lived [2 Cel., 5, 9].

But the mystic doesn't exist for his own sake. Rather, he acts as an intermediary between God and the world. Francis experienced the purification of his own will and inmost soul so as to be made into the instrument of harmony and peace that God wanted him to be. Part of the experience in the caves and grottoes was that Francis, son of Pietro Bernadone, was to die and become Francis, son of the Father. Thomas of Celano tells us that Francis "was afire within himself with a divine fire and he was not able to hide outwardly the ardor of his mind...when he came out again to his companion, he was so exhausted with the strain, that one person seemed to have entered [the cave] and another to have come out" (I Cel. 3, 6). The biographies tell us that Francis entered the caves many times and each time he returned a different man stretched open to the operation of the Holy Spirit in his life and with a clearer vision of the unity possible between God and man.

The man who entered the earth searching for Truth came upon Truth and the desire to share his illumined heart and soul with the world grew great. As we examine the sources, we can see that Francis longed to see the unity between the Creator and His creatures. His love for God was so great and his joy so overwhelming that he desired to share what he was learning.

The rule or form of life that Francis wrote for the brothers was a sharing of the vital dimensions of his personal experience

with the Godhead. Recalled very simply in his Testament, his experience was this: "After the Lord gave me some brothers, no one showed me what I ought to do; but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the pattern of the Holy Gospel." This implied that he and his brothers were to listen to the Word of God, live in utter simplicity and declare themselves poor for the love of Christ who became poor for them. The tone of the Testament is one of trust in God's providence —the same trust evinced by the lilies of the field that neither sow nor reap yet enjoy His favor.

Chapter 23 of the First Rule is an exhortation to praise and give thanks to the Father for his abundant gifts, especially for the creation of all things spiritual and material. The core experience of the Godhead was for Francis a bathing in the goodness of God. It seems he could never find

enough words to express his gratitude to one who loved him so much.

The secrets of the holy life that Francis received from the Father were given to the Brotherhood in symbolic fashion. Francis's desire to share his mystical experience moved him to look for avenues of exhortation and explanation. The writer of the *Speculum Perfectionis* tells us that "blessed Francis clearly perceived the goodness of God both within his own soul...and in all created things; so, he therefore had an especial and profound love for God's creatures, and especially for those which he thought of as representing some truth about God or religion" (113).

If we look to the form of life that Francis handed down to his brothers, we can see that he truly valued the Word of God. He exhorted all his brothers to listen carefully to it when it was being spoken or preached upon. In the same manner, he took the opportunity to speak to a noicy bunch of birds who were interrering with his preaching. "My sisters, swallows," he explained to them, "it is now time for me to speak, for you have already spoken enough. Listen to the word of the Lord and be silent and quiet until the word of the Lord is finished." The birds, Celano goes on to relate, "to the astonishment and wonder of the people standing by, immediately fell silent, and they did not move from that place until the sermon was finished" (I Cel., 5, 9). Francis spoke to the birds; but in a deeper way, he was really speaking to the people. He gave witness to a value he held close to his heart. The Word of God had revealed a sense of direction for his life, and it was to be reverenced because the words of scripture were "spirit and life" (Testament).

Another secret revealed to the simple man of Assisi was that he would experience true happiness when he embraced a life of simplicity. He turned to the little hooded lark and extracted from its place in creation the following symbolism for his brothers:

> 'Our Sister Lark wears a capuche like a religious. It is a humble bird that goes freely along the roads in search of a little grain. Even if she sinds some in horse-dung, she pecks at them and eats them. As she flies, she praised the Lord, like those good religious who despise earthly things and whose life is in heaven. In addition, her raiment, that is, her plumage, is earth colored. In this way she gives good example to religious who ought not to wear garish and choice garments, but dark colored like the ground.' For all these reasons, blessed Francis dearly loved and freely contemplated our sisters, the larks [*Spec. Perf.*, 113].

In this symbolic language, Francis spoke to the brothers and reinforced what he had written in the Rule concerning simplicity. His love for the larks was so deep that he is known to have said, "If I could speak to the emperor, I would beg him, for the love of God, to grant my prayer and to publish an edict forbidding anyone from trapping our sisters the larks or from inflicting any harm on them" (*Spec. perf.*, 110).

Utter simplicity is a definite theme that runs through the writings of Saint Francis. To live the life of the gospel was to live "sine proprio," that is, without having anything that is proper to oneself. The inner poverty that Francis exhorts his followers to live is one that is radical and difficult. He cuts deep into the heart of things and touches upon the challenge that Jesus places before all his disciples: Jesus became poor for us, and we must become poor for him (Phil. 2).

Francis is aware that God is good. In Chapter 17 of the Rule of 1221, he instructs his brothers to refer every good to the Most High Supreme God, acknowledging that all good things belong to Him. Again in his fifth Admonition Francis says, "Yet every creature under heaven serves and acknowledges and obeys its Creator in its own way better than you do." The call to be humble and give all credit to God is evident. Francis sees in creation a willingness to praise the Lord by simply being what it is. He can hear the symphony of praise that resounds from all of the Artist's handiwork. Consequently, he draws upon these creatures to help him explain the loving concern of the Father for all of mankind.

There are many stories recorded in the biographies by Celano and Saint Bonaventure that illustrate the special love Francis held in his heart for the birds. All the texts seem to point to the message of divine Providence. Francis admired the simplicity of the birds and saw in them a symbol of the soul of man that longs to take flight into the everlasting embrace of the Beloved. Francis found joy in preaching to these small creatures; and as he preached to them he preached to those about him. One of his approaches to reaching the hearts of men was to remind them of the good things the Father had given them. One day he gave this reminder to the brothers by speaking to a flock of birds:

> My brothers, birds, you should praise your Creator very much and always love him; he gave you feathers to clothe you, wings so that you can fly, and whatever else was necessary for you. God made you noble among his creatures, and he gave you a home in the purity of the air; though you neither sow nor reap, he nevertheless protects and governs you without any solicitude on your part [1 Cel. 58].

Everything that a friar needed was provided by the Father lovingly and freely.

Flowing from the reality of God's providence, Francis also preached about the danger of greed. In telling a story about the red-breasted brothers who had become so tame that that they lived with the friars, Francis pointed out to the community how one greedy little bird was disturbing the peace and tranquillity of the household. Even though he had eaten his fill, the bird continued to drive the rest away from the food and hoard it for himself. Francis says: "He will come to a bad end yet" (2 Cel. 47). With that the bird drinks some water and suffocates to death. It is recorded that there wasn't a cat around who would bother to eat him. His death was of no advantage to anyone, and consequently he has died in vain. The lesson Francis taught was that any form of greed will destroy the brotherhood and be a cause of tension. He thus held up to his brothers the value of living "sine proprio" and depending entirely on God for what is needed to journey towards Him.

Francis continued to grow in the spirit of universal charity which is characteristic of the mystic. He was filled with compassion not only toward men in need, but "even toward dumb animals, reptiles, birds, and other creatures about him both sensible and insensible" (1 Cel. 97). He continued to see relationships between the creatures around him and the Creator, and he was always making associations with the love of God that had completely filled his heart.

His journey back into creation after a period of despising it marked the beginning of his search for God. In a world that he could no longer relate to, he was as a sheep looking for a shepherd. Francis found his Shepherd in Christ Jesus. His devotion for the Lamb of God upon the cross grew intensely, and as a result "he loved little lambs with a special predilection and more ready affection because in the sacred Scriptures the humility of our Lord Jesus Christ is more frequently likened to that of the lamb and best illustrated by the simile of a lamb" (1 Cel. 77).

Francis's respect for the lamb went beyond lip service and into action. Whenever a lamb was hurt, he paid special care to it. If a lamb being sent to market, he would plead for its life and exchange his cloak for it (1 Cel. 79). The bishop himself was concerned about Francis's overly affectionate mannerisms with the lambs, but Francis explained how he saw the face of his Beloved, the Lamb of God, in each and every lamb and how he was reminded of His innocent death. His words moved the bishop to tears. Francis's movement among the senseless animals was graceful and he would always greet them kindly "as was his custom" (2 Cel. 31). Those who followed along behind him noticed the tenderness he showed towards them and the response of the animals amazed them. They were moved to see that although the animals lacked reason, they "recognized him as a friend of their Creator" (Ibid.).

Francis had become the intermediary between God and creation. His appreciation of creation is beautifully recorded in a number of sources. In the Legend of Perugia, we find that Francis loved Brother Fire because of its beauty and usefulness. In addressing Brother Fire, he speaks of his respect for its noble nature and service to mankind. Francis proclaims that he loves Brother Fire and "will always do so for the love of Him who created you" (*Leg. Perug.*, 48). But his love for the elements did not stop there. Francis had begun to see symbols in all of creation and to use the gifts of the created world as signs of the divine Love. He walked reverently over rocks because of the scriptural reference to Christ the Rock (*Leg. Perug.*, 51). He asked for plots of land to be left free for flowers to be planted. In this way all those who would see the herbs and flowers would be moved to praise God. For every creature proclaims, "God has created me for your sake, O man!" (Ibid.)

God had indeed made all things for man, and as Francis grew in his relationship to the God who is "perfect good, all good, every good, the true and supreme good and who alone is good" (1 Rule, 23), he firmly believed that "nothing, then, must keep us back, nothing separate us from him, nothing come between us and him" (Ibid.). Francis had come to see the Godhead in a new way. Not only was he to know the Lord and the operation of His Spirit in his life, but he was to become united to this same Love whom he loved so deeply. His soul had become betrothed to his Beloved. Jesus was now his sole Love, and the oneness that he experienced with Him was just as indescribable as was his relationship with the world. Francis now saw creation as a haven for God's presence and an instrument with which and through which God could be praised. Creation was now an intimate entity that bound him to heaven and acted as a constant reminder of his Beloved.

In his intimate moments with God, Francis began to write both for the glory of God and the instruction of men. The most famous of his compositions is the Canticle of the Creatures. It overflows with a love of God as well as of creation. "Written in the Umbrian Dialect it is thought to

be the oldest extant poem in any modern language" (*Omnibus*, p. 128). The English translation of the Canticle does not do it justice. It is meant to be read or heard in the dialect in which it is written. The melodious flow of joy and praise is lost in the harshness of our language. In its Umbrian simplicity it pours out as a love song similar to those that troubadours sang in the medieval period.

The Canticle was written at a time when Francis was in great suffering. He had already had the mystical experience of La Verna where he received the Stigmata. Brother Body had suffered greatly and was no longer at his peak. Francis's eyes were causing him a great deal of pain, and his vision was practically gone. He could hardly tolerate the least bit of sunlight, and the friend he had made in Brother Sun was now the source of discomfort. Although his physical eyes had lost their vision, however, his spiritual vision grew still more keen. He saw images of God and creation as One. He continued to perceive the wonderful deeds of the Lord and became acutely aware of the continuing operation of the Lord's Spirit in the events of his life. In these thoughts and reflections he found joy. It was as a witness to the harmony of praise that he saw happening within all of creation that he put into writing his discoveries about creation. It was for mankind, especially those who were mistreating and abusing the created world, that he said, "To His praise, for our own comfort, and to edify our neighbors, I want to compose a new Praise of the Lord in His creatures; for we daily make use of them, and cannot live without them, and through them the human race greatly offends their Creator" (*Leg. Perug.*, 43).

At first glance, the Canticle seems to be addressed as a hymn of praise to the Father. This, however, is not true. The Canticle is addressed neither to the Creator nor to the creatures. I believe it is addressed to those living in the world. It is a statement of what Francis perceives as reality. It is his commentary on what he sees as the possibility of harmony between Creator and the created. He shares what he sees in process.

Francis begins by speaking to his God as "Altissimu, onnipotente Bon Signore." This is a truth he has come to realize experientially: God is the Almighty, the High One, the Good Lord. It almost expresses a lack of ability to express the vision of God that Francis enjoyed. He had seen the goodness of God, and there were no words able to express the beauty he had found. There follows a recognition of man's unworthiness even to mention the name of the Godhead. Francis has stated who God is

and who man is. This is the key question that every mystic must ask during his spiritual journey.

The poem then breaks out into a litany of sounds beautifully expressed by the flowing melody of "Laudato sie, mi Signore, cum tucte le creature" (Be praised, my Lord, through, by, with all of Your Creation). Creation is the instrument for the making of the song. It is a universal hymn of praise that each creature and element of nature plays a part in. Each who has had a special significance in Francis's sharing of the mystical experience of God is called to the stage. Brother Sun who made each day a holiday for him is exhorted to continue to lighten the day and brighten the path to the Father. Francis has seen in the sun the very image of the Godhead. The evening peace with Sister Moon and Stars is recognized as being preciously made by God's loving Hands. Water, the symbol of baptism, and fire, so strong and mighty, are remembered for their usefulness to all mankind. Mother Earth that cared for the necessities of Francis and his brothers is mentioned with all her natural beauties that reflect the constant care and providence of God.

Then Francis turns his attention towards man, and he sees that man, for all his mystery, is one of the most fascinating of all creatures. He chants that those who forgive for the love of the Creator (quelli ke perdonano per lo tuo amore) and those who endure sickness and trial with patience will be crowned by the Most High. In his own way he sings an anthem that reconciles not only the world to God but creature to creature (*Leg. Perug.*, 44).

In the midst of this symphony and the sharing of the secrets of the mountain top, Francis turns his eyes to his body and speaks of the joy of Sister Death. Realizing what he has done to his own physical condition, he states the starkness of death (nullo homo vivente po skappare); but then, he goes on to speak of a greater reality (la morte secunda nol farra male). If the gospel of Jesus has been lived, then mortal death does nothing evil but rather serves the soul by uniting it with God. If the gospel of Jesus has been lived, then one has already entered into the Paschal mystery and has experienced both death and a taste of the resurrection. Francis loved Sister Death, for she was the portal through which he was to enter the banquet hall where his Beloved awaited his homecoming.

The Canticle ends with Francis reiterating his philosophy of life and his multi-faceted vision of the created world: "Laudate et benedicate mi Signore, et rengratiate et serviateli cum grande humilitate." This is the stance Francis has come to take, and this

is the stance he recommends to his brothers. This is the attitude all those journeying to the Father should have. In his experience of God, Francis has come to see that he is called to let God be God. He understands that to serve God humbly and gratefully is to follow in the footprints of Jesus. From the beginning to the end, Francis has sung the hymn of praise which proclaims God as "the Lord Almighty, in Trinity and Unity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator of all" (1 Rule, 21). Francis knew that in all created things there is a path leading men back to their God. The Canticle is perhaps the greatest invitation offered to man to stop and reflect

on the lessons to be learned from simple creation.

Francis learned his lesson well. The height of the mystical experience came, for him, at Mount La Verna where he went often to pray. Celano tells us that one day he went up the mountain with another brother to pray. This event happened after Francis experienced the unification of his flesh with the crucified Christ, and he held in his soul the intimacy of being one with Jesus. During this period of prayer, the brother experienced some temptation and longed for some words written by Francis, but he was afraid to ask for them. Francis, sensitive and in tune with the unspoken word, called to the brother and said, "Bring me some paper and ink, for I want to write down the words of the Lord and His Praises which I have meditated upon in my heart" (2 Cel., 49). With that request, paper and pen were brought to him, and the Praises of God were written.

It is important to consider where Francis was when he wrote those Praises. Mount La Verna, a densely wooded area, overlooks miles of farmland. The mountain has many large and small crevices and jagged rock formations. Francis finds his home here and is filled with thoughts of the crucified Lord. La Verna is holy ground for Francis because it was here that the six-winged seraph appeared and bestowed upon him the imprints of the Lord's sufferings. The solitude of La Verna leads the soul easily into prayer, and the discipline of contemplation is further aided by the immensity of beauty. Surrounded by the beautiful, Francis discovers truth. He is moved to exalt God as the only God and praise Him for His glory. He calls God his strength and acknowledges him again as the Holy Father, Creator of heaven and earth. In a Trinitarian mode, he proclaims the Goodness of God and the place God has in his life. He announces that God is for man and longs for man to be for Him. He lists numerous virtues in an attempt to capture the awesomeness of God's Reality. At length, almost in exhaustion from trying to verbalize, Francis concludes: "And you suffice for us" (Praises of God).

Life has taught Francis that God is Provider; He has been generous in the past and will continue to care for all his needs. There is nothing that will take the place of the constant love God has bestowed on Francis. In that framework of poverty of spirit—better stated, sine proprio —Francis surrenders all that he has. But he does not forsake Beauty; rather, he says to God, "You are Beauty" (Praises of God). The unity of spirit that Francis shares with Jesus gives him the vision to see and proclaim that everything on the face of the earth holds within it the reflection of the face of his Beloved. Not only does creation draw Francis closer to his God, but the love of his God draws him into a deeper love of creation.

We have seen that Francis was truly a mystic. His continual search for the Godhead was flowered with deeply intimate moments with God. His whole life was a journey to the Father. He longed to be perfect so as to be pleasing to the One he loved. The Rule of life he followed was the way of Jesus Christ. He listened to the word of God and opened himself to the possibility of the Lord's speaking in a multitude of ways. He never tried to box in the Holy Spirit or control His operation in his life. He learned through periods of purification how to move with the Spirit. His decision to live in utter simplicity called him to see the Godhead as a Father and the earth as a Mother through whom all that he needed would be given. His walking on earth pointed to a deeper reality. Through symbolic use of creation Francis tried to point to God. He knew that God wanted all persons to enter into a loving relationship with Him. Francis's decision to live "sine proprio," moreover was as we have seen a decision to let his soul praise God by being just what he was. He often said, "What a man is before God, that he is and no more

(Admonition 20). Francis's process of self-actualization within the framework of the Church and in the Life of the Holy Spirit was one of self-emptying. In this living of inner poverty manifested by externals, Francis could see and understand the dependence he had on the Father and the graciousness and providence of God. He was so filled with love of God that he found it an impossibility to see events without seeing God present in them. So filled with love was he, that he could not enjoy the beauties of the world without singing the praises of the Creator. He found it impossible to look upon the created world with anything but love and respect for the Hands which formed it all. So convinced of his sonship in God and his brotherhood with Jesus was he, that he could not treat anyone or anything as less than Brother or Sister (1 Cel. 80).

Saint Francis of Assisi brought to creation a new dignity. He saw the importance it played in his own discovery of God—how it had provided him with the atmosphere in which he could calm his soul and find God's presence. But he saw himself as endowed with all those creatures not exclusively for his own sake but also so as to teach all men. Creation held within itself profound symbols with which he could share the secrets of his inexpressible meetings with God. The oneness his soul experienced with God confirmed his call to be a reconciler of the world, an instrument of harmony between two worlds. His vision was one of love streaming from the reality of the Love he had felt and known in the core of his being. His vision was one of poverty, for he knew that what he saw was pure gift. His vision was one of peace, finally, as he longed for all of mankind to join in the universal song of praise.

This was Francis: a man who was in the world but not of the world, a man who speaks today as he did centuries ago:

> At all times and seasons, in every country and place, every day and all day, we must have a true and humble faith, and keep him in our hearts, where we must love, honour, adore, serve, praise, and bless, glorify and acclaim, magnify and thank, the most High, Supreme and Eternal God, Three and One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator of all and Savior of those who believe in him, who hope in him, and who love him; without beginning and without end, he is unchangeable, unfathomable, blessed and worthy of all praise, glorious, exalted, sublime, most high, kind, lovable, delightful and utterly desirable beyond all else and for ever and ever [1 Rule, 23].

Francis's life stands forever as a call to refer to the good Lord all the goods and every good of the earth. In doing what he could do, Francis stands as a hope-imparting beacon for a divided and wounded world; from him shines forth the hope that harmony and peace can reign, if we will but change our vision and see the face of God in all created things.

Halcyon

I who have known turmoil,
time's crowded space and frenzy,
have entered—ah! so softly—
unexpected days of gold.

Now timeless hours and moments,
sun-dipped and drenched in stars,
ablaze with beauty, trust, and love,
flow unending in their joys.

Gift so freely given! Giver
omnipotent and tender,
loving, charging leaf and flower
with presence, witness, wonder!

O Triune God adorable!
these tranquil days of blessings
are fragrant with Your love:
stretch mind and heart to freedom
and undisturbed sing "Amen!"

Marigwen Schumacher

Spirituality of Justice—I

JOSEPH NANGLE, O.F.M.

SEVERAL misgivings accompany this attempt to address a very much needed gospel-centered rationale, a "spirituality," to sustain activities by Chirstians to promote freedom, dignity, and equity in the world. In the first place, an article like this may appear very "trendy" at this time, one which cashes in on a growing concern for justice on the part of church people. I wonder also about approaching the subject in this periodical: Will the readers of a spiritual magazine such as THE CORD understand or accept the overriding premise of the article—that justice is as central to Christian faith as the sacraments or the gospel word itself? I fear, too, that what is said here might be taken out of its very necessary context: serious work on behalf of justice in a real commitment to righting the dehumanizing injustices around us.

And yet the need for a "spirituality" which accompanies our work for a better world, a "spirituality" which is influenced by that work, one which sustains us despite the many failures and few successes encountered, and which supplies hope even as our contacts with sinful injustice cause us to see how involved and recalcitrant are the problems to be solved—all of this impels me to plunge into this attempt. If we work seriously in the area of social justice and our motivation is Christ-centered, then we need a "spirituality" to go along with that activity. Else we run the risk of becoming unreflective crusaders and activists, eventually unable, I think, to withstand in faith the sin we have set out to overcome.

To begin, then, you have noticed the quotation marks around the word "spirituality" in the preceding paragraphs. They are there, not because I have doubts about the reality and need of "spirituality" and a "spirituality of justice," but rather because I have a certain difficulty with the word itself, especially as it relates to justice. For many people "spirituality," the "spiritual life," and other synonyms for this idea cause a mental dichotomy which places real life outside the scope

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of one's "higher life." We hear retreat-givers and retreatants, lay people, priests and religious, spiritual writers and readers speak of their "spiritual life" as though it were something apart from, or above, or even in conflict with the rest of their breathing, loving, eating, hurting, celebrating, mourning selves. Such a view of "spirituality" is bad enough in any case; when it affects the outlook of a person engaged in work for justice, it is fatal. For as we shall see justice, like word and sacrament, must permeate "spirituality," which in turn must underlie action for justice, or there will be imbalance.

Let me therefore offer my idea of "spirituality," then a definition of justice, and see how the two must be wedded.

I. "Spirituality" and "Justice"

AS I SUGGESTED above, spirituality can in no way be opposed to the corporal, the material, the here and now, any more than the Holy Spirit can be considered absent from these dimensions of reality. Spirituality is "life in the Holy Spirit," life in the One sent by the Father and the Son to guide and console, to urge and challenge, and to give repose. Spirituality is our life in the Person who is Love, the mutual Love of Creator and Redeemer, Love between the Parent and the Begotten, Love divinely personified. Spirituality—life in this Third Person of the Trinity—cannot be opposed to matter and life and emotions created by God and redeemed by Jesus; quite the contrary, spirituality has to encompass all that is, and all that will be. Spirituality—life in the Spirit Love—is opposed only to *lovelessness*, to whatever stands in the way of love, to whatever proves an obstacle to love.

This very sketchy description of spirituality as I understand it has profound significance when coupled with the idea of justice. Pope Paul said during his visit to South America in 1968 that justice is love's first and most basic expression; it is love's minimum, below which there is no love possible. Love requires in the very first place that we give the person loved his or her due, and that means justice. Hence, to speak of life in the Spirit Love—spirituality—is to speak in the very first place of justice.

The joining of Spirituality and justice brings us quite naturally to what I stated above as the first premise of this article: namely, that justice is as essential to Christian living as sacrament and the gospel word itself. After what has been said about spirituality necessarily wedded to justice, such a premise should not be so startling. No one would argue against love's being central to our faith, as central as the sacraments or the gospel. What we say in this

premise, then is simply that love's basic component, justice, must be central to Christianity. The 1971 Synod of Bishops put it clearly when in a now famous statement they said:

> Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive structure [Justice in the World, Introduction].

One really cannot insist too much on the centrality of justice. Working for a more equitable society and world is not a corollary to the gospel, something which good Christians might do. It is "constitutive," essential, central to Christian living. Without efforts for justice one cannot be said to live a fully gospel-oriented life.

Having thus cleared, we hope, some of the ambiguity surrounding the term "spirituality," and presented the notion of justice as well as its centrality in Christian life, we can turn to some elements of a spirituality of justice.

II. Incarnation

FOR ME, THE starting point for a spirituality of justice is the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity in the man Jesus Christ. When God becomes human, when the Divine breaks in on history, when the Creator unites with the created, when the Word becomes flesh, then all human beings gain a dignity greater than that which they previously had; then human history takes on a totally new coloring and importance; then the proper stage for divine-human action becomes this life and this world.

The consequences of the Incarnation for human beings and all creation are enormous. The human condition, dignified through God's uniting with it, must be allowed to flourish, to grow, to become. Whatever stands in the way of humanization, therefore, must be combatted, must give way, must be overcome, must be conquered; otherwise God has joined himself to a permanently subhuman race, one which is ultimately unworthy of the divine Presence.

Flowing from God's breaking in on human history is a new awareness of that history's terrible importance. We can no longer view our personal, communitarian, or social history as a kind of stage on which individuals work out their eternal destiny, having no importance in and of itself. In the light of God's insertion into time and place and social reality, all time and all places and all social realities in this life's journey take on tremendous seriousness and consequence.

Modern people accept the importance of the here and now almost without question, and perhaps without an ultimate rationale. Christians should see the here and now as important for the reason that God dignified our history with his active Presence in it through the man Jesus.

To understand better what I am trying to say here, we have only to look at Jesus's actions during his life among us. He took life in all its manifestations with complete seriousness. He reacted totally to the situations in which he found himself: to a problem at a wedding feast, to the "encroachments" of sick and crippled people, to a shamed woman and a despised man, to hunger, to widows and children. And he reacted against a social-religious caste which was laying heavy burdens on ordinary people. This constant and strong opposition to the Pharisees finally brought about his death. Being thus a man of his time and place and viewing human life with utter seriousness, Jesus gave every time and every place an ultimate worth.

To see the Incarnation this way is necessarily to be about justice. One cannot do less if one accepts the dignity which Jesus gives to everything which is human. Any injustice which keeps human beings from realizing their God-given potential, any structure or person or situation which denies to men and women or whole peoples the opportunity to become more, is anti-Incarnation, anti-Christ. We Christians who have received talents and the opportunities to develop them, of necessity must be about the development of our brothers' and sisters' talents in the brilliant light of the Word made flesh.

III. Reading the Gospel

ANOTHER DIMENSION of this spirituality of justice flows quite naturally from the view of the Incarnation just proposed. I mean that which has been called a "political reading of the gospel." ("Political" here of course refers to the total life of the people, and not petty or party "politics.") In his Encyclical "On the Development of Peoples," Pope VI gave an example of such a "political reading of the gospel" when he mentioned the parable

of the rich man and Lazarus. The Pope used that parable to speak of injustices not against a single "Lazarus" but against all the "Lazaruses" of the world today. "The point at issue," said the Pope, "is the establishment of a human society in which everyone, regardless of race, religion, or nationality, can live a truly human life free from bondage imposed by men and the forces of nature not sufficiently mastered, a society in which freedom is not an empty word, *and where Lazarus the poor man can sit at the same table as the rich man*" (Populorum Progressio, §47). In this passage the Pope "takes off" from an individualistic understanding of the parable and moves to a political one. When all the Lazaruses of our planet can sit with us affluent people at the same table of opportunities, then we shall be near the Kingdom: truly a "political reading of the gospel."

Jesus identified with the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, homeless, and imprisoned people; and our response to him in them is his final test of our justification (Mt. 25). To read that twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew in a political way would be to see the hungry not only as the occasional impoverished person one meets on a city street, but also as the nearly half-billion co-inhabitants of our world who do not have enough calories to sustain life, who are starving. It would see the thirsty as those classes of people who dry up from lack of what we call the basic necessities: milk, pure water, fresh air, green grass, etc. Reading Matthew 25 politically would mean seeing the naked as that stratum of human society which cannot cope with a highly competitive world around them and go under. The homeless in this view would be those groups of people in our inner cities and our Third World who must live in shifts of eight hours, sharing one or two rooms with other families. The imprisoned would be the two-thirds of humankind today which is at the mercy of communism or capitalism—denied human rights by the first system, and supporting with their life's blood the wealth of the second.

A political reading of the gospel takes the parable of the talents, turns it around, and stretches it. The call, therefore, as sounded in the Lord's speaking of talents means not so much that I develop my gifts to the full, as that I make sure my brothers and sisters can begin to develop theirs. And the political reading goes further to look at the social realities of our world wherein whole societies lack any way of realizing their potential of developing their talents.

One could go on and on with examples of how Scripture lends itself to this social, structural, political reading. I wish here, however, to place one warning sign. This way of reading the gospel is not gimickry, or novelty, or a violence to the inspired word. The political reading of Jesus' message simply calls upon that message to cover newly discovered realities: hunger on a world-wide scale, man's inhumanity to man, oppression of one people by another, the call for a new world economic order, the evils of communism and capitalism, and so on. And in my opinion the gospel has more than measured up to the call: it has a message if we read it correctly for an interdependent world, a global village, for realties which new disciplines like sociology, economics, and psychology have only recently shown to be there.

IV. Penance and Reconciliation

IN A spirituality of justice penance and reconciliation must have a vital place. When one becomes aware of the terrible injustices and inequities among human beings, of the widening gap between the haves and the have nots, of how affluence has come about by impoverishing other peoples, then one cannot present his or her gift at the altar without some effort at reconciliation, without an act of penance.

Some might say at this point that I am laying a "guilt trip" on good people, on folks who have no part in the current sad state of affairs, on persons who share no blame for today's world. But when one segment of humanity, and a minority at that, lives very well while another, the vast majority, live anywhere from poorly to abjectly—and this in the same world at the same historical moment—then that minority cannot but feel a measure of uneasiness, a sense that things are amiss. We may not consider ourselves directly responsible for the oppression of so many in our own country and the majority of peoples overseas, but we are part of this same history and we need to be reconciled with our brothers and sisters, who, in the words of Jesus, have something against us: their abject condition in the face of our prosperity. Before Eucharist or prayer, then, we must make an attempt at reconciliation.

There is an even deeper reason, however, for taking penance and reconciliation out of the merely personal and interpersonal realm, where we ask pardon for our faults against ourselves and one another, and moving our need for pardon into the areas of local, national, and international injustices. Jesus took on himself the sin of the world. In the words of Saint Paul the Lord "became sin." Not that he was himself guilty of any

wrongdoing but he took it on himself in the paradox of the Cross so as to redeem from it, to overcome it, to put an end to it. We do the same as he when we ask pardon of our common Parent for the injustices prevailing in our world. We imitate Jesus very closely when we not only admit our affluent part in the oppression of human beings today, but go further and shoulder all the sin which obtains in our world as he did in Gethsemane and on Calvary. We thereby further a reconciliation, a redemption; we thereby fill up in ourselves what is lacking as yet in Christ's sufferings.

V. Poverty

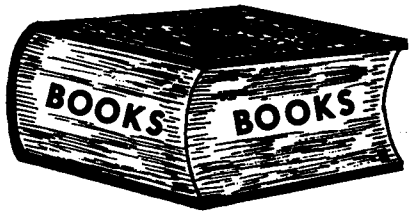
THIS VIEW of Jesus's redemptive act on Calvary by which we take on ourselves precisely that which must be overcome, gives us an insight into the ultimate reason for Christian poverty. Religious vow to be poor; bishops and clerics are rightly criticized when their lives do not somehow exemplify poverty; lay people live it, almost through necessity at times, as somehow congruous and necessary for a gospel-centered life. And yet all too often poverty finds no rationale in the minds and hearts of Christ's followers. Or the rationale stops short of its ultimate possibility.

We hear poverty-practicing Christians speak of "traveling light" as their reason for such a style of life; others feel that in a consumer-oriented society the Christian should be a sign that *having more* does not mean necessarily *being more*. Liberation from a cluttered existence, and efficiency in one's life sometimes are cited as reasons for embracing a poorer way of life. Or the freedom better to serve gives some their rationale for poverty.

All these reasons are good; all help us in our search for more authentic Christian living. But I suggest that the ultimate, bottom-line rationale for poverty lies in the paradox of the Lord's Incarnation and Redemption. God becomes human to save humans. The Savior dies in order to overcome death. Christ takes on sin so as to conquer sin. How this is, lies at the heart of the mystery we call the Redemption, as we saw in looking at Reconciliation. Logic fails us here, for we deal with a mystery; but its truth is manifest—else the Incarnation and Redemption have no truth at all.

And so with poverty the follower of Christ takes on himself or herself that very reality which must be overcome. We become poor so as to liberate from impoverishment. There is no human logic for this, only the logic of the Cross which is paradox. Freely becoming one with the outcast, the oppressed, the underdeveloped, the marginated through a materially poor life has a redeeming effect, as anyone who has ever seriously tried it can testify. In a spirituality of justice the element of poverty, of an option to be on the side of the poor as Jesus was, becomes very important with tremendous consequences in terms of everyday living.

(to be continued next month)



The Irrational Season. By Madeleine L'Engle. New York: Seabury Press, 1977. Pp. viii-215. Cloth, $8.95.

Reviewed by Marigwen Schumacher, M.A. (Classical Philology, Radcliffe College). An instructor for several years in the former classics department at the Emma Willard School, Troy, New York, Ms. Schumacher is presently Resource Consultant in Humanities with the Indiana Humanities Project.

The Irrational Season—the season of the heart—plummets us from our cold analytical consideration of human events and divine impersonality into an intense, fathomless inquiry, a surging, searching struggle towards the God of Christianity who is personal and immanent as well as transcendent, and touchingly in love with each particularity of his creation.

The book is a many-faceted jewel bouncing light-arcs in myriad directions. We read with an effortless compelling that mutely insists upon our continuing until we are caught in the wonder and poignancy of the telling. Madeleine L'Engle writes with superb control of language, of nuance, of verbal intensity, and with the clearest of statements of vision and struggle to be—to become—Christ's person.

Writing in a reflective, conversational tone, Ms. L'Engle weaves anecdotes, incidents from her personal, familial life, her work and prayer experiences—weaves these into her probings of the significance underlying each of the High Feasts of the Christian liturgical cycle. The book is thus—on one level—a series of reflections, pointed and illuminating, stretching from Advent unto Advent. But it is much more than another set of seasonal meditations. Merged into profound musings about ultimate realities are perceptive observations on the dilemmas of our modern world torn by dissension, evil, and pain. Fraught with the antinomies of "sunside" and "nightside," she shares with us her struggles, her "moments of glory," her facing of

events both joyous and pain-filled.

For Madeleine L'Engle is not afraid to admit her continuing struggle: "We are all broken, we human creatures, and to pretend we're not is to inhibit healing" (p. 92). She offers no pietistic, simplistic solutions for coping with personal or worldwide ills—offers none because she has found none but that demanding compelling surrender to the mystery of God: "I seek for God that he may find me because I have learned, empirically, that this is how it works. I seek; he finds" (p. 171).

Busy, active, creative—wife, mother, writer, teacher, and currently librarian at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine—from these multiple roles, she speaks candidly and openly, sharing with us wisdom and insight gained from hard-fought experience:

> When we pray with the mind in the heart, sunside and nightside are integrated, we begin to heal, and we come close to the kind of understanding which can accept an unacceptable Christianity . . . (p. 21).
>
> If we have so little control over the world in which we live, can our lives, and the lives of those we love, have any meaning? (p. 103).
>
> But all power is God's and God's power is an expression of his joy, and all earthly ritual is afire with the powerful joy of the Resurrection (p. 148).

One of the special qualities that make this a very special book is the author's gift of moving into song, poem, inspired utterance at depth-points throughout the chapters. One short sample perhaps tells much:

> To the impossible: Yes!
> Enter and penetrate,
> O Spirit, come and bless
> This hour. The star is late.
> Only the absurdity of love
> Can break the bonds of hate.
>
> (The Annunciation, p. 154)

The Mother of God. By Valentine Long, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. xvi-288. Cloth, $6.95.

Reviewed by Father Dominic J. Unger, O.F.M.Cap., Associate at St. Charles Church, St. Louis. The contributor of numerous monographs on the Primacy of Christ and other theological topics to various periodicals over the years, Father Dominic is continuing his research in Mariology and on St. Irenaeus.

The Franciscan writer of many years, Father Valentine Long, is well known for his pleasant style. He is true to himself in this work on Mary. It is written in an easy flowing, beautiful style, quite in keeping with the beauty of the Virgin Mother of Jesus.

The book has three unequal parts. The first deals with the four great Marian truths that are dogmas of divine and Catholic faith: her Immaculate Conception, her divine motherhood, her total virginity, her glorious Assumption. Maybe the fifth dogma, such at least by the ordinary and universal Magisterium, should also have been treated: Mary's sinless holiness throughout her life.

In the second part, Father Long describes and theologizes on the apparitions of the Virgin. The major apparitions are given separate treatment, some more than one chapter. Some minor apparitions are woven into various chapters. I said Father Long theologizes in this section. I mean that he brings out the Marian theology proclaimed or involved in the apparitions. As he concludes in the third part: These apparitions honor the faith; that is, they are in harmony with the public revelation as taught by the Church. Also in that third part (which deals with three inevitable conclusions) are these two: the miracles accompanying the apparitions are God's certification of the apparitions and their message; and, thirdly, honoring Mary redounds to God's honor and glory.

This work has been styled devotional. That is true, but I would rather call it popular, to avoid the misconception that it is not based on solid doctrine and scholarship. There are no long footnotes to reflect the scholarship; but everywhere those who have made special studies on Mary will see sound Catholic doctrine shine through. Father Long betrays an overall knowledge of the various areas that enter into Marian studies: Scripture, patristics, liturgy, conciliar and papal teachings. At times, of course, his statements relative to the content of Scripture on Mary will not accord with the conclusions of some modern scholars. Father Long, however, rightly reads those texts as the Church has read them and does read them still.

Some may judge the work a mix-up of doctrine and devotion, of divine public revelation and private revelations. But I think it is true to the real life of God's people; these live by the public revelation on Mary, but they are also influenced by the approved apparitions and their message. These apparitions were certainly meant by God for the good of the Church. The faithful will, in their daily lives, bring them to influence their living more carefully according to the public revelation.

I have some criticisms of accidental elements. Too many printing mistakes escaped the eye of the proof readers. Father Long refers to and quotes the Father of the Church and the theologians, but not once does he even mention the great Marian Doctor of the Church, Saint Lawrence of Brindisi, although it would have been appropriate to do so.

The statement that Mary in heaven enjoys a glory greater than what Satan once had (p. 4), needs to be reworded since Satan was never in heaven. The lessons for the feast of the Immaculate Conception ascribed to Saint Jerome (p. 12) are not authentic. Scholars do not hold that Daniel prophesied some five hundred years before Christ (p. 32). The star in Balaam's prophecy referred to the Messiah himself, not to the guiding star of the Magi (p. 34). The Lateran Council of 649 was not ecumenical as seems implied by putting it on a par with the Council of Ephesus and that of Chalcedon (p. 52). The Apostolic Letter in which Pius XII defined the Assumption was not composed by him, but by a group of scholars (cf. p. 66). Irenaeus's main work is not titled *Against Heresies*, but *Against the Heresies* (p. 100).

These blemishes in accidental matters will not hinder Catholics from reading this work with confidence that in it they are getting the teachings of the Church on the Virgin

Mother of God. The book should be a delight.

Give Me Souls: Life of Don Bosco. By Peter Lappin. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. 366, including bibliography. Cloth, $9.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard Leo Heppler, formerly a member of the English Departments of St. Joseph's Seminary and St. Francis College (Holy Name Province), and now chaplain to the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in West Paterson, New Jersey.

The life of every saint can be summarized in one word: *love*. The lives of some saints can sometimes be summarized in a one-word aspect of *love*. In this light the Little Flower would be *prayer*. St. Francis would be *joy*. St. Aloysius would be *purity*. And Don Bosco would be *zeal*.

Everything in Don Bosco's priestly life was directed towards helping "his" boys. Day and night he was always thinking how he could assist them. His prayers were for divine aid in his apostolate. His dreams were indications of what he was to do for them. He labored to acquire an Oratory for them. He introduced a successful program of training and education. He struggled against Alpine difficulties to expand his facilities. He founded two congregations to carry on his work. He sent missionaries to Europe and to foreign lands to work with youth. Even when he became a friend of popes and the adviser of political giants, his first concern was the betterment of boys.

Who were these boys? Initially they were the neglected youth of Turin. They were "street people" often lacking the necessities of life. Many were lads who had come to the city to find employment and had failed. Others were unwanted, the throwaways of society. They infected Turin and other cities of Italy just as our own delinquents are the cancer of our cities.

Give Me Souls is the story of one man's effort to save the youth of his day and of the future.

The events in the life of Don Bosco leave the reader open-mouthed. He was born into a family of less than modest means. He had to struggle to obtain the basic elements of an education. Eventually, he was able to enter the seminary, where he studied with a passion. He became a priest, and in a short time he discovered his apostolic work: the salvation of youth. From then on he followed his star wherever it would lead him, be that into obstacles from powerful civil authorities, or clerical criticism, or attempts on his life by assassins.

I think Don Bosco was fortunate in having a clear-cut aim in all his activities. It seems to me that those sincere people who must always wait in the darkness of faith for the Lord to manifest His will in very restricted revelations suffer greater trials than those who are driven by great dreams.

At any rate, zeal for souls is typical of all the saints. It is an outgrowth of love for God. Struggling against overwhelming odds is also common to all the saints. From these twin elements comes a wide variety of saints. From them emerged the kindly, fatherly Don Bosco attracting the most unlikely boys and leading them to salvation.

Writing hagiography is a demanding task. Each age has its own nuances of spirituality. What was edifying in the thirteenth century may leave the modern reader unresponsive. The author of *Give Me Souls* does not always treat his material most felicitously. It is not that there is any shortage of material; if anything there is too much. And there are occasional stiff expressions, as though the author were translating literally from the Italian. On occasion the time sequence gets jumbled. And in this age of renewed interest in prayer, reading of Sacred Scripture, desert days, and houses of prayer, we would expect more information on the interior life of Don Bosco. The *zeal* of the author, however, covers minor deficiencies. This is obviously a labor of love.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

My God and My All. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, rev. ed., 1976. Pp. 288. Leatherette, $2.95.

My God and My All is described as a Franciscan parish prayer book, but it is a prayer book of universal interest, for the style of Franciscan spirituality is one that appeals to far more than those somehow connected to Franciscans. Included in this prayer book are preparations for Confession and Mass (and Thanksgiving), Novena Prayers (nine different ones), Litanies, hymns for Benediction and in honor of the Saints, and some special favorite prayers to our Lady and the Saints. Especially valuable are the prayers for anointing of the sick, the Franciscan Stations, and the Credo of Paul VI. *My God and My All* will prove an aid to devotion for all who use it.

Questions and Answers: A Shorter Catholic Catechism. By Otto Pesch. Trans. by John Maxwell. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press; London: Burns and Oates, 1977. Pp. 89. Paper, $2.95.

Questions and Answers is more than a catechism or summary of Church teachings. What the author does in the 21 short essays is to explain in contemporary idiom what the Church is saying in a given area of doctrine or morality and then suggest its plausibility and its basis in Scripture. After treating of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, he goes on to discuss each of the Sacraments and its rationale. He then poses and answers questions like, "Do we have to pray every day?" "Does morality change?" "What is sin?" "What happens after death?" "Are Christians really free?"

Particularly excellent, in the opinion of this reviewer, were the essays on the Mass, baptism, and confirmation.

Definitely written for adults, *Ques-*

tions and Answers is a valuable little work. It does need supplementing by the oral word, however, as the sections on dogma, the priesthood, and the anointing of the sick (pastoral practice in the U.S. has gone far beyond the minimal use referred to in the text), in particular, are incomplete. And some of the judgments of the author might easily be disputed—e.g., that confession once or twice a year is adequate. Still, the helpful catechism should and doubtless will reach with great benefit, not only those already in the faith, but also those considering entering it.

Alone No Longer. By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 125. Paper, $2.45.

The publishers describe this book as "a priest's personal account of his profoundly moving experience with Marriage Encounter. However, perhaps because I have made a Marriage Encounter, Father Champlin's observations come through as objective description and analysis of the M/E movement, as well as personal testimony to its multifarious benefits to himself and encountered couples, their families, and their parishes. What is most significant for us professional men and women of God, is that the 44-hour week-ends that couples give to each other bring them genuinely closer to God. *Alone No Longer* is not, however, a sustained panegyric. The pitfalls, the occasional bad side effects, such as elitist attitudes, over-enthusiasm, pressuring recruits, are realistically set forth and admitted as undesirable. Father Champlin writes clearly and concretely, and his book is a valuable one—for prospective priests, sisters, or couples seeking to be encountered, for the already encountered, and for those who want to know something about a movement which can so enrich a couple, family, or parish.

Our Name Is Peter. By Sean O'Reilly. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. xii-144. Cloth, $5.95.

This work is subtitled "An Anthology of Key Teachings of Paul VI" and is dedicated to the Pontiff. But the author, Dr. Sean O'Reilly, a neurologist, has done more than compile papal statements about Mary, the Eucharist, the Role of the Pope, Infallibility, the Council, and the Pope as Teacher. He has woven a wealth of data into a forceful apologia for the Catholic Church's understanding—a self-understanding—of the special position occupied by the successor of Peter. Clarity of expression is Dr. O'Reilly's forte, while a perhaps too polemical tone might prejudice one against the logic of his exposition, a logic in itself nearly flawless. *Our Name Is Peter* is a book that every convent and friary should have.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Harris, Charles W., C.S.C., *Your Father's Business: Letters to a Young Man about What It Means to Be a Priest.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 110, illus. Paper, $1.75.

Huston, Joan, *A Hunger for Wholeness.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 87, illus. Paper, $2.95.

Lyons, James W., *Steps into Light: A Prayerbook of Christian Belief.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 63, illus. Paper, $1.75.

MacManus, Francis, *Flow on, Lovely River.* Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. 112. Paper, $1.95.

Manteau Bonamy, H.M., O.P., *Immaculate Conception and the Holy Spirit: The Marian Teachings of Father Kolbe.* Trans. Richard Arnandez, F.S.C. Kenosha, WI: Prow Books, 1977. Pp. xxxviii-134. Paper, $4.00.

Murphy, Edward J., *Life to the Full.* Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. xiv-142. Paper, $3.50.

Our Lady Speaks to Her Beloved Priests. Private ed. available only on written request to a distribution center of the Marian Movement of Priests (Natl. Hq.: St. Charles Rectory, St. Francis, ME 04774). Pp. 199; no price given.

Powers, Isaias, C.P., *Kitchen-Table Christianity.* Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. vi-179. Paper, $2.75.

White, Jack Noble, *Everything You Need for Children's Worship.* Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. viii-104. Paper, $3.25.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our May issue have been drawn by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, a novice member of the Franciscan Brothers of the Holy Cross at St. Anthony's Novitiate, Riverton, IL.

SUMMER 1978

FRANCISCAN GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND IN NEW SPIRITUAL DIRECTION PROGRAM

CALENDAR

Registration	Monday, June 26
Classes Begin	Tuesday, June 27
Modern Language Exam	Friday, July 14
Final Exams	Saturday, August 5

ACADEMIC YEAR OFFERINGS

THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES M.A. Program may be pursued during the Summer, Autumn, and Spring Semesters. The required number of course credits can be obtained in two Summer sessions and the intervening academic year, or in six Summer sessions.

COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1978

FI 500 ***Bibliography***
1 cr. hr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: MW 10:20-11:25, Library Seminar Room. This course is required of all new degree candidates. It must be taken in the first summer session attended.

FI 501 ***Sources for Franciscan Studies I***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 303
This course is a prerequisite for 503 and 504

FI 503 ***Early Franciscan Texts***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 308
Prerequisite: 501

FI 504 ***Life of St. Francis***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 302
Prerequisite: 501

FI 506 ***Survey of Franciscan History***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D.Phil.Oxon.: 10:20-11:25, Room 303

FI 508 ***History of Franciscan Thought***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 302
Required for students in tracks one and two.

FI 511 ***Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts***
2 cr. hrs., Dr. Malcolm Wallace, Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 308

FI 522 ***Franciscan Values***
2 cr. hrs., Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., S.T.L.: 8:00-9:05, Room 302

FI 541 ***Psychodynamics and the Franciscan Tradition***
2 cr. hrs., Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D.Min.: MWF 7:00-9:00 P.M., Room 302

FI 550 ***History of Franciscan Spirituality***
3 cr. hrs., Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M., M.A.: 11:30-12:35, Room 302
Required for students in track three.

FI 553 ***Contemporary Franciscan Documents***
2 cr. hrs., Fr. Joachim Giermek, O.F.M. Conv., S.T.L., M.A.: 11:30-12:35, Room 308

FI 563 ***Introductory Techniques of Spiritual Direction***
2 cr. hrs., Fr. Peter Damian Wilcox, O.F.M. Cap., S.T.L., S.T.D. Cand.: 8:00-9:05, Room 308

FI 599 ***Independent Research***
1-2 cr. hr., for advanced students by special arrangement.

FI 699 ***Master's Thesis***
6 cr. hrs., for advanced students by special arrangement.

Students planning to pursue the program through the year should begin their studies in Summer session.

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

the CORD

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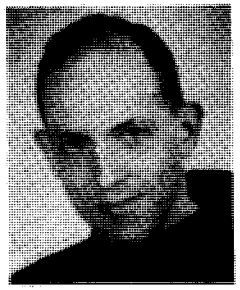


A REVIEW EDITORIAL

Angels and Men

A "JEWEL OF A BOOK," the publisher calls this on the jacket flap; and so it most assuredly is. If the author didn't refer to it a few times explicitly as a "book," with no indication of a different origin, I would be sure it was a series of retreat conferences. The style is irresistibly direct, abounding in first and second person usage, clear, simple, and compelling.

The book consists of twenty very short chapters ("meditations") if we include Foreword and Afterword, each devoted to a specific theme regarding the angels, their creation, nature, glorification or fall, governance of the visible universe, and role in salvation history. The first "meditation" sets the key, as it were, for the rest. Taking the appearances to Saint Joseph as his text (Mt. 1:20; 2:13; 2:19f.), the author emphasizes the angelic functions of bringing us help, mediating salvation, and assigning us tasks to perform.

Boros wears his erudition lightly. His citations from Scripture are abundant and are supplemented by only a few references to Thomas Aquinas and to his own friend and teacher, Romano Guardini. He sets forth, in this book, a consistent and quite traditional hypothesis (cf. Col. 2:15; Eph. 1:21f., etc.): that Jesus has, in the Incarnation, "displaced" the angels in their headship of creation (pp. 8, 32, 103-04). But this does not mean that their services were terminated; only that the incarnate Lord is their center and head as well as ours, and that their sublimest function is to lead us and all things to unity in him. Far from dwelling apart in some unknown "region," they are an integral part of the one creation.

In a fashion reminiscent of Tobias Palmer's *An Angel in My House*,[1]

[1]Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1975. See our short notice in the January, 1976, issue, p. 32.

Angels and Men. By Ladislaus Boros. Illustrated by Max von Moos; translated by John Maxwell. New York: Seabury Press Crossroad Books, 1977. Pp. 128. Cloth, $6.95.

Boros skillfully blends the literal and the metaphorical, explaining that now Jesus is our only "angel" and that we are "angels" to one another. Similarly, he blends the existential emphasis (the meaning of biblical texts on the angels for our concrete daily lives here and now; cf. p. 59) with the literal, insisting that he "would never wish to 'demythologize' or 'dissolve' the reality of the angels" (p. 126).

Some readers may have difficulty with Boros' diffidently expressed hope for Satan's ultimate salvation—but it is set forth only as a personal opinion and does get some scriptural support (at least if we accept the author's somewhat doubtful interpretation of Zech. 3:1-2, Jude 9, and 2 Pet. 2:11—cf. p. 83). Another difficulty I had is a minor one, involving only a degree of consistency and coherence. On p. 21, man is said to be the "apex of creation," since Jesus "did not become an angel but a man." But on p. 76 we read: Lucifer "did not wish to serve the human being in Christ, a creature below him in the hierarchy of creation." There is no contradiction here; but the apparent one should have been explicitly resolved.[2]

Angels and Men rightly deserves this editorial prominence, and a very wide circulation. This business of attaining salvation and fulfillment, in which each of us is engaged, is a cosmic affair. Far from being a speculative decoration of theological systems, the angels are real, powerful, important, and deeply involved partners with us in that cosmic affair. Any reading material which will keep our attention turned toward them is therefore needed and welcome. When such reading material is so engagingly written, elegantly translated, and fascinatingly illustrated, we can only be delighted and grateful.

Fr. Michael D. Mailach, ofm

[2]I like to think I did something like this in my book, *From Order to Omega* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966), pp. 37-38: "It is pointless to speculate, in this context, about the comparative excellence of human and angelic nature in the abstract. This particular human nature [of Jesus], opened as it is onto the fullness of the Word's Being, is by that very fact raised to a unique level of existence. Certainly the raising in question is essentially supernatural; but it is not without its effect, in the concrete, on what has traditionally been referred to as the natural dimension of Christ's humanity."

Spirituality of Justice—II

JOSEPH NANGLE, O.F.M.

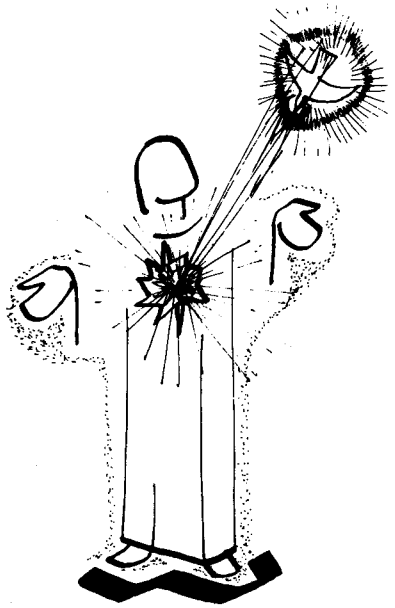
VI. Sin and Grace

SPIRITUALITY has concerned itself traditionally with the notions of grace and sin. A spirituality of justice, too, needs these categories, for they are very real in the one history of salvation which concerns us. For the Christian actively engaged in the struggle for justice, all the inequitable situations described throughout this article, the realities which hold human beings down, can be described as sin-filled. The struggle, therefore, is against sin, just as it was for Jesus. The Bishops of Latin America described the situation of that continent as "institutionalized sin." They referred, obviously, to sin which is not only personal but also social, structural, political. They referred to people's turning away from God, neighbor, and self, thus creating social evils. They referred to the institutionalized dark areas of life in Latin America, areas which affect so negatively the majority of people there, areas which must be combatted.

The believer who is engaged in promoting justice must understand the evils to be overcome in the category of sin so as not to lose a Christian perspective. And the category is real. "The light shines on in the darkness, a darkness that did not overcome it." What could this darkness be if not those areas of life which are not as yet grace-filled, which are oppressing humans, which are sin-filled. The struggle for the person of faith is between the powers of light and darkness, between grace and sin. "Where sin abounded, grace did more abound" is Paul's explanation of the struggle which continues to this day.

Grace, therefore, means as it always has the Life and Love of God, pushing back the dark areas of human existence through efforts of good men and women everywhere. Grace does not only push into our interior selves —though it most surely does that—to reduce the darkness in all of us. Grace, God's Life and Light, seeks also to permeate a world of economic, social, and political structures which are still much sin-filled at every level. Realities which are more and more full of God's Life and Light will come about only

Father Joseph Nangle, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province, has been affiliated with the U.S. Mission Council in Washington for the past two years.



through the efforts of good people to ameliorate things. This is the Christian view of struggles for justice and love, and it sustains us in those struggles.

VII. Prayer

WHILE IN A very real sense the integration of justice and the Spirit does make a prayer out of all tasks which promote human welfare, no one could deny the absolute need for what we call "solid times of prayer" or "moments of sheer prayer." Recent emphases on the necessity and value of praying in the Christian life take on even more strength when seen through the prism of action for justice. This is so evident as not to need further elaboration here.

This categorical affirmation becomes even more clear when we consider the *content* of prayer, the "stuff" of our solid moments before the Lord. For persons actively engaged in efforts for justice those very efforts and the problems which they seek to overcome appear as natural leads into prayer. Must we not bring the Kingdom values of dignity and freedom and liberation, as well as the violations of them and our struggles in favor of those values to our prayer? Is it not logical to present ourselves before the Lord with the everyday efforts we and our fellow human beings make towards a better world? We speak to the Lord of these things, listen for his word about them. Not a quiet time for mapping out strategies in the struggle for justice, this way of praying is an acknowledgement once again that in the Incarnation all of creation is called to union with its Maker and in the Redemption all must enjoy its fruits. This area of a spirituality of justice cannot be stressed enough.

In this view of prayer contemplation and the contemplative life take on renewed importance. There is great need for moments of contemplation that will shed gospel light and insight on our activities for justice. Thus there can be no good Christian activist who is not at the same time a Christian contemplative. Prayerful, reflective action is the only

kind which will keep alive the faith dimension of our concerns for justice. We need too the help of our full-time contemplative brothers and sisters to fulfill in faith this same task. Thomas Merton and others since have made great contributions and provided real challenges for us regarding our obligations to build the Kingdom in our real world—and this from their contemplative viewpoint.

VIII. Eucharist

IN OUR consideration of a spirituality of justice we look finally at the Eucharist—the most sublime expression and reality of Life in the Spirit, and a central action in the spirituality we have been describing. "When we eat this Bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory." To say this prayer after the consecration of the gifts is to acknowledge that we enter into the death of Christ each time we participate in Eucharist. And if the death of the Lord was the efficacious sign and final seal on his efforts to overcome sin and liberate humankind from sin's effects, then we enter into the Eucharist on those precise terms. During the moments of Liturgy we re-present, relive, reenact, share in and witness to that saving death. Hence to celebrate Eucharist is not only to acknowledge the Lord's death until he comes in glory, but to pledge oneself to the battle against whatever endangers that salvation, whatever militates against the already saved and yet to be saved human person. It is a pledge to struggle against lovelessness—injustice.

Saint Paul put all of this much more graphically, and I wonder why so few have ever read him in this light. In a letter Paul wrote to the Christians of Corinth, he tells them of the Lord's Supper and describes in detail how the Lord effected the Eucharist. But the context of that Pauline revelation is a very stern criticism leveled against that same Corinthian community, wherein among other abuses surrounding the Eucharistic celebrations "one person goes hungry while another gets drunk." Paul asks them: "Would you show contempt for the Church of God and embarrass those who have nothing?" (1 Cor. 11:11-27). In effect the Apostle is telling the Christians of Corinth that they run the risk of making a mockery of the Lord's freeing and saving act, the Eucharist, by the inequities rampant among them. Does not the same situation prevail today on a worldwide scale? Can we not read this passage in the light of some eating too much while others go hungry all over the world today? The consequences for our participation in Eucharist need not, I think, be spelled out.

If the Lord's Supper is Christ's continued action for total human liberation, then anyone who celebrates it must be about the same thing: liberation from whatever stands in the way of freedom. That is why the Eucharist has been called subversive: it overthrows and urges the overthrow of anything which prohibits true human freedom. Eucharist is the deadly enemy of ignorance, poverty, hunger, excessive power, unjust social contracts, exploitation of workers, violence against the weak, the arms race, the present unjust world economic (dis)order, the threat of nuclear destruction, overdevelopment in an underdeveloped world.

And for this reason the Christian engaged in the struggle against any of these sins finds in the Eucharist a motive, a hope, the consolation and a reason for continuing. Eucharist sums up a sustaining spirituality of justice.

Conclusion

ONE TERRIBLE risk inevitably run by those engaged in promoting justice is that of discouragement, a sense of hopelessness, the temptation to despair of ever effecting the changes needed for a more humanized world.

The dropout rate for social activists is extremely high, a fact admitted by all who have been there. There is, too, the increasingly common phenomenon of persons who are working for social justice having turned aside from their original Christian, gospel-centered motivation to a very humanistic, political clout kind of activity, not bad in itself, but far from where they began. So many persons who see the message of Jesus as a clear call to help bring about a world more in line with the values preached by the Master, eventually find the road of Calvary, or patient long-term work too slow and confining. Results are sought. Again, there are those who despair of the institutional Church's ever really placing itself squarely on the line for social change in our country. And this disheartens those with a broader vision than that currently projected by the organized Church, at least the Church in the United States.

For all socially conscious Christian people, but especially those just described—those tempted to give up because of the terrible obstacles encountered, those tempted to resort to

political expediency, and those tempted to take scandal from the institutional Church—there is a common reason for hope which must sustain. I speak of the Resurrection.

In my own life I have been faced with the consequences of structural evil: children of the poor dying in numbers because of the lack of the most basic health care; women in our parish clinic who were beaten down under the weight of too many responsibilities, too little food, no income and nowhere to turn; workers pleading simply to work, to earn, to produce with the sweat of their bodies something for their families to eat, and denied. In such situations and so many similar ones, two alternatives opened: belief in the Resurrection or weapons.

Hence the final word in an article on the spirituality of justice has to be Resurrection and what it says. No pie in the sky doctrine this, the Lord's final triumph after the Cross offers the only basis for hope. Death in the search and struggle for justice leads to a sharing in his Resurrection. Failures in the battle for justice must be seen as a share in the Lord's own colossal failure, one which somehow leads on to triumph. Weapons may alleviate for a time the sufferings of those who wait for a better world. But only those who are willing to work without seeing the effects of their efforts, who know that the task will surely take many centuries, who are with Jesus in Gethsemane and on Calvary—only these can sustain hope in themselves and in all who share their concern for a better human life. Only these can witness to a new Easter when justice breaks forth from its grave and the world is finally the Kingdom.

Postscript

LOOKING BACK over this attempt at outlining a spirituality of justice, I get the distinct impression that so much more should have been said. Each of the several headings in the article deserves greater depth in its treatment. The interlocking and complementary nature of them all should be better pointed out. And concrete struggles for justice, presupposed from the beginning, could have been cited profitably as vivid examples of what I was theorizing over.

Hence, if the article's opening words spoke of misgivings regarding its readers, these final ones express the same about its content. May we all see the entire effort as one of the first attempts to address in some ordered way what will surely be treated much more extensively by those more knowledgeable than I. The need to underpin, sustain, and permeate our justice-oriented actions with a Christian spirituality adequate to those actions is very real.

Francis and the Church of Sinners

SERGIUS WROBLEWSKI, O.F.M.

THE massive defection of youth from the Church is almost universal. The articulate among them have given an explanation. Their allegation is that the Church of today is unfaithful and radically different from the Church Jesus founded. There is a vast difference, they contend, between the Jesus of yesterday and the Church of today, between the Gospel that Jesus preached and the religion that Catholics practice today.

Consequently, the trend is not to attach any importance to one's being inside or outside the Church. The main thing, so the argument goes, is to live in loyalty to the Gospel; and to do that, it is not necessary to belong to any institutional Church. What puts one in communion with Christ is sharing the condition of the poor for whom Christ meant the message of salvation. To choose the poor in opposition to power and money is to draw close to Christ.

After all, the Church Jesus founded was a brotherly Church, comprising equals living in a fraternal climate of charity, prayer, and participation. But the institutional Church which often discriminates and exploits cannot be the realization of the Church of Christ. The only place one finds the kind of Church Jesus envisaged is in the freedom of the communes which are satisfied with a room, a Bible, a little bread and wine to remember the Lord's death and resurrection. In any case, many conventional Catholics who were born into the Church—but not necessarily "born again"—are put off by a Church that looks more like the "Church of sinners."

In his *Theological Investigations*[1] Karl Rahner has a chapter entitled "The Church of Sinners," in which he observes that too little attention has been given to what everybody knows from experience: that the supposedly "holy Church" is unholy.

[1]Karl Rahner, S.J., "The Church of Sinners," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 6 (trans. Karl-H. and Boniface Kruger; New York: Herder & Herder, 1969), pp. 253-69.

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From the very beginning the faithful have agonized over a sinful Church; Tertullian, for example, maintained that the universal Church of his time was not the true Church of the Spirit and of spiritual men but a house of whores! Again and again, seemingly dedicated Christians have rejected the Church as sinful and founded or joined some new church as the holy one. Luther, Calvin, Wycliff and Hus—to mention some of the principal dissidents—preferred to start another church while declaring the old one nothing less than a Babylonian whore!

These purists could never tolerate sin in the Church, whether they were Montanists or Novationists or the Cathari and always favored the permanent exclusion of the sinner from the Church rather than absolution. Their complaints were always the same: the clergy do not practice what they preach, and the churchgoers are hypocritical in their conduct.

Rahner reminds us that sinners are members of the Church: not only those who have lost grace by sin, but even those who are foreknown by God as eternally lost. Their membership may not be fruitful, but it is valid. Rahner adds that no member of the Church militant is without sin. Holiness and sin coexist in every baptized person. This holds just as true for the official representatives of the Church, bishops and priests, who thereby do not fatally pollute the sacraments even when their personal behavior is gravely sinful.

Like every generation, Francis and his brothers faced the same crisis. After they left all things to follow Christ, they continued to live in a Church which was institutional, authoritarian, and wealthy. But the more they found themselves at odds with the clergy in their lifestyle, the more Francis insisted on loyalty to the Church. They fully recognized the Roman Catholic Church as the Body of Christ and as the universal sacrament of salvation.

Let us make a quick review of the moments when Francis demonstrated his loyalty to the Church.

The principal inspirations came to Francis in churches. The voice from on high came to him at San Damiano and the Portiuncula. The call was to reform the "Church of sinners." Most often, admirers of Saint Francis assume that his vocation was to follow Christ. That is not entirely true. The more accurate description is that his vocation was to repair the Church of Christ by following him. These two parts of his vocation were not divorced, any more than the Church can be separated from Christ, the Head from the Body.

It was providential that the inspirations occurred in churches which were vivid symbols of a Church in disrepair: in the dilapidated San Damiano and the neglected Portiuncula. At first, Francis hardly understood this call. He obeyed the injunction "repair my church," given him at San Damiano, by taking up masonry and tuckpointing four churches. As yet, he did not discern the larger sense of the message. In this connection, Saint Bonaventure observed that "he was quite willing to devote himself entirely to repairing the ruined church of San Damiano, although the message really referred to the universal Church which Christ "won for himself at the price of his own blood' (Acts 20:28) as the Holy Spirit afterwards made him realize and he himself explained to the friars."[2] But as he continued to follow Christ and to take his words to heart as the only norm of conduct so that he "walked in the Spirit," he was more open to God's word.

For that reason the call came to him a second time at the Portiuncula—in that mean church with a mean priest presiding, as if the liturgical circumstances were reminders of the sorry state of the Church—the Gospel was read, in fact, Jesus's missionary discourse:

> Preach as you go, saying, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons ... take no gold nor silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff" (Mt. 10:7-10).

The call was to preach an eschatological message and to live an eschatological life style. The very next day, after spending a night in prayer, Francis preached. From that moment on, Francis dropped masonry and took up the ministry of the word. God's will was clear to him: he should edify the church by the living word, and bring the faithful back to Christ, to his person and message.

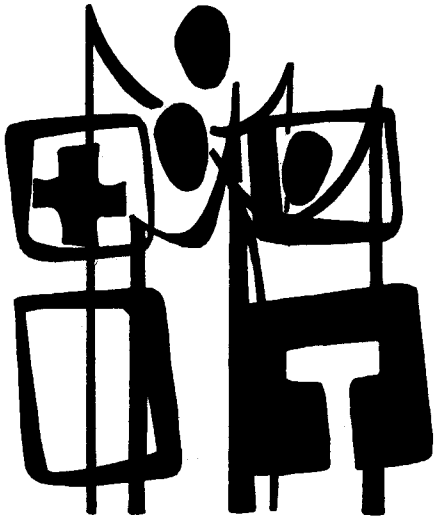
It may very well be that Francis would never have received this call to repair the Church if he had not previously demonstrated his loyalty to the See of Peter. It was only after Francis made the trip to Rome to honor the tomb of Saint Peter that he got the call. He was unlike many reformers who were zealous but not loyal: who followed Christ in his poverty but denounced his Church in her clergy, who instead of repairing the Church split her into sects.

It is not surprising that upon reaching the apostolic number twelve the little company of the Poverello sought papal authorization. Who else could authorize a vocation to repair the Church except the Head of the Church?

[2] *Omnibus*, p. 640.

Legend has it that Innocent III was moved to this official act by a dream of the Lateran on the verge of collapse but, at the same time, upheld by a little poor man. Perhaps this was a medieval literary form used to enunciate a general conviction that Francis indeed fulfilled his call to repair the Church.

Certainly Francis, more than any other twelfth-century person-



ality supported the sacramental system. In his letters as well as his Rules Francis was emphatic: the Eucharist, the sacrament of penance, the word of God—all are to be reverenced along with the clergy who alone can administer them. In his Testament this support of the hierarchy and the sacraments is unmistakable. Esser wrote in his commentary on the Testament:

> Time and again he requires that the Catholic Church is to remain authoritative. In this Church alone the objectivity of the saving process seems safe to him. "It was always his opinion," wrote Celano, "that above all and in everything we must believe in, honor, and obey the faith of the Holy Roman Church; in her alone do we find the means of salvation for all." That is the basis for his respect for the priesthood of the Church even if they might be sinful. Thereby Francis professed his utter faith in the sacramental Church. One can find important elements of the Franciscan movement in others of his time, but here is something new that separated Francis and his brothers from all similar, contemporary and radical groups: their orthodox faith and their devotion to the Church.[3]

Francis's loyalty to the Church was visibly located in his devotion to the sacrament of the altar, which was for him the very heart of the Church.

Karl Rahner observed in his book, *The Dynamic Element in the Church,* that Francis remains a force in the Church precisely because he remained loyal to it while other dissenters have long since been forgotten. Rahner

[3]Kajetan Esser, O.F.M., *Das Testament des Heiligen Franziskus von Assisi* (Munster/Westfalen: Aschendoffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1949), p. 156.

wrote that Francis's loyalty to the Church brought him many disciples who continued to express and transmit the Franciscan charism:

> What would Francis mean to the Church if he had not found disciples throughout the centuries? He would not at all be the man of charismatic gifts in the sense we have in mind here, but a religious individualist, an unfortunate crank, and the world, the Church and history would have dropped him and proceeded with their business. But how could he possess disciples, many disciples who have written into the actual history of the Church something of the ever-young grace of the Spirit, if these disciples and the soul of the poor man of Assisi had refused on principle to be faithful to this Spirit of theirs under the yoke of ecclesiastical law, of statutes, vows and the obligation that derives from the liberty of love?[4]

It was becaue Francis submitted to the ecclesiastical authorities that he attracted followers who struggle to realize his ideals to this day.

Two other events indicate Francis's love for the Church of sinners: (1) the Portiuncula Indulgence, and (2) the Stigmata. He requested the former of Pope Honorius for the benefit of the many sinners in the Church, that there might not be any impediment to their union with and growth in Christ. The second gift was from the Lord Jesus, who filled Francis's heart with his own compassion for the Church and marked his body through an angel with wounds similar to His, so that he might have the occasion to lay down his life for the Church.

In this way Francis bore the Church's burden of sin as his own. Never did he deny sin in the Church; nor did he ever sweep it under the rug. Rather, he felt for the Church just as his Savior had had compassion on His Bride, even when she was like the woman caught in adultery.

Perhaps that is why he ever noticed the miracles God works through the Church, as Rahner so beautifully put it:

> That, in spite of everything her hands are today as yesterday overflowing with grace, that the entreaty of the Spirit and his inexpressible groaning still ascend from her heart, that the angels of God still carry the prayers of the just in this Church like incense before the throne of God, that her voice still proclaims the Lord's word faithfully, that she conceives life for her children ever anew in her maternal womb, that the Spirit of Love continually wakens men

[4]Karl Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in the Church* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1964), p. 59.

to holiness within her, that in her the Lord's act of redemption continually takes place till the end of time.[5]

The Church, sinful though she is in her members, continues to be and will always be the instrument of God's grace.

Today the inclination of many is to flee the Church, but the Franciscan attitude, an essential part of the charism of the founder, is to feel for it.

[5]Rahner, "The Church of Sinners," p. 268.

I Love You

We are different, yet one.
You call out to me; I call out to you.
Our hearts embrace and grow ever fuller in love.
But it seems that as soon as we grow close
You are gone, we are separated.

And then I see a new heart.
At first I'm cautious and reserved,
But all of a sudden , I look again,
And I see that the heart is you.

It is different, yet the same.
You call out to me, and I respond.
Our hearts embrace and grow ever closer—
Ever fuller in love,
Until we are separated again
And I find someone new,
Only to discover that this heart is you too,
Loving me in the bittersweet loneliness of Chastity.

Timothy James Fleming, O.F.M. Conv.

Prayer of the Earth

SISTER DOROTHY KLAAS, O.S.F.

O MIGHTY and gracious One, Creator and Lord of all, I praise You for making me a mother, a bearer of life enshrined in so many splendid and varied forms. You have blessed me and made me fertile. All living creatures from the greatest to the least depend upon me. They are, in fact, made of my very substance. It is I who supply them with the water, carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, iron, potassium, other elements which compose their bodies. And some day, when they die, their bodies will slowly crumble and the various elements will be returned to me to be used over again. New plants sinking their roots into my soil assimilate those same materials and grow to maturity. Lord, you really are an old pro in this recyclying business. Human be-beings have been so slow in imitating You. They boast today of their ability to recycle paper, tin cans, and old cars. You must smile. From the beginning You ordained that most of the stuff around should be recycled thousands and thousands of times during the course of my history. How wise, how ingenious You are!

I praise You, O Holy One, for the marvelous succession of seasons—each with its special beauty, each bringing unique gifts. In particular I bless You for springtime, the season of miracles. Only a few weeks ago, trees, grass, and flowers lay rigid in apparent death under a blanket of snow. Then as the air grew warmer, the black arms of trees became flexible again, their joints swelled with the fluid of life, buds appeared, and delicate leaves began to emerge. Blades of grass gladdened the beholder with the brightest green imaginable, and blossoms shyly unfolded their petals on tree and bush. "Glory to God," they sang. "He made us, we are His. He is great and good." Birds joined in the symphony of praise with their melodious songs while brooks and rivers broke their bonds of ice and once again skipped along in lovely rhythms. At the same time seeds stirred in their tombs and behold! tender new plants rose to my surface. None but You could have devised such a

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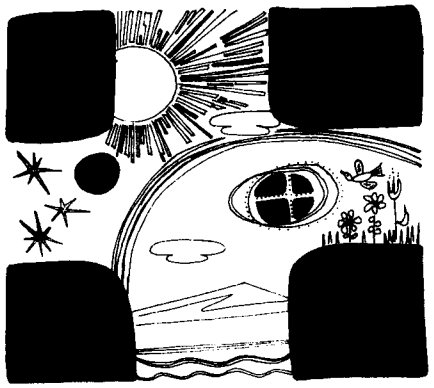
masterpiece as one tiny seed and given it such incredible power. You, O Lord, are worthy of the highest admiration.

I praise You, too, for making me a storehouse. With a father's indulgence, You have planned a perpetual treasure hunt for the children of men. For indeed, Your sons and daughters are surrounded by treasures. In field and forest, in orchard and vineyard, in lake and stream, You generously provide their every need. You give them grain, fruit, meat, and fish in abundance; in addition, all the materials necessary for clothing and shelter. In my depths, You have hidden vast quantities of oil, salt, sulphur, coal, gold, silver, iron, metal of every description. Diamonds, granite, marble, and limestone were Your inventions; and you lovingly prepared these surprises over the course of millions of years.

Of all the planets, You have bestowed on me alone that most holy, most versatile, most precious liquid, H_2O—water. Its presence on my surface is essential to life; its presence explains why I have been named the Blue Planet. Omnipotent, good Lord, I praise You for creating water and entrusting it to me.

I thank You, O my Creator, for allowing me to be a veil before Your adorable face. The beauty of my sunsets, majestic mountains,



and rolling oceans, the power of cascading water falls, high winds, and erupting volcanos, the gracefulness of birds in flight, of deer, of trees and flowers: all of these are a reminder of You, the Author of all beauty, power, and grace. You are present in all Your works, keeping them in existence from moment to moment. This is indeed a holy place—the dwelling place of Divinity. Unfortunately, for many individuals, I prove to be a thick, opaque veil. Or perhaps they are blind; seldom do they catch a glimpse of Your face. But then there are others: poets, artists, and saints who have inner vision. For them the veil is nearly transparent, and they are able to see You in a thousand places. Francis of Assisi was such a man. The sight of water, fire, sunlight, clouds, birds, and beasts filled him with tremendous joy. In them he sensed Your presence and Your Love. As someone expressed it, Francis seemed to

"feel the heart beat of God pulsing through all creation."

The Jesuit poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, became almost ecstatic as he contemplated the loveliness and variety of nature:

Glory be to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stiple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls, finches' wings . . . .

Meeting your Son at every turn in the world—this was the experience of another poet, Joseph Plunkett, who wrote:

I see His Blood upon the rose
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,
His body gleams amid eternal snows,
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower;
The thunder and the singing of the birds
Are but His voice—and carven by His power
Rocks are His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,
His cross in every tree.

All thanks to You, my Lord, that You have made me an instrument to feed, to clothe, to teach, to inspire, and to sanctify Your sons and daughters. "You have done all things well."

I have but one petition. Do You not see the sorry state to which my streams, the air, and the land are being reduced by wasteful practices, greed, and thoughtlessness? Today's inhabitants are committing crimes of pollution which will surely choke all life in a few decades unless this trend is reversed. Forgive me, O God. Perhaps I exaggerate. With all my years of experience, I ought to realize that Your mercy and Your power are unlimited. Though many of Your children have little reverence for the beautiful home You have given them, though selfish brothers seem bent upon bringing about a de-creation of the earth, Your Holy Spirit still hovers over me. Let me draw hope and comfort from that poet-priest, Hopkins, who recognized the wounds inflicted on me by men but who never doubted that

You are in control of my destiny.
He wrote:

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell; the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And through the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

It is with complete confidence in Your Goodness that I pray as Your Church prays: "Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your divine Love. Send forth Your Spirit, O Lord, and they shall be created, and You will renew the face of the earth."

★

Healing of Memories:

Summit of Franciscan Poverty

PATRICK MCCLOSKEY, O.F.M.

HAVE YOU ever heard a Franciscan say the following? Have you yourself ever said something like this?

*You know, I'm really not appreciated for my work. I gave my life to build up that parish (school, hospital, mission, chaplaincy). Now what do I have to show for it all? The community decided not to staff it any more.

*I got "burned" because of him (her). He (she) will never do that to me again.

*I gave everything I had to that community and got practically nothing in return.

*When I was younger I believed all that "will of God" stuff about my superior. When I saw what that got me, I changed my mind.

Have you ever run into a Franciscan who kept a very long and detailed record of offenses suffered and who readily shared this recital of woes?

If you have never said any of these things to yourself or have never heard a friar, sister, or lay Franciscan say them, stop reading this article. It cannot make any sense to you at this time. But if these complaints sound familiar, read on.

What do I mean by the term "healing of memories"? Michael Scanlan describes healing as the process by which what is wounded or sick becomes whole and healthy; it is the mending of a hurt. The healing of memories concerns a hurt lodged in the mind, the will, the heart.[1] People sometimes savor a painful memory much as European students once prized dueling scars. Strange as it may seem, sometimes people would rather keep an unhealed memory and the sympathy it may generate than have it healed. Unhealed memories can help rationalize failures and win attention.[2]

Richard Rohr describes bitterness in a person as the image Satan creates. Those who let

[1]Michael Scanlan, T.O.R., *Inner Healing* (New York: Paulist Press, 1974), p. 5.
[2]Ibid., p. 41.

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themselves be loved by Jesus are gentle and generous.[3]

By itself time does *not* heal all wounds; forgiveness does. The most common block to inner healing is therefore an unwillingness to forgive. People sometimes feel that forgiving certain memories would be an admission of failure on their part. The peace of Jesus Christ comes from a reordering of one's life, a transforming of the past and the present. Painful memories carefully withheld from the saving power of God shackle people.[4] When those memories are surrendered to God's grace, the person becomes more free and gains more trust in God.

The healing of memories takes a crippling memory and looks at it from the Spirit's viewpoint.[5] This healing prays that resentment may be replaced by God's forgiving love.[6]

What Johannes Metz said of poverty of spirit certainly applies to the healing of memories:

> To stick to oneself and to serve one's own interests is to be damned; it is "hell." Here a man discovers, only too late, that the tabernacle of self is empty and barren. For man can only find himself and truly love himself through the poverty of an immolated heart.[7]

An immolated heart forgives painful memories.

The healing of memories is based on the truth, the *whole* truth as God sees it. Here there is no pretending that the painful memory does not exist, that a harsh word or vindictive action never occurred. The healing of memories is a decision to forgive and not be warped by that memory. God alone can see the whole picture and judge accordingly.

Forgive: that is the key word. Are we totally unwilling to forgive? No, but we tend to set conditions. "If he makes the first move, if he grovels for a while, then I may forgive him," we tend to say. Such forgiveness is conditional; the healing of memories demands unconditional forgiveness.

In the story of the prodigal son (Lk. 15), the father did not decide to forgive the son as they were standing in the roadway. The father forgave the younger son long before going out to the road and looking for the prodigal. We love the story of the prodigal son. Rarely do we stress that the father's forgiveness was in effect long before the younger son came to ask for it.

In the *Teleketics* film on the sacrament of penance, the young girl injured in a car accident forgives the driver of that car long before the driver finds the courage to go to see her in the hospital. "I knew you would come," she says.

Scripture's most memorable stories are those of forgiveness. Jacob feared the meeting with Esau (Gen. 32); yet when it occurred Esau readily forgave his brother (Gen. 33). Joseph had his brothers in a completely vulnerable position, and then he forgave them (Gen. 45). Hosea forgave Gomer's many infidelities (1-3). As he was being stoned, Stephen prayed, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (Acts 7:60). Christ prayed on the cross, "Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing" (Lk. 23:34).

Was there ever a martyr for Christ who went to his (her) death cursing the executioner? Thomas More forgave Henry VIII and the headsman. Before she died, Maria Goretti forgave the man who tried to rape her.

In all these examples, the injured party forgave *before* anyone asked for forgiveness. But what if no one ever asks us to forgive? If we have forgiven anyway, we are more ready to do whatever *else* God may ask of us. A refusal to forgive until we have seen the other person crawl and prove his (her) sincerity beyond any doubt is a sure formula for bitterness and self-imposed stunted growth.

The healing of memories occurs in a *body* living the life of Christ. The community unbinds people and encourages them to become a new creation in Jesus Christ.[8]

So, what does all this have to do with Franciscan poverty? How can I call the healing of memories the "summit of Franciscan poverty"?

Francis tells his friars not to *appropriate* anything for themselves, "neither a house, nor a place, nor anything else."[9] Francis tells them not to be ashamed when begging since God made himself poor for their sake. We could ask, however, "When God made himself poor for our sake, wasn't forgiveness essential to that poverty?" The poverty of Jesus was not simply material;

[3]Richard Rohr, O.F.M., "Jesus, The Healing of God" (cassette published by St. Anthony Messenger Press).

[4]Scanlan, p. 28. On this subject readers may wish to check Jean Rosenbaum's "Don't Be Trapped by Your Past" in the January 1978 issue of the *St. Anthony Messenger.*

[5]Dennis and Matthew Linn, S.J., *Healing of Memories* (New York: Paulist Press, 1974), p. 7.

[6]Ibid., p. 27.

[7]Johannes B. Metz, *Poverty of Spirit* (Paramus, N.J.: Newman Press, 1968), p. 34

[8]Rohr, loc. cit.

[9]Rule of 1223, chapter 6.

it included a spirit of unconditional forgiveness. Wisely then does Francis warn his friars against condemning those who wear soft clothes and live luxuriously.[10]

Forgiveness and the healing of memories is the summit of Franciscan poverty because unhealed memories are the last "appropriation" we surrender. Friars, sisters, and lay Franciscans suffer a common temptation. They may check the urge to acquire material goods; yet they may jealously guard selected painful memories. They can avoid fancy clothes and very well furnished living quarters. They may re-evaluate and modify their hobbies and vacations. But for all this external poverty, they may be piling up inner "riches"—unhealed memories for later boasting and plays for sympathy.

The most barren cell may contain a friar bursting with painful memories which he will not give up for all the world. I am not arguing against material poverty, but only reminding myself and readers of THE CORD that such poverty is the beginning and not the end of Gospel poverty.

Francis carefully resisted the temptation to be materially poor yet rich in unhealed momories. In his last year was Francis a bitter man, grabbing every opportunity to save his Order from friars proposing relaxation? Is his Testament a deathbed attempt to head off changes in the Order? Did Saint Francis give up all his material possessions only to die swollen with painful memories that "his" ideal was being defiled? No.

The goal of Franciscan poverty is union with Christ crucified. The sons and daughters of Francis have set as their goal Saint Jerome's phrase, "naked ones following the naked Christ." Bonaventure ends his *Itinerarium* by praying:

> Let us silence all our care, our desires, and our imaginings. With Christ crucified, let us pass out of this world to the Father, so that, when the Father is shown to us, we may say with Philip: It is enough for us.[11]

If we are to be naked following the naked Christ, then forgiveness and the healing of memories must be part of that nakedness. If we are to be united with Christ crucified, then we must be joined to a Savior who was not bitter even toward those who taunted him on Calvary.

In the *Sacrum Commercium*, Saint Francis meets two old men

[10]Ibid., chapter 2.

[11]St. Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, Introd., trans., & commentary by Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M. (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1956), p. 101.

who tell him Lady Poverty now lives on a high mountain. "Therefore," they continue, "if you want to get her, remove the garments of your rejoicing, and put away every encumbrance and sin entangling you, for unless you are stripped of these things, you cannot go up to her who dwells so high above."[12] In the quest for Lady Poverty, nursing yet never healing painful memories is definitely an "encumbrance."

But perhaps the power of forgiveness and its connection with the healing of memories is best shown by this story from Eccleston's chronicle:

> There also grew up among them the very religious custom never to swear to anything but simply to say "Know that it is so." As soon as any of them was reprimanded either by a superior or by a confrere, he would immediately answer, "Mea culpa, I am at fault," and, frequently, he would even prostrate himself. For this reason, the master of the Preachers, Brother Jordan of happy memory, said that the devil told him when he appeared to him once, that mea culpa took away from him whatever he thought to gain amongst the Friars Minor, because they confessed their faults one to the other if one had offended against the other.[13]

[12]*Sacrum Commercium*, trans. Placid Hermann, O.F.M., *in Omnibus*, p. 1556.

[13]*De Adventu Fratrum Minorum in Angliam*, trans. Placid Hermann, O.F.M., in *XIII Century Chronicles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1961), p. 118.

A Modern Marian Creed

I believe in Mary, the chaste **Spouse of Joseph,**
Immaculately conceived, by a singular grace and privilege
of Almighty God, free from every stain of sin,
and **born of Anna and Joachim.**
Through the power of the Holy Spirit, she gave birth to Jesus
Christ, the Lord and Savior of the world,
and thus became the **mother of God.**
For us men and for our salvation, she suffered by sharing
the pains and death of her Son, Who died for the
Redemption of all mankind.
For our sake, she accepted at the foot of Calvary a **mission**
that was inseparable from her **divine Motherhood.**
On the Cross, our dying Savior gave her not only to the
Apostle John, but to each one of us when He said:
Behold your Mother.
I believe, therefore, in her role in the plan of **Redemption**
and in her function as our **spiritual Mother.**
I believe in her Assumption into heaven, where she, body and
soul, now gloriously reigns as **Queen of the Universe.**
For I believe that the **Mother of Life Himself** is lifted up
to life by **Life Himself** and that neither death nor the tomb could
hold the **Mother of God.**
I believe Mary is the perfect Image of the Church.
In heaven, she is a kind of sign, reassuring and comforting
the wandering and **pilgrim People of God,** who are still on earth.
I believe in Mary, the Mother of the Church, sent by God to
make all men one, in her Son.
For she is the **Mother of God and Mother of men,** who helped the
beginning of the Church by her prayers.
I believe that Mary, now raised above the angels and saints,
will **intercede with all the saints to her Son,** until all
families of people, whether Christian or not may be gathered
together into **one People of God,** for the glory of the Trinity.
I believe that Jesus is the Source of all Truth and Holiness
and that **our devotion to Mary should lead us to him.**
For **Mary is the true and perfect Christian,** and what has been
accomplished in and for her is something that will be bestowed
upon all faithful believers.
I acknowledge Mary as the Example of what we can accomplish through
Jesus Christ.
And through her intercession and mediation, I look for the
resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Cletus J. Dello Iacono, O.E.M.

The Little Brothers of Saint Francis

THE LITTLE Brothers of Saint Francis are a contemplative community of Brothers, who have as their cloister the noisy streets of the inner city, and as their cell the deep center of their hearts where they foster an interior life of union with God.

The Brothers strive to rediscover the authentic charisms given by the Holy Spirit to Saint Francis and his early friars. Responding to the exhortations of Francis in his earliest rules, including a little known rule for eremitical and contemplative life, they center their lives in the "mystery of the Lamb that was slain" with daily Community attendance at the celebration of the Mass and one hour of Eucharistic Adoration each evening. They strive to imitate and experience the three great loves of Saint Francis: (1) Eucharistic devotion and liturgical prayer, (2) ministry to the "lepers" of our society, and (3) actual poverty like that of Christ and his Apostles.

Founded in the Archdiocese of Boston in 1970, the Little Brothers follow the rule for Regular Communities of the Third Order of Saint Francis and a set of unique guidelines for their way of life approved by His Eminence, Humberto Cardinal Madeiros. Autonomous in their government and formation program, they are under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Immaculate Conception Province of the Order of Friars Minor and enjoy the fraternal blessing of Father Constantine Koser, O.F.M., Minister General.

Candidates are accepted for a three to six month Observership, a six-month Postulancy, and a one year Novitiate before being admitted to Profession. Final Profession follows five years of temporary vows.

Participating in the Church's official liturgical prayer, the Brothers regularly chant the Divine Office in common and allow in their daily horarium for periods of silence, meditative reading, and personal prayer. Their communal prayer is one of Praise, Adoration, Thanksgiving, and Intercessory Petition for their fellow Christians.

From the end of Night Prayer, with its traditional singing of the *Salve Regina*, until after Mass the following morning, they observe "Grand Silence." Silence is a necessary condition for hearing

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The text of this article is reprinted, with minor adaptations, from the vocational brochure distributed by the Little Brothers of Saint Francis: Fraternity of Peace and Love, 789 Parker Street, Mission Hill, MA 02120.

and being responsive to the call of God. It contributes to a rhythmic way of life that facilitates habitual union with God. They place special emphasis on personal holiness, acquired in communal life through penance and encounter with the Lord in his true humanity: tender in the manger, sorrowful in his Passion, and joyfully transfigured in his Resurrection.

Led by the Lord to an "evangelical street ministry," the Little Brothers encounter Jesus in the many homeless men and women who populate our city streets. Among these poor little ones are alcoholics, drug addicts, the mentally disoriented, and just plain outcasts, who together share a common loneliness and rejection by a materialistic and impersonal society. They bring to these people the healing love of Jesus, listening to their individual problems, giving them hope, and sharing with them the happiness of the Gospel message. They also share a hot meal with them when means are available, and they distribute sandwiches and hot cocoa when possible.

Since the Brothers do not aspire to professional careers, they cooperate with existing agencies and assist the needy to the hostels, soup kitchens, detox centers, and institutions that can better meet their needs. The Brothers' ministry and daily sustenance are provided by the Providence of God, by generous Christians, and by whatever income they can earn from part-time crafts and odd jobs. They are always more than adequately provided for at "the table of the Lord."

Obedient to the Church, the Holy Father, and their Superiors, and submissive to the will of God in their lives, and as a means to true conversion, the Brothers embrace humility and actual poverty, living in small rented inner-city fraternities and assuming the simple circumstances of their neighbors. Each Little Brother has two pair of dungarees, some underwear, a pair of sandals, and a blue denim habit. A woolen jacket and waterproof boots are added for winter months. They deny themselves all other personal items, and to facilitate the contemplative life they forego television, radio, smoking, and many other diversions.

The Brothers embrace a chaste and celibate lifestyle as an eschatological witness to the Kingdom of God. Obedience and celibacy free them from the tyranny of self-centered impulse so that they can dedicate their lives to Jesus in a service of love to their poorer brothers and sisters. By returning each day to their contemplative communities, they are able to replenish their spirit in the love of Jesus, the Lord.

The Brothers see their vocation to the Brotherhood as a sign of the humility and obscurity that characterized the life of the Holy Family at Nazareth. Their lifestyle is intelligible only in the light of faith. Saint Francis, in a very early text, exhorted his Brothers: "Do not argue with unbelievers, but be humbly subject to all creatures for the love of God, and thus bear witness to what Christianity really is."

Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. The Little Brothers seek to be consumed in his flame—to be the hands of Jesus to the poor and the smile of Jesus to the whole world.

The Holy Bible

In the beginning
was a story
The story was
here
But it got pushed
out

It wandered here

It got ended here.

But there was an
Author; so it
continued after
it ended.

It begins today.

Sister M. Mercedes, P.C.C.

Here in Lisboa

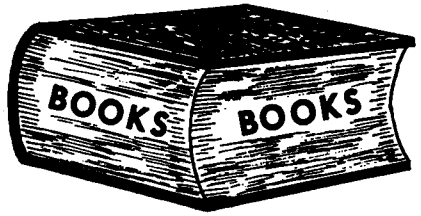
I stood at your death-place,
saw through the votive hearts
and tinsel wreaths,
found you there
behind the green marble,
felt the tears come
as we linked hands
there is Padua
over seven long centuries,
Father, Brother, Anthony.

I stand now at your birth-place,
and wonder:
however could you leave
these beautiful banks of the Tagus?
Though deep down I know—
the call of the Canons,
the bones of the martyrs,
and Francis,
the Gospel, its marrow,
His way.

Father and Brother,
I have long knelt among your clients
asking to find
knowledge and wisdom and virtue,
articles lost by the way.
Today, a pilgrim and beggar again
here at your birth-place,
Dante-like
in a dark wood,
I fear I have lost the way:
I touch the trees and I bleed.
Here, under the blue skies
and brilliant sun
of your Lisboa,
I reach again for your hand:

Father, Brother, Finder,
help me to find
His blazings
on the bark.

Leander Blumlein, O.F.M.



Variations on a Theme. By Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. viii-100. Cloth, $5.00.

Reviewed by Father John F. Marshall, O.F.M., author of several well received series of Conferences for Religious and presently Assistant Pastor at St. Mary of the Angels Church, Allegany, New York.

Instant satisfaction! Joy! Inspiration! This was my experience in reading and re-reading this gem of a poetic treasure trove.

I recall "huckleberry" days when as a boy I used to sit on the branch of a sturdy tree and so perch myself over a quietly flowing ribbon of a river and gaze into the water in search of fish. The longer I looked, the more fish I saw, the more varied the shapes and sizes of submerged rock, the more visible the camouflaged species of water life.

In reading this timeless tome of tender beauty I was again that free spirited boy on the limb (and since then many a time out on the proverbial end of it!). With each poem and a re-reading thereof, like a deep sea diver overcoming his fear, I dove deeper and deeper, overcoming the fear of misinterpretation. As from the bottom of Shechem's cool and refreshing well, I drank in delightful droughts of poetic pleasure. Thanks to the obvious gift of intuition that belongs to Mother Mary Francis, I was privileged with keyhole glimpses of beatific beauty. My first reaction was to run off and share my own insights.

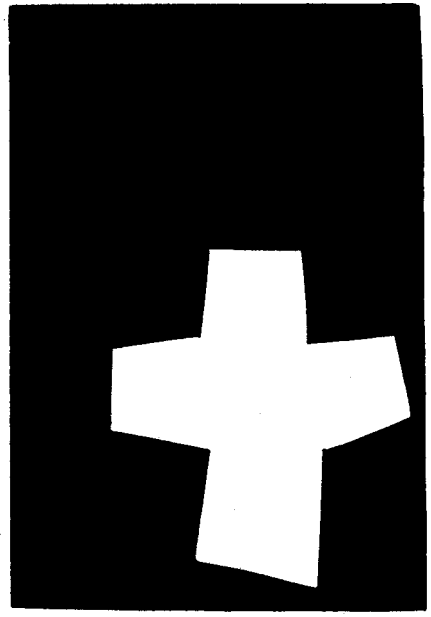
Variations on a Theme is an ensemble of fifty-eight poems assorted into six general categories. As Mother Mary Francis says, all of them were gleaned from "her riper years." And what a harvest! All "stacked" yellow ripe according to the following themes: Days of Our Life; Vocation; Francis and Clare; Life, Joy, Pain; Christ the Lord;

and End of the Day. In the reading I really "made hay." In the reflecting the grain became bread, and in the tasting the bread became communion.

In the reviewing of poetry, how does anyone do justice in the attempt when he is a poet himself only by disposition? Is a "foot in the door" competence enough to judge the "interior" of the home? Well, whatever, the recognized gift that Mother Mary Francis has of transitizing the abstract and the neutral was enough to move my heart and settle my soul. As though led by the hand, I have been escorted from ordinary experiences (never ordinary to her) such as guimpes hanging on a line (what are these?), a friendly loitering cat, or an autumnal scene, then been taken on a tour through the pages of Scripture, and finally offered a "take-home" soft punch line that left me content with the entire content. Ponder, e.g., this concluding couplet:

> Sweet is the love that never knew a wound,
> But deeper that which died and rose again.

It takes courage to read good poetry, the kind that it takes to pen it. May I encourage the readers of this review to peer into the depths of these poems and keep looking until there is revealed at least some of the varied joy and inspiration that is so satisfying in the searching and finding. May I also ask forgiveness of Mother Mary Francis for daring to review what in words of poesy are surely the very breath of her religious life.



Invitation to Luke: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke with, Complete Text from the Jerusalem Bible. By Robert J. Karris. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Image Books, 1977. Pp. 279. Paper, $2.95.

Invitation to Matthew: A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew with Complete Text from the Jerusalem Bible. By Donald Senior. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Image Books, 1977. Pp. 279. Paper, $2.95.

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

These two books form part of a new series of commentaries on the Word of God. One of the aims of the series is to introduce the educated laity to the contributions of technical scholarship.

Father Karris, to begin with the volume on Luke, certainly achieves this purpose without confusing the ordinary person with footnotes or scholarly apparatus. Another significant feature is the lucid manner and apparent ease whereby the author shows how the Christian community with which Luke was familiar was the catalyst prompting him to write his gospel as a means to encourage his Christian audience to persevere in prayer and faith in Jesus. This commentary singles out teachings that address themselves to and have interest for men and women today. Some of the issues which are discussed are these: Jesus and women, the Eucharist, encouragement for relentless adherence to Jesus, prayer, suffering, God's promises, and forgiveness.

The book's format is simple. The gospel text is presented in units (e.g., Lk. 1:3-38; 1:39-56, etc.). The major theme of each unit is explained. A study question for reflection and discussion, which relates the theme to living out the gospel teaching concludes each unit. Men and women who read, study, and reflect upon the gospel text and this commentary will learn much about Jesus and his message. The author's engaging style as well as his enthusiasm and interest in the gospel will bring any serious reader into contact with the bedrock of the gospel tradition, Jesus of Nazareth. This book is highly recommended for anyone interested in personal or group study of the gospel. It is rich in insights into Lucan spirituality.

Father Donald Senior introduces his commentary on the first gospel with a brief but fascinating analysis of the turbulence that beset the Christian community to which Matthew addressed his gospel about 80-90 A.D. One must sense the crisis and tempo of the first Christian century if the gospel is to come alive and the reader is to get caught up in its story and feel the impact of its message. Matthew's portrait of Jesus, moreover, reflects the hopes and aspirations of Christian men and women of these crisis-filled days. Although several sections of the book might be selected to give the reader an idea of its value, a few samples should suffice. The infancy Narrative is treated in four separate units. Each unit points out some teaching that underlies the colorful events that describe Jesus's birth. For example, there is an adequate explanation of the theological meaning of Jesus's genealogy. The name Immanuel, one learns, is the biblical way to say that Jesus is the embodiment of Yahweh's covenant with Israel, its definitive renewal, and the fulfillment of God's promise to be with his people. Another interesting section of this commentary is the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus is presented as a new Moses proclaiming a new revelation which challenges people of faith to hear and obey the will of God. Throughout the commentary there seems to have been a conscious effort to highlight those things that have particular interest in the thinking of today's Church. Some of these interests are community, leadership, Jesus's law, gospel attitudes, change of heart, healing with love, and faith in Jesus. Reflection on and careful study of this com-

mentary will be a helpful guide to open up the richness of Matthew's gospel and elucidate its meaning for Christian life and spirituality today. The book is very well written, most interesting, and truly inspirational.

The Franciscans and Italian Immigration in America. By Leonard F. Bacigalupo, O.F.M. Hicksville, NY: Exposition Press, 1977. Pp. 80. Cloth, $4.50.

Reviewed by Father Cyprian J. Lynch, O.F.M., Archivist of Holy Name Province, Editor of its Annals, *and a member of the staff of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University.*

This useful little volume is an expanded version of a paper prepared for the Sixth Annual Conference of the American Italian Historical Association in 1973. Described in its Foreword as "a brief history of the Province of the Immaculate Conception," it fills an obvious gap in the literature of American Franciscan history. An account of the friars' apostolic labors among Italian immigrants has long been overdue.

After sketching the development of his province from its foundation in 1855 to the present day, the author outlines the history of the several Italian parishes founded by his confreres in the eastern United States and Canada. In the third chapter, entitled "An Evaluation," he concludes that "the Italian American today has identified with his Church, and plays an important role in its growth and development as it moves from the Irish Catholicism of the past to a more universal Catholicism according to the mind of Vatican II."

One of the book's most valuable sections is its eight-page "Bibliographical Essay" containing an annotated listing of both archival and published sources. Only American archives, however, are surveyed. Until European record collections, especially the Archives of the General Curia of the Order, are thoroughly searched, the early history of the province cannot be completely reconstructed. It was, no doubt, an oversight that Tomasi Silvano's *Piety and Power: The Role of Italian Parishes in the New York Metropolitan Area, 1880-1930* (Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies, 1975) was omitted from the list of published sources.

In an appendix, English translations of four key documents in the province's history are reproduced: the contract between the Bishop of Buffalo and the Minister General of the Friars Minor that gave the Italian friars a residence at Allegany, New York (1855), the decree erecting the Custody of the Immaculate Conception (1861;, the decree separating the Italian from the Irish members of the custody (1901), and the decree raising the custody to the status of a province (1910). The book concludes with a reprint of the author's article, "Italians in the U.S.," from the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (vol. 7, pp. 746-47).

The Franciscans and Italian Immigration in America fittingly commemorates the 75th Anniversary of the decree of 1901 that guaranteed the legal autonomy and ethnic identity of the custody that nine years later became the Province of the Immaculate Conception.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Barclay, William, *The Men, the Meaning, the Message of the New Testament Books.* Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976. Pp. xi-149. Paper, $3.95.

Boros, Ladislaus, *Angels and Men.* Trans. John Maxwell; illus. Max von Moos. New York: Seabury Press Crossroad Books, 1977. Pp. 128. Cloth, $6.95.

Finley, James, and Michael Pennock, *Your Faith and You: A Synthesis of Catholic Belief.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. 2 vols, paper. Text, pp. 270; $3.95; teacher's manual, pp. 118; $2.25.

Heidt, William G., *The Book of the Apocalypse.* New Testament Reading Guide Series, n. 14. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1962. Pp. 129. Paper, $0.80.

Howell, Clifford, S.J., *Of Sacraments and Sacrifice.* Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 3rd rev. ed., 1977. Pp. 197. Paper $3.95.

Hunt, Marigold, *A Book of Angels.* Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, rev. ed., 1978. Pp. 143. Paper $3.95.

Jungmann, Josef A., S.J. *The Mass: An Historical, Theological, and Pastoral Survey.* Trans. Julian Fernandes, S.J., ED. Mary Ellen Evans. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1976. Pp. xvi-312, incl. indices. Cloth, $9.95.

Lauder, Robert E., *Loneliness Is for Loving.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 143. Paper, $2.75.

Manton, Joseph E., C.Ss.R., *Ten Responsible Minutes: A Pleasant Approach to Homily Headaches.*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. 232, incl. index. Cloth, $9.95.

O'Connor, Edward D., C.S.C., *Pope Paul and the Spirit: Charisms and Church Renewal in the Teaching of Paul VI.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. xiii-258, incl. 3 appendices. Paper, $4.95.

The Order of Priesthood: Nine Commentaries on theVatican Decree "Inter Insigniores." Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. xiii-145. Cloth, $7.50.

Shlemon, Barbara Leahy, Dennis Linn, and Matthew Linn, *To Heal as Jesus Healed.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 107. Paper 1.95.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our June issue have been drawn by Sister Marie Monica, O.S.F., of Sacred Heart Academy, Klamath Falls, OR., except those on pp. 165 and 167, which were drawn by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, F.F.S.C., of St. Anthony's Novitiate, Riverton, IL.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrationsfor our July-August issue were drawn by Brother Robert G. Cunniff, 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

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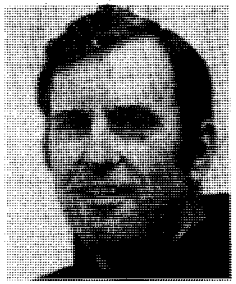

"Closet Religious"

RECENTLY, WHILE SPEAKING with a friend, I got onto the topic of faith and its public profession. My friend felt that many of our contemporaries are really believers but reluctant to manifest this commitment. It struck me that not only are there lots of "closet believers" around, but some "closet religious" too.

By "closet religious," I mean a person in religious life who in his heart believes in the values behind the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience he or she has professed. His or her conscience is still troubled at times of retreat when the words "God has as much place in your heart as he has in your schedule" are uttered, or when reminded that "you come to religious life to do what God wants, not what you want." Yet when time of community chapter or visitation or just ordinary conversation in a serious vein comes around, the "closet religious" expresses no dissatisfaction with the ever-diminishing prayer life of his fraternity, the decreased availability of confreres who are elsewhere, the multiplication of automobilies, the larger concern for money, to name a few things which in our own day run counter to the thrust of our religious vocation. The "closet religious" just goes about living in community without giving any input into the quality of religious living, whether by suggestion, by vote, by complaint, or by observation. I suspect that anyone who has never been on the losing side of a community vote is a "closet religious."

Why is it that people let what is most dear to them—community life—crumble or dissolve or get sick before their very eyes? Native timidity is one explanation. But likely more to the point is that "Human respect" we were all cautioned about at the beginning of our religious life. Words like "pre-Vatican II," "conservative," "fearful," "closed," are barbs which can bother even the most thick-skinned of us. Or perhaps we dread more the condescending attitude of those who think community "happens" or view religious life as the place where *I* work out a destiny *I* have chosen. Although some of us have the name of "minors," we do not like at all being looked down upon.

Another factor which makes us "closet religious" is the momentum of the "liberty" band-wagon which we have all more or less jumped upon. We are used to our own way quite a bit more than we were ten years ago, and we have acquired a few fringe benefits we are reluctant to surrender. Then too, we don't want a return to the "mickey mouse" of the 50s, and so let the chaos and confusion of the late '60s settle into the "every man for himself" of the '70s.

In the field of educational theory you are all reading about "back to the basics" and increased prevalence of a fuller core curriculum as schools look toward the '80s. As in education, so in religious life, time-honored structures were abandoned in the interest of freedom, and the unfulfilled expectation that good advice is almost inevitably taken. The educators have realized their mistake. Are we in religious life going to come out of our closets (*comfortable* closets) and *work* for a return to the basics, *speak out* for the core values of community prayer, community togetherness, and *common* life which are our deepest expectations, and which we know just don't happen when evervone does his thing?

F. Julian Davies ofm

The Garden of the Sun

A plant—once giant height—now dwarfed and
weathered
praises the Owner of the field in which it
rests in death
and calls by name all things green and brown
and wondrous surrounding it
although it cannot see these beauties any more.

Diminished in stature with its gnarled and twisted
limbs
it yet produces seedlings of delicate hue
which wave breathlessly in its shadow
harbored yet beneath the dying father.

The most fragrant and brilliant of all shoots
blessed her father and makes for him
coverlets of her own leaves
thus Clarifying the Canticle which all creatures
hear in the garden of the sun at San Damiano.

Sister M. Thaddeus, O.S.F.

God Alone Is Good

BERARD DOERGER, O.F.M.

IN HIS BOOK, *Transformation in Christ*, Dietrich von Hildebrand describes the humble person in the following words:

> The humble man is not interested in values as an instrument of "decorating" his own self and enhancing his dignity; he understands, and responds to, their importance in themselves. He is interested in the good for its own sake. He finds the cause of his joy in the *magnalia Dei*, the glory of God as mirrored and signified by the cosmos and its wealth of values, including in particular, the values he discerns in human beings other than himself. Not subject, as we have seen, to the urge of "counting for much," he neither boasts of his virtues nor takes pleasure in their contemplation. He knows that he has received whatever good there is in him from God, and attributes nothing to himself. He says with St. Paul: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:14). He does not feel in any way superior to others; even, say, in regard to criminals, his first thought will be, "Who knows what might have become of me, had the grace of God not protected me, or had I been exposed to the same temptations." He considers himself the least among his fellow men, more sinful and unworthy than anyone else.[1]

Von Hildebrand makes no reference to Saint Francis of Assisi in this chapter on humility in his book; yet the description that he gives of the "humble man" seems to fit perfectly the picture of the "poor man of Assisi" as we meet him in his writings and the early sources of his life.

And at the root of Francis's humility is his conviction that "God alone is good,"[2] and that whatever good there is in creatures comes from God and must be attributed to God, with nothing attributed to oneself except one's failings and sins and sufferings.

In the following pages, by examining the writings of Saint Francis and those of his early biographers, we shall attempt to trace this concept of God as the source of all good and to spell out some of its ramifications and applications in the life of Francis and also hopefully in our own.

[1]Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Transformation in Christ* (New York • London • Toronto: Longmans, Green & Co., 1948), pp. 142-43.

[2]Rule of 1221, ch. 17, *Omnibus*, p. 45. Subsequent references to early sources with page numbers only are to be found in this edition.

Father Berard Doerger, O.F.M., teaches Latin and German at St. Francis Seminary, Cincinnati. He has done graduate work in Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University and participated in the Hermitage Program at St. John the Baptist house of Prayer in Jemez Springs, New Mexico.

God, the Only Good and Source of All Good

"GOD ALONE is good."[3] These words of Christ found in St. Luke's Gospel are three times cited by Francis in his writings when he speaks about the goodness of God.[4]

Francis expands on this scriptural quotation in a variety of ways in different contexts. In Chapter 23 of the Rule of 1221, for instance, we find: "He alone is true God, who is perfect good, all good, ever good, the supreme good, and he alone is good."[5] Similar expressions are found in the Praises of Francis as he prays to God: "Lord, God, all Good, You are Good, all Good, supreme Good, Lord God living and true." Or again in the Letter to the Faithful Francis proclaims: "He is our power and our strength, and he alone is good, he alone most high, he alone all-powerful, wonderful, and glorious; he alone is holy and worthy of all praise and blessing for endless ages and ages."[7]

The eighth Admonition specifies that God who is good is also "the only *source* of every good,"[8] and the seventh, in a similar way, speaks of "God, to whom belongs all good."[9]

Goodness in Created Beings

SINCE GOD alone is good and the source of all good, then it follows that all good found in the created world is a participation in and a reflection of God's goodness.

Francis, it seems, had a very clear perception of this truth. As Celano writes in his *Second Life of Francis:*

> . . . he used it [the created world] as a very bright "image of his goodness." In every work of the artist he praised the Artist; whatever he found in the things made he referred to the Maker. 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

[3]Luke 18:19.

[4]Rule of 1221, ch. 17; p. 45; Letter to All the Faithful, p. 97; Rule of 1221, ch. 23; p. 52.

[5]Rule of 1221, ch. 23; p. 52.

[6]The Praises before the Office, p. 139.

[7]Letter to All the Faithful, p. 97.

[8]Admonition VIII, p. 82; emphasis added.

[9]Admonition VII, p. 81.

things he saw Beauty itself; all things were to him good. "He who made us is the best," they cried out to him. Through his footprints impressed upon things he followed the Beloved everywhere; he made for himself from all things a ladder by which "to come even to his throne."[10]

Saint Bonaventure writes in a similar vein of Francis's attitude toward the created world in referring all good in creation to God:

> His attitude toward creation was simple and direct, as simple as the gaze of a dove; as he considered the universe, in his pure, spiritual vision, he referred every created thing to the Creator of all. He saw God in everything, and loved and praised him in all creation. By God's generosity and goodness, he possessed God in everything, and everything in God. The realization that everything comes from the same source made him call all created things—no matter how insignificant—his brothers and sisters, because they had the same origin as he.[11]

According to Bonaventure, then, Francis perceived the intimate relation between the Creator and all His created works, realizing that all created good came from the one and same source. This realization, notes the Seraphic Doctor, led Francis also to recognize the unity and brotherhood of all created things.

But not only is God the source of all good in the created world; he is also the source of all good that a human being possesses or accomplishes by word or deed. Especially in the Admonitions of Francis do we meet this conviction of the Saint. " . . . the good that God says and does in him,"[12] ". . .the good that the Lord says and does through him,"[13] ". . . when God accomplishes some good through him."[14]

The sometime-considered "illogical" Francis was not confused or unclear on this point: God was the only good and source of all good, and hence all good that was found in Francis himself or any human being came from God. "God has given and gives us everything," Francis insisted: "body and soul and all our life; it was he who created and redeemed us and of his mercy alone he will save us; wretched and pitiable as we are, ungrateful and evil, rotten through and through, he has provided us with every good and does not cease to provide for us."[15]

[10]2 Celano, 165; pp. 494-95.
[11]St. Bonaventure, *Legenda minor*, 6; p. 808.
[12]Admonition II, p. 79.
[13]Admonition VIII, p. 82.
[14]Admonition XII, p. 83.
[15]Rule of 1221, ch. 23; p. 52.

BECAUSE GOD is all good and the source of all good in his creatures, Francis's immediate response was to give thanks and praise to God for the good that he found in creatures or the good that God accomplished in him or in any other person.

> Because all good comes from God [Francis wrote,] we must thank him for it all. May the most supreme and high and only true God receive and have and be paid all honor and reverence, all praise and blessing, all thanks and all glory, for to him belongs all good and no one is good but only God.[16]

Francis himself composed several such prayer or hymns of praise and thanks to God from whom all good comes and to whom belongs all good. There is the Canticle of the Sun,[17] which he composed, says the Legend of Perugia, as "his way of inciting the hearts of those who would hear this canticle to give glory to God *so that the Creator would be praised by all for all his creatures.*"[18] Then there are the Praises of God, which Francis wrote for Brother Leo and the original copy of which, in Francis's own handwriting, is still in existence. "Blessed Francis . . .

made and wrote with his own hand these Praises," recorded Brother Leo on the manuscript, "*giving thanks to the Lord for the benefits conferred upon him.*"[19]

Finally, there is the prayer that Francis composed and recited before each Hour of the Office, which prayer is usually called "The Praises before the Office." It is a song of praise and glorification to God for all his works, made up of passages from holy Scripture and the Liturgy. It ends with this beautiful oration:

> All-powerful, all holy, most high and supreme God, sovereign good, all good, every good, you who alone are good, it is to you we must give all praise, all glory, all thanks, all honor, all blessing; to you we must refer all good always. Amen.[20]

[16]Rule of 1221, ch. 17; p. 45.
[17]Canticle of the Sun, p. 130.
[18]Legend of Perugia, 51; p. 1029; emphasis added.
[19]Cf. *Omnibus*, p. 124; emphasis added.
[20]The Praises before the Office, pp. 138-39.

THE LAST LINE of the above oration mentions another theme that Francis uses frequently in his writings: referring or ascribing all good to God who is the source of all good. "We must refer every good to the most high supreme God, acknowledging that all good belongs to him."[21] writes Francis in the Rule of 1221. In a similar vein, Francis says, "Let us bless our Lord and God, living and true; to him we must attribute all praise, glory, honor, blessing, and every good for ever."[22] "In this should we glory," Celano quotes Francis as saying, "that we give glory to God, that we serve him faithfully, that we ascribe to him whatever he has given us."[23]

The person who "ascribes all the good he has to his Lord and God" is indeed "blessed," promises Francis in one of his Admonitions.[24] If someone attributes anything to himself, however, Francis goes on to say that he is like the wicked servant in the Gospel (Mt. 25:18) who hid his master's money. He is hiding the gift of the Lord "in himself," comments the Saint very insightfully, and "even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him."[25]

Our knowledge, too, is a gift or good that we receive from God, and so all that we know we must refer or ascribe to God. Francis brings out this point in commenting on the words of Saint Paul: "The letter kills, but the spirit gives life" (2 Cor. 3:6). A person is killed by the letter, explains Francis, when he wants to know the Scriptures only so others will think he is learned. "On the other hand," he continues,

> those have received life from the spirit of Sacred Scripture who, by their words and example, refer to the most high God, to whom belongs all good, all that they know or wish to know, and do not allow their knowledge to become a source of self-complacency.[26]

In this connection, Francis also shows great insight regarding the good that God works in others than ourselves. This good, too, is from God, and so we must not envy others, for that would be like blaspheming God. In Francis's own words:

> Saint Paul tells us, "No one can say Jesus is Lord, except in the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3), and "There is none who does good, no, not even one" (Rom. 3:12). And so when a person envies his brother the good God says or does through him, it is like committing a sin of blasphemy, because he is really envying God, who is the source of every good.[27]

Francis returns to the point of the good that God works in others in a later Admonition, but with a different emphasis:

> Blessed the servant who is no more elated at the good which the Lord says and does through him, than at that which he says and does through someone else. It is wrong for anyone to be more desirous of receiving from his neighbor than he himself is desirous of giving to the Lord God.[28]

Here Francis again states that all good that we do or that others do has its source in God, and hence we should not take any more credit for the good that God works through us than in the good that he works through someone else. It's the same God working through all. We are blessed if we have such an attitude. On the contrary, it is wrong if we are more concerned about receiving praise and admiration from others for the good done through us than of giving praise to God who accomplishes every good in us.

Nothing of Our Own

SINCE WE MUST ascribe all good to God, is there nothing we can attribute to ourselves? "Nothing," Francis would answer. "Nothing. . . except our vices and sins." "We must be firmly convinced that we have nothing of our own, except our vices and sins."[29]

An episode that illustrates this conviction of the Saint is found in Celano's Second Life of Saint Francis and is repeated with some alterations in the Legend of Perugia and the Mirror of Perfection. Francis had preached to the people in the city of Terni, and after his sermon the Bishop, who had been listening to the sermon, spoke some words of exhortation to the people. Pointing at Francis, the Bishop said: "In this latest hour God has glorified his church in this poor and despised, simple and unlettered man. For this reason we are bound always to praise the Lord, knowing that 'he has not done thus for any other nation.' " Later, as Francis was entering the church with the Bishop, he fell at the feet of the Bishop and said:

> In truth, lord Bishop, you have

[21] Rule of 1221, ch. 17; p. 45.
[22] The Office of the Passion, p. 142.
[23] 2 Celano, 134; p. 471.
[24] Admonition XIX, p. 84.
[25] Ibid., quoting Luke 8:18.
[26] Admonition VII, p. 81.
[27] Admonition VIII, p. 82.
[28] Admonition XVII (author's translation; cf. p. 84).
[29] Rule of 1221, ch. 17; p. 45.

done me a great favor, for you alone kept the things that are mine unharmed, whereas others take them away from me and say: He is a saint! Thereby they attribute glory and holiness to a creature and not to the Creator. You, on the contrary, have separated, I say, the precious from the worthless, giving praise to God and ascribing to me my worthlessness.[30]

The Legend of Perugia and the Mirror of Perfection follow this episode with the Bishop of Terni with other comments that Francis would make when he was praised and called a saint. I like the following comparison of ourselves to a wood-painting:

> In a picture of our Lord and the Blessed Virgin painted on wood, it is the Lord and the Blessed Mother who receive honor, while the wood and the paint claim nothing for themselves. God's servant is like a painting: a creature of God, through whom God is honored because of his blessings. He must not claim any credit for himself, for in comparison with God he is less than the wood and the paint; indeed, he is nothing at all. Honor and glory must be given to God alone. The only thing we must retain for ourselves, as long as we live, is shame and confusion, for as long as we live, our flesh is always hostile to the grace of God.[31]

In the above comparison, as well as in the following Admonition, Francis hits upon one of the fundamental attitudes that must characterize our relationship to God: acknowledging that what a man is, before God, that he is and no more; that is, acknowledging our true condition as creatures and servants who belong entirely to God and who have received everything from God, the "Great Almsgiver".[32]

> Blessed the servant who has no more regard for himself when people praise him and make much of him than when they despise and revile him and say that he is ignorant. What a man is before God, that he is and no more.[33]

The Greatest of Sinners

IN THE paragraph from Dietrich von Hildebrand used in the introduction to this article, that author stated that the humble man "does not feel in any way superior to others; even, say, in regard to criminals his first thought will be, 'Who knows what might have become of me, had the grace of God not protected me, or had I been exposed to the same temptations.' He considers himself the least among his fellow men, more sinful and unworthy than anyone else."

Francis of Assisi certainly fits this description of a "humble man" in this respect. "In his opinion," writes Saint Bonaventure, "he was the greatest of sinners, and he believed that he was nothing more than a frail and worthless creature."[34] When he was praised by others for his virtues, says Celano, he would answer with words like these: "I can still have sons and daughters; do not praise me as being secure. No one should be praised whose end is yet uncertain. If ever he who has lent these things to me would wish to take back what he has given me, only the body and soul would remain, and these even the unbeliever possesses." "Such things," continues Celano, "he spoke to those who praise him. But to himself he said: 'If the Most High had given such great things to a robber, he would have been more grateful than you, Francis.' "[35]

At the root of this humble opinion of himself, then, was again the conviction that all the good and holiness that was in Francis was from God and that without this grace and favor of God, Francis could boast of nothing. Francis did not deny the gifts which God had granted to him nor the fact that he possessed certain advantages in a higher measure than his fellow man. It was just that he was so keenly aware of the gratuitousness of these gifts and graces. And so he measured the state of his holiness, not by the criterion of what he had received from God as such, but by the distance between what he had received from God and what he actually accomplished. The more Francis received of the goodness of God, the more clearly he perceived the abyss that separated him from the infinite goodness and holiness of God. His humility was not a fake humility, and he could in all sincerity pray: "Who are You, my dearest God? And what am I, your vilest little worm and useless little servant?"[36]

▲

WE HAVE tried to show in this study that Francis was indeed a humble man and that his humility was based on his keen awareness that God alone is good and that all good in the created

[30]The version given here is the author's combination of of 2 Celano, 141 (p. 476); Legend of Perugia, 103 (p. 1080); and Mirror of Perfection, 45 (p. 1170).

[31]The version given here is the author's combination of the Legend of Perugia, 104 (p. 1080) and the Mirror of Perfection, 45 (p. 1170).

[32]2 Celano, 77; p. 427.

[33]Admonition XX, p. 84.

[34]St. Bonaventure, *Legenda minor, 4; p. 807.*

[35]2 Celano, 133; p. 471.

[36]Little Flowers of St. Francis, Third Consideration on the Holy Stigmata; p. 1444.

world and in his own personal life came down from the Great Almsgiver.

In this humble recognition of the source of all good, Francis was of course only imitating his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, whose constant claim as the Son of Man was that his Father alone was good (Lk. 18:19) and that he was completely dependent upon his Father for all that he said and did, claiming nothing as his own: "The Son cannot do anything by himself, he can do only what he sees the Father doing."[37]

[37]John 14:10; cf. also John 5:19; 6:57; 7:16; 8:27; and 17:24.

A Poor Man's Dream is a Mountain of Remembrances

Past . . . Present . . . Future . . .
Remembrances . . . Realities . . . Hopes . . .
Ideals and Dreams . . . .
The common and mundane
Become precious and sublime.
Person and community with all their failings
Are returned as an offering and a gift
Fit for the Body of Christ—
THE BODY OF CHRIST.

Hearts cold and damp
Are warmed with a holocaust of love.
All the sins of man from time infinite
Can never erase
The Perfect Joy,
The Irresistible Command:
Do this in remembrance of me.

The Poor Man now becomes Time's mediator
Between the sufferings of the cross
And the Loving Bread of the Kingdom
Both experienced NOW
By all poor men of faith
"In remembrance of me."

Timothy James Fleming, O.F.M.Conv.

A Commemorative Reflection:

The Canonization of Saint Francis

DONALD GRZYMSKI, O.F.M.CONV.

> To the praise and glory of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and of the glorious Virgin Mary and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and to the honor of the glorious Roman Church, at the advice of our brothers and of the other prelates, we decree that the most blessed father Francis, whom the Lord has glorified in heaven and whom we venerate on earth, shall be enrolled in the catalogue of saints and that his feast shall be celebrated on the day of his death.[1]

WITH THESE WORDS Pope Gregory IX (Francis's friend Cardinal Ugolino) canonized the Little Poor Man in his hometown of Assisi on July 16, 1228, the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost. Accounts further tell us that the Cardinals and the friars present then joyfully intoned the *Te Deum.* Outside the people shouted and the soldiers sounded trumpets, while the Pope prostrated himself at the tomb and then celebrated Mass. Seven hundred and fifty years later we should ponder what prompted this action of Pope Gregory which seems so much to have pleased the faithful of that day. We might further ask what its implications are for us who follow the Rule of Saint Francis in another age.

We know that Francis and his way of life had been accepted by the Church and the people of his hometown even before his death, and that there was great concern as he lay dying that his remains would not be returned to Assisi. Still, the momentum increased after his death.

> He immediately became famous for the numerous and extraordinary miracles which were worked through his intercession because God looked with favor upon him. In his lifetime his sublime holiness was made known to the world in order to show people

[1]1 Celano, 126; *Omnibus*, p. 340. Subsequent references to early sources with only page numbers are to be found in this edition.

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how they should live by the example of his perfect uprightness. Now that he was reigning with Christ, his sanctity was to be proclaimed from heaven through the miracles worked by God's power, to strengthen the faith of the whole world. All over the world the glorious miracles and the wonderful favors which were obtained through his intercession inspired countless numbers to serve Christ faithfully and venerate this saint.[2]

Brother Elias had acquired the site for the basilica even before the canonization, a sign of the town's esteem. In the deed transferring the property, "Francis is already spoken of as *sanctus*, although he had not been officially canonised."[3] The Pope himself gave Thomas of Celano the duty of writing a biography, though whether or not the author was present at the canonization is not known.

All these events indicate the effect a simple holy man can have on the People of God. The consensus is expressed in Celano's *First Life*, where Francis is depicted standing "at the throne of God and [devoting] himself to furthering effectually the concerns of those he left behind upon earth."[4] The people of Assisi were enthusiastic not only because Francis was a native son of their town, but also because of what his sainthood meant for them. Pope Gregory captured this mood and stated in his homily on that day:

> Having confidence that through the mercy of God, we, and the flock committed to our care will be assisted by his prayers, and that we shall have him for our protector in heaven who was our friend on earth. . . .[5]

The canonization added official approbation to the growing popular acclaim. By it the Church stated publicly that Francis's life was exemplary, that miracles had been credited to his intercession,

[2]St. Bonaventure, *Legenda Major*, XV, 6; p. 744.

[3]John R. H. Moorman, *The Sources for the Life of St. Francis of Assisi* (Manchester: University Press, 1940), p. 61.

[4]1 Celano, 119; p. 333.

[5]P. DaMagliano, ed., *Francis of Assisi* (New York: P. O'Shea, 1867), p. 264.

and that he may be venerated. Authors writing of the canonization have always made clear that the Pope and Cardinals approved of the ascribed miracles and decided on his canonization. According to Bonaventure, Pope Gregory IX

> had the various miracles worked by the saint recorded in writing and approved by witnesses, in order to convince the whole world that Francis had been glorified in heaven. Then he submitted them to be examined by the cardinals who seemed to be least favorable to the process and then they had checked them carefully and agreed unanimously he decreed that Francis should be canonized.[6]

At the canonization Gregory IX also spoke of the influence of Francis that was to remain so powerful a force in the world:

> Francis, this noble prince, bears the royal standard, and assembles the nations from all parts of the earth. He has organized a threefold army to fight against the powers of the dragon, and disperse his internal hordes.[7]

For Francis's followers the canonization was another formal approval of his way of life as a valid and valiant way to imitate Christ.

As the friars, sisters, and people rejoiced on that Sunday in 1228, so the Poverello's followers can rejoice in 1978. His Order has grown and expanded around the world, as had been prophesied. The spirit of Francis is alive in Assisi, in his followers; and this spirit is spread to those whose lives are touched by his sons and daughters. The miracles of physical wonder and spiritual renewal continue through the Saint's intercession. As we commemorate the Church's official recognition of Francis's sanctity, we keep in mind his devotion and respect for the Church, and we renew our own pledge to serve Jesus on earth. We rejoice, knowing that so many people around the world still venerate Francis and are inspired by his ideals. As Pope Gregory and Celano and others have pointed out, we who follow Francis take comfort in the assurance that he is in heaven and is continually interceding for us. We are humbled to realize that in imitating Jesus and Francis we are called to a life of perfection and holiness.

> Of Saint Francis it could be said, as of Samson, that he killed many more by his death than he had when alive. It is a certain fact that our holy Father Saint Francis is alive in the life of glory. May we be brought to this same life of glory through his merits who lives for all eternity. Amen.[8]

[6]St. Bonaventure, *Legenda major*, XV, 7; p. 745.

[7]DaMagliano, p. 264.

[8]Legend of the Three Companions, XVIII, 73; p. 955.

The Spirit of Francis in the *Divine Comedy*

MARA HUBER

THE SPIRIT of Saint Francis of Assisi exercises its influence throughout Dante's *Divine Comedy* like that of no other saint. The name of the *poverello di Dio* is heard everywhere from Hell to Heaven.

The first time he is mentioned is by Guido da Montefeltro in one of the most dramatic episodes of the *Inferno*.[1] Already here Francis stands for a life that will ultimately lead to salvation, and had Guido not strayed from his way, "it would have served."[2]

Although there are no Franciscans to be found in Purgatory, there are present in the memory of the penitents a number of Franciscans who are already in Paradise and give them hope by their perfection. All three Orders are represented: the Friars Minor by Marzucco degli Scornigiani,[3] the Tertiaries by Pier Pettinagno,[4] and the Poor Ladies by Piccarda Donati.[5] All of them exemplify Christian virtues that had become very rare in the Church before Saint Francis and his Orders gave it new spiritual strength. Marzucco stands for the love of peace, which is one of the main Franciscan ideals. By forgiving the murderers of his son, Marzucco prevented a chain reaction of *vendetta* that would have come close to a civil war in Pisa, and so truly lived up to the Franciscan greeting, *pax et bonum*. Peter the Combseller, a Tertiary, helps Lady Sapia purge her envy through his prayers. In him we find the humility and faithfulness that charity brings, and the deep and loving insight into human nature that Saint Francis himself had. Piccarda, although she was forced to break her vows, stands for those who long for God only. Her memory sets an example for those who were captives of their fleshly appetites. This is the first hint at the mystic and ascetic element in Franciscanism, which has come to perfection in Saint Clare, whom Piccarda praises in Paradise.[6]

Paradise is where Francis himself lives in the highest bliss, right at the center of the celestial rose. Together with John the Baptist, he is closest to Christ.[7] Here Francis's faithful followers, like the Friars Illuminato and Agostio, have eternal peace and joy in the friendship of God.[8] And here Franciscans and Dominicans compete only in praising one another: Saint Bonaventure, famous Minister General of the Friars Minor one generation after their Founder, honors Saint Dominic; and the Dominican theologian Saint Thomas Aquinas tells Dante the story of the bridegroom of Holy Poverty. Saints Thomas and Dominic are seen as the two champions of Christ's bride,[9] and the two wheels of her chariot as serving one Lord with diverse gifts: the one with seraphic love, the other with Cherubic intelligence.[10]

The account of Saint Francis's life is much more poetic than that of Saint Dominic. "His" Canto is full of love-imagery, while the one on Saint Dominic is dominated by soldierly images. The reason for that lies in the Saint's personality. Not only did Francis write outstanding poetry, as the "Cantico del Sol" proves but his entire life was one beautiful poem:

> St. Francis made his whole life one sacred poem, not written but lived, a poem in which the mystical marriage with Poverty and the reception of the Stigmata are the most lyrical passages. In his life the allegorizing spirit of the Middle ages took living form.[11]

John D. Sinclair takes Saint Bonaventure's Legend of the Blessed Francis for Dante's source of the Saint's life.'[12] It

[1] *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*, with translation and comment by John D. Sinclair (New York, 1939), *Inferno* XXVII. Edmund Gardner calls this Canto the most dramatic of the entire *Comedy*; see his study, *Dante and the Mystics* (New York, 1968), p. 203.

[2] *Inferno* XXVII, l. 84.

[3] *Purgatorio* VI, l. 18. The full name is mentioned by Gardner, p. 205.

[4] *Purgatorio* XIII, ll. 124-29.

[5] *Purgatorio* XXIV, ll. 13-18.

[6] *Paradiso* III, l, 97ff.

[7] Gardner, *Dante's Ten Heavens* (Westminster, 1898), p. 239: "It will be observed that next to the Precursor of Christ comes his closest and most perfect imitator." The reference is to *Paradiso* XXXII, l. 35.

[8] *Paradiso* XII, l. 130.

[9] *Paradiso* XII, l. 43ff.

[10] *Paradiso* XII, l. 106ff.

[11] Garner, *Dante's Ten Heavens*, p. 97.

[12] *Paradiso*, commentary on Canto XI, p. 172.

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need not, however, be the only one. True, Bonaventure suppressed the original Vitae in favor of his own, for the sake of unity in the Order. But the material Dante uses, and the emphasis he places on poverty, are also in keeping with the earlier Legends, like the "Tres Socii" of Giovanni of Ceprano, and the Legends of Thomas of Celano and Brother Leo. Dante might very well have known some of this literature. Francis enjoyed such popularity among Dante's contemporaries, moreover, that the story of his life was passed on by oral tradition as well. The collection of the "Fioretti" is dated only a little later than the *Comedy*. Consequently, Canto XI of the *Paradiso* need not be just a "transcript in Verse" of passages from Saint Bonaventure's Legend.[13]

Saint Francis was called "the mirror of Christ," a mirror which increased the amount of light by reflecting it. His appeal to popular piety was infinitely larger than that of Saint Dominic,[14] probably because his emotionality was generally more accessible than Saint Dominic's intellectuality and also much more lovable, more humane. While Dominic saw the earth as field of the battle between the faithful and heretics, Francis had the vision of the oneness of all creation. The two Orders stand for love and knowledge, both essential to Dante to the point where they are the main themes of the *Comedy*.[15] The perfection of the two Founders stands in sharp contrast to the decrepit condition of their Orders, and through Bonaventure and Aquinas Dante expresses his concern and dismay over their corruption.

Saint Francis's influence is in no manner limited to the few Canti on Franciscans; it pervades all of the *Comedy* in many ways.

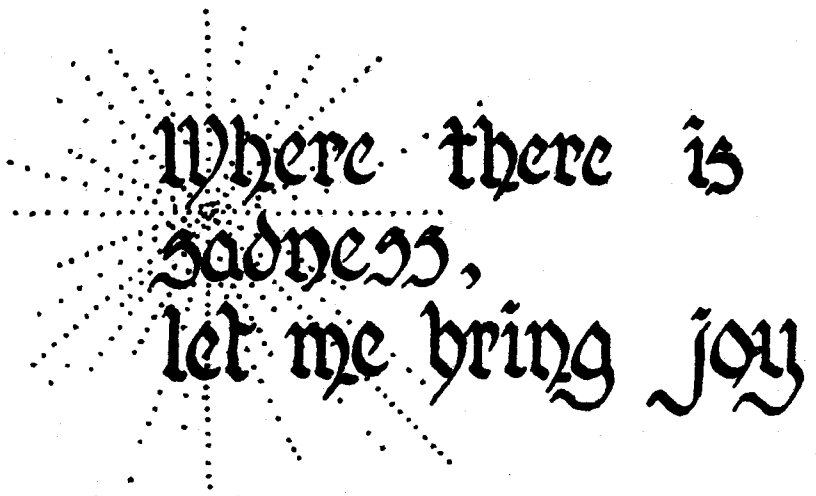
Francis seems to me the sign of the end of the Dark Ages. His great achievement is that he "solved in his own fashion the great problem of Christian piety: to conquer the world without debasting it."[16] He showed that not only the wayof renunciation leads to the perfect love of God: with him the way of affirmation had its breakthrough. Love for created beings was no longer a damning thing that lured the soul away from God; it could be love of God through loving what he had created: realities to which he had

[13]Ibid.

[14]Karl Federn, in his *Dante and His Time* (Port Washington, NY, 1969), p. 141, proposes not to "follow Dante in considering these two men equal."

[15]Gardner, in his *Dante's Ten Heavens*, p. 98, holds a similar view.

[16]Karl Vossler, *Medieval Culture* (New York, 1929), vol. 1, p. 68.



given some of his own qualities. Creation was a manifestation of God, and as such no longer seen as inherently evil, but even salutary, if it directed man's thought toward the infinite Goodness from which it had its being. The immediate general enthusiasm for this way shows that the time was ripe for its introduction. In this sense Dante clearly was a disciple of Saint Francis, as is shown in his answer to Saint John in the examination on love: "The leaves with which all the garden of the eternal Gardener is embowered I love in the measure of the good He has bestowed on them."[17] Indeed, only the love of creation makes the love of the Creator perfect.

This new way made it possible for men to accept their own humility: to be good Christians, they did not have to try to become superhuman and thus run the risk of becoming in reality only inhuman. "Francis has loosened the tongues and opened the eyes of the Italian people, dispersing the choking fumes of anxiety and hatred which surrounded them."[18] Religion thus gained new strength and became attractive once more. It had grown rather superficial and secularized, to say the least; but now a new emotional dimension was added to it. New forms of popular piety came into being, like the Stations of the Cross and the Rosary. The sudden development of veneration of the Virgin and the increased emphasis on preaching and instruction—indeed, a reform of the entire Liturgy—all

[17]*Paradiso* XXVI, ll. 64-66.

[18]Friedrich Heer, *The Medieval World* (New York, 1961), p. 229.

this was in large part due to the influence of the Poverello.[10] The Third Order enjoyed such popularity that Pier delle Vigne is reported to have said that there was hardly a man in all Italy that did not belong to it.[20] Soon "the same ecstasy pervaded the religious life of the people which appeared in the feelings and expressions of love of the refined."[21]

Through the life of Saint Francis the mystical element of Christianity also received new attention, particularly the notion that "certain men, in the living body and in a state of ecstasy, have been permitted to behold the future world of Hell and heaven."[22] Far from "forsaking human society," as Vossler would have it,[23] Francis made it more human. His poetic as well as his religious genius played a part in this.

Francis was deeply influenced by the Minnesong of the troubadours of Provence, and in joyous moments he would break out into song, praising the Lord in Provencal. His "Cantico del Sol," in Umbrian dialect, is the first and at the same time a superb instance of Italian vernacular poetry; and among the followers of "God's minstrel" "we should naturally look for the composers of spontaneous religious poetry."[24] Some of the finest poetry of the time was indeed by Franciscans, in the vernacular as well as in Latin, as the "Stabat Mater" and the "Dies Irae." The name of Jacopone da Todi is particularly illustrious in this context.

The Franciscan spirit was one that greatly encouraged artistic expression,[25] and it was much more in touch with the people than were the earlier forms of monasticism, as is indicated by the establishment of the Third Order. Saint Francis firmly believed in uncloistered Christianity,[26] and hence the tendency of Franciscan literature to "address itself to the comprehension of the unlearned, to get more into touch with actual life."[27] by the use of the vernacular. Jacopone da Todi's Italian poetry was very

[19]For a detailed analysis of Franciscan influence on the Liturgy of Dante's time, cf. Olaf Graf, *Die Divina Comedia als Zeugnis des Glaubens* (Freiburg, 1965), pp. 76ff.

[20]Lonsdale Ragg, *Dante and His Italy* (London, 1907), p. 108.

[21]Federn, p. 152.

[22]Vossler, p. 313.

[23]Ibid., p. 70.

[24]Charles Grandgent, *Dante Alighieri* (New York, 1916), p. 163.

[25]Cf. George Zarnecki, *The Monastic Achievement* (New York, 1972).

[26]Cf. Heer, p. 226.

[27]Gardner, *Dante and the Mystics*, p. 184.

widely read and proved that "the purest mysteries of faith and the loftiest speculations of philosophy could be fitly expressed in the idiom of the people."[28]

All of this first made the "dolce stil nuovo" possible:

> That profoundest peculiarity of Dante's art, the entire supernatural sense of the *Commedia*, no matter how truly it is the personal creation of the poet—all this, but for the previous Franciscan movement, would have been an incomprehensible, unnatural innovation. Even the courage to force such a preeminent ecclesiastical and religious content into a secular, earthy vernacular would have appeared, without the Franciscans, an unexampled anachronism.[29]

Without the Franciscans, a concept like that of the "Donna Angelicata," or an account of the ascent of a soul through Paradise would have been regarded as nonsensical or even blasphemous by most of the public. But since Saint Francis had provided both a precedent for "unsensualized" love and actual union of the soul with God in his relationship with Saint Clare and in the Stigmatization, the group was broken for Dante and his *Comedy*.

Because the spirit of Saint Francis is so much alive throughout the *Comedy*, and because of some rather uncertain evidence, Dante has often been thought a Franciscan: ". . . his sacred poem, and his others, came from the pen, wingborne—for his surname, Alighieri, means the "wing-bearer"—of a Franciscan Tertiary; let us be humbly proud of this fact."[30] I understand and share with Benjamin Musser the wish to claim the greatest poet of the Middle ages for our Order; yet there does not seem to exist enough evidence to verify that he was at any point in his life either a Tertiary or a novice of the First Order.[31] His having been buried in the Franciscan chapel at Ravenna might have had other reasons, and whether he was buried in the Franciscan habit or not is not certain. Opinions also vary on the question of whether the Tertiary in Giotto's fresco in the lower church of San Francesco of Assisi really represents Dante. Neither need the cord with which he girds himself upon arriving at Mount Purgatory[32] be the Franciscan cord that is part of

[28]Frederick Ozanam, *The Franciscan Poets of the Thirteenth Century* (Port Washington, NY, 1914), p. 294.

[29]Vossler, vol. 2, p. 89.

[30]Benjamin F. Musser, *Franciscan Poets* (Freeport, NY, 1953), p. 174. Federn, p. 152; Ragg, pp. 76 and 356; Vossler, vol. 2, p. 86; and others have similar, if more detached, arguments.

[31]Gardner, *Dante and the Mystics*, p. 200.

[32]*Purgatorio* I, 11. 94-96; 133-36.

the habit of all three Orders.

It is certain, however, that Dante was educated by the friars of Santa Croce, and thus was closely in touch with Franciscan ideals during those young years when he was most likely to be formed by his teachers. Vossler imagines this process thus:

> An overheated monastic atmosphere of sensitiveness and dramminess environed and weakened his all too emotional spirit. A sensuous and supersensuous love, morbid, intensified by fashion, took hold of him.[33]

The Spirit of Saint Francis, however, as well as the *Comedy*, clearly has nothing to do with weakness, morbidity, or dreaminess. On the contrary, it strengthened, healed, and awakened much that had been unhealthy and inactive in the Church and society in the century that opens around the year 1215. "It looked out freshly upon a fresh world,"[34] full of audacity and simplicity. It is the strength of affirmation that truly makes Dante's *Divine Comedy* a poem in the spirit of Saint Francis.

[33]*Medieval Culture*, vol. 1, p. 315.

[34]G. K. Chesterton, *St. Francis of Assisi* (Garden City, NY, 1924), p. 152.

Breath of Spring

Mary, Mary, mother of all men,
let me fall in love with you.

The winter winds of weakness and
evil blow through my mind with a
touch of death.

Breath of Spring, spotless Beauty
of all Creation, warm this child
of yours! Melt this heart of ice,
merge it, lose it in your own
torrent of love for God.

If they had hearts and knew you.
would the flowers not hide if you
would turn away? Would the birds
not die if you turned away?

Turn not away, O Breath of Spring,
First flower of the Lord.
Come, Breath of Spring, through
whom all warmth and graces pour.
Lead us forth in honor of the
living God.

Charles Goering

Salve Sancte Pater

These reflections are reprinted with permission from the Bulletin of the Province of the Immaculate Conception of the Order of Friars Minor in England, Wales, and Scotland, Vol. 41, n. 4 (April, 1978).

WHEN Francis of Assisi embraced Sister Death on that evening of 3rd October 1226 beside the Portiuncula which he loved as the birthplace and center of his brotherhood, the friars and the citizens of Assisi knew that they would have to act quickly to prevent his body becoming a prize to be despoiled (especially by the Perugians). We read how the very next morning, 4th October, they set out in solemn and well-guarded procession up to the city of Assisi with the body. They made a special detour past San Damiano, so that Saint Clare and her Sisters could embrace the body through the grill through which they normally received Holy Communion and so take their tearful leave of their Father. The body was laid to rest temporarily in the church of St. George, where Francis had first gone to school and where later he had preached his first sermon.

The fame of Francis of Assisi soon made his grave an object of veneration by enormous crowds of pilgrims seeking favors and miracles. Less than two years later, on 16th July, 1228, his great friend Cardinal Hugolino, now become Pope Gregory IX, made the veneration official by canonizing him. At the same time, he laid the foundation stone for a church, on land given by the citizens of Assisi, to be the permanent tomb and memorial of the Saint, entrusting the task of building it to Brother Elias, who completed the task in only two further years. So the body of Saint Francis was transferred to the new church—now the lower church—on 25th May, 1230, less than four years after his death, the friars having gathered in Assisi to celebrate their General Chapter.

We read that the procession on this occasion gathered together in Assisi a great number of people of all degrees and was one of great splendor, so that in the narrow streets perhaps not everyone realized until it was all over that Brother Elias had forestalled any attempt to rob Assisi of its treasure by shutting the doors of the new church as soon as the body had entered it and secretly burying the Saint in a place which was to remain a matter of conjecture for centuries.

From that day to his, only once have the remains been sought, found, and examined. Six hundred years after Elias had hidden the body, in 1818, a search revealed the body of the Saint buried in the rock under the altar of the lower church, and after an official "recognitio," the remains were gathered inside a new metal coffin, replaced in the stone, and the place around it rebuilt as a

chapel, almost constituting a third church underneath the lower church.

Until this day, I said.

In January of this year it was noticed that the grave needed repair, various fittings being loose. One thing led to another and eventually a request was made to the Holy See, which has wisely reserved to itself jurisdiction over the remains of Saint Francis, for the remains to be removed temporarily so that a thorough repair of the tomb could be carried out. The Pope set up a commission to carry out a canonical "recognitio" once more (which was done on 24th January, 1978), our own Minister General being one of the members, with various lay experts to help establish the characteristics of the remains and the best way to preserve them. It was decided, after every bone had been examined, to seal the remains inside a perspex-glass case, to replace this inside the metal coffin, and to relocate both in the stone once the tomb had been rebuilt. In the meantime, the perspex case was placed in a room of the Sacro Convento and guarded there. As more and more groups of people were admitted to view the body, it became evident that the secret could not be kept much longer.

On 27th February, during a normal session of the Plenary Council of the Order then meeting in Rome in the General Curia, Father General said he had an announcement to make. It fell to me to translate this simultaneously into English, like so many routine announcements before. I found myself recounting the above history and the details of the historic *recognitio* in which Father General had taken part, finishing with the suggestion on the part of Father General to the Plenary Council that we should suspend our work for one day, 2nd March, to travel to Assisi and grasp this historic opportunity of seeing the remains of Saint Francis before they were reburied (for ever?) two days later. Needlessly to say, the suggestion was enthusiastically taken up, and the pilgrimage duly took place.

And so it happened that two members of our Province were privileged to stand beside the bones of our holy Father Saint Francis in Assisi that day, namely Father Paschal Rowland, who represented at the Plenary Council all the friars of Africa (with the exception of certain territories in the North), and your Editor, who was one of two interpreters at the Council for the English-speaking Conference.[1]

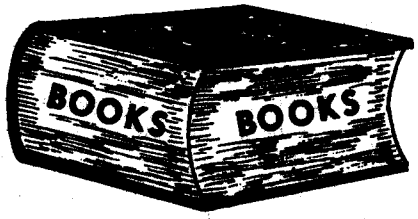
Those bones which the experts could recognize were laid out in skeleton form, the remaining fragments gathered together at the foot in a perspex box placed within the whole perspex case. Even allowing for the shrinkage of the centuries it was easy to see that Francis had been indeed "pusillus," as described by his biographers. The skull was damaged because Elias had placed a stone under the head to raise it, and in the course of the centuries this had penetrated the skull. Of the stigmata it was impossible to see any evidence, since the bones in question had split or disintegrated.

[1]American friars present at this event: Fathers Charles V. Finnegan (Minister Provincial, Holy Name), Francis Muller (Holy Name; Definitor General), John Marie Cassese (Immaculate Conception), Mel Brady (St. John the Baptist), John Vaughn and Brian Flynn (both St Barbara).

●

It is difficult to describe the feeling of awe which overcame me as I found myself within touching distance of the mortal remains of the Poverello who had fired my imagination since boyhood, and I hope that the prayers which we offered in that deeply felt moment will bring blessings on the whole Order and on our Province.

Boniface Kruger, O.F.M.
Editor
Franciscan Study Centre
Canterbury



Saints for All Seasons. Edited by John J. Delaney. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978. Pp. x-205. Cloth, $7.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph. D., Associate Editor of this Review and Head of the Philosophy Department at Siena College, Loudonville, NY.

Seldom have I read an anthology of such even excellence. The twenty essays by some of the leading Catholic literary figures over the past couple of decades do, as John Delaney's preface suggests, show that the saints are "real flesh and blood people . . . with an inner strength and purposefulness that can serve as examples to us today . . ." The book begins with an account of "Mary, Mother and Friend," which any mother will be able to relate to, and closes with an account of "The Unknown Saint," by Fulton Oursler, Jr., with which any adult can identify.

In-between, we find capsulized the spirit of the giants of the faith like Peter, Paul, Augustine, Patrick, Francis, Dominic, Ignatius Loyola, Vincent de Paul—and also lesser known and less flashy, perhaps, people like Francis de Sales, John of the Cross, Anthony Claret, and Ann-Marie Jehouvey (a lady of whom I had never before heard). The essays, particularly those on people who lived since the 15th century, sparkle with detail and offer a perspective on the life of a saint which enables the reader to see sanctity as the labor of a lifetime.

Among the other saints included are Saint Jude, Thomas a Becket, Joan of Arc, Thomas More, and the two Theresa's. An omission I noticed on reflecting on the book's contents will perhaps suggest material for another book: *Scholar-saints for All Seasons,* and will let us get a glimpse of Bonaventure, Aquinas, and Bellarmine, to name a few. And maybe by that time *Saints for All Seasons* will

be an Image Book and get the wide circulation it deserves.

Jesus and You. By James Finley and Michael Pennock. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1977. 2 vols., paperback: text, pp. 223, $3.50; teacher's manual, pp. 111, $1.95.

Reviewed by Brother Michael Montgomery, O.F.M., Religion teacher at Roger Bacon High School, Cincinnati.

High school religious educators can now rejoice in the fact that there is a text which effectively introduces the high school student to the person and message of Jesus. Authors James Finley and Michael Pennock together have produced a realistic and teachable approach to the problem of introducing the student to the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.

In the past, the problem for the religious educator has been how to introduce Jesus effectively to the students without becoming unrealistic in approach so that students might find the person and style of Jesus believable. The authors of *Jesus and You* do this "through a careful blend of tradition, history, scripture, and contemporary media."

The first three chapters of the text develop the concept of the historical and human Jesus. The person of Jesus is contrasted with the times and culture of the Roman world as well as Jewish life and tradition in Palestine. Thus the reader perceives Jesus as really human and believable in his encounters with his contemporaries.

The next six chapters deal with the Christ of faith in an endeavor to elicit a personal commitment from the student. We are shown the faith of the early Church in regard to the resurrection of Jesus, the paschal mystery, how the early Christians viewed Jesus in their lives. Misconceptions about Jesus's humanity and divinity which arose in the Church are adequately discussed and explained in these chapters.

The last chapters propose contemporary images of Jesus and discuss their popularity and their relationship to the images of the early Christian communities. The chapters explore the images of Christ as given in the media, such as Jesus Christ Superstar, Godspell, and other movies and recordings in an attempt to guide the student to the Jesus of Scripture and not the Jesus of fad and popularity.

The text is primarily geared for the junior and senior levels, but in my experience I have found the material accepted enthusiastically by sophomore students. Many exercises and activities are suggested for use as homework assignments and/or discussion material.

The Teacher's Manual is excellent for both new and experienced teachers. Each chapter begins with a short theological survey of the chapter. The chapter is then outlined step by step for use as a semester course, a full-year course, or twelve one-hour CCD sessions. Additional resource references are available in the form of bibliography and audio-visual materials.

Never before have I been excited over the subject matter of a text as I have with *Jesus and You.* Student response to the book is enthusiastic and enjoyable. I highly recommend this book for all secondary religious educators as well as adult discussion groups.

The Resilient Church: The Necessity and Limits of Adaptation. By Avery Dulles, S.J. Garden City. NY: Doubleday, 1977. Pp. x-229, including Index. Cloth, $7.95.

Reviewed by Brother Dennis E. Tamburello, O.F.M., a second year theology student at the Washington Theological Union.

In *The Resilient Church,* Avery Dulles confronts several themes of renewal in contemporaty ecclesiology. Dulles hhas shown himself to be a good synthesizer, both in this book and in his previous work, *Models of the Church.* He situates each issue by briefly sketching its historical context and describing the main lines of current thought on the subject. In contrast to *Models,* he is much more opinionated here, taking specific stands on each issue, sometimes to the point of slipping into a rather "preachy" tone.

Underlying Dulles's approach is a *sacramental* model of the Church. He makes it clear, in fact, that this is his preference (p. 26). While this is an important model (and an appealing one for Roman Catholics), I believe that at times Dulles stresses it too much here, almost to the exclusion of other images such as the ones he himself describes in *Models.*

For example, in Chapter One (*"Rethinking the Mission of the Church"*), he makes the surprising statement that "the Church is no more subordinate to the Kingdom than the Kingdom to the Church" (p. 18). He dismisses as "theologically awkward" the idea that the Kingdom is a "wider" concept than the Church, without really defending this position with evidence. The fact is, this view of the Kingdom which he somewhat flippantly rejects has been around for a long time in our tradition. Saint Augustine once declared: "Many whom God has, the Church does not have." In my opinion, Dulles is carrying sacramentalism to an extreme in making this assertion.

This position seems to be a carryover from *Models,* where the author makes the point (over against several leading theologians) that the Church is not just "provisional" until the coming of the Kingdom but in some sense will continue to exist in the eschaton. This is plausible enough. But now he comes dangerously close

to asserting that the Kingdom and the church are *coextensive*. The Church is, indeed, a sacrament or visible sign of God's presence and activity in the world; but this is not to say that God's grace is not efficacious elsewhere, even prescinding from such awkward conceptions as "implicit" membership in the Church. The Kingdom of God, I would insist, is a symbol and cannot be reduced to the Church, even though I would agree that the Church is an essential element.

I am slso a little hesitant about accepting Dulles's conception of "mission" as he describes it in this chapter. Although he does not ignore the social dimension of the gospel, he seems to put it in a secondary place when he says that the Church's "first and foremost task is to call people to a new life in God—a life mediated especially by faith and worship" (p. 24). It should be noted that his major concern here is that "mission" should not be conceived in a purely secular sense (e.g., the cult of human progress, revolution in the socio-political order), but must relate to the transcendent dimension of existence, particularly the promise of eternal life. While this is a perfectly valid concenr, it can be equally argued that the command to love is at the heart of the gospel and that the Christian affirms the transcendent precisely through living a life of loving service as Jesus did. My impression is that Dulles tends to separate the mission of the Church from that of Christians. I would ask the crucial question: Is the Church an entity to which Christians *belong*, or is the Church *constituted* by its believers?

In Chapter Two ("Church Reform through Creative Interaction") Dulles makes a good case for a more dialectical approach to Church reform, based on the Church's relation and response to the environment in which it finds itself. "It is a matter," he asserts, "of doing what is required in order that the gospel may remain living and effective" (p. 34).

His discussion of polarization is an example of the "preachy" tone to which I referred earlier. He comes down hard on the more radical reformers of the sixties (in general, he does not seem to look kindly upon this era). In addition, I would question his assertion in this chapter that the average Christian is "uninterested in the reforms most cherished by the liberal clergy" (p. 42). He goes on to suggest that the rank-and-file Christian should be only marginally involved in Church reform, on the premise that public opinion is unstable and that authority knows best. This leans heavily on the side of an institutional model of Church. It is true that many Christians are misinformed or uniformed, but if there is to be a dialectical approach to reform, it should not just happen in the upper echelons of the Church's structure. Rather, people should be informed so that *they can participate* in the renewal. Otherwise, the polarization that Dulles is trying to eliminate will only be perpetuated.

Chapter Three ("Doctrinal Renewal") does not suffer from the imbalances I noted in the first two chapters. His "situationist view" of dogma is well presented and is based on a solid contemporary hermeneutic.

Chapter Four ("The Critique of Modernity and the Hartford Appeal") is largely an apologia for the Hartford Appeal, an ecumenical statement which, in essence, deplores the loss of a sence of the transcendent in contemporary theology (the text of the Appeal appears in the Appendix). Here Dulles lashes out at such "secularist" theologians as Langdon Gilkey and David Tracy. In gneral, I think Dulles is on the mark when he attempts to debunk the theory that the world should set the agenda for the Church. Nevertheless, I detect an excessively alarmist tone in this chapter. There is also an obvious defensiveness about the Appeal (he signed it). I found the Hartford Appeal much more appealing *before* I read this chapter than after.

Chapters Five through Nine, in my opinion, return to Dulles's more balanced approach, and I do not have major problems with the positions he espouses here. Chapter Five ("Doctrinal Authority for a Pilgrim Church") suggests a "pluralistic theory" of doctrine which recognizes an interchange between various sectors of the Church (scripture, tradition, magisterium, and the "generals ense of the faithful"). Chapter Six ("Toward a Renewed Papacy") stresses the "Petrine Function" (i.e., the fact that Peter was given responsibility for the mission and unity of the Christian community) as a more ecumenical way of speaking of the papacy and advocates a more "sacramental" view of the pope, as one who is endowed with charism and moral authority, as opposed to a "juridical" view. Chapter Seven ("Changing Concepts of Church Membership") emphasizes a "communion" model of membership in which the criterion is *conversion* with its fruits in Christian living and which thus avoids an extrinsicist conception of membership.

Chapter Eight ("Eucharistic Sharing as an Ecumenical Problem") is particularly impressive. While recognizing the very real problems of intercommunion, Dulles suggests that within given parameters Eucharistic sharing can be a sign of the growing unity of the Church of Jesus Christ. The Eucharist is not seen, then, as a reward for a state of "perfect Christianity" (if this were the case, how could *anyone* partake of the Eucharistic meal?).

Finally, Chapter Nine ("Ecumenical Strategies for a Pluralistic Age") takes a slightly hesitant but perhaps more realistic view of ecumenical dialogue. Dulles recommends that the Christian Church should strive to be a "heterogeneous community of witnessing dialogue" (p. 181). He positis unity as an ideal but does not deny that there are real theological differences which remain to besolved.

To sum up, I would say that this book contains many good insights. I found the first half (except for Chapter Three) to be somewhat variable, especially in the tone of "preachiness" which occasionally surfaced. Its main strength, as exemplified in the later chapters, is that it situates the issues well and gives concise historical background. I believe that this book can be a good source for theological discussion, both in the "professional" sphere and in more informal settings; its style is such that it can be understood by the average Christian reader.

Gospel Poverty: Essays in Biblical Theology. By Augustin George, Jacques Dupont, O.S.B., Simon Légasse, O.F.M., Philip Seidensticker, O.F.M., Beda Rigaux, O.F.M. Trans. Michael D. Guinan, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. xvii-150. Cloth, $6.95.

Reviewed by Ms. Barbara Nauer, a free-lance writer living in New Orleans, and author of a memoir of Catholic life in the 1960's, Rise up and Remember *(Doubleday, 1977).*

These days it is very unlikely that a work published under Catholic auspices and with the title *Gospel Poverty* would be anything but another liberationist harangue, thinly veiling some more pro-Marxist and anti-U.S. propaganda as exegesis or "liberation theology." So this book is a welcome surprise.

Capably translated from the 1971 French edition *La pauvreté evangélique,* the work offers a collection of five papers on aspects of the subject announced in the title, papers originally delivered at a Rome meeting in June of 1970. The authors are all academics and scripture specialists, and they have carefully examined the subject of poverty the way it resides in the Old and New Testament.

Augustin George's opening essay defines clearly the meanings of *poverty* and some equivalent terms in the biblical languages, and then he goes on to show that in the Old Testament, human wisdom saw poverty as the consequence of laziness or disorder, whereas faith saw it as either a divine punishment, a scandal, or a call to discover certain religious values.

Jacques Dupont's chief concern is the New Testament. He draws upon the Gospels and Acts to show that Jesus changed the concept of poverty to a religious one. For our Lord, "the poor" signified all who were in distress, not merely the economically poor. And when Jesus encouraged his followers to be poor, he meant for them to trust perfectly in the Father's loving care.

Simon Légasse analyzes carefully Jesus's call to the rich young man (Mark 10:17, Mt. 19:21, Lk. 18:18) and challenges the traditional interpretation, the one pointing to a "lower" and "higher" form of Christian life. The *sequela Christi,* he convincingly shows, is for all Christians.

Philip Seidensticker agrees with Dupont that in the New Testament, poverty is a religious idea which does not necessarily include economic poverty, and that it involves total dependence on God. His important contribution is to show how Saint Paul departed from the older biblical spirituality in giving minimal attention to human poverty and maximum attention to the "richness of Christ."

The most memorable essay in *Gospel Poverty* is the final one, by Beda Rigaux, on "The Radicalness of the Kingdom." It reminds us that our "Lord's expectations of his followers flew in the face of traditions then current. Continence, carrying the cross, not burying one's father, leaving wife and family—all these were radical demands. Rigaux's penetrating commentary makes it plain that Jesus bound his followers to himself

with the same kind of radical interdependency that marked his own relation to the Father.

Gospel Poverty, though it has some physical flaws—typos abound—is a fine exegetical treatment. All of the selections are free of the "hobby horse" mentality that has disgraced so much Catholic scholarship since the 1950's. The writers come at the Scriptures bootless, as it were, willing to listen carefully to whatever the inspired writers appear to be saying, and not merely to prove some prior theories of their own. And from this very poverty of theirs derives their richness.

Juan de Cartagena, O.F.M. (1563-1618), The Mariology of His Homiliae Catholicae and Its Baroque Scripturism. By Sabino A. Vengco. St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1978, Pp. 335, incl. bibliography. Paper, $10.00.

Reviewed by William Kraus, O.F.M. Cap., a graduate student in Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University.

"Theology does not labor somewhere high above the foundation of tradition, as though Church history began today. . . . In order to serve the community of today, theology must itself be rooted in the community of yesterday." With this wisdom from Karl Barth, Vengco introduces his book on the Mariology of Juan de Cartagena and suggests its value to the contemporary church (p. 4). Vengco claims that in studying the works of the past theologian, we learn both the positive contributions and the mistakes of his theological method and conclusions. And just as important, we understand better the relationship of his theology to the historical period in which it developed. We see how the theological language and method, the use of Scripture, the manner of preaching, and the whole cultural *Weltanschauung* of a time influence and shape that period's Christian thought. Therefore Sabino Vengco has written this work not only to acquaint us with the Mariology of Juan de Cartagena, but also to allow the lessons of Cartagena's theology in dialogue with its historical milieu to teach and serve theology today.

In this three-part book, Vengco presents in a very thorough and scholarly way Cartagena's life and works, his Mariology, and his use of Scripture in preaching and teaching. Our author seeks first to clear up much of the confusion about Cartagena's life, background, and theological career. Through a careful study of all the available records Vengco establishes Cartagena's Spanish origins and culture—important in their influence on his religious expression and Baroque style—and then traces his history as a Jesuit and Franciscan, as a recognized and sometimes controversial preacher and teacher, and as a strong papal advocate. Vengco includes in these historical data a comprehensive detailed listing of all Cartagena's known works and the Western European and North American libraries in which they can be found. He then analyzes Cartagena's typical works, drawing out their literary characteristics and the biblical, patristic, and ecclesiastical sources they use

Part Two of the book is the longest and most important, a presentation

of Cartagena's Mariology as found especially in his four-volume collection of homilies, the *Homiliae Catholicae*. In discussing the three central Marian doctrines of the Immaculate Conception, the Assumption, and Mary's perpetual virginity, Vengco considers two points: first, Cartagena's systematic teaching about Mary; and then, his use of Scripture in support of his teaching. Vengco finds in this 17th-century theologian a capable if not innovative teacher and preacher of the Mariology inherited from earlier centuries. But Cartagena is quite original in much of his biblical exegesis and his use of Scripture to support and enhance the developing Marian doctrines. Typical of his time, he is caught up with the *sensus mysticus* of Sacred Scripture and is a master at applying the spiritual and mystical interpretations of biblical passages to his Mariology. Vengco demonstrates the fertility of Cartagena's imagination and his imitation of fellow authors in mystically interpreting animals, plants, buildings, historical persons and events, and numerous other images and types and metaphors—mostly from the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament—to prove his Mariological conclusion. Here Vengco takes a critical look at the interpretation of Scripture prevalent in Cargagena's time and cites instances of its often labored and irresponsible use in preaching and theology.

In the third part, Vengco concludes from the foregoing discussion that Cartagena was both a product and a proponent of a theological-cultural style of expression he calls "Baroque." The Baroque in art and literature was characterized by the practice, indeed the passion, of reaching to the extremes of the allegorical and climbing to the heights of the symbolic, of preferring the most profound and obscure to the more obvious and literal. In his Baroque homiletics and scripturism, Cartagena carries the mystical and spiritual biblical exegesis of the Middle Ages to its extreme imaginative and symbolic application. He justified such exegesis by the "silence" of Sacred Scripture regarding the Marian mysteries, a silence which he says does not deny the presence of Marian doctrinal arguments in the Scriptures but rather challenges the theologian to find these arguments in the deeper mystical understanding of the Bible. Vengco shows that this scriptural use, and sometimes abuse, exemplifies well the "Baroque" theology and preaching of the time.

Vengco's work is clearly organized and well written and is an attractive volume appearing as No. 8 in the Franciscan Institute Theology Series. The book will not have a wide appeal, but it should have a strong one for the theologian interested in the development of Mariology as well as for the historian of theology interested in the homiletics and scripturism of the post-Reformation and Spanish Baroque periods. To those scholars we recommend this study of Juan de Cartagena and his *Homiliae Catholicae*. How valuable Cartagena and his thought are to the theological past's service of the present will ultimately be decided by the readers of this book. For his part, Vengco has done his work well.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our September issue were drawn by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, F.F.S.C., of St. Anthony's Novitiate, Riverton, Illinois.

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A REVIEW EDITORIAL

God's Word—The Church's Book

A LITTLE OVER A YEAR AGO we called attention in this space (July-(August, 1977, pp. 194-95) to Gerhard Maier's attack on the uncritical use of the historico-critical method in scriptural studies. Now we find ourselves in a position, after extensive personal conversations with some evangelical charismatics, where we feel called upon to oppose with equal vigor an indefensible fundamentalism—the opposite extreme, as it were, of the exaggerated h-c method.

The fundamentalist takes as absolute literal fact every word of scripture, relegating to insignificance the identity and role of the human author, the context, and the genre of the book or text in question. Dr. Barclay's point is well taken, however, when he insists that "it makes all the difference *who* said a thing; it makes all the difference *when* it was said; it makes all the difference *where* it was said" (p. 5).

Professor Barclay, of the University of Glasgow, is a prolific author, among whose biblical studies is a detailed commentary called the *Daily Study Bible*. In the present work he gives us, instead of a line-by-line commentary, a vignette for each of the New Testament books stressing the answers to the questions mentioned above: the authorship, living context, and purpose of each of the books. He does have a way of making the Gospels and Letters come alive, and from any scholarly viewpoint the theology is (with one exception for Catholics at least) quite reliably orthodox. The exception comes in his treatment of Romans, where justification is set forth in Lutheran terms. Barclay tries to defend this interpretation by appealing to the etymology of *dikaioun* (the Greek term involved); but the large lexicon I checked shows that the word lends itself to either the Roman or the Lutheran interpretation. Here again, therefore, I cannot see how one is to avoid the same recourse to ecclesiastical, authentic decision on which I insisted in last year's review of Maier's book. The Bible *is* the Church's book.

Father Marrin teaches scripture at Immaculate Conception Seminary, Huntington, New York. His book is smaller and even less imposing than Dr. Barclay's. It is *not* offered as a scholarly or esoteric discussion, but is a series of short reflections ideal for spiritual nourishment and for moving the reader to *go to the texts* of scripture and assimilate them. Father Marrin does not even treat the individual books separately—his approach is thematic, as he takes us through the sweep of salvation history and presents the Incarnation as God's answer to the problematic of human existence.

Sister Mary Seraphim, whose contributions to this periodical have long been deeply appreciated by our readers, makes a good, and a genuinely Franciscan, case for the practice not only of reading, but even of memorizing goodly portions of scripture (see *The Queen* 29:1—May-June, 1978—pp. 14-17). "To make the words of God bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh," she says, "it is necessary to write them on our hearts." But our point here is that to do that really intelligently and effectively, one cannot simply "lift texts" with no historical or theological perspective, in fundamentalist fashion. *A Kingdom Coming* and *The Men, the Meaning, the Message of the New Testament Books* are both fine, up-to-date, eminintly readable introductions to such a perspective.

Fr. Michael D. Maslach, ofm

The Men, the Meaning, The Message of the New Testament Books. By William Barclay. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976. Pp. vii-149. Paper, $3.95.

A Kingdom Coming. By William C. Marrin. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. vi-84. Paper, $1.75.

Our Response to the Transcendent in the World of "Future Shock"

SISTER PATRICIA SHEEHAN, O.S.F.

FROM ALVIN TOFFLER'S book, *Future Shock*, we learn that the pace of life will continue to accelerate and will continue to tax our ability to adapt to the extreme limits as we respond to the changes around us and to the stimuli that bombard our senses.[1] Our concomitant ability to maintain our spiritual equilibrium in the midst of increased activity will depend upon how our primary commitment to the Transcendent in our lives is maintained.

Witness to the values of the Kingdom will call for more radical counter-directions from Francican religious men and women. The values of society around us are presently in need of revitalization. We are being called to minister to our world not merely at the level of technological advancement, but with the redemptive presence of Jesus as "wounded healers." To bring such a redemptive presence to our world today demands a greater intensity of presence to God as the Holy and Transcendent in our lives.

We are daily responding to the call of the Second Vatican Council to renew and revitalize ourselves for the sake of the Kingdom. We have been challenged to adapt to the milieu of our day, a challenge set forth, e.g., in the conciliar document *Perfectae Caritatis:* "The manner of life, of prayer, and of work should be in harmony with the present-day physical and psychological conditions of the members [of the religious institute]"[2]

What is this "today" and "Tomorrow" that we are called upon to adapt to? A cursory scanning of chapter headings in *Future Shock* can put us in touch with the reality: the acceleration thrust, the pace of life: "Things: The Throw-away Society," "People: The Modular Man," "Places: The New Nomads," "The Fractured Family," "The Limits of Adaptability," and "Strategies for Survival." Toffler maintains that

> the speedup of change is a psychological force . . . the rising rate of change in the world around us disturbs our inner equilibrium, altering the very way in which we experience life. Acceleration without translates into acceleration within.[3]

As Franciscan Religious what measures are we taking to maintain our Christocentric vision of life with an ability to perceive and interpret our experience in the light of our vision? Without such a vision the way in which we experience life may well be altered in such a way that we lose this essential centeredness in the Lord Jesus.

The need to "anchor" ourselves is emphasized by Toffler lest the changes about us affect the very quality of our presence in the world:

> To survive, to avert what we have termed future shock, the individual must become infinitely more adaptable and capable than ever before. He must search out totally new ways to anchor himself . . . He must understand in greater detail how the effects of acceleration penetrate his personal life, creep into his behavior, and alter the quality of existence.[4]

Life presently and in the future will have a sense of increasing complexity about it, demanding an intense mobilization of all the forces within us and the resources about us to "sort it all out" and to "keep it all together."

> For while we tend to focus on only one situation at a time, the increased rate at which situations flow past us vastly complicates the entire structure of life, multiplying the number of roles we must play and the number of choices we are forced to make. This in turn accounts for the choking sense of complexity about contemporary life.[5]

It is my personal belief that a value clarification process is the crux of both our anchoring and our sorting out. As always, we are challenged to order the hierarchy of our values in accord with the priorities of the Gospel way of life.

The need for our centeredness in God is cited by Jesus as the first and greatest commandment, and the same need was explicitly reaffirmed in *Perfectae Caritatis:*

> They who make profession of the evangelical counsels, [the Council Fathers insist,] should seek above

[1] Cf. Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York: Random House, 1970).

[2] *Perfectae Caritatis*, §3, Austin Flannery, O.P., ed., *Vatican Council, II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1975), p. 613.

[3] Toffler, p. 32.

[4] Ibid., p. 35.

[5] Ibid., p. 33.

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all else God who has first loved us. In all circumstances they should take care to foster a hidden life with Christ in God, which is the source and stimulus of love of neighbor for the salvation of the world and building up of the Church.[6]

As the situations in which we find ourselves change and become increasingly complex, our need for God in prayer and solitude seems to become more profound and acute. "The circumstances of the twentieth-century world have changed the orientation of many a religious family, but there remains a personal need for interchange with God."[7]

Franciscan Father Roderic Petrie sees the renewed emphasis on the quest for a more intense presence to the Holy in our lives as a "good omen":

> More religious today are becoming convinced, like Elijah, that the firestorms, mighty winds, and earthquakes of today have little to say of God, but that he speaks a tiny word of silence (1 Kings 19:11-13). Religious people, particularly people who are religious, are therefore looking for out-of-the-way places where silences are less rare and better heard.[8]

Citing the relationship between the search of modern Religious for more frequent moments of solitude amid our "pressurized existence," Thomas Merton says:

> Modern Religious who feel the need of silence generally seek it not merely for the purpose of self-scrutiny, but in order to recuperate spiritual powers which have been damaged by the noise and rush of a pressurized existence.[9]

Today more than ever in the world about us there is a gravitational pull toward activity, especially in America where such high value is placed on efficiency, competition, and productivity. This pull creates a tension between our need for solitude and the demands placed on us for accomplishment. Judgments from within our culture and among ourselves can be the source of guilty feelings when Religious manifest the need for deeper and more frequent periods of presence before the Holy. Dr. Susan Muto explains that

> misunderstandings about solitude are understandable in a society such as our own that tends to attach a negative stigma to any form of withdrawal—as if only in the world of action or only in the world of ideas can our true selves emerge.[10]

Our witness to the value of "wasting time" with the Lord in our lives can easily be lost if it is not supported and encouraged by the community. Presently some Religious are being "spent" in the demands of the apostolate, to the detriment of their spiritual development and communal presence, with little hope of respite because of the policies that govern them.

Sister Marie Beha, O.S.C., who has her doctorate in philosophy from the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, has experienced religious life in both the active and the contemplative modes. She advocates the necessity of leisure for the contemplation necessary to enhance the quality of religious presence in our world. "A positive effort has to be made," she says, "to be leisured, to live a contemplative life in the face of too much that needs to be done and the paucity of time to do it."[11]

Leisure as an attitude of life encompasses the components of openness, awareness, and silence. It demands the discipline of taking time, of moving away from obsessive accomplishment and from the evaluation of self and others in terms of productivity which Brother David Steindl-Rast calls "ascetical leisure."[12]

Merton affirms the need for solitude by saying:

> Today more than ever we need to recognize that the gift of solitude is not ordered to the acquisition of strange contemplative powers, but first of all to the recovery of one's deep self and to the renewal of an authenticity which is twisted out of shape by the preten-

[6] *Perfectae Caritatis*, §6; p. 614.

[7] Roderic Petrie, O.F.M., "A Good Omen," *Spiritual Life*, Winter, 1974, p. 250.

[8] Ibid., p. 248.

[9] Thomas Merton, *Contemplation in a World of Action* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Image Books, 1973), p. 280. The section on Franciscan Eremitism, which first appeared in THE CORD 16 (1966), 356-64, is on pp. 273-81.

[10] Susan Annette Muto, "Solitude, Self-Presence, and True Participation," *Spiritual Life*, Winter, 1974, p. 233.

[11] Sister Marie Beha, O.S.C., "The Leisure to be Contemplative," *Spiritual Life*, Winter, 1974, p. 245.

[12] Cited ibid.

tious routines of a disordered togetherness.[13]

Far from isolating us from the community of man, more frequent and intense periods of withdrawal should lead us to a deeper quality of presence to our world. The moment in history has come when solitude can no longer be viewed as something peripheral to our redemptive mission but as the fountain from which our Christian ministry flows. A question we might ask is: What will be the outcome without solitude? Dr. Muto offers this, at least partial, answer:

> The experience of solitude comes to fruition in an inner attitude of presence to self, others, and the Sacred that is faithfully manifested in all that we say and do. Without solitude, action may become superficial, spiritual life weaken, and self-discovery in depth grind to a halt.[14]

Our periods of solitude as active Religious are for the sake of the Kingdom. It is during these moments that Jesus can give us his own focus and teach us his own responses to the complexities facing us in our world. Solitude then becomes "an attitude of our inner presence that unites us to the Sacred in the center of our being and far from being an escape becomes the root of human solidarity."[15]

[13]Merton, p. 280.
[14]Muto, p. 234.
[15]Ibid., p. 233.

Thus far in this discussion I have tried to develop the thesis that one of our greatest challenges now and in the future will be to maintain our spiritual equilibrium in the midst of the arena of increased change and complexity in our world. I have posited that the balance will depend to a large extent upon the frequency and intensity of our presence to God as the central focus of our lives. I have cited the developing desire of many Religious for more frequent and deeper encounters with the Lord in solitude amid the gravitational pull of our society toward increased activity. The relationship of community support, encouragement, and leisure in the pursuit of solitude was considered, and solitude was viewed within the framework of our mission and ministry to the world. In what follows, I want to place the solitude experience within the context of Jesus's life and the Franciscan tradition.

In the Gospels Jesus gives us many examples of his need to withdraw into solitude and prayer with his Father in the midst of his life of active ministry. In one passage Luke says, "He would go away to lonely places, where he prayed" (Lk. 5:16). The themes of retreat and return are recurrent in the life of Jesus. Father Petrie mentions that 'one sometimes hears the criticism that time spent in solitude is time lost to the Apostolate"; and yet Jesus himself "seemed to prize solitude as a setting for prayer and practiced prayer not as a preparation for ministry nor as a respite from it, but rather as an integral part of it."[16]

Periods of withdrawal and solitude are part of our Franciscan heritage where, according to Merton, "the spirit of solitary adoration, in the midst of nature and close to God, is closely related to the Franciscan concept of poverty, prayer, and the Apostolate."[17]

"The eremitism of Saint Francis and his followers," Merton continues, is deeply evangelical and remains always open to the world, while recognizing the need to maintain a certain distajce and perspective, a freedom that keeps one from being submerged in active cares and devoured by the claims of exhausting work."[18]

The evolution of the hermitage experience as a form of recuperative presence before the Lord is attested to in Francis's time and is again becoming a revitalizing phenomenon in our day. Francis too lived in a time of change and found himself immersed in the "marketplace" of his day, which was characterized, like our own, by increased levels of activity. It could be that, immersed in a world of frantic and feverish activity, the Religious of today looks to the hermitage experience as a more complete form of withdrawal in preparation for the more complete form of presence he or she must bring to the world.

As Merton notes,

> Saint Francis founded at least twenty mountain hermitages, and there is no need to remind the reader what outstanding importance his own solitary retreat at Mt. Alverna played in his life. He received the Stigmata there in 1224. Franciscan mysticism is centered upon this solitary vision of the Crucified and the love generated in this solitude is poured out on the world in preaching.[19]

In his introduction to Francis's Instruction on Hermitages, Father Marion Habig has this to say about the role hermitages played in our Franciscan tradition:

> So too from the early days of the Franciscan Order, there were small hermitages where the friars could retire to give themselves more completely to a life of prayer and meditation... even while they chose the mixed life of prayer and apostolate. Francis still

[16]Petrie, p. 250.
[17]Merton, p. 273.
[18]Ibid., p. 280.
[19]Ibid., p. 277.

wanted a number of places of retirement, called hermitages, where some of the friars could lead a life of seclusion and to which others could retire at least occasionally.[20]

We need, in our movement toward new horizons, to reaffirm our commitment to this ideal and in practical and concrete fashion to provide both opportunities and places for solitude and prayer. As Petrie puts it,

> . . . religious families, dedicated as they are to converse with God, owe to their members opportunities and places where this may be done. Solitude is not merely a modern, fast moving commodity, it is a necessity for the implantation, cultivation, and fruition of prayer.[21]

I have tried in this paper to develop the position that parallel to our apostolic involvement in the world of "future shock" there exists a real and pressing need for us as Franciscan Religious to have more frequent and more intense periods of exposure to God as our anchor point in solitude and prayer. I personally feel that the greatest challenge we face in our value system is to maintain the primacy of the Holy and Transcendent in our lives and not allow ourselves to be swept into the throes of an existence and presence that will compromise the Lord Jesus's role as the heart and essence of our religious life.

My primary motivation for living the life of a Franciscan Sister today rests in the primacy of the call I felt long ago and still feel, to a life of intimacy with Jesus, supporting and being supported in this call through community. In the past this primary orientation has been compromised to apostolic demands, but I feel we are presently at a juncture where we can no longer tolerate such a compromise and remain authentic to the call of Jesus to let him be in fact as well as in name the Lord of our lives.

I end with the following provocative challenge set before us by Dr. Muto:

> We can conclude from all of this that solitude sustained by prayer, is neither end of engagement nor cessation of action, but the binding of participation to its sources and inspiration. When life is a rhythm of sharing and solitude, we can better discover ourselves and our unique call to participate actively in the emergence of community and culture. If we deny ourselves the refreshment of solitude, we may neither discover our uniqueness nor remain faithful to its call.
>
> Even more seriously, solitude is a condition for survival in the modern world. The encounter mystique, together with the explosion of possibilities in economics and politics promising me the good life, if only I promise to give up my best self, all tempt me away from solitude. I must have the courage not to succumb to this temptation.[22]

[20]Marion A. Habig, O.F.M., ed., *Omnibus of Sources* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1972), p. 71.

[21]Petrie, p. 250.

[22]Muto, p. 237.

Fullness

Every moment . . .
A drop of morning dew on grass
Which is gone so soon.

Every heart . . .
The presence of Christ
And a calling to share his presence in me with others.

Every encounter . . .
An opportunity for sharing
words,
The Word.

Time . . .
No precious pearl to be guarded
But a means for love to superabound
In fullness.

Fullness . . .
Unceasing . . . Overflowing . . .
Participating in eternity . . .
Right now!
Because this is the fullness of Christ's presence
Encountered every moment in time
In every heart
Open to see
The drop of morning dew on Grass
And say: Thank you, Lover.

TIMOTHY JAMES FLEMING, O.F.M.CONV.

Francis and "the World"

SISTER MADGE KARECKI, S.S.J.

SINCE earliest Christian times the members of the Church have struggled to form a consistent and proper attitude toward the world. Francis was unique among the medieval religious founders in his attitude toward the world, and his insight is timeless because it is based on Scripture. To gain a better understanding of his perspective, therefore, we would do well to examine the attitude of the early Church as found in the Second Letter to the Thessalonians.

The people of Thessalonika expected the Second Coming of Jesus to take place within their lifetime. They were almost frantic in that expectation, so that at length Paul wrote to them, advising them to live calmly, caring for one another and waiting quietly for the Lord. In his second letter to them, Paul took occasion to set down his teaching on the Second Coming so that they would have a sound foundation for their faith. Before that Advent would occur, he told them, evil would pervade the entire world. Then the Antichrist would appear but would be defeated by the Lord's power. God's triumph was sure.[1]

Paul's point in writing this was to let the Thessalonians know that they should not completely abandon concern for the world. He sought, in other words, to correct their exaggeratedly eschatological outlook which was devoid of concern for humanizing a world which they felt was soon to end.

Today we have a different perspective. The prevailing mood is activist: efforts are made to humanize society, almost to the exclusion of concern for man's spiritual needs.

Since Vatican II religious have opened up to the world. The Council urged us to serve the world and to give witness to the Lord's presence in it—ideas which received authentic expression in the document on The Church in the Modern World.

But this mental climate has produced a secularized religious life. Today many religious have adopted the world's values instead of living differently from secular people—within but not of their world. The pendulum has thus swung to the extreme antipodes from where it was in the early Church. Now there is so much concern about this world that we have almost forgotten that it is ultimately going to pass away. There is among us, in general, a loss of consciousness of anything other than this world. No one writes any more about the ultimate realities of life and death, heaven or hell.

Perpetuation of injustice or social apathy is not being advocated here; only a balanced perspective. In the uptown region of Chicago, where I live, there are hundreds of services for all sorts of needs, but little is done to nourish the spirit of the people. The Liturgy is anything but inspiring; the sacraments are almost routine, and the sacred element is diminished in the name of "revelance."

Saint Francis, whom Arnold Toynbee called the most perfect man after Jesus Christ, had a more balanced perspective, a more comprehensive world-view than many a modern man. He had both a concern for this world and a keen sense that the world was much larger than what we see of it here on earth. He knew that the world has other realms that we will inhabit if we live in union with the Lord while on earth.

Francis's view of the world was, as briefly indicated above, shaped by Scripture, especially by the Johannine writings. He saw the world in three different ways: (1) as creation, for which he was grateful and showed his gratitude by using it wisely and abstemiously; (2) as all of humankind, toward which he had a redemptive intent, a longing for its union with God; and (3) as a society organized against God, toward which he took a prophetic stance. He lived *differently* from other people, therefore: while in the world, he did not accept the world's values.

When Francis used the phrase "we have left the world," he used it in connection with that third sense of "world" found in John's writings. In the monastic structure a person who sought to live the Christian life left his family and home and went to a monastery. Behind high, thick walls he shut out "the World." Francis introduced a new idea to the meaning of "leaving the world." He did not leave Assisi; he remained there. What he did leave was his father's house, his inherit-

[1]William Barclay, *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians* (Edinburgh: The St. Andrew Press, 1966), p. 237.

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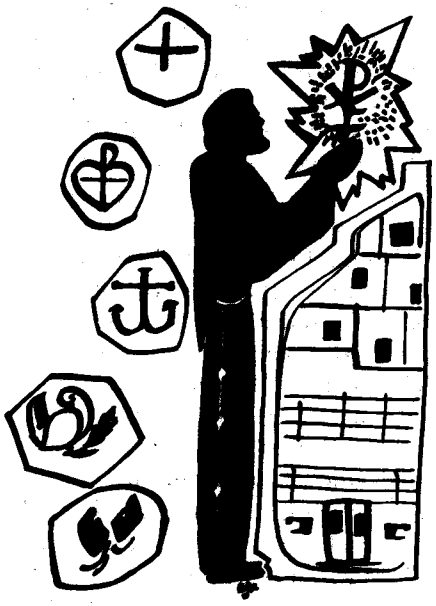
ance, his bourgeois values. He left these for the sake of human solidarity: to be with man, every man, especially the outcasts of society, in a deeper, more personal way for the sake of the Gospel.

It is not surprising, then, that he regarded the leper incident as a milestone in his life. In accepting the leper as a man, as a member of Christ's Body, he left the world; that is, he wrenched himself from bourgeois bias, from evaluating man by a monetary measure. He wanted to be in communion with all of mankind, to have a world-wide community with all of his brothers and sisters and especially with those who were forgotten by the rest of society.[2]



In the twenty-third chapter of the Rule of 1221 the Friars Minor give their message to the whole world. This is the essence of their response to the world. They "beg and implore everyone to persevere in the true faith and in a life of penance; there is no other way to be saved. We beseech the whole world to do this." They address these words to the "world" taken as all of humankind. They not only ask, moreover, but set out to provide an example by their own life-style. They live *differently* within society. Francis proposed to counter discrimination with community, power with minority, exploitation with servanthood, affluence with poverty, war and fighting with non-violence, and self-aggrandizement with a life of worship.

Francis was more balanced than either the Thessalonians or modern man. He could live differently because he believed in a life beyond earth. He did not need to store up things here because he knew that his treasure was somewhere else. He saw the things that needed to be corrected in society, and his answer was a whole new, revolutionary way of living that his followers are still grappling with today. He lived by Gospel values. He lived with a deep consciousness of the fact that this earth is passing and that he was a pilgrim here on earth—that only when the Lord Jesus would come again would all evils be righted and all wounds healed. He was not unaware of the things in medieval society that needed to be changed, but he was aware of his own limitations and his own special call to live differently for the sake of the Kingdom. In this way he lived justly because he lived consciously in the reign of God, bringing the message of the Gospel to the world. He felt this to be both a privilege and a responsibility, for he was grateful for God's gift of creation and longed for all of it to be redeemed in Christ.

Unlike the monks who saw the world as evil and sinful, Francis saw nothing as evil except man himself with his vices and sins. The world was the meeting place of God and man. But Francis was realistic enough to know that man needs to have a certain readiness if he is to meet God, and that this readiness comes only from persevering effort (itself His gift) to maintain communion with God. One must know the values of the Gospel, experience their liberation before one can take a prophetic stance in the world. For this reason Francis and his brothers wrote in the Rule of 1221, chapter 23, that "Nothing. . . must keep us back, nothing separate us from him, nothing come between us and him."

Francis knew his world and the values it espoused, but he preferred Gospel values. He chose to live by the latter and spoke his choice and his belief not so much in words as through a life-style that could say more than volumes of words.

We must know our world. . . in some ways different from that of Francis and in some ways the same; but we must know it and live in such a way that we further the Spirit of God at work in the world.

[2]Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., and Sister Margaret Mary Hoffelder, *Saint Francis Yesterday and Today* (Pulaski, WI: Franciscan Publishers, 1974), p. 53.

Along the Road

Journeying along the road
at my own rate
taking time to listen
to the Word of all creation
sparrow sings a morning song of praise
not new, but seldom heard before
I listen.

Looking to the distant hills
wondering how high, how far away
wishing to be mountain bound
I glance beyond the pebbled road I walk upon
heavenward
and I can see.

Hungry for a food unknown
thirsty for an everlasting spring
well water deep and still
I long to taste of gentle streams and gurgling brooks
I know exist.

Time so scattered and lost
so often lost
by ignorance of what to do
I pause now
long enough to breathe the air
surrounded by a love unseen
I still myself! until I feel.

I reach to sky and cloud and sun
to touch the essence of their being!
radiant of His face I've seen before
Stretching high above my reach
beyond my expectations
I am lifted by the touch of Him who gives
All good and powerful and loving
I find I am created anew
in His very image
As I journey along the road.

SISTER JO THERESE SAN FELIPPO, O.S.F.

Musings on Contemplation—I

CONRAD A. SCHOMSKE, O.F.M.

THE CONSTANT prayer of a contemplative person is expressed in Pssalm 27: "Of you my heart has spoken; [it said to me:] seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek. Hide not your face from me." Again, in Psalm 73 we read: "As for me, how wonderful to be near God."

Those enjoying the gift of contemplation sense God's presence. To them, God is very real and alive. They experience his touches and feel his embraces. This does not depend on their willing it; rather, the Lord "visits" when he wills. A "visit" here means, not that the Lord was not there before, but that he makes his presence felt so strongly that it seems as though he had just arrived. It is as if one could not *not* notice him.

And yet this awareness is somewhat obscure and vague; it is incomprehensible in the sense that the person does not understand how the Lord "comes" and makes his presence felt. That is why contemplation is sometimes called mystical prayer: all that is going on in the depths of one's being, is happening in a hidden manner, at least in the earlier stages. There's something mystifying about it. For this reason, too, it is difficult to describe the experience to others. One can only say: "I experience the presence of God; I know he is here. I am aware of his presence, conscious that he is with me, deep within my being or next to me or all around me. I don't 'make' him present, as it were, by reasoning him into existence or by imagining he is there. I just sense his closeness, his intimacy. This is stronger at times than at others. And then again, the Lord 'goes away.' I can't seem to bring him back. I didn't chase him away by my indifferent attitude; he just went, as quickly as he came. I felt his loss; I regret his absence; I wish he hadn't gone; I long ardently for his return. I miss him so. I'm almost tempted to say to him: 'Why have you wounded my heart, by giving me a taste of you and then going off leaving me to

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Father Conrad A. Schomske, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province, currently resides at the Franciscan Retreat in Cedar Lake, Indiana. Acceding to requests for further development of the ideas presented in our December, 1977, issue, he discusses this month the nature of contemplation and ways in which we can prepare ourselves for it. Next month, he will treat of God's role and offer some concluding remarks.

my longing and my loneliness?'"

It is this experience of God's presence that we call contemplation. It requires less effort than meditation or "thinking about God." It requires less effort even than "talking to God." It is really just resting in the Lord, reposing in him, content to be silently with him, saying nothing. For this reason it is sometimes called the prayer of quiet, because our mind, imagination, and memory are quiet—at least we are not using them to make contact with the Lord. They may go off on their own in what we call distractions, but down in the recesses of our hearts, we abide with the Lord.

As one strives to curtail the activity of the intellect, the memory, and the imagination, trying solely to rest in the Lord, it seems as though these faculties tend to lose some of their sharpness. I suppose this statement is open to misunderstanding in the light of the fact that we have to use our talents and not let them become dull. But I think it has to be understood in the sense of the acorn dying before it can produce the oak. It's the idea of dying to self to live for God. After all, we don't really apprehend God with our intellect or our memory or our imagination. Rather, we intuit God; that is, we go to him directly, without going through or using the intellect, etc. Our spirit contacts his Spirit, all other interior activity coming to rest in him. This is what I think Saint John of the Cross meant when he said, "The cavalry (intellect, memory, imagination) came down at the sight of the waters (God)." A contemplative person can become so rapt in God that these faculties are all drawn to God, like iron filings to a magnet, and they participate in the enjoyment of God. They just rest in him without going about their usual business. This is what it means to become one with God. Admittedly, this is an advanced state of contemplation, especially insofar as it becomes habitual, continuous, and without distractions. In fact, this is about as far as one can go on this earth in attaining union with God. I think it is in this light that we mean the faculties lose their sharpness but are not sorry for the loss. It is as the Lord said: "He who loses his life, shall find it." It's being in the cloud of unknowing by our natural ways of knowing (intellect, etc.) and instead knowing God by direct perception, in our very souls.

This resting in the Lord in quiet contemplation, has a restful influence on our bodies also. We find ourselves more at ease with God, with ourselves, and with others. Because we come to see more clearly that everything that happens is God's working, we learn to take things in stride.

We become more calm and tranquil in speech, motions, visage, and external behavior. Untoward happenings are less likely to upset us. Calmness may thus be seen as one outward characteristic of a contemplative. It is not a forced control of emotions and reactions, but rather the undisturbed equilibrium of one's inmost being resting securely in God's arms in loving trust. It is genuine peace of soul, which can remain even though we be surrounded by any kind of outward turmoil.

There are, of course, various degrees of this union with God in mystical prayer. It may be rather infrequent in the beginning: come and go, last a brief moment, or endure for longer periods. It may be somewhat slight or fragile, almost imperceptible at times; or again, it may be strongly and unmistakably experienced. As time goes on, usually over a period of years, the experience becomes more habitual, more perceptible, more protracted. It can even become the usual state of the soul, so that the person is almost always aware of God's presence. (It couldn't, of course, be so to speak the totality of one's conscious life, because that situation would be heaven.)

This is a wonderful thing: to be habitually aware of God, living intimately with him who is our All. Why should we not give our all to him: our full attention, all our time, all our concern? With Francis of Assisi, we should be able to say: My God and my All. God is really my All. Everything I am or have is God. As we experience this kind of prayer more and more often and deeply, the practice of virtue becomes easier. The Spirit of Jesus seems to rub off on us, as it were; and his love, his humility, his meekness, his patience, his gentleness all become more evident in us.

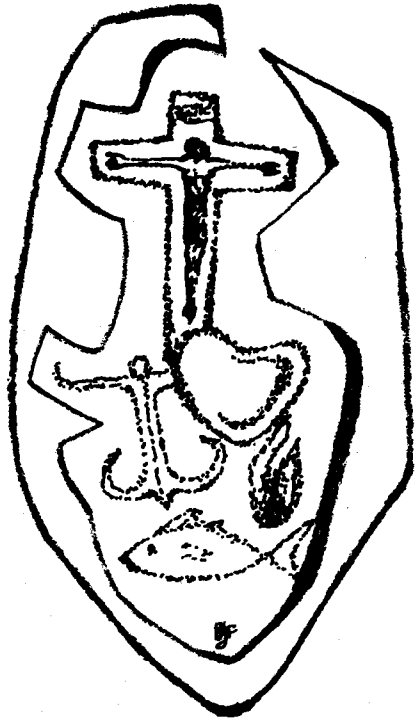
But to bring about this state of being one with God, we have to do our part. It is true that God alone can achieve it in us, but paradoxically we can and must prepare ourselves for it, so that he can, in his love and generosity, respond to our efforts by giving us his gift of contemplation. As the beloved disciple put it, "It is not that we have loved God, but that he has loved us" (1 Jn. 4:10). There are various things we can do to prepare ourselves.

The first requisite is that we desire this sort of close union with God. We must want it. The more strongly we desire it, the more ardently and wholeheartedly we shall strive for it. We have to want this habitual union with God more than anything in the world.

In the second place, we must spend as much time as we can in prayer. The more time we spend

in prayer, the more finely attuned we shall become to God and the more readily we shall perceive his workings within us. We shall become sensitive to his presence and more alert to respond to his initiative. As with everything else, we become good at it by doing it: practice makes perfect. As already observed, this does not mean that we become adept at conjuring up God within ourselves. Rather, it is like a musically gifted person picking out musical notes and variations which an ordinary person may not even notice. A Greek lyre is supposed to have been so sensitive that its strings would vibrate with the passing wind. This is the way it is with us; the more time we spend waiting for the Lord, the more alert we become to his "passing by."

This subject of time spent in prayer is worth some more examination before we turn to some other prerequisites for attaining contemplation. One result of persevering in the effort to pray, e.g., is that we attain a certain gracefulness or facility in conducting ourselves in God's presence. We are no longer "all thumbs," but learn graciously to "do the right thing," which in contemplation often means doing nothing to get in the Lord's way. We learn, that is, how just to *be there* with the Lord, giving him our full, loving attention, residing in him, abiding in him, enjoying him,



being ravished by him, letting him consume us in his love, joyfully surrendering ourselves to him and "letting ourselves go" to him. We learn to "let go," and allow God to work his wonders in us.

The more time we spend with God, the sooner all this is likely to happen. It's like spending time in the sun, just soaking up its rays. Without *doing* anything, but just *being* there in the sun, a person gets tanned. Even so, just by "being with the Lord," we allow him to act for us, with us, in us. That's what I meant by saying that the more praying we

do, the better, that we learn to pray by praying.

In terms of hours , then: what, concretely, are we talking about? I would think that two hours a day is a good starting figure. This suggestion is based on my own experience, on my work with other people, on my reading of the masters of mysticism, and on my study of the Rules of various religious congregations— documents composed in past centuries. This does not mean that we jump all at once into the two-hour routine; rather, we have to build up to it. If we haven't been praying at all, we should probably start with fifteen minutes in the morning and fifteen at night. Then, after six months or so, we can add five minutes to each period, until we have reached a full hour both morning and evening. This is of course only one way of doing it— but by some means or other I do think that the goal eventually has to be two full hours of prayer each day given to the Lord, 365 days a year, if we aspire to contemplation. Others may question this stress on precise time periods, and they are of course entitled to their opinion. I want only to report the conclusion to which my own experience and research have led me.

Once this two-hour level has been reached, at any rate, we should stick to it for several years. In time, depending on the individual person, his/her inclinations and inspirations from the Holy Spirit, grace, and several other variables, this prayer time should be increased over the years to three, four, five, or more hours of the day. Some may laugh at this and say: "He's off his rocker," or "Who are you kiddding?" I would simply respond: "He who laughs last, laughs best," and "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." After all, the saints did it. It would be impossible, in fact, to think of a single contemplative saint who did *not* give several hours a day to contemplative prayer.

Many think that in our efficient, technological age of instant results, this time can be condensed, or capsulized into much shorter blocks. I would reply that although the times in which we may live may change, the two elements we are talking about here—God and the soul—do not change essentially. Others may say, "Who can find this much time in each day? After all, there are only twenty-four hours." Admittedly, priorities of time have to be set: how much time for God in contemplation, how much time for other things (which is not to say that the "other things" cannot be *for God*, but cultivating a sense of God's presence while doint something *else* is not the same thing, nor does it obtain the same results, as devoting time explicitly and solely to con-

templative prayer). In some cases, apportioning this much time to contemplation may call for a radical break with one's present patterns of life. It might involve becoming a hermit or some such step. If you think this sounds foolish, recall the words of Jesus: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice . . ."

I realize that not everyone will think the pearl of great price is worth *that* much; but for those who feel deep down in their hearts the Spirit's call to contemplation (and after all, it is to them, primarily, that this article is addressed), there is no greater treasure in this world than living continuously in conscious awareness of the Lord, and no price is too great to pay.

Some too may think that fifteen minutes of prayer without distractions is worth an hour of prayer mingled with distractions. The difficulty with this rejoinder, however, is that no one can be confident of "turning on" at will fifteen minutes of concentrated prayer. What usually happens is that within the fifteen-minute span there might be only a single minute of deep, unadulterated contact with God and the rest of the time is mostly distractions.

To put it more simply, the more fifteen-minute periods we spend in prayer, the more one-minute periods there will be of recollected prayer. As a result, in two hours of prayer, we may end up with, at least, eight minutes of deep contemplation. The whole thing cannot, of course, be reuced to numbers quite this simply; but this much is true, and the Fathers used to repeat it: "Quantity of prayer leads to quality." And by quantity, I don't mean multiplying words, but rather spending much time earnestly trying to be united with the Lord in mind and heart, with or without words.

The third means of preparation for contemplative union that I want to consider here is spiritual reading. That is, besides the strong desire to live habitually conscious of God and aware of his presence, and besides the honest day-to-day effort to spend much time with him, spiritual reading is a most effective means to foster growth in the contemplative life. Such reading should be regular—should receive at least fifteen minutes of our time each day, and if possible even a half hour or more. If contemplation is what we are interested in, it's best to stick with the classical authors on prayer and to read their books slowly, praying before we begin, to the Holy Spirit to help us understand what we are reading, and afterwards to ask him to help us put into practice what we read.

The kind of "classical" works I have in mind can be either from the past (St. Bonaventure, St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross, St. Francis de Sales, *The Cloud of Unknowing, The Way of a Pilgrim,* etc.) or by more contemporary writers such as Thomas Merton, Father George Maloney, and Evelyn Underhill. A prayerful reading of this type of book daily, over a period of ten to twenty years or so, would do much to put one safely on the road to contemplation, which is not to say that unless one reads them he or she cannot arrive at contemplative union with God. On the contrary, if someone prays faithfully and fervently every day, the Holy Spirit will, as the years go by, lead him or her to close union with God. Still, the books do teach us how to work along with God; and particularly in the absence of a spiritual director the Spirit can use them as effective means of guidance.

We thus come at last to the final means of preparation for contemplative union: a fourfold effort to purify ourselves, sometimes referred to as "the four purities." Reserving for the concluding half of this article in November our consideration of "trials" sent to us by the Lord mainly from outside, I want to discuss here the human person's endeavor to maintain and foster these "purities," which concern conscience, mind, heart, and will. We have to keep these areas solely for God if we expect to grow in our union with him.

First of all, it goes without saying that our conscience has to be pure. Sin and God just do not go together. Sin, in fact, is really not loving God, whereas this whole business of contemplation is simply and precisely loving God so much that we constantly try to keep our attention on him. This means that we cannot tolerate deliberate, willful sin in our lives. We cannot compromise with sin. Sheer, stark honesty is necessary here. Sin is sin. We cannot sugar-coat it by calling it something else. It is deliberately doing something we know deep down in our hearts, God does not want. Or it may be willfully refusing him something we know he does want.

In the beginning stages of the road to contemplation, as a result of original sin and our personal sins, it may be difficult to break with sin in our lives. Here, I think we have to keep several things in mind. (1) We should make regular use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which not only takes away sin but also gives grace to avoid temptation, sin, and the occasion of sin (persons, places, and things that lead us to sin). (2) We must be patient with ourselves; it may take years to overcome some sins, but saints are not made in a day. (3) Sinning keeps us humble, which is not to say, of course, that it is on that account desirable or even excusable, but rather that even evil can be turned to good.

(4) Even while we have not as yet completely uprooted a sinful habit, grace is also growing in our souls as long as we are sincerely trying; "where sin abounds, grace abounds still more," so that little by little grace is overcoming sin in us. (5) We ought constantly to remind ourselves of God's love, mercy, and forgiveness—to realize that he is our Father, that Jesus is our Brother, and the Holy Spirit is all love. No matter how low we fall, we should never get discouraged, but rather resolve to correct ourselves gently, turn to the Lord in trust and confidence, tell him we are sorry, and start again.

If we try to keep our conscience clean this way, God's love will grow gradually in our hearts. While he is exalting us with gifts of prayer, he is also keeping us humble with the realization of our sinfulness.

This, then, is purity of conscience. It is not something that happens overnight; but if we are faithful to prayer day in and day out as the years go by, we come to sin less. Our conscience becomes pure and spotless, as God's love heals our unruly passions and melts away our sins.

The second important factor or "purity," if we want to grow in contemplative prayer, is that of mind. This means keeping our mind filled with God and the things of God—and at the same time keeping out of our minds whatever does not lead us to God or may even lead us away from him.

This is one reason why spiritual reading is so important. It puts Godly thoughts into our minds. The Bible is of course the best spiritual book. Lives of the saints are very good too, because they show us how ordinary people like ourselves centered their lives on God, how they overcame sin and other obstacles to God, how they practiced charity, humility, and the other virtues as Jesus did. Then there are books which explain about prayer, the Mass, the cross, the Blessed Virgin, etc. There are also good Catholic magazines and newspapers which tell us about God in one way or another. Reading these books, magazines, and newspapers daily for at least fifteen minutes to half an hour, helps to keep us conscious of God in our lives. After a while, we may come to the point where other books, magazines, and newspapers seem dull and insipid. This is one good way to fill our minds with God: to read much about him and his workings in us and in our world. On the other hand, to avoid reading a lot of secular matter keeps undesirable and ungodly—even harmful—thoughts out of the mind.

Apart from what comes to our minds through reading, we have to control what comes into them

from other sources and what goes on inside them. Very simply, we try to think about God and whatever is related to him or can be related to him. Other things we do not bother with, not because they are bad, but because they do not positively contribute to keeping us aware of God in our daily lives.

This, then, is what we mean by purity of mind—keeping our minds filled with God and at the same time keeping out of our minds what is not God, even though it may not be sinful.

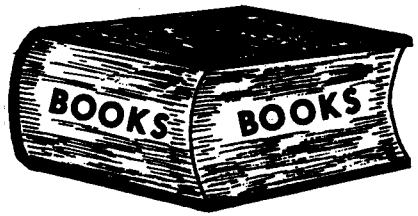
The third "purity" is stated by the Lord himself as one of what we have come to call the "Beatitudes": "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8). Contemplation is "seeing" God, not with the eyes of the body of course, but with those of the soul, of our inmost being. It is apprehending God, intuiting him, touching him, letting him touch us. All of this happens a lot more easily, more frequently, and more intimately and profoundly to those who keep their hearts for God alone.

This, incidentally, is one way of looking at poverty: i.e., being so enamored of God and loving him alone as our one real treasure in life that we keep the cupboard of our mind stripped bare of everything else and the strings of our heart from wrapping themselves around anyone else. This kind of poverty proclaims that God and only God is our All.

Finally, there is purity of will. Very simply it means willing only what God wills in everything. It means that our will is one with God's. Contemplation is loving God, and as Jesus said, "He who does the will of my Father, he it is who loves me" (cf. Mk. 3:35). To will all that God wills means that many times we have to give up our self-will, in small things and in great. It means giving up all sin, of course, at least in the sense that we make a sincere effort to avoid it; but it also implies giving up imperfections and repudiating tendencies which, although perhaps not all that bad in themselves, involve catering to our own will, just for the sake of pleasing ourselves, rather than seeking God's. This can happen in matters of food, drink, recreation, conveniences, and so forth.

If our wills are pure, we will only what God wills and the way he wills it. Any self-will, any acting from expediency, any self-serving which we might call impurities in our will, have to be eradicated. One way of ensuring this selflessness is to try, at times, to choose the more unpleasant, the less satisfying.

What these four "purities" say, then, is that for the contemplative, God is everything. As Saint Francis put it: "My God and my All." And this is so, not only in time devoted to explicit prayer, but all the time.



Words in Pain: Meditations on the Last Words of Jesus. By John Cardinal Wright. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 79. Paper, $2.95.

Come, Take up Your Cross: The Practical Responsibilities of Christians Today. By Flann Lynch, O.F.M.Cap. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 95. Paper, $2.95.

The Language of the Cross. Edited by Aelred Lacomara, C.P. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. vii-149. Cloth, $5.95.

Reviewed by Father John F. Marshall, O.F.M., Assistant Pastor at St. Mary of the Angels Church, Allegany, New York, and author of several series of spiritual conferences for religious.

The title of this carefully crafted booklet belies the spiritual joy that ensues with the reading of this gem. Meditations on the last words of Jesus should be first on anyone's Lenten list and are, at any rate, appropriate spiritual nourishment in any season. Even more so when those meditations are of the quality of Cardinal Wright's reflections. Even as I read his even and easy trend of thought, I found myself imaginatively delivering those thoughts in sermon, so far down the road of inspiration did he walk me.

Only 79 pages short, this diminutive masterpiece is long on suffering insight, Jesus's as well as ours. Interspersed throughout the book but without cluttering the profound script are stark and appropriate photographs which depict as much the pain that is not pictured as the loneliness that is portrayed—not unlike the crucifixion scene atop Calvary.

Each of the seven meditations on Jesus's sayings ends with practical but not preachy applications. In the entire genre of sermons and pamphlets devolving about the last words of Jesus this highly endorsed publication must stand head and shoulders above the average.

May I offer a sampling quote that truly moved me? "It is easy to believe in the Church and to love it when it is the inspiration of the artists; when it is enjoying the golden age of sanctity and prosperity. It is easy to believe in the Church when she is transfigured in her saints or venerable in her more learned pontiffs and doctors.

"But when she is persecuted and reviled, outlawed, and out-of-fashion, then glorious is the faith of those who still love her! When she is eclipsed by the deficiencies of her leaders, or has become weak in the infidelity of her followers, then should we reverence the extraordinary holiness of those who still cleave to her and seek Paradise from her" (pp. 33-34). This is a contemporary mouthful. Of such thought-out and, I am sure, prayed-over exposition is the entire book woven.

I venture to say that if this book were read throughout the weeks of Lent and each word of Jesus reread on a given day of the week, the reflective fodder contained therein would even then not be exhausted. And not a few priests would find some of these well written insights creeping in and cropping up in their homilies and conferences, but only because they have captivated their priestly hearts. What is true of priests is also true by analogy of Sisters, Brothers, and the lay folk.

* * *

It is one thing to broach a good idea but quite another to reduce that idea to concrete reality. The book under review certainly embodies its author's ingenious idea of correlating the fourteen Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy with the fourteen Stations of the Cross. The real, however, falls somewhat short of the ideal.

In the ninety-five pages of his book Father Lynch takes the topical title of each Station, provides an appropriate graphic and an initial prayer. He then attempts to harmonize the Station with a given Corporal or Spiritual Work of Mercy by introducing excerpts from Scripture, a practical reflection, and a series of questions concluding the whole concordance.

I found it rather difficult, if not at times almost impossible, to relate the Work of Mercy under consideration with the specific Station. Although the Work of Mercy was elaborated upon in the reflection, the Station was left without any insight, except perhaps in the opening prayer. Even the content outline of the book betrays the above criticism. Chapter four, for example, "Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross," is subtitled "Support the bereaved." Chapter 10, "Jesus is Stripped of His Garments," is related to "Counsel the Doubtful." And chapter 11, "Jesus Falls the Third Time," corresponds to "Spread the Good News." It may not take a procurstean effort, but it would require a creative shoe-horn to fit these themes into a reasonably unified presentation.

Come, Take up Your Cross would have been the better off had Father Lynch not take up the idea of coupling the Stations with the Works of Mercy. His reflections do justice to the Works but not to the Stations. He should have reserved the Stations for another book with a similar overall structure of Scripture, reflection, and questions. Then we might have had a complementary pair worthy of compliment.

* * *

To commemorate the two-hundredth anniversary of the death of Saint Paul of the Cross, the Founder of the Passionist Congregation, Father Aelred Lacomara was motivated to edit this book which, in the introductory words of his Provincial, Father Flavian Dougherty, would be "a special gift from some of the Scripture scholars in the Passionist family" rendering honor to their father in Christ.

It is one endeavor to review a single authored work in which unity in the midst of variety is preserved, but quite another effort to review a compilation of articles comprised in a

volume in which the end result must be the same. Here there must be unity within harmony. And there will be only if the right selection of articles is made.

It is evident that Father Lacomara has made the proper choices and so has given blended honor to his father in Christ while doing proud to his Congregation. The Passionist tradition of producing first class Scripture scholars who focus their talents on the Cross of Jesus Christ has made the selection so much the easier. And of course there is always the inspiring and charismatic example of his Founder.

The language of the book comes through at times theologically scientific but always Calvary clear. Without any overlapping, the eight contributors effect a composite that does corporate justice to the anniversary that occasioned the book.

The article by Father Jerome Crowe, entitled "The Laos at the Cross: Luke's Crucifixion Scene," was especially absorbing to me. In so many commentaries on the Passion of Jesus the crowd is but a peripheral fill-in or fill-out, an indistinct element vociferously present but specifically absent. During the chaotic 1960's, when our country was beset by disorder, many an editorial gave much publicity to the "personality" of the mob. Father Crowe does the same for the laos at the Cross. Very interesting!

Time sacrificed to read this book will be time spiritually well spent. Its language is universal: light and unction for all who have an eye and an ear for the crux of the Good News.

The Monastic Journey. By Thomas Merton; edited by Brother Patrick Hart, O.C.S.O. Mission, KS: Sheed Andrews & McMeel, 1977. Pp. xi-187, incl. bibliography. Cloth, $8.95.

The Collected Poems of Thomas Merton. New York: New Directions Publishing Corp., 1977. Pp. viii-1046, incl. index. Cloth, $37.50.

Disputed Questions. By Thomas Merton. New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2nd Noonday printing, 1977. Pp. xii-283. Paper, $3.95.

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

Over the years of his brief monastic life the late Thomas Merton wrote incisive and informative articles on the monastic and solitary life which interested laymen as well as fellow monks found appealing. He also wrote several full-length books on the same theme: *The Waters of Siloe*, *The Silent Life*, and *Contemplation in a World of Action*, which became best-sellers. Many more essays and conferences, directed towards his fellow monks, were never published in book form during his lifetime. Some of these are now gathered together and edited by his former secretary, Brother Patrick Hart, under the title *The Monastic Journey*. Herein we find Merton describing the "beauties and demands of monasticism, emphasizing the essentials of that way of life, the basic values of silence, solitude, prayer, [and] purity of heart" (p. vii). Admirers of Merton will be grateful to Brother Patrick and the Trustees of the Merton Legacy Trust for making these essays available to a wider audience.

"The articles selected and edited for this volume," writes Brother Patrick in his brief Foreword, "were written during the last decade of Merton's life, and hence reflect his mature thought on both community monastic living and the solitary life, which was a lifelong preoccupation" (p. viii). Amongst the subjects treated in this collection are "Basic Principles of Monastic Spirituality," "The Humanity of Christ in Monastic Prayer," "Conversion of Life," "Project for a Hermitage," "The Solitary Life." In an Appendix we find essays titled "A Letter on the Contemplative Life," "Monastic Renewal: A Memorandum," and "Contemplatives and the Crisis of Faith." All of these contain much that is valuable to a variety of readers, whether monks, hermits, Religious, or laymen, seeking guidance in prayer and contemplation.

"The Monk takes the Gospel with the deepest seriousness. He is bound by his faith in Christ, to develop *a special awareness* of the spiritual possibilities and hazards of human life," writes Merton in one essay (p. 7). Today, many men and women living outside monasteries share such an attitude which amounts to an inward journey of solitude bringing them closer to the basic elements of life. For, as Merton wrote in his *Asian Journal*, "Our real journey in life is interior, it is a matter of growth, deepening, and in an ever greater surrender to the creative action of love and grace in our hearts." We are often confused by the superabundance of books on the market which profess to serve as guides to the life of the Spirit. Many of these only add to our initial confusion. In Merton we can be assured of a wise and experienced guide who will take us through this "journey without maps" (to borrow a phrase from Graham Greene) sharing with us his own mature reflections upon solitude, emptiness, joy, perplexity, and wonder.

The Monastic Journey is a book to be read slowly, meditatively. It includes a select bibliography of books by Merton which deal either directly or indirectly with prayer and the monastic vocation.

* * *

One literary critic has suggested that Merton's true medium of expression was prose, not poetry. With the publication, exorbitantly priced, of *The Collected Poems of Thomas Merton*, readers are afforded the opportunity of assessing that critical statement for themselves. In 1944, New Directions brought out Merton's first book of verse simply titled *Thirty Poems*. I can recall the impact that first collection made upon me by such lines as these: "But never dreams his eyes may come to life and thread/The needle-light of famine in a water-glass" ("Lent in a Year of War") and "When cold November sits among the reeds like an unlucky/fisher/And ducks drum up as sudden as the wind/Out of the rushy river" ("The Regret"). Upon investigation, one learned that the poet was a Trappist monk who had entered the Abbey of Gethsemani three days after Pearl Harbor. Other collections of verse followed: *A Man in the Divided Sea* (1946), *Figures for an Apocalypse* (1947). And then, in the summer of 1948, sitting in the office

of the President of the Catholic Poetry Society of America, John Gilland Brunini, Editor of *Spirit: A Magazine of Verse*, told me that Merton's autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, was soon to be published and urged me to get a copy. The rest is literary history as well as a chronicle of religious book publishing in America at mid-century.

The Collected Poems of Thomas Merton gathers together all of Merton's poetry up to and including *Sensation Time at the Home*, which he finished shortly before his death. Also included are uncollected poems, humorous verse, poems written in French, Merton's translations of poetry from other languages, drafts and fragments of uncompleted poems, and a selection of concrete poems. This volume spans almost a quarter century of intense productivity.

It has become platitudinous to state that Merton was a compulsive and prolific writer. In the beginning, because of the demands of his monastic vocation, he was free to write only a few hours each week; later, more time was allowed him, but then there were frequent interruptions from many visitors seeking his advice on a variety of issues. Nevertheless, creative activity went forward as *The Monastic Journey* and *The Collected Poems* bear witness. With the publication of the latter book we can now evaluate that aspect of Merton's initial vocation—while a student at Columbia and before his entry into the Abbey of Gethsemani—his aspiration to become a poet.

His poetry for the most part tends to be pious but never pietistic. Many of the early poems indicate the influence of poets such as Hopkins, Eliot, Blake, and, perhaps, Hart Crane. The poetry after his entrance to Gethsemani reflects the influence of the Psalms and the rhythms and themes of the liturgy of the Church year. As might be expected, most of the poetry revolves around religious subjects: "After the Night Office," "Trappists, Working," "A Whitsun Canticle," "St. Alberic," "Hymn for the Feast of Duns Scotus" (there are two poems devoted to this Franciscan scholar). Another theme—a combination of the monastic *contemptio mundi* and the prophetic vision of William Blake—is the un-Christian city juxtaposed against the contemplative life as Merton experienced it in the "catch-light" cloisters of Gethsemani: "This was a city/That dressed herself in paper money./She lived four hundred years/With nickels running in her veins" ("In the Ruins of New York"), and

> Blessed is the army that will one day crush you, city,
> Like a golden spider.
> Blest are they that hate you. Blest are they
> That dash your brats against the stones.
> The children of God have died, O Babylon,
> Of thy wild algebra.
> ["The Captives: A Psalm"]

whereas we have the following by way of contrast:

> Night is our diocese and silence is our ministry
> Poverty our charity and helplessness our tongue-tied sermon.
> Beyond the scope of sight or sound we dwell upon the air
> Seeking the world's gain in an unthinkable experience.
> We are exiles in the far end of solitude,
> living as listeners
> With hearts attending to the skies we cannot understand:
> Waiting upon the first far drum of Christ the Conqueror,
> Planted like sentinels upon the world's frontier.
> ["The Quickening of St. John the Baptist: On the Contemplative Vocation"]

There are occasional witty and memorable phrases in this early poetry. Lines such as "Time falls like manna at the corners of the wintry earth" ("Advent"), or "Now all our saws sing holy sonnets in this world of timber/Where oaks go off like guns, and fall like cataracts" ("Trappists, Working"), and "Forsake your deserts of centrifugal desire..." ("Ode to the Present Century") are haunting.

Re-reading these poems of the 'Forties, one becomes aware of the rhetorical aspect of much of Merton's poetry. There sounds an urgent note calling his readers from the Babylon of contemporary life to the still pastures of contemplation. Seldom is he lyrical, although there are passages such as this from "Natural History":

> Walk we and ponder on this miracle
> And on the way Your creatures love Your will,
> While we, with all our minds and light, how slow
> Hard-hearted in our faithlessness, and stubborn as the coldest stone!
>
> It was Your St. Theresa struck the deeps
> Of this astounding parable—
> For all creation teaches us some way of prayer.

Even here, however, one catches the rhetoric, the voice urging us to "forsake our deserts of centrifugal desire" and "Learn of the green world what can be thy place," as Ezra Pound expresses it in his *Pisan Cantos*.

The rhetoric predominates, it seems to me, in the poetry of the late 'Fifties and early 'Sixties when the "conjectures of a guilty bystander" sought verbalization. During these years, Merton was addressing himself to burning contemporary issues, making "raids on the unspeakable," with his perceptive essays on war and non-violence, racism, and the exploitation of the weak and powerless by the strong and powerful. Somehow, poetry could not sustain the anger and distress; prose seemed to be the better medium. As he states in the Author's Note at the beginning of *The Geography of Lograire*:

> A poet spends his life in repeated projects, over and over again attempting to build or dream the world in which he lives. But more and more he realizes that this world is at once his and everybody's. It cannot be purely private, any more than it can be purely public. It cannot be fully communicated. It grows out of a common participation which is nevertheless recorded in authentically personal images [*The Collected Poems*, p. 457].

Like Blake and Yeats before him, Merton in his later poetry creates his own landscape, records his own "authentically personal images." *Cables to the Age* and *The Geography of Lograire*, both published in 1968, may leave many readers of the earlier poetry baffled if not cold. A mixture of parody and satire, of personal reflections about language, and the nature of true wisdom, these books await explication and criticism by trained scholars. They reveal another aspect of this multi-faceted

and most humane of contemporary religious poets.

Undoubtedly, were he making his own selection Merton would not have approved for publication some of the poems found in the section entitled "Uncollected Poems." The banality of such lines as "The moon shines like a queen/(says the voice in my vision" (p. 790) or "Man is an animal who thinks himself important/And his reason is right" ("The Moment of Truth") would have been excised, I am quite sure. Nevertheless, publication of *The Collected Poems* is important and necessary for anyone interested in Merton as a poet, and it is invaluable for a critical evaluation of this most outspoken monk of our century. The price of the book, however, will be prohibitive for many readers. Such readers will have to wait for a less expensive paperback edition.

* * *

In his preface to the recently reissued book of essays, *Disputed Questions*, Merton wrote, "There is one theme, one question above all, which runs through the whole book. It is a philosophical question: the relation of the *person to the social organization*" (p. viii). The book includes essays on monasticism and solitude ("Mount Athos," "Philosophy of Solitude," "A Renaissance Hermit," "The Primitive Carmelite Ideal") and on spirituality in the world ("Christianity and Totalitarianism," "The Power and Meaning of Love," "The Pasternak Affair"). "I know from my own experience," Merton writes, "that in the last twenty years the world has moved a long way towards conformism and passivity. So long a way that the distance is, to me, both frightening and disconcerting" (p. ix). This movement towards conformism and passivity is not without its effects even in religious communities, where conformism masquerades as "being relevant" to the age in which we live. "We simply submit to the process of being informed, without anything actually registering on our mind at all. We are content to turn on a switch and be comforted by the vapid, but self-assured slogans of the speaker who, we fondly hope, is thinking for the whole nation" (p. ix).

Disputed Questions intends to make things "register on our minds." Some readers may disagree with much that Merton says in these essays, but what he says will force these readers *to think in order to disagree* and thereby disturb them out of "conformism and passivity."

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Marin, William C., *A Kingdom Coming: An Overview of the New Testament and Its Message for Us.* Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. vi-84. Paper, $1.75.

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COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our October issue were drawn by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., except for the one on page 301, by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, F.F.S.C.

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Jesus, Total Redeemer

LOOK AT JESUS, Father Charles van Corstanje repeatedly and exquisitely exhorts us in the poem following this editorial. From Orbis Books come two new works urging us to do the same thing and providing some quite specific and effective help in doing so.

Jesus, the Stranger comprises 52 meditative sermons given by White Father Joseph G. Donders, a Dutch missionary who heads the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies in Nairobi, Kenya.

The sermons are divided into six main groups paralleling the periods of our Lord's life, from "Beginnings" through his public ministry, Passion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost and "beyond." Far from being simple expositions or dry instructions, they are replete with poetic imagery and concrete detail often supplied by the author's fertile imagination. They are, in fact, printed in verse form and abound in rhetorical devices, particularly frequent and extended repetition.

The book takes its title from the thirty-seventh sermon, entitled "Expatriate Jesus," in which the point is made that only the Lord himself can reveal himself to us, but he does so *from within.* Our belief in him bespeaks something present in us that enables us to "recognize" him. In widely varied ways and often with very specific reference to his African experience, Father Donders facilitates that recognition on every page of this exquisite book.

A work published in poetic format should receive detailed criticism of a literary sort—more so than is the case with prose; but rather than devote scarce editorial space to that in this forum, we are forwarding suggestions to the publisher for future editions. Here it is more important to concentrate on the author's underlying vision, which emerges frequently in the sermons but most explicitly in the twentieth and fiftieth: "Sins Are the Trouble" and "Advent or Utopia."

(Continued on page 309)

Jesus, the Stranger: Reflections on the Gospels. By Joseph G. Donders. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1978. Pp. viii-290. Cloth, $8.95; paper, $4.95.

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Look at Jesus

CHARLES VAN CORSTANJE, O.F.M.

Just three words,
but in these three words is the mystery of our existence.
See Heb. 12:2

Look at Jesus
in Holy Scripture, to learn who he is,
What he has done, what he gives, what he asks of us.
There, in his actions, in his teaching,
in his commandments, in his promises,
we shall find our example, learn wisdom,
discover our happiness, enjoy the perfect satisfaction
of all our needs.
If we look for him there, we shall find him
and be glad.
No one can be concerned with him in faith
without being caught up by him,
for he is our gladness.
See Mt. 2:10; Lk. 1:14; 1:44; 2:10; Jn. 3:29; 15:11; 16:20; 16:22; 16:24; 17:13

Look at Jesus
who was crucified
according to the Scriptures for our sins,
so that we can find peace and reconciliation in his cross,
for he is the Lamb who takes away all our sins.
Jn. 1:29, 36

Look at Jesus
who rose again from the dead to obtain for us grace and holiness.
We are unworthy and incorrigible,
but in him and with him and through him we may turn
to his Father and our Father,
for he is our brother.
See Mt. 12:48; 25:40; 28:10

Look at Jesus
who was glorified
so that we might find our constant intercessor in him
who lives to pray for us,
for he is our high priest.
See Heb. 4:14

Look at Jesus
who reveals himself to us through the Holy Spirit
to banish darkness from our hearts
and calm our rebellious will,
so that we may go through life upright and just,
for he is the light in our darkness.
See Jn. 1:4, 9; 3:19; 5:35

Look at Jesus
who makes us repent of our sins.
He who is without sin makes us pure
when we come into contact with him,
for he is the holy one.
See Jn. 3:19; Rev. 5:12

Look at Jesus
so that we can obtain from him every day
the strength that we need to carry out our tasks,
for he is the power that reveals itself in our weakness.
See Lk. 6:19; 9:1; 2 Cor. 12:9

Father Charles van Corstanje, O.F.M., is the author of Francis, Bible of the Poor. *A member of the Dutch Province, he is a frequent contributor to Franciscan periodicals, including the* Franciscan Herald, *in which this beautiful meditation first appeared. It is reprinted here with permission.*

Look at Jesus
so that we can cease looking at ourselves
and forget ourselves,
so that our joy can be made holy and our sorrow pure,
so that he can make us small and therefore great,
so that he can make us sorrowful and therefore glad,
so that he can take away from us everything that is worthless
and give us what is lasting in its place,
so that he can teach us how to pray and hear our prayer,
so that he will let us live in his world,
without being of it,
so that he may show us
how to make the little world of our everyday existence
a little bit more like God's world
and people will be able to recognize him
in our words, in the way we look at them,
in our judgments, in our brotherly love,
for he is our teacher,
our guide,
our model.

See Mt. 8:19; 10:24; 19:16; 23:8; 23:10; Mk. 5:35; Lk. 6:40; 22:11; Jn. 11:28; Mt. 2:6; 3:17; Jn. 13:1-15

Look at Jesus
who returned to his Father's house
to prepare a place for us.
He has overcome death.
Beyond death we will meet him
and be at peace.
No power will be able to prevent this meeting,
for his love is stronger than death.

See Jn. 17:20-26

Look at Jesus
who will come again on the day and at the hour
determined by the Father;
who will come again soon—
soon for those who watch out for him
soon for those who are not expecting him,
For he is faithful to his promises.

See Mt. 26:64; 1 Cor. 4-9; Heb. 2:17

Look at Jesus
the foundation and fulfillment of our faith.
He is our entire faith,
he who goes before us, who supports and encourages us,
men of little faith,
until we have overcome sin and death
in him and with him,
for he is the great shepherd of the sheep.

See Heb. 13:20

Look at Jesus
and at nothing and no one else.
Look away from everything else. Look only at him.
Do not think that this will set you apart from the world,
apart from other people, apart from your earthly task,
for he is the way, the only way, the right way.

See Jn. 14:6

Look at Jesus
and not at yourself—your profound thoughts,
your dreams of grandeur, your excellent taste,
your noble aspirations, your ambitious plans,
for he is the servant of God and the Most High.

See Phil. 2:6-12

Look at Jesus
and not at the world,
at what is to be desired, possessed, and enjoyed in it.
Do not fear that this may make you seek flight from the world.
Jesus did not seek flight from the world.
No one has ever been so close to the world as he was.
Desire, possess, and enjoy him.
for in him all things were created in heaven and on earth.

See Col. 1:16

Look at Jesus
and not at sin, at illicit pleasure,
at the elation of the moment,
which only makes our loneliness sadder,
for he is our glory.

See Jn. 15:10-11

Look at Jesus
and not at systems,
however evangelical they may be, however well thought they may be theologically,
however up to date and new in their formulation.
Faith that saves and sanctifies is not a rational assent
to the teaching of the gospel,
but a personal bond with the Redeemer.
It is not enough simply to know who Jesus is—
you must possess him.
for he who has the Son has life.

See I Jn. 5:12

Look at Jesus
and not at our prayers and talks about the Bible,
our unforgettable meetings.
These are all good and necessary,
but we should not confuse them with the grace that is Jesus himself.
They are ways in which he reveals himself to us.
We must not overlook the one
who has given content and meaning to all these things,
for he is the head of the body,
the Church; he is the beginning.

See Col. 1:18

Look at Jesus
and not at the function you have in the Church,
not at the education you have received
and not at the respect that others have for you
because of your piety—real or presumed.
Some of those who prophesy in his name
may hear him say: 'I do not know you.'
but for his Father, he will recognize the least of those who looked at him,
for he is our judgment.

See Jn. 5:30; 9:39; Mt. 25:31

Look at Jesus
and not at your brothers,
not even the best and most likeable of them.
Do not think that this will make you go astray and become inhuman and unloving.
Even my most beloved brother cannot say to me:
'Live from me. Think, feel, and do as I do. Eat and drink me.'
He can never be the basis of my existence.
Only Jesus can be that,
for only he is the living bread
that came down from heaven.

See Jn. 6:33, 35, 48, 50

Look at Jesus
and not at your enemies or his enemies.
Only he can overcome hatred by his love,
for he did not answer back when he was insulted
and did not utter threats when he was made to suffer;
by his wounds we have been healed.

1 Pt. 2:23-24

Look at Jesus
so that we can cease looking at ourselves
and forget ourselves,
so that our joy can be made holy and our sorrow pure,
so that he can make us small and therefore great,
so that he can make us sorrowful and therefore glad,
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for he did not answer back when he was insulted
and did not utter threats when he was made to suffer;
by his wounds we have been healed.

1 Pt. 2:23-24

Look at Jesus
and not at our problems.
If you are surrounded by problems
it is all the more important to look up at him.
We should not say too quickly:
'I am intelligent enough to solve all my problems.'
We must use our intelligence,
but our problems surprise us, tire us, and test us.
They come again and again, from dark forces,
and cannot be overcome by our intelligence alone—
only by Jesus,
for he will bring to light
the things that are now hidden in darkness.

1 Cor. 4:5

Look at Jesus
and not at your own sadness, so as not to be cast down.
not at your joy, so as not to be blinded by it,
and not at the interest of your own group
or at your own individual interests.
Seek his honor so that you will be able to count on his favor,
for 'if anyone loves me, he will keep my word
and my Father will love him
and we will come to him and make our home with him.'

Jn. 14:23

Look at Jesus
and not at your own decisions, energy, and inventiveness.
Rely on his love
and on the fact that your name resounds in his heart,
for 'I have called your friends.'

See Jn. 15:15

Look at Jesus
and not at the law.
The law commands, but does not bestow power.
Jesus is the fulfillment of the law.
He has the right to ask for our obedience,
and he claims our hearts and our most secret thoughts.
But his yoke is easy and his burden light.
Look at him
so that you will be able to understand
the breadth and length and height and depth
of the love of Christ, which surpasses all knowledge.

See Eph. 3:18

Look at Jesus
and not at what we do for him,
not at our successes or our talents.
We can so easily work hard with empty hearts,
achieve results with no proof of blessing.
Talents are important
only if we use them for him who gave them to us.
They do nothing to increase our own value;
they only show the glory of the Giver.
Look at Jesus, who said:
'My food is to do the will of him who sent me
and to accomplish his work.'

See Jn. 4:34

Look at Jesus
and not at the degree of your own faith.
If your faith is weak, you can easily be discouraged.
If your faith is strong, you can become proud.
Our strength is to be found not in the quality of our faith,
but in Jesus,
who said: 'Abide in me, and I in you . . .
Apart from me, you can do nothing.'

See Jn. 15:4-5

Look at Jesus
Anyone who is full of him
will love his brothers and sisters,
tolerate his annoying brother or sister,
forgive his enemies.
He will be fully committed to a better society.
He will be brave and magnanimous,
endlessly patient.
He will never despair.
He will see the light in the darkness.
He will understand the signs of God's kingdom.
He will recognize Jesus's redemptive love
through all the destructive powers of this world.
He will be happy and at peace,
be a little piece of paradise,
a song in a pessimistic world—
a world wonderfully created by God.
A holy desire will grow in him
to go on pilgrimage with Jesus,
together with his brothers and sisters in this world,
with a firm hope that he will experience the hour
when we shall all be like him
and see him as he really is.

See 1 Jn. 3:2

Look at Jesus
brothers and sisters, do not leave Jerusalem.
Jesus died and was buried for us too
and is dead and buried again and again.
Every time we come into contact with the suffering, the mockery, and the scandal of the cross, we turn away, dismayed, from him.
(We are, after all, only human.)
Stay in Jerusalem, until, praying and purified by penance and conversion,
we see him again with the eyes of our hearts.

▲

We were on the way to Emmaus,
running ahead of him in flight,
looking for a more 'human' form of spiritual life,
when suddenly, we shall recognize him again
in the words of Scripture and the breaking of the bread.
We shall know: The Lord is there.
He was there the whole time.
He will make our hearts burn within us.

Forgive, then, and you will begin to live. When Jesus said, "Love your enemies," it was not so much for your enemies' sake as for your own. For when you hate, you become small and petty, and the worm of decay eats at your heart, and the taste in your mouth is bitter. But when you forgive and love those who persecute you, you grow big and surpass even your own imaginings of what you could become. Love is expansive and its taste is sweet to the mouth.

—Murray Bodo, O.F.M.,in
Song of the Sparrow, p. 11
St. Anthony Messenger Press

With Bonaventure in Prayer

MARIGWEN SCHUMACHER

THERE ARE moments when one is gently led to confront the half-questions which lie restlessly and relentlessly below the daily surface of conscious thought and activity. Such a moment came upon me when I read—and as I re-read—Kieran Kay's honest and profound words about "Francis and Prayer" which appeared in the August, 1976 issue of THE CORD. Not only am I deeply moved by his experiential prayer-life, but I feel myself led to face, as seriously and as honestly as I can, similar questions about my own prayer-relationship with the Triune God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Although I have no canonical Franciscan affiliation, I have delved into Franciscan origins; walked with Francis and Bonaventure the hills and streets of Assisi, Bagnoregio, LaVerna; traveled to their abodes in Rome and Paris; entered into many of those forces which shaped and molded them as Heralds of the Great King. How, then, have I been molded and shaped by their witness?

Since I maintain that my interest in Bonaventure is spiritual as well as scholarly, I must look into what he says about prayer. How does he pray? What was his experience and method of prayer? But even more urgently, how does Bonaventure affect my prayer-life? What does he say to me about prayer? What is my prayer? What have I learned from him? Where do I now stand in prayer before my God? Do I grow more Christlike each day in responding to needs and graces and gifts, or do I stay safely uninvolved in efforts which would demand more of me than I am willing to give? How do I break through the layers of complacency, of protective coverings, to move into the radical Christianity demanded by the Gospel message? Wherein do I admire Francis and Bonaventure as Heralds of the Great King? Now is a time to face these questions: to look into my prayer, my priorities, my promises; nay, rather, it is a time to look deeply into what the Lord God Yahweh is saying to me in breeze, flower, scripture, person!

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It is a time seriously to listen to the Spirit who prompts and challenges, enfolds and nourishes, breathes in us new life, new hope, new love, new insight—that wondrous *novitas* which contains all the opposites of Ecclesiastes's *vanitas*.

Lord Jesus, you know that these ponderings are deep within my being, that they are infused there by your Holy Spirit entering into me to bring about your will in my life and to lead me constantly towards that tremendous moment when you will gather me into your arms and bring me into the home of our Father. Enter into me now that I may see and feel and taste and know you in Bonaventure's belief and prayer and thus be more open and touched by your wondrous presence in my every moment. Let the words of my heart and the touch of my fingers create tribute of praise to the glory of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

In considering how Bonaventure prays and what he tells us about a life that is prayer, I do not intend to provide an exhaustive trip through the *Opera Omnia*. I should, however, like to ponder upon a very few excerpts from his writings and through them try to enter into his experience of prayer—or, more accurately, my experience of his experience of prayer. This method involves risks of being unscholarly, biased, personal; but for me there is no other way but to risk that kind of directness and involvement with what I am seeking with prayer-filled quest. It is easy enough to go through Bonaventure's collected writings to cull his statements on prayer and prayer-forms. It is much less easy to enter into significant passages in order to experience in them what Bonaventure experienced. Can we meet the personal Bonaventure through and beneath his roles as teacher, Minister General, retreat director, pastor?

We all know that Bonaventure rarely speaks in the first person. However, a prayerful reading of his recorded words brings one to sense something of his personal prayer-stance. Probably the most clearly expressed text is found in the small letter to a friar-friend—the *epistola continens XXV memorialia* (VIII, 491-98). Bonaventure wrote the letter in response to the repeated asking ("mihi instantissime supplicasti") of this friar-friend for a handy outline, a brief compendium, for everyday living in prayerful stance before God. In his reply, Bonaventure shares some personal reflections, attitudes, practices about prayer and his own prayer-life. In the Prologue, he writes:

> I am writing you, however, not any special suggestions but rather

those unpolished and straightforward guidelines which I have been intending to gather together for myself [VIII, 491a].

Again, at the end of the letter, Bonaventure repeats this personal tone:

> I have written these, dear friend, not because I thought you needed such a list, but because these are the very same ones that I had gathered together for my own self . . . and I thought to share them with you as a trusted teammate [VIII, 498a].

Thus it seems reasonable to accept the letter and its "memorialia" as a very direct statement from Bonaventure concerning his own prayer-practices. Continuing in the Prologue, we read:

> No one, as experience certainly shows, can serve God perfectly unless he takes care to free himself completely from the pressures of this world. We should strive, then, that unencumbered by earthly concerns, we may, with unshackled footsteps, follow after our Redeemer . . . .
>
> Never, therefore, let us allow our heart to be anxious about any created thing except in so far as it enkindles our awareness of the warmth and passion of divine love. Reflecting unduly upon the myriad variety of ephemeral things troubles the spirit and sunders the agreeable quiet of one's tranquil mind. Moreover, by creating in our spirits phantasms of turbulence and affliction, uneasiness strikes violently against us. Much better to lay aside the heavy burden of worldly concerns and, with no slowing impediment, to run towards Him who invites us, in whom is sumptuous refreshment and total peace which is far beyond human understanding (Phil. 4:7) [VIII, 491b].

At this point, Bonaventure moves into that direct prayer which flows so easily from what he is speaking of, reminding us that prayer is not that which we talk about but that which we do as naturally as we breathe and as constantly:

> "Come to me," he says, "all you who labor and are heavy-burdened, and I will refresh you" (Mt. 11:28). O Lord, whom do you need? Why do you call? What is common between us? O wondrous consideration of our God! O unutterable Love! Lo! He invites enemies, urges culprits, charms cynics! "Come," he says, "To me, all of you, and learn from me; take my yoke upon you, and you will find rest for your spirits" (Mt. 11:29). O honeysweet words, fragrant, God-formed! Wake up, now, O Christian spirit, to love such intense friendship, to taste such sweet pleasure, to breathe such spritely fragrance! Take fire now, my spirit. Grow rich, be sweetened in the compassion of your God, in the gentleness of your God, in the love of your Betrothed. Blaze with the passion of your Beloved. Grow rich in his love. Be sweetened by his food. Let no one hinder you from walking in, taking possession, and enjoying this feast [VIII, 491a-92b].

It is almost impossible to capture in translation the rich lushness of word-choice and physical sensation of Bonaventure's dialogue. Instinctive and deliberate are the words—e.g., *inardesce, pinguesce, dulcesce*; i.e., become on fire, be growing fat/rich, come to know sweetness, etc. Such fullness of practical imagery increases the reality of his conversation with God and asks us to share the same everyday yet end-of-life intimacy with our God, Beloved, Nourisher, Creator, Companion.

Feeling deeply drawn by such a call, yet I seek for some easy "how to do it" guide, especially in my 20th-century fragmented life. There is a brief insight in Bonaventure's *De Triplici Via*, §5: ". . . that the loving spirit be always saying to the Lord: 'I am seeking you, I hope in you, I desire you, I stand in you, I receive you, I exult in you, and I cling to you for all time' " [VIII, 15b].

Still needing "specifics"—how did Bonaventure manage to be "always saying to the Lord" in his busy, activity-oriented life?—I turn again to the *epistola continens XXV memorialia*. In one of the longest sections of this letter (§22), Bonaventure gives us a vivid glimpse into the life that is prayer. Accepting his words as personal testimony from his maturing prayer-life (even though we cannot precisely date the letter), I feel drawn into the intensity of his experience and am swept into closeness, challenge, loving warmth and wonder. The series of vignettes provides a rich source of *in situ* meditative prayer moving through all the phases of prayer-types and through the whole panoply of doctrine and of human experience. Once again his words are vibrant, creedal, emotive, and powerful. Surely there is sufficient wealth therein to fit every need and whim, mood and action of my life and enable all to be immersed in prayerful communion with my God. Listen with me to Bonaventure's charge:

> Freed from all things and desiring nothing of this earth,
> disregarding all creatures, with great force of mind and fervor of desire,
> stretch towards your Creator
> so that, forgetful of all lesser objects
> whatsoever you do,
> wheresoever you stand,
> with whomsoever you engage in affairs,
> day and night,
> every moment and every hour,
> have God always in your thought,
> trusting and considering

that you are most really in his Presence,
and reflecting that he catches sight of you
from all sides.

With great reverence and respect and with pulsing attention,
with the greatest discernment and most ardent love,
reflect upon these postures:

now prostrate before the feet of his immense Majesty, keep asking pardon for sins;

now pierced by the sword of compassion for the most sacred Passion of the Son of God, appear beside him, wounded and tear-filled;

now imagine the course of his whole life as a line of straightness for your twisting path;

now devote yourself to acts of thanksgiving as you think about his innumerable and immeasurable gifts;

now stung by the touch of his most ardent love, gaze upon him in all his creatures;

now observing his power, now his wisdom, now his goodness and mercy, praise him exuberantly in all his works;

now drawn by longing for our heavenly home, come to him with heavy sighs;

now seeing around us the inner secrets of his inestimable love, surrender to him with joy-filled and overflowing wonder in heart and spirit;

now feel yourself running towards him, now fleeing, now God holding you, uplifting and drawing you towards himself;

now see yourself ungrateful in everything, even though the ineffable secrets of divine compassion are opened for you, and give yourself totally to him, releasing your whole self in tears;

now indeed adore him in all things with the greatest love, reverence and respect, faithful and constant, alert, suppliant and humble, carefully considering the evidences of his justice—evidences which are so secret, deep, honor-filled, so special and so wonder-filled.

Beyond all else, bear in spirit and body a constant living memory of his most sacred Passion [VIII, 496a-b].

So many words, phrases, scenes in this passage strike a familiar chord in harmony with Bonaventure's other writings. His frequent focus on the richness and solace of our Lord's Passion is well known to all who are even vaguely acquainted with his work —e.g., *Lignum Vitae, Officium de Passione Domini, Vitis Mystica, et al.* I am struck by word and phrase reminders of the several steps of the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* written on LaVerna in 1259 and possibly the best known of all Bonaventure's treatises.

Opposed as I am to capsulized versions which rob the life-blood from the original text, I now find it expeditious to use just such a capsule of the *Itinerarium* in order to share my reaction. Explaining that we move "into God" in a threefold subdivided series of "illuminationes scalares"—i.e., steps by which our understanding is moved from consideration of things "Extra nos" through those "intra nos" until we finally stretch towards comprehension of Him who is "Supra nos," Bonaventure presents, as steps up the ladder, this outline for consideration of God

—extra nos: 1a per vestigia eius in universo
(through the indications of him in the universe)
1b in vestigiis suis in hoc sensibili mundo
(in the indications of him in the animal world)

—intra nos: 2a per suam imaginem
(through persons created in his image)
2b in sua imagine
(in persons restored by his grace)

—supra nos: 3a per eius nomen primarium, quod est "esse"
(through his basic name, that of Being")
3b in eius nomine, quod est "bonum"
in his name, that of "Goodness"
(cf. *Itinerarium*, list of chapter headings, V, 296).

It is in this context that I find myself when I encounter his suggestion, cited earlier, "now stung by the touch of his most ardent love, gaze upon him in all his creatures; now, observing his power, now his wisdom, now his goodness and mercy, praise him exuberantly in all his works." The interweaving of God in Love, in creation, in power, wisdom, goodness, and being is the finite, tangible yet ineffable reality upon which Bonaventure based his life-love.

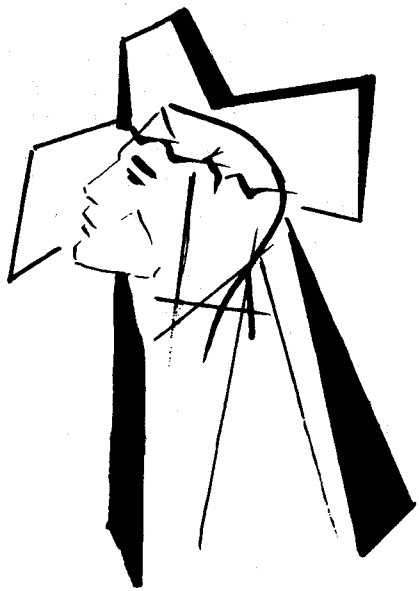
It is to the *Itinerarium* that I owe my first association with Bonaventure. In 1968, I read/taught it in a college Latin course for young future Franciscans. How little I then appreciated the vast riches contained therein, and how much these recent years have brought me to realize that the *Itinerarium* is a lived experience and not just an intellectual study! The ladder-sequence does, indeed, move in just that line of progression—or at least it has for me—unplanned and unprogrammed. Now, reflecting, I can see bits and pieces which

indicate the sometimes momentary, sometimes steady growth "in Deum" that has become part of my life. Not that the progression is ever finished or that one step is finalized before another begins; they slide back and forth like an escalator or the angels on Jacob's ladder "ascending and descending."

Flowers and mountains and sunsets and all have long spoken to me of the glory of God; so there was no problem in the initial "per vestigia eius in universo." But I vividly remember a moment some six years ago when the Presence of God "in vestigiis suis" became suddenly tangible for me. It was early spring, after several days of cold, gray rain, and the sun began shyly to shine through. I was walking alone through the lovely Japanese garden at the Motel-on-the Mountain at Suffern, New York, delighting in the pure simplicity of the arrangement of rocks and plants. As I gazed at the little spring flowers brightly in blossom, there came, with unexplainable suddenness, an understanding experience of "knowing" that GOD IS BEAUTY and that Beauty, in the abstract *eidos/idea* of philosophers from Plato on, is a reality and a God-reality to our world. Beauty, then, IS God, and the touches, glimpses, snatches of beauty which surround us are, indeed, sparks scraps, *scintillae*, *vestigia*, images, mirrors, minuscule microscopic bits of that divine *Eidos* who is God. I had never before understood the philosophers' abstractions; for mine is not the "philosophical mind." But from this insight into Beauty, I have become at least a little able to fathom the related ideas of Good, Truth, Love, Being. It was at this time that the statement in the Creed, "one in Being with the Father," began to take on untold dimensions of reality and awe as I proclaim it in public liturgy and in private prayer. Understanding comes slowly to those of us conditioned to rational thought and logical reasoning. But God is patient with our slowness, and "surely his Goodness and Truth will pursue me all the days of my life" (Ps. 23).

In other ways, through the myriad identity crises of these years which have brought about a maturing awareness and self-acceptance, I have become able to see God both "per suam imaginem" and "in sua imagine" in myself and in those persons who touch my life. "Love others as you love yourself" becomes possible only as I learn to love myself because God is in me and I am his witness to this world just as every other person is, who also bears his image. And occasionally there are those gift-given moments of touching—although in a very surface-scratch fashion—that which is "supra nos"—"per nomen eius," that of "Being," and "in nomine eius," that of "Goodness." These are fleeting insights, and yet some tiny residue remains to strengthen and encourage, steady and support me through the difficult darkness towards the Light eternal.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from the Father of Lights." This text from James 1:17 is often used by Bonaventure in lectures and homilies and is the opening scriptural quotation for the *Itinerarium*. Gift-given grace and God-gifted insight/understanding are the twin bases for our individual *itineraria in Deum*. This dual focus of openness of heart and concentration of intellect is Bonaventure's characteristic posture



in the LaVerna event as throughout his life. He tells us that he was in prayer, in solitude/silence, pondering upon Francis's experience of the seraphic Christ, when "suddenly it became obvious to me what 'visio illa' of Francis presented" (*Itin.*, Prol., 2). In a passage in the *Collationes in Hexaëmeron*– that significant lecture series interrupted by the summons to Lyons in 1274 —Bonaventure tells us:

> Discernment is needed "in visione." Unless the word [Word] sounds in the ear of the heart, His brightness shine in the eye, unless the warm breath of the Almighty be in his nostrils, His sweetness in his taste, foreverness fill his spirit, no one is ready "ad intelligendas visiones" [III, 22; *Opera Omnia*, V, 347a].

To understand fully interior and exterior vision-reality demands the confluence of mind and heart. There is a oneness of our cognitive and affective faculties moving back and forth, blending and integrating. Apparent dichotomies reveal themselves as analogs: mind and heart, disciplined and spontaneous, probed and prompted, active and passive, forming and fashioned, reflective and perceptive, observing flower and seeing beauty, studying scripture and knowing Wisdom, searching truth and learning humility, touching another's hurt and being healed within, facing frustration and

finding faith. All these join in the unity of God-gift to me this moment and always.

What else does Bonaventure teach me of prayer? In one of his homily outlines, developed on the text, "My house will be a house of prayer" (Lk. 19:46), he leaves us some rich sources for meditation and prayer.[1] Although we have only the barest indication of Bonaventure's expansion of the text in the actual moment of preaching, we are fortunate in that the manuscripts do preserve some sense of his introduction and the outline of his development with the scripture quotations used. These alone provide us with a feast of Old and New Testament scenes and situations of prayer and parallels for our present-day ailments and their remedies. But it is the basic image-metaphor of his homily which captures and challenges me most poignantly:

> . . . the whole effort of our salvation stresses the proper and consistent practice of prayer. In this regard, there are three things necessaary for prayer to be pleasing and welcome to God. These are:
>
> 1. *Praeparatio*—a "making ready" must lead the way to prayer.
>
> 2. *Attentio*—attentiveness must accompany prayer.
>
> 3. *Exsultatio*—passionate joy must follow close after prayer. These correspond to the three actions of prayer: scrubbing, brightening, and polishing [pp. 7-8].

Again Bonaventure uses such ordinary language, developing a deep prayer theme around daily life routines of housewifely chores or medical practice. How can I, then, separate my prayer from my daily round of duties, chores, routines? His subdivisions and their scriptural support offer much nourishment for my oft-repeated question, "How should I pray?" How many times I rush right into prayer, demanding of the Lord without any—or very little—*praeparatio* to enable me to wind down from anxieties and activities and properly to focus on Him whom I approach. How carefully do I maintain that *attentio* on God alone during my prayer-time, ruthlessly casting aside all the distractions and concerns which haunt me? Because I so often fail in these two considerations, is that the reason that I all too seldom experience Bonaventure's *exsultatio* after my prayer? By definition, "exsultare" denotes

> a passionate, uncontrolled joy. . . The *exsultans* shows this by a voluntary, full resignation of himself to joy, which displays itself, if not by skipping and jumping, at least by an indiscreet outbreak of joy bordering on extravagance.[2]

Bonaventure tells us in the homily-outline we are now considering (p. 13) that "this joy is welcome and is an awareness of blessing . . . . This exuberant joy develops from the enjoyment of Presence . . . . This joy must be alive with that deep sense of protection." And John records Jesus's words: "that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete" (Jn. 15:11).

I seek to sing, in the words of Joseph Folliet:

> God of joy,
> you're in your essence
> (the way you're justice and peace)
> because you're love
> and because love is supreme joy.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> You're my joy, Lord,
> my joy as a person,
> because you've made me capable of joy,
> capable of your joy;
> and because my thirst for infinite joy
> can be slaked only in your eternity.
>
> Forgive me, Lord, for all my blasphemies
> against your joy,
> and for the arid days
> when I lost Faith in it.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And accept the hymn of praise which I send up to you,
> so that it may blend
> with the eternal song of your joy:
> "Amen!" "Alleluia!"[3]

The quality of joy, so vital to our love-song with God, is far too often unknown in our prayer life. But when I believe in Bonaventure's directives, I find myself constantly challenged to invite

[1]Dom. IX post Pentecosten, sermo 2, preached in Paris at the house of the Dominicans. This is translated from the Latin of *Opera Omnia*, IX, 390-92, in Marigwen Schumacher, *Bonaventure: Rooted in Faith* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974), pp. 7-13.

[2]Doderlein's *Hand-Book of Latin Synonyms* (Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1869), p. 92.

[3]Joseph Folliet, *Invitation to Joy* (Ramsey, NJ: Newman Press, 1968), pp. 28-29.

joy in, *to let joy be*—in me and splash forth as God's witness upon others.

Another facet of prayer is the use of the prayer-phrase. This aid to praying constantly is as ancient as the Eastern Oriental mantra forms and the Eastern Christian tradition of the Jesus prayer from the writings of the *Philokalía* It continues in Charismatic prayer and in certain strands of Quaker prayer. As far as I know, Bonaventure does not specifically mention such prayer, but I speculate that it was a part of his prayer-life. Certainly the prayer-phrase is rooted in Scripture—in Psalm refrain especially—and in the oft-repeated formulae of liturgical prayer. Francis is remembered for his repeated "Deus meus et omnia" as recorded in the Fioretti, which expands upon the account, found both in Celano and in Bonaventure, of Bernadino's hosting of Francis. In the magnificent chapel at St. Bonaventure University, the central terra cotta reredos depicts the twin experiences of Francis and Bonaventure on LaVerna with the seraphic Christ. With Francis in ecstasy of vision are the words, "Deus meus et omnia"; with Bonaventure, the book which becomes the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* and the words taken from the *Collationes in Hexaëmeron* (I, 17—V, 332b): "Domine, exivi a te summo, venio ad te summum et per te summum" (Lord, I came forth from you, I come to you, and through you, Most High). In context, these words are a prayer of empathy patterned after those of Jesus himself in John 16:28. I have come to realize the appropriateness of their choice for the reredos scene and to feel in them a true Bonaventurian prayer-phase even though I know there is no "proof" for such a statement. To me, at least, the statement is basic to his prayer, basic to his life, basic to his witness in just the same way that Francis's words are for his. I think we could also discover the central prayer-text of other spiritual friends and be aided by them to move closer on our journey into God. For example, I have come to believe that Mary's joyous words to Elizabeth, "My whole being rejoices in God my Savior," continued to be her prayer throughout all those years through Calvary and Resurrection. I see her saying them still, gathered with the others, at the moment of Pentecost. Surely Luke must have heard them from her lips in many situations where pure joy mingled deep with faith that the joy would someday be completely and definitely perfected. Somehow these expressions, lived in their totality, make tangible for us that special giftedness of individuals who lived constantly and deeply in the

awareness of the Presence of the Trinity. They are a real gift for us of the quality of awareness of the individual and myriad gifts of Creator to creation in creature. "I have come forth from you, Most High Lord; I am coming towards you, Most High God, through your help."

In other smaller but still significant ways, I acknowledge that my life in God has been nourished through my contact with Bonaventure. From reading many of his lectures and various treatises, but especially from his *Sermones*, I have garnered treasures of his scriptural exegesis that remain fresh and stimulating as I re-encounter them in Psalm text and liturgical selection. His vast command of both old and New Testament has caused me to learn much in the course of my translating. My response to his delicacy of word-choice and nuance of meaning sharpens my own acumen, and the vivid vignettes of his metaphors persist in my memory. The special charism of Francis and Bonaventure has touched me in the many friars who are my friends and whose sharing in PAX et BONUM continues to give an added dimension to my life. Entering into Bonaventure's life and work and environments, probing parallels between the 13th and the 20th century, surrounded by new insights of simplicity, by God-given moments of sent-ness, by my own struggles to accept/avoid given-ness, I am healed, helped, held.

Since I am so at home in the academic world and because I have travelled in Italy and France, it is easier for me to feel a kinship with Bonaventure that I am not as able to feel with Paul and Peter, whose lands I have not visited and whose professions I do not share. This ability to transfer from my own experience into his, and conversely from his into mine, is a compelling reality which affects my prayer and deepens my merger into Bonaventure's "visio."

I know myself to be troubled —tormented—at times by problems and decisions which I cannot solve and by the difficulties of my friends. At these times my attempts at prayer become strained, minimal, and unsatisfying—until I recall:

> Never let us allow our heart to be anxious about any created thing except in so far as it enkindles our awareness of the warmth and passion of divine love. Reflecting unduly upon the myriad variety of ephemeral things troubles the spirit and sunders the agreeable quiet of one's tranquil mind. Moreover, by creating in our spirit phantasms of turbulence and affliction, uneasiness strikes violently against us [cf. above, p. 290].

Indeed, I know how much "un-

easiness strikes violently against" me! And so I am reminded that I must "seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be given unto" me. As the breathing eases and the muscles relax and tensions calm, there comes again that experience of the "warmth and passion of divine love" which lifts and uplifts and strengthens and provides—and prayer flows. *Oratio enim hausorium est.*

Where do I now stand before my God? Rooted somewhat more strongly in faith, lifted a little taller in hope and joy, stretched wider in caring, sharing love, acquainted with the blossoms of ardent longing,[4] repeating with Bonaventure, "Domine, exivi a te summo; venio ad te summum et per te summum," and yet, even more aware of the truth of Francis's words: "Let us begin, for up until now we have done nothing."

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[4]Marigwen Schumacher, "Bonaventure; The Power of Metaphor," THE CORD 21 (1971), p. 293.

Walls of Reflection

And the people worked together
in order to build the fine structure . . .
its foundation,
strong and firm,
was based on the kind of love
that grows when people do . . . .
. . . they built the tower,
not so much out of the great blocks
of clay and mud,
but out of conviction,
promises,
and hope. . . .
. . . days and days,
years and years. . .
they passed,
as did the conviction
to attain a definite goal
based on a combined effort.
And one day,
it took but a single individual

to begin a new fire burning . . . .
No longer did they build out of love
and concern for each other,
no longer did they struggle together
in order one day to share
in the accomplishments
of many hands . . . .
. . . their song of unity
became a cry for expediency.
Soon, each heart was possessed
with only the tower's size and height,
rather than the splendor of its beauty.
There was no one to call by name,
to smile with,
to comfort. . . .
. . . each was known by his ability,
his usefulness.
At last,
when the tower reached high for all to see,
there were walls,
and nothing left to say.

Sister Marie Joette Ebert, O.S.F.

Musings on Contemplation—II

CONRAD A. SCHOMSKE, O.F.M.

IT IS FRUITLESS — a waste of time —to try clearly and adequately to separate or even distinguish God's role from our own in the building up of the life of contemplation. But it is possible, and I hope helpful, to describe the various aspects of that life and to characterize some of them as more markedly our own responsibility, and others as perhaps more directly involving the divine initiative.

Thus, while I want to emphasize the ultimate inadequacy of this distinction, I like to think that the four "purities" discussed last month are for *us* to cultivate, whereas the trials sent to purge us, the experience of God's presence in solitude, and the divine guidance given us through spiritual direction—all to be discussed briefly in the following pages—are somewhat less under our own control.

Trials

THE REFINEMENT accomplished by the "four purities" is so important, then, that it is sometimes taken by the Lord into his own unerring hands. He achieves this by the insights he gives us into ourselves, telling us what to do to come closer to him as well as what not to do. But he also accomplishes it by sending trials into our lives—or at least allowing them to come. Through trials he makes our love for others and for him more genuine. By trials, we mean anything that is difficult for us, anything that is hard on us. These trials may come from ourselves, from other people, from our work, from the events of everyday life, from sickness, from dryness in prayer, or from temptations.

Sometimes we ourselves are the cause of our trials insofar as we have a rather difficult personality. We may be hard to live with. Maybe we are too irritable, too fussy, too hard to please, too sensitive, hurt too easily, stiff, uncommunicative, a loner. For any one or for several of these reasons, we may find ourselves clashing with other people. In this sense, having a difficult personality can be a great trial. Needless to say, we should do what we can to correct ourselves and to smooth out the rough edges of our personality. If necessary, we should get professional help.

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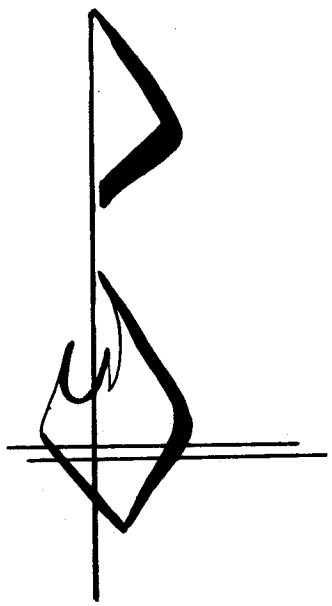
Maybe the answer is deceptively simple: e.g., we just need more sleep. In any case, besides all the human means we can employ to become a more pleasant person, we should turn more earnestly to God. Our problems should make us realize our our own weakness and should therefore spur us on to look to God for special help. In this way, the trial of a difficult personality can do two things for us: It keeps us humble, reminding us of our own shortcomings and inadequacies; and besides, it makes us pray more, asking God daily for the help we need to become more like Jesus in his patience, understanding, magnanimity, and long-suffering. This is the way the Lord uses the trials coming from a difficult personality to bring us closer to him: they keep us humble, and they make us pray more earnestly and honestly.

At times, the people around us can be the trial which brings us closer to God. If these people are hard and cold, lacking understanding, sympathy, and compassion; if they are revengeful, unappreciative, spiteful, envious, catty, they can be very trying on us. These people may be members of our family, people we live with, people we work for, people we work with. Further, if we happen to be of an overly sensitive nature, some people can be all the more of a trial for us. They may get on our nerves, get under our skin, drive us up a wall. Such a trial can bring us closer to God in that it offers many opportunities to practice genuine, selfless charity and real forgiveness. Besides, these people's behavior makes us pray more insistently for the help we need to deal with them as Jesus would. And this extra praying and dependence on God inevitably brings us closer to him.

Then there is the trial of work. If we are not all that inclined to work in the first place, or if the work assigned to us is boring, disagreeable, not challenging; or if we have no special talent or attraction for it, then such work can be a real trial. To stick with it day after day can be an outstanding means of self-denial. It can teach us to work only for the love of God and neighbor, rather than for self-satisfaction. It is this kind of selfless love which is required for contemplation.

Trials coming from the various events of everyday life can further purify us for contemplation. These events may be major happenings such as the death of a dear one, or they may be mirror occurrences such as plans gone awry. In any case, they help us to realize our own helplessness as human beings. They bring home to us the transitoriness of our earthly life and remind us not to sink our roots too deeply in it because our true home is heaven.



In all of these things, if we turn more and more naturally and spontaneously to God our Rock and our Salvation, and cling to him more tenaciously with an ever stronger love, then the trial has served its purpose of bringing us closer to God. It is this closeness to God, this intimacy with him in unshakable trust, that contemplation is all about. Sometimes the Lord uses painful events of daily life to wean us away from ourselves and this passing world and to draw us tightly into his protective, loving, and fatherly arms.

Sickness is another trial the Lord uses to purify us for more intimate love with him in contemplation. This may be our own sickness or that of a dear one. When we become seriously ill with cancer, arthritis, ulcers, a heart condition, diabetes, or the like, we realize, perhaps for the first time in our lives, our own weakness and helplessness. Before that, perhaps, we strutted with overconfidence and self-esteem. But when we are brought low in sickness, lying flat on our back, we realize that we are only flesh and blood after all, and that we need God. This tends to make us humble, and it seems that God is more inclined to give his gift of contemplation to the humble. Even as he exalts us in a sense with the graces of contemplation, he keeps us humble with some such trial as sickness. And as we come to feel annihilated—emptied of self—in sickness, God can come to fill us with himself. Then too, as we come to experience our helplessness in times of sickness, we learn to cast our cares upon the Lord and to pray to him more fervently. We come to love the Lord in spite of the pain he allows us to suffer. As we do so, our love becomes more genuine. We gradually get to the point where we love the Lord simply and purely for himself, not for his gifts (which in fact seem to be taken away in sickness—at the very least, the gift of good health). As love for God increases, love for self decreases. It is this kind of pure, genuine, selfless love which the Lord demands before

he gives the grace of contemplation. And so it is in this way that sickness helps accomplish the self-emptying or kenosis which seems to be a condition for contemplation.

The sickness of a dear one can achieve the same results for us, especially if we personally have to care for the sick person for weeks, months, even years. In all of this, our love for others becomes more real and less self-centered. We have to give up self in so many ways, in order to care adequately for a very sick person. All virtues, moreover, can be tested in the sick room: our patience, kindness, charity, forgiveness, humility, self-restraint. All these virtues have to be there in an eminent degree, if we expect to grow in contemplation. In fact, we can measure our growth in contemplation precisely by our growth in these virtues. Insofar as these virtues are not evident, we should indeed wonder whether we are growing in contemplation at all.

This, then, is the purpose of the trial of sickness: it helps purify us for contemplation by purging us of much selfishness and hidden pride; and it helps us grow in selfless love for God and trust in him even when his hand lies heavy upon us. We learn to love him for himself, rather than for his gifts. And finally, sickness keeps us humble and down to earth, lest the gift of contemplation puff us up.

Dryness in prayer is another trial the Lord uses to help us grow in the prayer of contemplation. This may seem contradictory. We would think that to help us grow in prayer, the Lord would make prayer easy for us, so as to encourage us. We would think he would make his presence felt the more strongly, so as to attract us to him. In the beginning of our prayer life, in fact, he usually does do this; we call this period "first fervor." But as time goes on, the Lord tends to withdraw from us. There are days—even weeks and months, in some cases even years—when we cannot perceive his presence at all. He seems so far away; he seems not to care. Try as we will, we cannot seem to make him real in our lives. This, we call dryness. Its purpose is to make sure we are loving God only for himself, not for the satisfaction we may get out of experiencing his presence—for the latter is no more than a hidden kind of self-love.

Considering God's status as Creator, and our own as creatures, we owe him precisely this kind of love: homage, respect, reverence, and adoration—regardless of what we personally get from our periods of prayer. God, not self, has to be the complete and total object of our prayer. To drive this point home to us, God

does at times seem to go away from us. We can't seem to make contact with him any more. But precisely by seeking him in these times of dryness, we learn to love him for himself alone. This is pure, genuine, selfless love for God—the kind of love he demands from contemplatives. As we learn to give him this kind of love and try our best to love him for himself, even though he seems as though he couldn't care less about us, he tends to "visit" us with his presence. Suddenly he makes us very much aware of himself, even outside times of prayer. This is contemplation. He teaches us that we cannot bring it about by our own efforts, that all we can do is humbly and gratefully acknowledge his presence and realize that he and he alone is the Giver of all good gifts. We can't force him; he doesn't have to come when we whistle. But when we are in this attitude of humble, frank awareness of our own helplessness and weakness, the God of creation comes to us in all his splendor, touching our hearts with his powerful yet gentle presence. The trial of dryness thus helps us prepare for contemplation and disposes us to appreciate it all the more when it comes.

Strange as it may seem, temptations also purify us and make us more fit for contemplation. There is of course a big difference between temptation and sin. No matter how severe temptations may be, it scarcely needs to be pointed out, there is no question of sin. To avoid *all* sin, however, we must pray for God's help. Also, of course, it is presupposed that we are not *looking for* or inviting temptations by flirting with occasions of sin. In addition, we must not knowingly and willingly close our hearts to anyone out of pride, hatred, or envy. Temptations remind us of our weakness and proneness to sin. In that, they keep us humble and force us to pray for God's help. Jesus said, "Without me, you can do nothing," but he also said, "Ask, and you shall receive." If we humbly acknowledge our weakness and turn in loving trust to the Lord for help, while growing in humility we also grow in prayer—two necessary conditions for contemplation.

We might even say that sin itself can serve this same purpose. The bold paradox of such a statement must be clearly understood, however: there can be no question of approving of sin, and certainly we are not speaking here of completely deliberate or habitual sin. Rather, we have in mind the sort of sin that comes from just plain human frailty, over-confidence, carelessness, even perhaps a growing lukewarmness. While such sin is in itself deplorable, it can have the salutary effect of reminding us of our lack of love for the God who loves us so much. As the Breviary says (Office of Readings, Saturday of II Week): "Grant that where sin abounded, grace may more abound, so that we can become holier through forgiveness and be more grateful to you." We will find too that as our love for God grows by constant fidelity to prayer through thick and thin, in good days and bad, in dryness and fervor, our temptations as well as our sins will, little by little over the years, diminish. God's love experienced in contemplation just seems to consume our human weakness and heal the wounds of our past sins. Truly, his mercy is above all his works!

These, then, are some of the trials we experience on the road to contemplation which is the awareness of God present to us—an awareness reinforced by his loving touches on our souls and by his "visits" to us reminding us that he is very near— in fact, within the very depths of our being.

Sometimes these trials are called purifications or purgations, because through them our love for God and our faith in him are purified and made stronger, more enduring, and more genuine. At the same time, through these trials we are being purged of much self-love: made to realize our weakness and the need to cast our care upon the Lord. We learn also that truly he alone is our All. We depend less and less upon others and upon ourselves and more and more throw ourselves into the Lord's arms, surrendering to him without reserve, without conditions. The self-love, pride, self-sufficiency hidden in the corners of our hearts gradually melt away. We learn to face ourselves realistically, honestly admitting that it is true: we cannot do anything by ourselves. At the same time, we acknowledge that our experience has taught us that we can do all things in him who strengthens us. Both the distrust of self and the trust in God gradually become part of us—almost second nature. We become godly, God-like, holy. We put on the Lord Jesus. God becomes a living reality for us—the be-all and end-all of our lives. He becomes everything for us, and the rest doesn't matter any more. This is contemplation; and it becomes a state of our being rather than an isolated, sporadic contact with God.

Sometimes these trials or purifications are referred to as a "dark night," because when we are going through them we are often not sure in which direction to go. We feel we are losing our spiritual moorings. We wonder whether we are moving toward the Lord or away from him; whether the Lord really loves us or not. It's like being in a dark room, unsure of oneself, not knowing where the door is. This uncertainty shakes our com-

placency and independence; it makes us reach out, almost in desperation, for a sure hand to guide us. It makes us cast ourselves totally upon the Lord. The very darkness itself, then, leads us in the night of trials more securely to the Light which is God.

Sometimes, however, what seems like darkness is really the overpowering brilliance of God. It's like looking up into a dazzling sun and being momentarily blinded. As we come closer to God, the light of God's ways and the darkness of our own clash. The more we cling to our ways, the less able we are to see God's. Only in faith can we clearly see and appreciate God's way of thinking and acting. Eventually we come to believe that God really can write straight with crooked lines (sickness, dryness, etc.). Humanly speaking, these things do not make sense to us. As far as our human understanding is concerned, we are in the dark; hence the expression "dark night." The brilliance of God's way of acting is just too much for our limited way of thinking. In that sense, his light blinds us, leaving us in the dark. Little by little, we come to realize that the only way we can find the path through this darkness is by the light of faith. Leaving aside our human way of judging, we come to believe, in pure and simple faith, in God and his way. Our faith becomes genuine, without props or supports: the kind of faith Jesus demanded of Peter if he were to walk on the water.

Next month we shall offer some concluding reflections on solitude and on the role of the spiritual director.

Jesus, Total Redeemer

(Continued from page 282)

The vision in question is central to Orbis Books' publishing apostolate: it sees Jesus as come to save not only human individuals as such but whole classes of people, societies, and nations—in short, to do away with the old order of things fraught with sin and oppression, and inaugurate the Kingdom of God, in which all things are made new.

If you recognize this as "liberation theology," you are of course correct. But tags and labels are not very helpful. It's better not to use them—i.e., not to use preconceived axiological categories to interpret what an author has written and thus run the danger of missing the cogent premises supporting his message, or even his message itself.

The prophetic emphasis mentioned two paragraphs ago receives a somewhat more systematic development in Capuchin Father Michael Crosby's commentary on the Our Father, *Thy Will Be Done*. Here too there is an unmistakable, crystal clear synthetic vision that can do without facile labels. The triune Godhead is seen as the primordial Community, model for every human community, in which there is complete access to all "resources" and an effective imaging of God in oneself and to others. Jesus has come into the world to overturn the unjust order in which these two ideals are unrealizable.

Thy Will Be Done is not your ordinary commentary on the Lord's Prayer. Under the rubric of each of its petitions, the author hammers home his basic theme. To some readers this may seem to entail excessive repetition, but after prolonged reflection, I've concluded that the theme, radical and controversial as it is, can use all the support and repetition it can get. And it does get extensive support, not only from the work of other theologians, but much more importantly, from the Bishops' Statement of 1971 and above all from not one but several pronouncements of Pope Paul.

Father Michael Crosby speaks from a good deal of first-hand experience, pastoral, political, and economic—including personal involvement with corporate boards and legislative bodies. He urges that we transcend the "childish" level of spirituality, prayer, and ministry (preoccupied with the individual) as well as their "adolescent" level (restricted to the smaller community), and try through serious, persevering prayer to become identified with the Lord on the third, "adult" level where we recognize and combat "the sin of the world," which infects society's major institutions, religious as well as political and economic.

In the painstaking development of this exhortation, the author uses charts and detailed categorical systems which cannot be done justice in this space. His exposition is quite clear and competent, however, and deserves the sympathetic, unbiased attention of every reader (and this should be every Christian) who is serious about attaining (or maintain-

ing) a balanced, fully mature life in Christ.

But religious? What has this to do with religious, who form the majority of our readership? Again, I had to wrestle with this question before deciding to devote an editorial to it. What first nudged me in a positive direction was the fact that the author himself writes of his province's *communal* involvement in this prophetic mission. In the second place, there is the obvious fact that even those of us who are not directly engaged in economic and political work have to be straight on what a fully balanced and mature Christianity means. Finally, this vision which permeates both *Thy Will Be Done* and *Jesus, the Stranger* includes an understanding of poverty to which we shall return in great detail next month: material penury is no ideal, any more for a religious than for the untold millions of lay people who are now forced by unjust structures to live it.

But what most recommends both these books is neither rhetorical persuasion nor sustained argument (whether dialectical or empirical). It is the insistence of both authors that only a life of deep prayer can bring about in us the needed conversion. We can, that is, be "other Christs" and true prophets only by an ongoing, resolute, unflagging effort to "look at Jesus."

Fr. Michael D. Mailack, ofm

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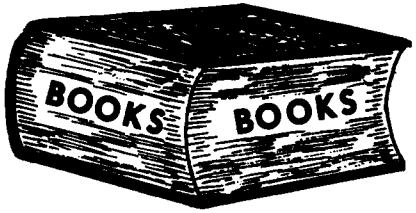

A History of the Controversy over the "Debitum Peccati." By Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M. Franciscan Institute Theology Series, St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1978. Pp. xiii-260. Paper, $7.00 plus postage and handling.

Reviewed by Father Dominic J. Unger, O.F.M. Cap., Associate at St. Charles Church, St. Louis. Author of many studies on the Primacy of Christ, Father Dominic is continuing his research in Mariology and on St. Irenaeus.

For some years, Father Juniper Carol, who had been so active in publishing books and scientific articles, seemed to have gone into permanent retirement. The present volume demonstrates that he had been silently hard at work in research. He presents us with a scholarly history of the thorny problem about whether Mary had any debt to contract original sin. Often the book is merely an outline of authors for or against the debt, but it does contain a careful analysis of the principals in the controversy. Father always writes in a clear style, which makes it easy to read the book.

Too often in the past, as Father notes, too many authors, especially of manuals, made a generalized statement that the majority favored a debt in Mary. They simply did not make an investigation of the authors. Father Carol made that investigation for all of us; and it will no longer be excusable to make sweeping statements that authors generally hold that Mary had a debt. Father Carol researched the problem from its beginnings in the twelfth century (ch. 1), through the debates of Toledo, Alcalá, and Seville (ch. 2), through the golden age when the absence of a debt was defended by Franciscans, Jesuits, and Carmelites, as well as by others (ch. 3), through a period of decline (ch. 4), through the century of the Immaculate Conception (ch. 5), and finally through the period of resurgence in modern times (ch. 6), when the majority of theologians are holding that Mary had no debt. For the rest one must read the book to get the full impact of how generally the non-debt opinion was held through the centuries.

It is very interesting, to this reviewer quite naturally, of how generally the Absolute Predestination of Mary, with Jesus, was used as an argument against any debt in her. Mary, who was predestined before Adam and unconditioned by Adam's sin, could not have been in debt to Adam's sin. And so, an indirect fruit of this study is the revelation of many defenders of the Absolute Primacy who did not treat the matter *ex professo*.

One of the biggest objections to the opinion that Mary had no debt to sin is that then she could not truly have been redeemed by Jesus. Some complicated systems have been thought up to solve this riddle. It seems the final solution for this will be as simple as it was for the Immaculate Conception itself: Mary was redeemed in the most perfect manner by being preserved from original sin and by being free of all debt to contract it, in virtue of the merits of her Son and Savior. Father Carol (p. 238) promises a book on this very point soon. We await it eagerly.

Living Our Faith after the Changes. Edited by Jack Wintz, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1977. Pp. viii-112. Paper, $1.95.

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., M.A. (Phil.), Coordinator of Alumni Services at St. Bonaventure University.

In 1973 the St. Anthony Messenger Press began publishing a monthly bulletin for parishes under the title *Catholic Update*. Later the decision was made by the publisher to collect these bulletins and put them out in book form for those who might want a more permanent copy of the series. The third volume of this series is entitled *Living Our Faith after the Changes*. In this volume the different authors present in nine chapters an explanation of and some personal reflections on the practice of the Catholic faith in the light of the Second Vatican Council.

As in the previous two volumes, so also in this third volume the authors demonstrate a sympathetic awareness of the anxiety of sincere

Catholics who feel threatened or confused in the practice of their faith because of the changes resulting from the Council. Emphasizing the unchanging character of the traditional teaching of the Church, the writers explain the changes as adaptations to the mind and culture of people living today. Citing present social customs and contemporary thought, they show how the teaching of our faith and the practice of our faith can be "updated" for people living in today's world.

This volume deals with Catholic doctrine and practice in such areas as rules and regulations, conscience, assisting at Mass, the sacraments of Penance, Anointing, and Matrimony, and popular devotions. Special importance is given to the tendency in today's society to emphasize individual responsibility. This personalism or individualism is seen to have had a tremendous influence on the teaching and practice of our faith today. In general, the changes in the Church are explained by these writers as primarily a change in emphasis, a change in personal attitude, rather than a change in doctrine. Changes in practice are the natural result of such change in emphasis and in attitude.

Like the previous two volumes in the *Catholic Update* series, ***Living Our Faith after the Changes*** is a short, direct, simply expressed presentation of Catholic doctrine. It is written especially for Catholics who might be anxious or confused by reason of some of the changes in Catholic practice and discipline in the last fifteen or twenty years. The authors do not explain away the changes; rather, they show the changes as proof of the vitality of the Church and its readiness to adapt to the needs of the people of every age. Saint Paul explained Christ's message so that the people of the first century could understand it; Saint Thomas Aquinas explained the same truth to students of the universities in the thirteenth century in a way suited to their situation; the Council of Trent taught and decreed for the faithful, in the sixteenth century, who were recovering from the shock of the Reformation; finally, the Second Vatican Council taught and declared the same message of Christ in a pastoral fashion to meet the needs of the followers of Christ living in the latter part of the twentieth century.

This third volume of the *Catholic Update* series is strongly recommended to all Catholics, especially those who are trying to understand for themselves and to teach others the doctrine of the Catholic faith. It is recommended to all those who find change difficult to understand or to accept. It is recommended to all who are sincerely trying to practice the faith in imitation of Christ and of all those who have set the example of loyal and faithful devotion to the Church that Jesus Christ founded for the salvation of all men.

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COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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

the CORD

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CONTENTS

THE CORD is a review devoted to Franciscan spirituality and published monthly with the July and August issues combined, by The Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. Subscription rates: $7.00 a year, 70 cents a copy. Second class postage paid at St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778, and at additional mailing offices. U.S.P.S. publication number 563640. Please address all subscriptions and business correspondence to our Business Manager Father Bernard R. Creighton, O.F.M., at the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. Manuscripts, Books for Review, and Editorial Correspondence should be sent to the Editor, Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., or Associate Editor, Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., at our Editorial Office, Siena College Friary, Loudonville, N.Y. 12211.

Poverty: Spiritual *and* Material?

LIVE TODAY as Francis and his brothers did at Rivo Torto? A friar responding recently to this question, in the course of a conversation, shook his head slowly, thoughtfully, and somewhat wistfully. "I'd be in the hospital with pneumonia within a week," he explained. "We not only live in a different society today, but even our physical and mental constitution as individuals has changed from what it was in the Order's early days."

The friars' life at Rivo Torto differed in many ways, to be sure, from our own; but perhaps the most fundamental difference can be said to be in the literal practice of material poverty. The two main articles in this issue are addressed to this perennial issue of Franciscan living, and further discussions on it are planned for the future. It may not be inappropriate, therefore, to offer in this space some reflections of our own which may serve to stimulate still further thought on the subject.

One frequently met approach, these days, is that of deploring the progressive "spiritualization" of the Franciscan ideal of poverty through the Order's history. As we imply in the title of this editorial, there can be no question of the need in every Franciscan's life for *spiritual* poverty: The real question is whether that detachment should receive an uncompromisingly literal expression in the material sense.

Thus phrased, of course, the question is too complex to be given a single, global answer. It must be broken down into other, more specific and concrete questions. Without pretending to give an exhaustive list of these, much less a definitive answer to any of them— and without claiming that any of them is new or original, we do want to express the main ones here in a more or less systematic way.

We all know that the apostolic work most Franciscan religious are engaged in today demands a considerable stock of material goods clearly at the personal disposal of each individual. Our first question, then, is this: could we, renouncing every other form of work, to revert completely to the lifestyle of the original twelve friars—be nothing but itinerant preachers of the Good News, totally dependent on alms for even life's basic necessities? Unless one answers this question in the affirmative, we think he should drop all pretense to be advocating *"uncompromisingly"* literal observance of material poverty. And we believe, moreover, that both the example of early friars after the twelve (Anthony and Bonaventure in particular come to mind) *and* a hard look at the limitations imposed by life in the contemporary world preclude that affirmative answer.

But accepting the negative reply leads to two more specific questions: viz., (1) for our institutions and (2) for individual religious, is renunciation of ownership in favor of dependent use a mere legal fiction, or is it a real and desirable option today? Our suggestions here are that (1) modern economic reality has precluded dependent use as a realistic possibility for our communities or institutions, but (2) dependent use not only can but must remain the only possible choice for individual religious.

Again, accepting this second suggestion leads to a gamut of further specifications. Accept it we must, of course; otherwise what meaning would be left to the vow of poverty? But what does its serious acceptance imply, beyond the obvious impossibility of a religious holding legal title to property? The extreme spiritualization of the vow so widely criticized today would maintain that "anything goes" as long as there is the (quite theoretical) velleity that, should some really cataclysmic event take place—and one thinks that for some people this could be only the Parousia—one would be willing to relinquish possession and use of one's items. We mention this, not as a purely hypothetical "pure extreme position" to round out our systematic synthesis of questions, but because it does in fact seem to be the mentality of some religious.

A second approach would also accept the contemporary de facto liberalization of the observance of poverty. But with every effort being exercised to maintain interior detachment, people in this category would insist that *in addition* there must be some "pinch" felt in the way of privation of exterior goods. There are many who would have such privations legislated; but we think this would be a mistake. Rather, we feel that within reasonable limits (and the line here would have to be drawn, ultimately, by those in authority) the individual mature religious must be left to express poverty in his own way, in prayerful communion with the Spirit.

Finally, it is not only possible, but actually a spreading reality in our day, for individuals to do what we said at the outset the institution cannot do: revert to the primal Franciscan ideal of itinerant preaching or hermitage life—ideally, a rhythmic movement between the two. In this age of personal choice, where not only apostolate but even place of residence is left to the individual's specification in so many cases, it has become quite feasible for an individual religious to embrace the most austere of lifestyles. A sounder theology, as well as better medical and psychological information, than was had in the Middle Ages would, of course preclude wild excesses; but short of them, one could voluntarily choose the apostolate and the residence which would make it possible to subsist on only the real necessities of human life.

It hardly needs to be said, in conclusion, that whether an individual chooses the second or the third approach to poverty (the first, we rule out as unconscionable for any serious religious), the emphasis must be

on what we referred to as prayerful communion with the Spirit. So many rationalizations have been defended by an appeal to disillusionment with community life. "I entered this life envisaging the loving support of my brothers (sisters), and all I've seen is backbiting, thinly- or non-veiled contumely, etc. So you can hardly blame me for falling back on material possessions and avocations as a compensation for what I've experienced as a complete lack of human support." This plea, for which it is difficult not to feel *some* degree, if not of acceptance, then at least of sympathy, overlooks that it is the Lord—not human respect or even support—that we have chosen as our inheritance. It is easy to nurture the misconception that the inheritance is something we come into only after death; but this is not the case. Rather, it is *a hundred-fold in this life* that we have been promised, and eternal life *besides*.

In this matter as in all others, we must be careful not to set about judging everyone else. Rather, as Francis advises, "let each one judge himself." If within the depths of your heart there is no longer any real attempt to maintain prayerful communion with the Spirit of Jesus—not just from time to time, but very often and even continually through each day—then any attempt to regulate mechanically the amount of goods you possess and use will be either a stoic striving for self-perfection or an exercise in futility. But if you "work in a spirit of faith and devotion," not "extinguishing the spirit of prayer and devotion" (1 Rule, 5), the Lord will himself be your support and you will have little danger of becoming enmeshed in undue material concerns. This—and only this—can be the meaning of poverty vowed out of love for and in imitation of the poor Jesus.

Fr. Michael D. Maitland, ofm

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i am poor, Lord, and lowly;
there's nothing i can call my own—save my sins.
my material needs are satisfied through your goodness;
my spiritual longings soothed by your love.
no matter how much i multiply words in prayer,
their end is the same—you, my God, my All.
hear this prayer, then I ask you, all-loving Father, in your mercy
but not for any merit of its own—it has none,
for i am poor, Lord, and lowly
and there is nothing i desire to call my own—
save you, my God and my All.

Timothy James Fleming, O.F.M.Conv.

The Plan for Franciscan Living Service

ANTON R. BRAUN, O.F.M.

SERVICE IS the key to the ministry of the friars as they move about in the world among the People of God. At times the question may well arise in the lives of the friars: "Who serves us? Who is there to minister to us?" We have, of course, our brotherhood, which is essentially our vocation, and our service flows from that. Yet there is a deep and genuine need that each friar be the receiver of ministry and service, that he be challenged to grow, that he be healed and restored.

The *Plan for Franciscan Living*, the Rule and General Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor, would remain a very impressive document even were it left to itself. There is a need to have these Constitutions come alive for every friar, to become a living and vibrant part of his life. Reading and meditation on the *Plan for Franciscan Living* certainly serves, to some degree, to meet this need; but still more is needed for each friar.

With these needs in mind, and with the encouragement of the Minister General, who asks that the Constitutions become the living resource of each friar, the Plan for Franciscan Living Service came to life in 1974. In May of that year the English-Speaking Conference of Friars Minor gathered together to formulate an interprovincial Renewal Project under the Directorship of Maury Smith, O.F.M. This English-Speaking Conference is made up of the first-ranking Minister of each of the ten Provinces, two Vicariates, and six Custodies of the United States, Canada, England, Ireland, and Malta. The plan for Francincan Living Service (hereafter referred to as PFL Service) became the practical and applied arm of the Renewal Project as teams of friars experienced in all aspects of Franciscan living began formulating a comprehensive plan of renewal.

The PFL Service is available to serve the friars in formulating

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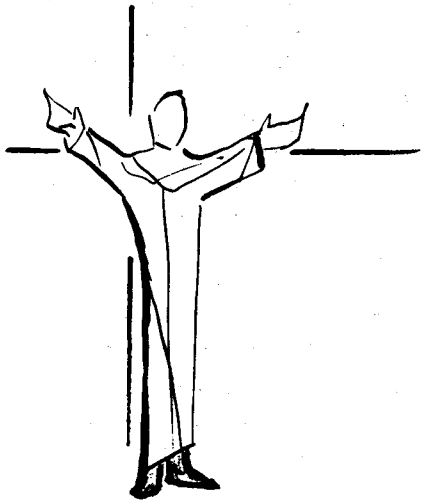
Father Anton R. Braun, O.F.M., a member of the Sacred Heart Province, is Administrative Director of Alverna: a Center for Human and Spiritual Growth, in Indianapolis. Part of Alverna's Mission is the dissemination to the various Provinces of up to date studies on Franciscan Life. The two papers on poverty in this issue were originally distributed through its facilities, and we hope to make available more such contributions in the future.

programs on Franciscan spirituality, discernment, prayer, friary chapters, community-building workshops, dialog, decision making, design of provincial chapters, and many other programs pertinent to renewal. The varied services are available to every friar, local minister, community, or province. One of the key ways the PFL Service is valuable to every community is the *Resource* Service, which is sent to every friary every other month. This is a valuable help to the local community, especially in making the house chapter an occasion of spiritual discussion and growth. Each *Resource* item provided has a three-part content: a presentation relevant to the friars, a worship service (liturgy or paraliturgy), and suggestions for growth in a particular area. The areas the *Resource* Service covers are both varied and pertinent: the friary chapter, prayer, brotherhood, community living, and poverty.



The full scope of this Service is presented and developed in the Franciscan *Resource Directory*, already in its second edition. This 90-page book provides both a list of resource personnel and programs to serve the friars' needs in practically every conceivable area of ministry and growth. The subjects include areas from Fine Arts to Ethnicity to Spirituality to Woodworking. The *Directory* contains a comprehensive listing of qualified friars and programs to serve the cause of renewal in community as well as in our external ministry.

But the *Resource Directory* is more than a compendium of men and programs; it captures the spirit of ministry and service that is so very much a part of what Franciscanism is about. It is the mutual cooperation, the linking together of friars from many provinces, joining hands and heads in the effort of renewal and growth. There is ability and expertise available in so many areas ready to be tapped and utilized so that Franciscan spirituality may be more of a living reality in the world today.

The religious renewal that has been called forth by Vatican II, as well as the renewal of the Order that our *Plan for Franciscan Living* demands from us, is something that comes about gradually and takes time. Maury Smith, O.F.M., the Conference Director of the PFL Service and its moving force, considers the results thus far to be a "realistic, solid kind" of renewed spiritual life growing from within rather than merely external. The PFL Service is a vital force in this growth. As the friars come to understand the implications of the new Constitutions and attain closer touch with their prayerful roots, the PFL Service plans to be there available to serve them on their journey. As the friars grow in their recognition that they must be an ever growing community of men of prayer, the PFL Service will be with them on their pilgrimage to help provide for the needs that will arise.

The friars are men of ministry in many ways. This is their calling. But very often they find themselves in need of ministry—in need of others' kindness and concern. They find themselves in need of being called forth, of being challenged to grow, to find new paths or new depths. They may well be in need of healing, as they themselves have helped to heal so many. The PFL Service is here to meet these needs of the friars and to actualize "from paper to life" the vision of the friars in the post-Vatican II Church. That is how the Franciscan Minister General, Constantine Koser, O.F.M., likes to phrase the friars' renewal.

In 1977, when the PFL Service grew and became more a part of the friars' lives, the Ministers Provincial of the Franciscan Conference appointed in each of their respective jurisdictions a director to work in conjunction with the PFL Service Director. This would provide a close link between the central office and each of the locations where English-speaking friars reside. These men were selected "on the basis of [their] quality as friars, ... dedication to Franciscan renewal, and . . . interest in serving the friars in Franciscan Renewal." Each of them will work to help the friars clarify Franciscan values today. They are to challenge and support their own Provincials and other friars in examining their Franciscan life-style. Most or all of them are to bring to life the fundamental idea of *service* itself in the PFL Service, in that they make available the resources of the Plan for Franciscan Living.

The Provincial Directors are Paul Reczek, O.F.M. (Assumption Province), Kevin Mackin, O.F.M. (Holy Name Province), Frank Hanudel, O.F.M. (Immaculate Conception Province), Tom Speier, O.F.M. (John the Baptist Province), Geoffrey Bridges, O.F.M. (Santa Barbara Province), Martin Wolter, O.F.M. (Sacred

Heart Province), Bernard Barry, O.F.M. (Christ the King Province), Matthew Brozovic, O.F.M. (Vicariates and Custodies), George-Albert Robert, O.F.M. (liaison for England, Ireland, and Malta). Other friars involved in the PFL Service program are Theodore Zaremba, O.F.M., Assumption Province Provincial, who serves as liaison between the English-Speaking Conference and the Conference Director, Maury Smith, O.F.M.; and Augustine Hellstern, O.F.M., of the Sacred Heart Province, who is responsible for public relations and communications.

The PFL Service came into being to meet the needs of the friars in as many ways as possible. Some of these are in areas where there is lacking a specific ministry, such as a deepening of Franciscan spirituality, or where a project is too demanding or too extensive for the resources of a single province. Last April, e.g., two of the Provincial Directors of the PFL Service, Matthew Brozovic and Frank Hanudel, coordinated an interprovincial day of renewal of vows in the Pittsburgh area; this was well received by the friars.

Our Lady Speaks to Her Beloved Priests

An Important Clarification

A book was listed as received in our May, 1978, issue: *Our Lady Speaks to Her Beloved Priests*, distributed privately by the National Headquarters of the Marian Movement of Priests. Recently we received notification of a letter written at the direction of the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan, where Father Gobbi began the "Movement." The letter explains that though the book contains no doctrinal errors, it does contain "an ambiguity of language and character . . . and an excessive sentimentalism which finds no firm basis in good theology and psychology." The book was refused an imprimatur, and the Movement does not enjoy official approval.

Franciscan Poverty in Today's World—I

ELOI LECLERC, O.F.M.

THE THEME of poverty is destined to reappear continually on any Franciscan agenda. It affects the very core of the Franciscan genius at its origins, and therefore has to do with its deepest identity. We are fully aware of the role played by poverty in the religious itinerary of Saint Francis of Assisi. We realize its fundamental bearing on his project of Gospel living. At a very early stage, poverty impressed itself on Francis as the indispensable foundation and framework of any authentically complete evangelical lifestyle. And for this reason he embraced poverty with stern inflexibility, but also with the sublime madness of a great love. He adopted the categories of chivalrous devotion, that of the troubadours for their ladies; he desired to be the dedicated knight of Lady Poverty, who had been abandoned by men but who had been the beloved spouse of the Most High Son of God.

Captivated by his example, we too have made this choice. We too have promised to live in poverty, following the footsteps of the Poor Christ. The very existence of the Franciscan family, its special vocation in the Church and its capacity to spread its influence in the world, hangs utterly and completely, today as yesterday, on this choice and on this promise. If the Franciscan way of life is not a continuous and realistic return to the Gospel, it is nothing. And this return to the Gospel inevitably begins with a rediscovery of poverty: the kind of rediscovery, in fact, which we must of necessity make in our world of today.

The world in which we live does not facilitate our task. It is certainly true that poverty has always been regarded as an evil, as a source of misery and degradation. Men have always striven to escape it, as far as possible. But modern society seems to have set as its goal the total elimination of poverty, once and for all. The instinctive and long-lasting

Brother Eloi LeClerc, O.F.M., presented this paper to the General Chapter of the Order of Friars Minor, held in Assisi in 1976. The English version was first distributed in the Dec. 1977-Jan. 1978 Resource *of the Plan for Franciscan Living, a consultation service directed by Father Maury Smith, O.F.M., the work of which is described elsewhere in this issue. It is reprinted here with permission.*

repulsion against poverty which has always existed has been reinforced in our own day by a conscious and determined will to rid the world of poverty.

This will is based on various factors. There is our exalted concept of human dignity. There is an increased consciousness of human dignity. And there is the optimistic conviction, born of the progress of science and technology, that we are finally capable of combatting poverty effectively, both on the level of nations and that of individuals.

The Church too is engaged in this struggle against poverty. In the name of social justice and of the Gospel ideal of brotherhood she feels bound to assist the poor to liberate themselves from their poverty and misery. No Christian can afford to disengage himself from sharing this fight against a poverty which is merely an oppressive burden to be endured.

Here a difficulty presents itself. How can we reconcile a necessary sense of solidarity such as this with the choice of poverty as an ideal to be embraced? Where can we assign a place to our option of evangelical poverty in this context of a struggle against poverty?

This, however, is not our only difficulty. Things would be relatively easy to resolve if there were not, underlying this struggle, a certain social model which strives to extend its influence everywhere. The model in question is that of the consumer society. It offers itself as the universal panacea for all indigence. Let us frankly acknowledge it for what it is. Everywhere this model of society has taken root, it has succeeded in putting at the disposal of the greatest possible number of people "objects" which would otherwise remain the privilege of the more fortunate: the refrigerator, e.g., the washing machine, all kinds of domestic appliances, automobiles, etc. It has developed proper hygiene and provided means of cultural enrichment. The consumer society has not only created all kinds of riches, it has also distributed them more equitably. To this extent it has contributed towards easing the harsh lot of peoples and has achieved a genuine human development. All this is undeniable and must be set down to the credit of this type of society.

The problem is, however, that the consumer society does not stop there. Far from being content with satisfying the real needs of people, it contrives through carefully orchestrated publicity to multiply needs artificially. Its aim is to induce people to consume more and more, and to do so more and more rapidly, by continually displaying new objects and thus arousing an ever-increasing greed.

Since it is able to offer people more and more facilities and a growing degree of comfort, and since it is careful to anticipate their desires, this civilization inculcates the impression that, thanks to material progress and with the help of money, man is capable of everything. He may now allow himself to expect everything. He can resolve all his problems: those of health, of security, of culture, of social relationships, etc.

Such is the society in which we live. This is the world in which we embark on our project of Gospel poverty. In this situation we can adopt various attitudes. The first and most common is that of adaptation and compromise. A certain kind of realism, allied with the urge towards efficiency, leads us very naturally to use what the consumer society offers us and to profit from all its advantages. This holds with regard to our activities as well as our possessions— our professional/economic as well as our leisure pursuits. To put it in a nutshell, we fit in. Sometimes very well. Now we must admit that all realities are nuanced, rather than black and white. But we surely must also admit that it is fatefully easy, even for people who have professed evangelical poverty, to be gradually and unwittingly mastered by the environment which surrounds us. And the end result is that we install ourselves comfortably in the consumer society. The adaptation can even be so wonderfully successful that we don't even stop to question ourselves about it. We simply allow ourselves everything. There are Friars Minor about today who move in this society like fish in water. But then what is left of our basic sense of identity? We are no more than consumers, like everybody else.

This kind of mentality is made all the more plausible as a result of a certain kind of religious formation of a strictly juridical nature. This has perhaps accustomed us to thinking of our poverty, and living it, in terms of legal observances. Poverty was simply fidelity to a clearly determined set of rules. These rules and determinations go back to situations which no longer obtain and are irrelevant in our situation. The fact is that the matters they envisaged have lost all value and are seldom met with any more. The result of this is that we now feel ourselves completely free as far as the law is concerned with regard to the mass of new objects which engage our cupidity. An effective desire to be poor can no-longer be sustained by depending on clear regulations, as if one could consult a list of things allowed and things forbidden. It must necessarily go beyond a juridical framework and bear the stamp of free decision.

Some may be tempted to invoke, as a remedy for this free-wheeling attitude, a completely spiritual ideal of poverty. No doubt poverty is chiefly qualified by its spiritual dimensions. But it is also true that poverty cannot be evangelical, or Franciscan, or even spiritual, if it neglects the economic dimension. And this dimension necessarily involves restriction in material goods, a restriction which comes from our free will and not merely from being deprived of the possibility of doing otherwise.

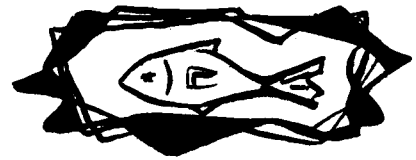
But is a mere appeal to liberty adequate to answer the question of poverty? What is going to motivate our liberty, to give it wings, as it were? Our desire to be poor people, if it is to become effective in practice, needs to recapture its original inspiration and its pristine enthusiasm. This inspiration and this enthusiasm are the only things capable of providing the needed thrust. Some among us seem to have grasped this fact. They become the prophets of a great return to the prophetic radicalism of Francis himself. Their attitude would take concrete form in an approach of contestation, even of revolution, with regard to the society in which we live. This stance has the merit of reacting against a facile and supine adaptation by which we should love our identity. And even if the heralds of this radicalism stop short all too often with verbal radicalism, yet they point out for us a way towards saving our vocation. They do this on one condition, though: that of not misinterpreting the prophetic radicalism of Francis. His radicalism is not that of the sects which proliferated in his own day: Waldensians, Cathars, Humiliati, Poor Men of Lyons, etc. All of these waved the banner of the most absolutely radical poverty in accordance with the Gospel, and they saw in it the only possible way of salvation for the Church, the way towards genuine spiritual fredom. And yet, between this radicalism and that of Francis there are enormous differences. The basic cleavage lies in their inspiration. And for this reason it is of the utmost importance to understand accurately the inspiration and source of Francis's poverty.

Contrary to widely held opinion, the radicalism of Francis in this matter of poverty does not trace its origin to a sense of reaction. It is not a reaction against a particular social state of affairs. Neither is it a form of protest against the State or the Church of the time. Undoubtedly, his style of poverty could not but have a massive impact and a liberating influence on his social milieu. It swept vigorously like a prophetic wind through the conscience of Christianity, and even the Institution itself swayed

under its power. But the intention of Francis's poverty had not had as its deliberate and carefully planned end such a change in society. When Francis chose the most absolute poverty, he was launching a crusade against nobody. He never set himself up as the judge of any individual or any institution. He voiced nothing which might be construed as a protest; he didn't even envisage teaching anybody anything. And this is where the profound chasm lies between him and the swarm of sects who busied themselves in a violent attack against the Church and her hierarchical representatives. Francis's radicalism is devoid of all aggressiveness, of any taint of iconoclasm, and finally of any apologetic preoccupation.

The novelist Georges Bernanos understood this very well. In this book *Frère Martin* he sketches a comparison between the Poverello of Assisi and the Father of Protestantism. "It is possible," he observes,

> that Saint Francis was not a whit less disgusted than Luther with the debaucheries and the simony of prelates. In fact it is certain that he suffered more exquisitely from them, because his natural fibre was so different from that of the monk of Weimar. But Saint Francis did not defy iniquity. He did not attempt to confront it. He simply flung himself into utter poverty and lived it as thoroughly as he could, along with his



> followers, plunging into it as the source of all pardon and of all purity .... And under the gentle caress of this beggar the heaps of gold and of luxury burst into a froth of blossom like a hedge row in the month of April ....

The sober fact is that, in the entire corpus of Francis's writings, one does not find one line expressing an attitude of contestation or the slightest tinge of polemic with regard to society or the Church. The very opposite is true. We encounter passages where Francis is very explicit in putting his friars on their guard against this kind of crusading mentality. We read in chapters 2 and 3 of the Rule of 1223, for example, the following exhortations:

> I warn and implore my brothers not to despise or judge those whom they see clothing themselves with excessive luxuriousness in color or in the quality of the fabric, or those who show an exaggerated fastidiousness in what they eat and drink, but let each one rather judge and despise himself.
>
> When my brothers pass through the world, I advise, warn and exhort them, in the Lord Jesus Christ, to avoid wrangles and conten-

tions and never to judge others. Let them rather study to be friendly and peaceful, meek and humble, and courteous towards everybody . . . .[5]

This is a far cry from the waspish aggressiveness of the sects. Francis saw abuse in the Church just as clearly as the next one. But his evangelical poverty flowed from a much deeper source than a mere desire to register a protest. Far from being the expression of resentment or revolt, it was the overflow of his interior plenitude. Nietzsche makes a character declare that truly noble beings do not allow their conduct to be dictated from outside themselves, as a movement of reaction to a given situation. Rather they act as an expression of what they are in themselves, and not under external dictation. Their action is never the negation of anything, but the affirmation of the fullness of life in which they share. This is a perfect description of the case with Francis.

In his case the fullness of life which overflows into activity is essentially the fullness of contemplation. His Gospel radicalism runs as deep as that. And this is what we desperately need to understand. Let it be said immediately, however, that to claim that the roots of Francis's evangelism are contemplative is in no way to diminish their vigor and creative force. The exact opposite is true. If Francis succeeded in creating, as a result of his disconcerting simplicity, a zone of limpid freedom in the Church which can do without the leaden apparatus of human structures and blithely escape hierarchical rigidity in its organization and power-politics and grab-mentality throughout its membership—in short, a zone of liberty and of evangelical communion—if Francis did all this, then it was because his entire being not only mirrored the depth of his contemplation, but also exploded under the pressure of this ecstatic experience.

It has been written that to contemplate is to become. Francis became what he had not ceased to contemplate. His poverty, and indeed his entire life, sprang from the depth of his vision. We must draw for ourselves the consequences of this fact. For it would be useless to desire to return to Francis's radicalism without encountering it at the point of his profound contemplation. So our first enterprise is to find out what was the nature of this contemplation.

Francis's contemplation was essentially a gazing upon God. His writings—especially the prayers he composed—reveal a man ravished by God's sovereignty: a sovereignty which is neither domineering nor destructive, but gracious and beneficent, a sovereignty in the order of

the Good. God appeared to Francis as "sovereign Good," "total Good," the One "from whom comes all Good." These repeated expressions pervade the *Praises*. They convey Francis's vision of God. He is the Lord of Goodness, since he is its only source. Good is his sovereign domain.

This vision led Francis to a radical disappropriation which extended to all goods, of whatever kind. He kept himself free of all ownership, material or spiritual. And this disappropriation meant for Francis a restitution to God of what belongs by right to him alone. It is no more or less than a recognition of God's sovereignty as the unique source of all Good.

To this contemplation of God must be added Francis's vision of the mystery of Christ. In fact the two are intimately united. Francis saw God when he contemplated Christ. And here he discovered the poverty of his Lord. He himself has crystallized this vision of Christ in the following phrase of his Rule: "The Lord made himself poor in this world for our sake." And he writes in the "Letter to All the Faithful": "He who was richer than all others chose to live in poverty." Francis always had before his eyes this mystery of love: that the Most High Son of God had been urged to love to divest himself of divine glory and assume the poorest human state, and all this so as to enrich us with his own life. "He kept nothing for himself," Bonaventure has Francis say of Jesus, "but gave up everything to save us."

Here we must make an important point. The poverty of Jesus, as contemplated by Francis, is inseparable from the mission of the Son of God who leaves the Father's glory to come, in the greatest self-emptying, to save human beings. The Gospel of poverty is here intimately linked with the Gospel of mission. At the starting point of Francis's vocation to Gospel poverty we find the Gospel of the mission. This is the account of the sending of the disciples: it tore Francis from his eremitical life and caused him to plunge himself, utterly devoid of means, into wandering the roads of the world. And when, later, he had qualms about what kind of life he should embrace, it was again the thought of the mission of the Son of God, sent by the Father to mankind, which confirmed him in his vocation as a wandering missionary preacher.

So the notion of mission, in its deepest sense, is at the heart of the poverty of Francis and of his evangelical radicalism. His ideal of poverty is not that of the primitive Jerusalem community, after Pentecost: a stable group, closed in on itself, focused on the Temple, on worship and liturgical prayer, in which each member

gives up his goods for the sake of the collectivity. Francis's is rather the poverty of the community of the Apostles and disciples, sent throughout the world by the Master in imitation of his own example. This community is essentially itinerant and missionary; it cannot exist in ponderous and permanent establishments. It is incompatible with all forms of fixed property, whether collective or personal. This is the kind of apostolic community which continues the mission of the Son, announcing the Kingdom and living from the generosity of those who receive the message.

The root of this poverty is mission, in its double sense: the aspect of the message to be transmitted, and that of solidarity with those to whom the message is directed. To be sent is to leave everything in order to be at the service of the Word. It is also to enter into total sharing with those for whom the Word is destined—in the first instance, the poor. And it is also witness, by the quality of this sharing, to the truth of the Word announced. "If he has sent you throughout the entire world," Francis writes in the Letter to a General Chapter, "it is so that you may, by word and action, bear witness to his Word. . . ."

Poverty, as Francis conceived it, is all one with this missionary dynamism as we see it in the life of the Son of God, stripping him of the Father's glory, entrusting him with the word, and binding him intimately to the most humble human condition—that of *homo viator*. This same missionary dynamism forced Francis, in Jesus's footsteps, to renounce everything and to throw himself, bereft of everything, onto the ways of the earth to live his poverty in solidarity with the poorest of the poor.

The last point must be examined: solidarity with the poor. It is indeed true that Francis was not satisfied with merely being poor. He wished to be with the poor, to mix with them and share their lot. He wished to live his poverty in communion with theirs. He writes in the first Rule: "The brothers should rejoice when they find themselves among those of humble condition and the despised, among the poor and the infirm, the sick and the lepers, and those who beg by the wayside" (IX, 3).

But how did Francis live out this solidarity with the poor? Here we must beware of projecting our categories and our modern preoccupations into the past. There is no question but that the class struggle was already rampant at that time, even though under different forms. Feudal society knew the opposition between serfs and lords. The communes knew that between

minores and *majores*. But Francis did not take part in this class struggle. If he wished to be among the humble folk of towns and countryside, it was not in order to espouse a social war or to stir up a spirit of vengeance. He never set the poor against the rich. In fact, he even goes so far as to write: "Where there is poverty with contentment, there is neither greed nor avarice" (Adm. 27). But it would be a glaring mistake to suppose that he preached resignation. Nobody ever took up the cause of the poor as Francis did, but on the deepest level. Certainly not in the style of a political leverage, but by the very irradiation of his life. His very being emitted such spiritual power that social relationships where simply forced to change. By his manner of being poor and being with the poor, Francis awoke the Christian conscience of his age. He caused it to discover the eminent dignity of the poor. Francis revealed this dignity to the poor themselves, but also to the masters. He led the rich and the powerful to take the poor into account. He made them realize that their riches and their power did not belong to them, but were confided to them by God so that they could put them at the service of the poor and the weak. He taught them that the rich and powerful were simply the servants of the poor. Everywhere he went, Francis, by the inspiration of his poveerty, forced the dialectic of the master and the slave to capsize; he forced the master to honor the slave and serve him as if he were the master. This is how Francis espoused the aspirations of the poor, and how he became for them, in his own original way, a force for liberation. He proposed to the people of his age a new path of brotherhood.

Now, what do we conclude from all this?

First, it is necessary for us, if we wish to rediscover the evangelical dynamism of poverty, and therefore our very sense of identity, to open ourselves, beyond any reference to legalistic categories, to the primal inspiration of the Franciscan charism. This is the only way to prevent our legitimate concern with adaptation to modern society from degenerating into abject compromise. Our life as Friars Minor has inscribed within it a built-in tension (which is constant and fruitful) between necessary adaptation and fidelity to the evangelical radicalism of Francis. It is only in this way, moreover, that our primal inspiration can impart anew to the Order today a new youthfulness and a new power of persuasion: by breathing into it a new enthusiasm.

In the second place, it would be the height of folly to expect to rediscover the basic inspira-

tion of Francis unless we join Francis himself in the depths of contemplation. Francis's evangelical radicalism springs completely and utterly from his constant and burning contemplation of the mystery of God, who is all Good, and of the mission of his only begotten Son. One can be a Friar Minor, a Poor Clare, a Franciscan, without being learned, but never without being a contemplative. Eliminate the contemplative dimension, and by the same stroke you wipe out Francis's Gospel spirit and its proper expression.

Thirdly, it is impossible to separate Franciscan poverty from the missionary impulse. We have shown that this impulse is the dynamic aspect of Francis's poverty. For his poverty is that of the disciple who is sent, in the image and after the footsteps of the Son of God. We have already cited the passage from the "Letter to the General Chapter": "The Lord has sent you into the entire world, so that by word and action, you may bear witness to his word." Mission and service of the Word are essential. Francis writes at the beginning of the "Letter to All the Faithful": "Since I am the servant of all, I am obliged to place myself at the service of all and to minister to you all the sweet-smelling words of my Lord. . . ."

A fourth point: this missionary poverty makes us stand by the poor. This real solidarity urges us to feel responsible for the poor of the world. We must become for them a force for liberation, but according to the mind and style of Francis: in other words, by the witness and influence of the way we live. Gandhi once wrote: "My religion teaches me that in every place where suffering is such that it cannot be assuaged, I am obliged to fast and pray." Francis's solidarity is of this order. Some Friars Minor, who are missionaries in South America, once asked me to what degree a Franciscan can, out of his solidarity with the poor, enlist with the querilleros. Francis never enrolled in any militia. His life was, by and in itself, a superior force. And undoubtedly it is because we lack just this mystical force that we are tempted to search elsewhere for effectiveness.

Finally, we do well not to forget that Francis's poverty entails a will to universal communion. It is an unbounded area of welcoming acceptance. By the very fact of refusing all particular attachments, Francis left himself free to love all creation. He was unhampered by any defensive reaction or by any kid of aggressiveness. Louis Lavelle writes of him: "Everything which was withdrawn from him broadened his horizon." When understood in this way poverty is a true expansion of affectivity. Our capacity for sympathy and communion, instead of centering on narrow areas of interest, is open to the universal values of being and life. We remember the episode recounted in the "Sacrum Commercium": Lady Poverty, having been received among the friars, asks to see their cloister. The friars lead her to a nearby hill, and there showing her a splendid panorama, they tell her: "Our Lady, this is our cloister."

This wonderful cloister, whose dimensions are those of the universe, is not merely a spectacle to be contemplated. It is life: life in whose development we share, that of the world in its deepest becoming. We can share in the very act of creation itself if, free from all will for possession and domination, we are in sympathetic harmony with all that exists and all that lives. We are free to love all beings, without limits.

Franciscan Poverty in Today's World—II

DISMAS BONNER, O.F.M.

THE DEVELOPMENT in this paper while retaining the basic theme of the Extraordinary General Chapter,[1] goes considerably beyond the ideas offered there—in some cases even adopting a contradictory stance. It may be described as an attempt to set forth some reflections of American friars

[1]This paper, originally presented to the Spring, 1977, meeting of the English Speaking Conference of Ministers Provincial, is the result of several currents of thought. The basic theme is that presented to the General Chapter of 1976 in Assisi by Brother Eloi LeClerc, O.F.M., in a paper published in this issue of THE CORD. It also incorporates ideas on poverty presented to the English speaking friars at the Chapter by Father Ignatius Brady.

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on Franciscan poverty and its meaning in the contemporary scene. Hopefully it will provide the basis for honest discussion and dialogue that will lead to a realistic and livable ideal of poverty.

I. Jesus and Poverty

A. In What Sense Was Jesus a Poor Man? Granted the difficulties involved in trying to ascertain the life style of the "historical Jesus," it does seem that we can sketch at least the broad outlines of his way of life. The Gospel does not at all present a picture of Jesus as a man who belonged to the class of the destitute poor. We see rather a member of a class who had to work with their hands for a decent living, an itinerant preacher who had no permanent place to lay his head and who lived from a common purse. There is no mention that he or his followers begged. The Gospel presents the image of a man whose attitude towards material goods was one of complete freedom. His first concern was to preach the good news of the Kingdom to the poor—whatever might be the consequences of this mission for his relationship to material things.

B. Who Were the Poor to Whom Jesus Preached the Kingdom? In the first place, Jesus preached the good news of liberation to those who were economically poor and oppressed. This is the original meaning of the term *anawim*, those of whom Luke says, "Blessed are the poor," i.e., the materially poor and disadvantaged. And why are they blessed? Not because this kind of poverty is a virtue in and of itself; it is rather an evil, an affront to God's justice, and God wants to put an end to it. It is no more a virtue or an ideal than is blindness, lameness, or captivity. Nor are these poor blessed because of their spiritual disposition. They are blessed simply because of God's attitude toward them. He will give them mercy and justice. This is what the Gospel is saying. It proclaims the end of affliction for the persecuted, lepers, the blind and the deaf, and the cripples—and for those who are really poor.

However, the basic theme as outlined at the General Chapter has been substantially modified in the light of subsequent discussions with other American friars, particularly members of the Franciscan community at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. Most especially, this presentation has been influenced by Father Michael Guinan, O.F.M., of the Franciscan School of Theology at Berkeley, whose article, "Gospel Poverty and Religious Life" is the source of many of the ideas in the first part of this presentation.

Did Jesus preach to others besides, to those who were poor in a different way? Indeed, he did reach out to those who admitted their sinfulness and need, those who, like the publican and like Zacchaeus, emptied themselves before God and thus shared in what may be called the spirituality of the *anawim*. The notion of *anawim* later acquired a religious and spiritual meaning: those who fear and seek the Lord, those who are humble before him and open to him. They are the "poor in spirit" of whom Matthew speaks, thus transforming poverty into a Christian virtue. He transforms material poverty into poverty of spirit, the meekness and humility of Jesus. This is a different level from that of material poverty, the level of the spiritual values and dispositions of the Kingdom. Jesus calls all to seek this attitude, to be converted, to open themselves to God and to recognize their need and dependency. And those who are called to this kind of life are in turn invited by Jesus to join in and continue his work of bringing the good news to all—to the materially poor by working to put an end to material poverty and suffering and want, and to others who, though not materially poor, are desperately in need of the good news of the Kingdom with its spiritual values and the disposition of the poor in spirit.

C. Some Theological Reflections on Gospel Poverty. This kind of poverty points first of all to a radical faith in God, the spirit of the *anawim* which places one's whole life in his care. This amounts to total availability to the Lord. Gospel poverty also points to charity which finds expression in active preaching of the Kingdom, in concern to put an end to material poverty, hunger, and oppression, and in willingness to share all one has so that no one suffers basic need.

Here it is possible to see how concern for material things fits into the picture. Some mistakenly try to make a virtue out of the lack of material things. As Murphy O'Connor remarks, "They make a consistent effort to strip themselves of worldly goods in order to attain the state of insecurity that characterizes the truly poor. This rests on a radical misunderstanding of the gospel message." The real problem that must be faced is that material things, good in themselves, can and do present a strong and very common distraction from the radical faith in God and from the charity and total giving that are necessary to follow the Gospel. And Christians must be ready to sacrifice anything that becomes an obstacle to following this Gospel call in radical faith and charity. This kind of detachment is the indispensable condition for following Christ and flows from

the positive need to be totally available to the Lord. Thus poverty comes down to total faith in God, putting self completely in his hands; it is total dedication to charity, concern to put an end to material poverty and the suffering of others, regardless of the consequences for our own relationship to material possessions. It is an attitude of complete freedom in regard to material things, the attitude which was characteristic of Jesus.

The ultimate basis for all of this is the call to follow the Gospel by sharing in Christ's own life with the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Son's whole existence is received from the Father, and he freely gives it all back to the Father in love. The bond of this love is the Holy spirit. Both aspects—receiving and giving—are reflected in the Incarnation. "Being rich he became poor," completely open to receive all from God, an attitude expressed in the images of crib and cross. "He emptied himself," and so was filled with his Father's will, giving himself so that we might become rich by his poverty. In this connection, Ignatius Brady remarks: "Christ embraced poverty not for its own sake, but because he was so deeply centered on his Father that no earthly thing held any attraction. Total surrendering of self to his Father and total emptying of all external signs of his divinity are the roots of the external poverty of Christ."

It is this kind of life to which Christ invites his followers, a life characterized by openness of faith to receive God's gift of the Spirit which calls us to the attitude of the *anawim* and to discipleship dedicated to spreading the Kingdom of justice. Thus, to sum up, Gospel poverty is defined, not primarily in terms of material things, but of God and our attitude toward him. Poverty is the manner in which our living of the life of the Father in the power of the Spirit, the life opened to us in and through Jesus our brother, bears consequences in our relationship to material things. Plainly, true faith and charity are bound to affect the way we use what we have.

II. Francis and Poverty

A. The Source of Francis's Poverty. Brady points out that, although Francis was at first attracted by the external poverty of Christ, he grew to understand its inner meaning. This he did by contemplating the mystery of Christ and the good news of the Kingdom—God the sovereign and all that He has done for us in Jesus Christ. In no sense was the poverty of Francis a crusade or a protest; it was not intended to be a reaction against the evils of society or the corruption of the Church. "Still," observes Leclerc, "his poverty

had a massive influence and impact on society. It swept vigorously like a prophetic wind through the conscience of Christianity, and even the institution itself swayed under its power." Why and how? Simply because this poverty was the expression of what Francis was in himself. He literally became what he contemplated, and so his poverty sprang from the depth of his contemplative vision. It was not merely a negation of corruption in the Church, but rather an affirmation of the fullness of life.

B. The Radical Poverty of Francis. The poverty of Francis was radical in the sense that it went right to the root, the theological heart of poverty as he saw it in Christ and his relation to the Father in the Spirit. It was radical also in its expression, which amounted to a complete disappropriation of all goods and ownership for himself and his brothers. This radical charism was the unique witness of Francis, particularly suited to the situation and needs of the day in which he lived. It was a time when there existed an abundance of heretical sects who turned away from the Church, which was corrupted by attachment to the material. Francis too turned away from possession of material things—but in an entirely different spirit. He affirmed the goodness of God's creation as few other men have succeeded in doing, at the same time remaining grounded in the firmest of loyalty to Christ's Church. He witnessed to the goodness of God's creation by his complete openness to receive all from the Father and to give all back to him—to empty himself in a very radical expression—and this in faithful respect and obedience, indeed the deepest of love, for the Church and its authority. Total faith in God and dedication to charity had these consequences for Francis and his relationship to material things—and he responded with wholehearted generosity.

The radical poverty of Francis was coupled with a call to active preaching of the Kingdom. The inseparable link between poverty and mission in Christ tore Francis from a solely contemplative and eremitical life and sent him into the world to fulfill his mission as did Jesus. There is a double aspect to this mission, including both the Gospel message to be transmitted, and a solidarity with those to whom the Gospel message is directed. To be sent is to leave everything in order to be at the service of the Word; it is also to enter into total sharing with those for whom the Word is destined, principally the poor. In fact, the quality of this sharing serves as a powerful witness to the truth of the word itself. This explains Francis's determination not only to be poor, but to share

their lot in imitation of Christ. Neither by preaching revolution nor by acquiescing passively in the fate of the poor, but by the power of his life, Francis and his followers forced social relationships to change. He awoke the Christian conscience of his age and caused it to discover the eminent dignity of the poor.

C. Connection between Poverty and Mission. When LeClerc turns to Sacred Scripture to illustrate the connection for Francis between poverty and mission, he writes:

> So the notion of mission, in its deepest sense, is at the heart of the poverty of Francis and of his evangelical radicalism. His ideal of poverty is not that of the primitive Jerusalem community, after Pentecost: a stable group, closed in on itself, focused on the Temple, on worship and liturgical prayer, in which each member gives up his goods for the sake of the collectivity. Francis's is rather the poverty of the community of the Apostles and disciples, sent throughout the world by the Master, in imitation of his own example. This community is essentially itinerant and missionary. It cannot exist in ponderous and permanent establishments. It is incompatible with all forms of fixed property, whether collective or personal. This is the kind of apostolic community which continues the mission of the Son, announcing the Kingdom and living from the generosity of those who receive the message.[2]

This understanding of matters seems to be a misinterpretation which can cause us no little mischief. Actually, according to modern commentators on the Acts of the Apostles, the context of the Jerusalem community texts is quite apostolic in character. According to the *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, for instance, Luke used the technique of "summaries" such as the description of the life of the Jerusalem community to fill in gaps and to create the impression of continuous history. There is a characterizing and generalizing function by which single incidents of the adjacent narrative such as Peter's discourse, conversions, and the cure of the cripple are shown to be usual, typical, and continued. In fact, the summaries in Chapters 4 and 5 seem to be the same material as in Chapter 2 and are more explicitly apostolic in nature, clearly setting the life of the community in the context of apostolic witness to Christ. In this same connection, Guinan points out that there is

> broad consensus among scholars that Luke is less interested in presenting accurate historical description than he is in offering an ideal of Christian life. Notions like "sharing all things in common" and "of one heart and mind" convey the Greek notion of friendship, Christian agape love. This is the sense of shared faith, worship, prayer, and goods. The community is called through active caring and sharing to go out of itself to continue Christ's work of putting an end to the evils of poverty so "no one was in need."

Now, this is hardly a picture of what LeClerc labels "a stable group closed in on itself." Nor can it be called a "ponderous and permanent establishment." Rather, there is a strong missionary thrust, since the very life of the community is to announce the Kingdom and to live on the generosity of those who receive the message. It is, in short, not all that different in essence from the life led by Christ and his apostles which LeClerc describes as the ideal of Francis. There was, of course, some ecclesial development in the external form of the life, as is expected and necessary. Only the most naive fundamentalism would see this as incompatible with the kind of life led by the original apostolic band in union with Jesus.

It must assuredly be granted that, at any stated time in history, certain forms of apostolic community may appear which set up a workable life style that is not compatible with fixed property. Evidently such an apostolic community can continue the mission of the Son, announcing the Kingdom and living from the generosity of those who receive the message. This indeed was the charism and the vision of Francis. Perhaps Francis even understood the life of the Jerusalem community as something quite different in essence from the life style of Christ and his Apostles. But given the status of current biblical scholarship and the contemporary understanding of Acts, it is apparent that the external style of life of Jesus and his

[2]On June 18 of this year, CBS radio broadcast a feature on its regular series, "The World of Religion," documenting the contention that the early Christian communities described in Acts were not, in fact, "Communists," holding all goods in common, but owned property and were expected to contribute only their fair share to the common fund for the poor. Interested readers can probably still obtain a copy of the script from CBS in New York [editor's note].

Apostles is not the only kind of apostolic community which can carry on the mission of announcing the Kingdom and living from the generosity of those who receive the message. There are other models. It must be asked: Does LeClerc's misinterpretation of the Jerusalem community in Acts lead to a kind of "Franciscan fundamentalism," a conclusion about Franciscan life style that was necessary and divinely inspired for Francis in his day, but is no longer necessary and possible for the Order as a whole? Another way to put the problem: What is the relationship between the charism of Francis and that of the Franciscan Order in the contemporary world?

III. The Franciscans and Poverty

A. Expression of Poverty in Franciscan Life. LeClerc states:

> Our desire to be poor people, if it is to become effective in practice, needs to recapture its original inspiration and its pristine enthusiasm. This inspiration and this enthusiasm are the only things capable of providing the needed thrust. Some among us seem to have grasped this fact. They become the prophets of a great return to the prophetic radicalism of Francis himself.

Surely, radicalism is in place today in the sense of a return to contemplation of the heart of poverty in Christ and his relation in the Spirit to the Father, his mission to spread the Kingdom. This is where Francis began. As LeCerc concludes: "It is necessary for us, if we wish to rediscover the evangelical dynamism of our poverty, and therefore our very sense of identity, to open ourselves to the primal inspiration of the Franciscan charism."

But what about the material expression of this poverty? Is radicalism truly a realistic concept today, especially when we espouse it in the face of so many material things, buildings, and grounds in which we are deeply involved? Is the radicalism of expropriation in common tenable in the face of our obvious involvement with ownership before the civil law? All the canonical dispositions and legal fictions in the world do not destroy the fact that civil ownership is true ownership which carries with it rights and responsibilities that are enforceable at law.

Perhaps the futile attempt to apply these radical notions distracts us today, and indeed has distracted us for a long time, from the search for truly effective expressions of poverty. Perhaps it is most eminently sensible to recognize that early developments in the Order under Bonaventure toward more stable houses were necessary and good, that we are at

present quite inextricably involved with the management of substantial assets for the service of God's people, and then get on about the business of searching for the expression of our charism at the present time. Maybe there are ways to live poverty and mission that are quite compatible with our contemporary situation, especially if we do not adopt too narrow a concept of the kind of life which carries on the mission of Christ and his apostles. What a tragedy it could be to miss many opportunities for the practice of genuine poverty in our Franciscan lives because we are too engrossed in our search for the kind of life style that was once livable in the Order at large, but now may be largely idyllic and unattainable for the majority of friars.

B. Charting Our Course Today. As LeClerc points out, "our life has inscribed in it a built-in tension which is constant and fruitful between necessary adaptation and fidelity to the evangelical radicalism of Francis." There are, to be sure, misunderstandings and temptations of which we must be aware. For instance, a sense of realism and efficiency can lead us to fit into the consumer society and become consumers like everybody else. We can come to the point where we don't even question our use of material goods, as we rely confidently on legal rules about situations that no longer pertain to real life. We can thus be free from any challenge about things that really engage our cupidity. Thus we let material goods become an obstacle to faith and complete openness to God.

Or we can develop a completely spiritual idea of poverty—to the fatal neglect of any economic dimension which involves free restriction of ourselves in material goods. Such an attitude adopts in practice the naive position that there is never a time when material goods are an obstacle to complete openness in faith.

In deciding the course of the Order today in its practice of poverty, we must keep in mind the fact that the New Testament definitely recognizes that riches and possessions can be one of the greatest obstacles to faith in God. Surely they are not bad in themselves, but they can easily become idols in which we put our security instead of in God. To the extent that material possessions are an obstacle to faith in God and to our mission of charity, a choice must be faced: God or mammon? Material goods can't be permitted to limit our perspectives, and they must be put aside if and when they do. In fact, the material things we as an Order have may

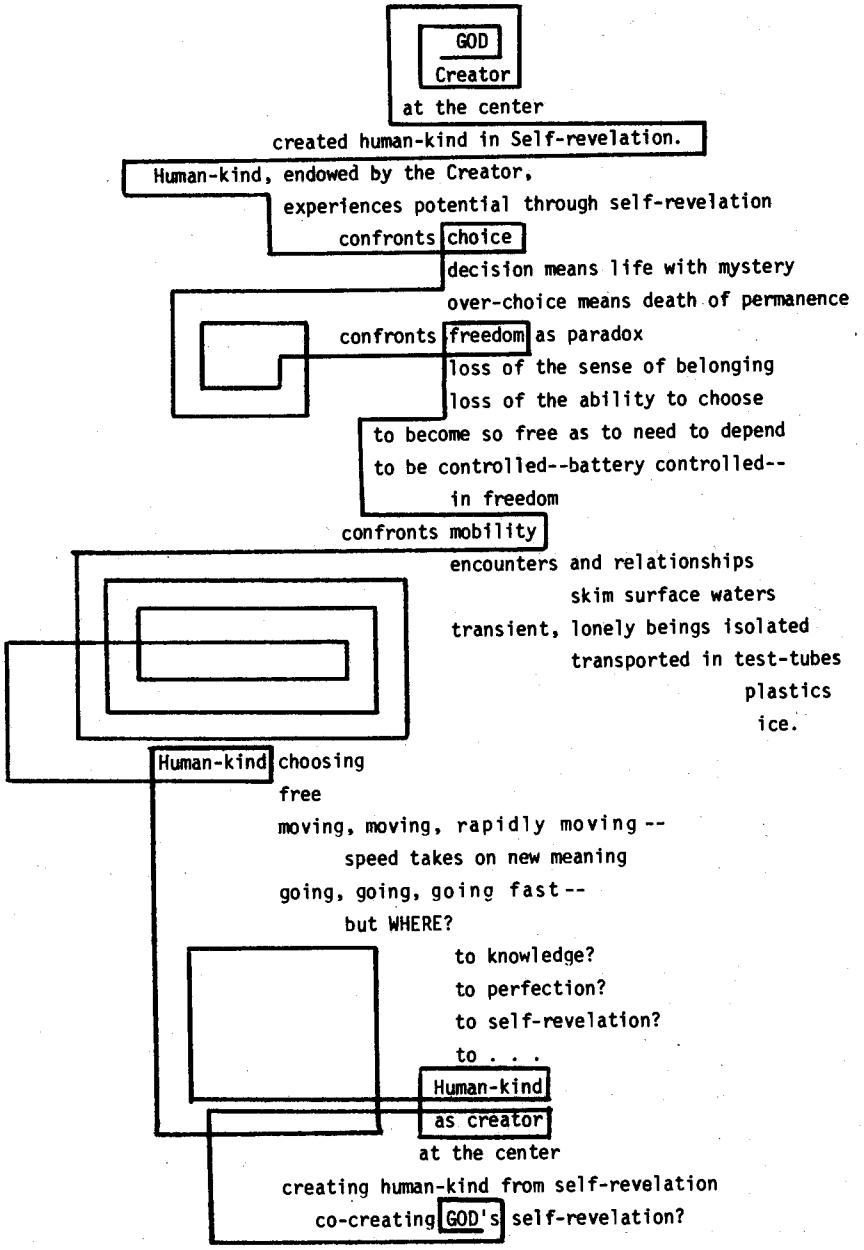
well be necessary means to alleviate poverty and oppression, and then we must be prepared to make them available. Herein lies the problem for the expression of Franciscan poverty today. Francis's charism led to a radical expression of poverty for himself. What are the truly effective expressions of poverty that can help us to give a genuine Franciscan faith witness today? To what extent do they help us express our faith?

In any case, if we place the primary emphasis on material poverty, the notions of renunciation and detachment, we are starting from the wrong end. If there is material expression of poverty, and indeed there must be in the context that material things are hindering our total availability to the Lord and his service, and because these goods are needed for others. This was the movement in the life of Francis. We know what it required of him. Can we now discern what is demanded of us today?

▲

Franciscan Bibliography Available

A Bibliography of Modern English Works on Five Themes of Franciscan Spirituality by Sister Linda Brandewie, S.F.P. The five themes are: the following of Jesus; poverty, obedience, living the Gospel, and Brotherhood. She has compiled a Bibliography on each of these themes consisting of periodicals dated between the years of 1960 to 1978. A book list also includes these five elements. Copies can be obtained from the Formation Office, St. Clare Convent, 60 Compton Road, Cincinnati, OH 45215. Cost $2.00.



Sister Mary Anne Heine, S.S.N.D.
Sister Maureen Riley, O.S.F. (art)

Musings on Contemplation—III

CONRAD SCHOMSKE, O.F.M.

ALREADY discussed in preceding segments of this article have been, mainly, the "four purities" the human subject can cultivate and the trials sent by God to purify him.

Solitude

ANOTHER indispensable condition for the gift of contemplation is the silence attainable only in solitude. Obviously it is up to us to provide the time for such solitude in our lives; yet the practical and active character of the suggestions made in the following paragraphs might prove destructively misleading if we did not insist here at the outset that the whole point of being alone and silent is to *give God the chance to speak to us and act in us.*

Presupposing this important clarification, we may go on, now, to discuss our own seeking of solitude in which God may lead us to ever growing union with him. Obviously the hermit is the outstanding example of Christian seeking for life alone with God. He provides for solitary silence quite simply by living alone with no one to talk to but the Lord. Some may be full-time hermits, living alone in what we call a hermitage. Others may be part-time hermits, living in a convent, monastery, or friary while spending whole days at a time, or parts of a day, in a quiet place off by itself. Some, like St. Catherine of Siena and St. Rose of Lima, lived in the same house with their families but had their own room apart by themselves, where they spent many hours in prayer. In our present work-a-day world, there are people who, before leaving for work in the morning and upon returning from work in the evening, spend time alone in silence and prayer. I knew a mother of five who spent about an hour and a half each morning in prayer and spiritual reading before the rest of the family got up. Again, a young man who works for a county social services department insists that he needs a period of meditation before going to work in the morning and another one upon returning so as to maintain his spiritual equilibrium and his sense of the divine presence, during the day at the office and then in the round of after-hours activities necessitated by his work.

However we do it, whatever arrangement we make, it seems that we must set aside time, daily if at all possible, but at least on weekends, for silence and solitude. The reason is that "God is not in noise." This has always been true, but in our fast-moving age we are bombarded by the noise and rush of cars, busses, planes when outside our homes and by radio, TV and hi-fi when inside them. All these things somehow divert our attention from the Lord and make it more difficult, or almost impossible, to center just on him—to rest in him alone.

There have, of course, been exceptions to this general rule: people who maintain that they can, in the hustle and turmoil of the Streets, find God and relate to him. My own reaction is that even these people, unless they have almost instinctively (and hence perhaps without realizing it at the time or remembered it later) attuned themselves to God in moments of silence and solitude, they too would find it very difficult—even impossible—to "tune in" on God in the noise of the streets, the office, the factory.

Weekend retreats are a widely used, popular means to expand from time to time the effects of the more frequent but less protracted periods of silence in our lives; and still longer retreats, so strongly recommended throughout the Church's long history, still deserve serious consideration by those who can fit them into their lives.

It's not that God cannot get through the noise; he can get through thunder, and even if need be through a rock concert. But surely no small degree of presumption is involved in expecting him to do so. With our eyes and ears and attention pulled in all directions, have we the right to expect God to pull them to himself with extraordinary, forceful means?

If, on the contrary, we do what is in our power to empty our consciousness of distracting sights and sounds (and we should, as stated above, do this on a regular, persevering basis), then we do, as it were, set the stage for a personal encounter with the Lord. It is crucial, at such times, to avoid "pre-programming" the entire period with spiritual activities of our own choosing. Some opening prayer or meditative reading is certainly in order, but such *means* for opening ourselves to the divine initiative cannot be allowed to become *the end*—the whole reason for being of the time spent in solitude. Rather, God must be allowed to lead us along his own path. Much of what he does with us at such times will itself prove to furnish its own

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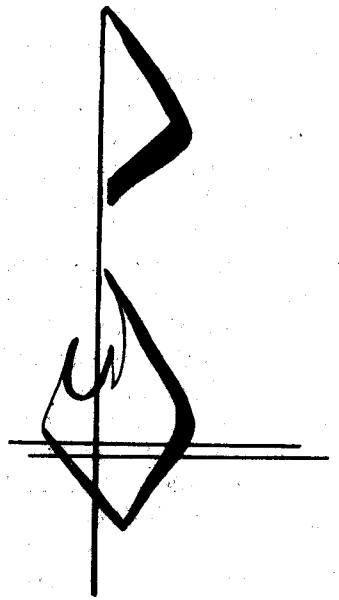
self-authenticated enlightenment; but on the other hand, the mysterious and delicate nature of this encounter bespeaks the need for a spiritual director, whose role I shall discuss briefly in the remaining section of this article.

To sum up what has been said, first, about silence in solitude: (1) such periods of silence are absolutely necessary in our lives if we are at all serious about growing in contemplative prayer; (2) shorter periods of silence should be provided for at frequent intervals, and longer ones from time to time; (3) the attempt to "practice the presence of God" amid the turmoil of daily life will prove fruitless without the support of formal periods given over in silence exclusively to prayer; and (4) such silent periods spent alone in God's presence must provide for docile *listening* to God, rather than being filled up with our own planned activities.



Spiritual Director

THE ROAD to contemplation passes through many strange waters, many untrodden paths, many unfamiliar obstacles. An experienced guide is therefore no luxury, but an invaluable, indispensable help lest we get lost along the way, head down a dead-end, or just give up in discouragement. A spiritual director should preferably be someone who has walked this road himself, has studied it carefully from the experts, and has worked closely with others as they experience the ups and downs of the road. Just going it alone, without the help of such a guide, can be very difficult at times, frustrating, and even precarious.

This is hardly surprising. If most arts and sciences require a knowledgeable, experienced teacher, the way of contemplative prayer should be expected to need one all the more because it deals with spiritual, intangible realities that cannot be measured in grams, cannot be viewed in a microscope, cannot be observed with the human eye.

Such guides are around. But choosing or finding one is an important procedure which should not be taken lightly. We have to pray to find one, and then search and inquire. If we cannot, for a time, find one, then we can and must rely on the Holy Spirit alone, who is after all *the* Guide of souls. Assuming that we have taken every reasonable and prudent step to seek competent human help and have been unable to find it, the Spirit will guide us directly in the depths of our being—but also indirectly through books on prayer, some of which were mentioned in the early part of this article.

MUCH HAS been said in the foregoing pages about contemplation. Contemplative prayer, we have said, is being aware of God who makes his presence felt within us and around us. It is having "God-sense"—a sixth sense for God, a special sensitivity to him.

We said, too, that this is a gift of God, but one for which we can and must prepare ourselves by desiring God, by spending time in prayer, by reading about God, by striving to keep a pure conscience, pure mind, pure heart, pure will. And we pointed out that we must in all of this allow free play to God's own initiative by accepting trials as sent by him for our purification, by opening our hearts and minds to him in periods of silent solitude, and by allowing him to speak to us through a competent guide or spiritual director.

It should hardly be necessary to emphasize, in conclusion, that the reader must not be misled by the complexities of this discursive exposition, into overstressing the multiplicity of stages, facets, etc., to the neglect of the dynamic, unified, simple, living reality itself: that life in union with our loving Creator for which he has made us. To persevere and succeed in the contemplative life is to begin already here below the indescribably ecstatic, beatific life of the world to come.

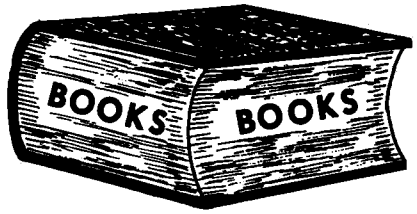
A Reminder

As announced last month, we have been forced to raise the 1979 subscription rate to $7.00. Single copies will be 70 cents.

Feel Free

the wind—
awakening a summer's morning
with its breath of new life—
sings to me, "feel free!"
the sun—
slowly making its way round the earth
from the quiet dawn to fading sunset—
commands me, "feel free!"
the birds—
endlessly filling my world with song,
in constant, soaring flight—
laugh at me, "feel free!"
the clouds—
lazily journeying in scattered directions
toward unknown destinations—
challenge me, "feel free!"
the captive—
trapped and imprisoned,
caught eternally in a hopelessness beyond control—
warns me, "feel free!"
the poor man—
needing to give love
and to be loved—
begs me, "feel free!"
my friend—
sharing faith, life, and love,
gently urging me to grow—
calls to me, "feel free!"
i — accepting a God-given ministry,
letting go of all for HIM
must learn to "feel free!"

Sister Diane Huck, O.S.F.



Of Sacraments and Sacrifice. By Clifford Howell, S.J. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 3rd rev. ed., 1977. Pp. 197. Paper, $3.95.

Reviewed by Father Vincent B. Grogan, O.F.M., J.C.D. (Catholic University of America), a member of the faculty at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, New York.

Put directly, this book is an attempt to explain in simple, easily comprehensible terms, the meaning and the rationale of Christian worship and liturgy. Really to understand the why and wherefore of this present edition, one must familiarize himself with its genesis and subsequent developments. The original edition (published in 1952) was a compilation of articles written for *Orate Fratres*, forerunner of *Worship* magazine. The Second Vatican Council's Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy prompted an extensive revision which appeared in 1965. With the promulgation of the *Missale Romanum* (1970) and the revised rituals of Penance and Anointing of the Sick (1973 and 1974 respectively), the need for further updating appeared obvious to the author—thus, the present work, the third revised edition. In his preface to this edition, Father Howell states that with the recent completion of the revision of the major liturgical books, a new edition of his own work will not be necessary in the foreseeable future (perhaps, wishful thinking on his part, for only time will attest to the accuracy of this statement).

The book pursues its topic in two clearly defined segments; the first of these discusses the meaning and principles of worship, and then each sacrament except the Eucharist, while the second part concentrates on the Mass.

The author makes several telling points in his initial chapters: the necessity that man interiorize his worship, with his life thus reflecting what he professes when he worships. The liturgical renewal is an attempt to enable Catholics actively and intelligently to participate in the Sacred Action, from which participation a beneficial influence might, ideally at least, be expected to result in one's conduct. A further significant reality emphasized by the author is this: the Catholic growth in his religion has not kept pace with his physical and intellectual advancement; i.e., Catholics have not built upon nor developed the fundamentals of their Faith learned as children. I believe this fact must be taken into consideration in all contemporary endeavors of Church renewal, liturgical or otherwise. Thirdly, the faiure truly to understand worship and the newness of life conferred by Baptism has so frequently distorted Christianity into a neat system of do's and don'ts.

Father Howell's explanation of the Sacraments is well done. They possess a threefold chronological dimension if you will: the past—the Paschal Mystery as the cause of grace; the present—our sanctification here and now; and the future—man's ultimate destiny of eternal life. The Author likewise stresses the necessity of avoiding an overly mechanistic approach to the Sacraments based on the concise traditional definition. To counteract this danger, it might have been helpful if Father Howell had adverted to the approach to the Sacraments that has been popularized in recent years: that of the personal encounter with Christ.

The section devoted to the Mass contains several worthwhile contributions: that rigid stability in the Mass ritual came only with the Council of Trent; that the Tridentine Fathers made their decisions vis-à-vis the Liturgy with a knowledge of the history of the Mass that did not extend beyond the eleventh century. The final chapter succinctly delineates the reason why the conciliar reforms of Vatican Two initially met with indifference, misunderstanding, even opposition—the laity had been nurtured on an overly individualistic piety and spirituality, centered more often than not on the saints rather than on Christ.

Of Sacraments and Sacrifice, however, is not without its deficiencies, some minor and some major. Among the former are cited antiquated terminology: solemn high Mass, with deacon and subdeacon (p. 162); the word *Collect* rather than *Opening Prayer* (p. 151); the ascription of the Letter to the Hebrews to Saint Paul (p. 56); and the statement that great numbers fail to receive Communion at Sunday Mass (true enough prior to Vatican Two—pp. 153-54).

More serious difficulties arise from an apparent failure sufficiently to nuance or incorporate theological/liturgical thought beyond the 1950's: for example, the author's treatment of the doctrine of the Mystical Body, which could have been enriched by more extensive treatment of the People of God theme from *Lumen Gentium*; his explanation of Redemption as a price paid to Satan; and his seeming denigration of an unbaptized person's natural state of existence when discussing grace and elevation to the supernatural.

Given the conciliar emphasis on the centrality of the Eucharist, perhaps a better arrangement would have been to reverse the two sections of the book: sacrifice and Eucharist, and then the other Sacraments as in some way relating to the Eucharist. While the author was about revising his work, a chapter on Eucharistic adoration and on popular devotions in light of Vatican Two ligurgical renewal would have been appreciated.

Given the fact that to this reviewer at least, so little has been revised from the original, and the fact that the bulk of the theological-liturgical principles and quotations come from *Mediator Dei*, with Vatican Two documents given inadequate recognition or poorly incorporated into the various chapters, and the fact that the author includes no references to the post-conciliar literature on worship and the Sacraments, one is forced to ask—why a revised edition? Undoubtedly, the book in its original form (especially with its discussion

questions which concluded each chapter and which are retained in the present edition) could still serve as an elementary introduction to the study of Liturgy. That is as far as this reviewer cares to go vis-à-vis any positive recommendation to a prospective reader.

Silent Music: The Science of Meditation. By William Johsston, S.J. New York: Harper & Row, 1975. Pp. 190. Cloth, $7.95.

Reviewed by Sister Mary Seraphim, P.C.P.A., a regular contributor to The Queen *as well as to this periodical, who resides at the Monastery of Sancta Clara in Canton, Ohio.*

Silent Music is a book that is intriguing because of the dimension that brainwave tests and biofeedback have added to man's understanding of what goes on in a meditator. Although some of the facts uncovered through electronic observation are helpful toward promoting a receptive state of mind for meditation, Father Johnston clearly states that the *content* of meditation is not subject to such analysis. Pictures of meditatortors wired up to EEG machines which measure brainwaves provoke an ambiguous response. How far does supernatural influence pervade the measurable phenomena of man's mind?

The section on Consciousness compares the various religions' explanations of what happens when one enters more and more deeply into the meditational process. Zen Buddhism, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, and *The Cloud of Unknowing* are quoted and compared to show their essential agreement but also their points of divergence. This is an area where Father is eminently qualified to give trustworthy answers to the many questions which arise concerning Western man's profitable use of techniques from the East.

"Healing," the third section, is perhaps the high point of the book. Here Father discusses the possible use of the meditational process for therapeutic purposes through the generation of passive energy. The healing of the body and the mind are treated with respectful caution—meditation cannot be considered a panacea for *all* ills. The "Deeper Healing"—that of the wounds to the human spirit caused by sin—is the more direct object of meditational processes, and here Father steers more directly into the Christian stream. The final chapter in this section, "Cosmic Healing," is profoundly inspiring. Father Johnston speaks of the mystic as "next to God the most influential person in the cosmos." He presents his views not only from the faith angle, but also in light of the natural ties with the universe that man has and his power to affect it for good or for ill. The Teilhardian overtones are very clear.

Silent Music intrigues one by the questions it raises, distracts one by the scientific insight it presents about supposedly very intimate states of mind, and inspires one by the vast horizons it opens to anyone who will allow the power of love to be dominant in his life. I would recommend this book to everyone who is serious about expanding his spiritual life.

An Introduction to the Franciscan Literature of the Middle Ages. by John V. Fleming. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. 274. Cloth, $10.95.

Reviewed by Father George Marcil, O.F.M., Associate and Theology Series Editor of the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University

One of the high points of attending a scholarly convention is the opportunity to browse around the display of new books. At the recent medieval conference at Kalamazoo, Michigan, it was particularly pleasant for one already interested in Franciscan studies to see a new book on Franciscan literature getting attention. The book was picked up and set down a number of times. The agent in charge of the book had a number of copies on hand, and they sold quickly. The new book seemed to have a ready market.

The content of the new book on early Franciscan literature does not take us by surprise. There has already been a good deal of research into the early years of the Franciscan movement in the last decade or so. The Vatican Council has sent all religious into a deep state of self-analysis. Before, during, and especially after the Council, religious men and women—and this definitely includes Franciscans—have been scurrying back to their earliest sources to rediscover the defining characteristics of the orders and congregations they belong to. For the Franciscans the light has been focused primarily on the writings of Francis and on the earliest biographies of the saint. The current interest in the spirituals is not unrelated because the so-called spirituals made special claims as to what were the prime intentions of Francis.

John Fleming's book is affected by the accumulation of the above-mentioned research despite the fact that his own purpose is very different. He even touches in his first chapter some of the writings of Francis, though these have nothing — or very little —to do with his literary theme. The author is trying to connect the Franciscan movement and the development of vernacular and secular literature in the 13th and 14th centuries. Strangely enough, he spends all of his time analyzing Franciscan writings, including those of Francis himself, even though most of these writings are not literature in the usual sense of the word.

The author creates the expression, "Franciscan literature." He defines it to make it cover "primarily those works of poetry, fiction, song, and the historical and visual imagination which are related, stylistically and ideologically, to the great Franciscan movement of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Europe" (p. 2). The problem created by this definition is what it means to include and what it will exclude. The definition makes trivial sense when the author mentions the *Canticle of the Sun*, the *Fioretti*, and the *Laude* of Jacopone da Todi (p. 7), but these works do not get any truly extended treatment in the book. The author is aware of his problem, for he states: "Franciscan literature thus conceived of course does not include all books written by medieval Franciscans, nor is it limited to works written by them only" (p. 2).

We have to sit back and wonder as to which set of a priori notions will help to determine who the real Franciscan happens to be and what constitutes a piece of literature. As to the first, Fleming is certainly not very didactic. He seems to be adopting the cliche that something (or someone) is Franciscan when it (he) accentuates the popular, the explicitly emotional, and in particular when it refers to Jesus in such a way as to dwell on his very human side. This may be very interesting and colorful; yet it may badly oversimplify. Saint Bernardine of Siena may be the ideal type of Franciscan preacher. He may fit all of the above characteristics, but he has some other serious traits that are being passed over. In a word, the above traits all too easily create a caricature.

As to what gets included under the rubric, "Franciscan literature," this reviewer has the impression that the works most often quoted were the *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, the *Apologia Pauperum*, and the *Sacrum Commercium*. It is difficult to find any unifying link between them. They are all interesting works, but for very different reasons. The *Meditations* is the only one to have been composed first in the vernacular. The *Sacrum Commercium* is the only one of the three to be a piece of literature in the usual sense of the word. The *Apologia*, which is not one of Bonaventure's more attractive writings, seems to be especially fascinating to Fleming. When considered together, these three works make us wonder whether the rules for the game that is being played here have been well thought out.

As to what gets excluded from the book, a number of things come to mind, and some of these need mentioning. John Duns Scotus is absent. True, the author does argue that he wants to exclude philosopher-theologians whose impact was felt primarily in the Latin scholarly tradition. But can he do this, can he make this dichotomy without impoverishing his subject? Has he considered the significance of the principle of individuation, the notion of the primacy of Christ, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception? Don't these themes appear in some guise or other in popular preaching? Roger Bacon is missing too. The authority on the Franciscan notion of nature in Fleming's mind is Bartholomaeus Anglicus. We have no reason for minimizing the latter's importance, but we do feel that Roger Bacon deserves some space. What the author is doing, of coursse is excluding from his concept of Franciscan the academic and the scholarly. This reviewer believes he is mistaken and that his book needs another chapter besides the one on Bonaventure to show some of the developments at the universities of Oxford and Paris. To ask this, however, may be to question the very viability of the thesis implied by the book as a whole.

It is in chapter one that Fleming first explains his purpose. He then gives an abbreviated introduction to the writings of Saint Francis. As we said, Franciscan scholars are wont to begin their re-research here as well. Fleming doesn't find much pure literature here, but he does manage to say a

few things about the Testament, the Canticle, and a few of the letters. In chapter two, Fleming does a bit of a dodge. He wants to treat and yet avoid the intricacies of the Franciscan Question. And so, he reviews the early biographies of Saint Francis, doing a fair job of it. He pays a bit more attention to the *Fioretti* than is usual today. He finds that this biography makes particularly good use of descriptive technique.

In chapter three Fleming ambles through a great amount of material on the poverty question. He appears to make use of the excellent book by M. D. Lambert, and he handles scholarly as well as poetic references to develop the theme. Fitting the entire debate under the title, "The Poetry of Poverty," takes some straining which may not have been worth the effort. Francis could wax poetic after the wars on poverty were won in his private life. Getting poetic in the middle of the legalistic and divisive debates of the last quarter of the century was more difficult. In this chapter, the author gives most of his attention to the *Apologia Pauperum*, but regretfully he is not to the point on the issues of dating and setting (p. 85). The *Apologia* is a response to Gerard of Abbeville and not to the earlier work by William of Saint-Amour.

Chapters four and five are perhaps the best of the book. In the former, Fleming studies the theme of preaching, setting the general historical scene quit well. He accentuates the importance and the influence of Franciscan preaching at that time and describes the hoard of material that preachers used in getting together their rather lengthy and entertaining sermons. The sermon here is the principal piece of literature. In chapter five, despite the fact that the organization of material leaves much to be desired, Fleming still touches some rather classical pieces in the mystical library of that time. He puts Bonaventure in center stage, but James of Milan, David of Augsburg, and Ubertino are not neglected. Some hasty remarks would need correction: book five of the *Arbor Vitae* (p. 230), e.g., is not the longest section of the tome.

In chapter six the question is style. The author gives his best attention to the *Meditations on lthe Life of Christ.* Making comparisons with previous and future centuries, he attempts to clarify what he means by Franciscan style. The questions he raises are admittedly broad and difficult.

On the whole, then, this reviewer has to confess his puzzlement. On one level, the book reads like a type of literary overview. At this level, it is interesting and challenging. The author shows a very broad knowledge of the Franciscan classics of the more readable kind. On another level, however: that of the very concept of the work, the book is very inadequate. If the author really was trying to connect the Franciscan identity and the burgeoning vernacular literature of the time, we do not believe he has succeeded. Nonetheless, we wish the book and its author well. We hope it will continue to sell and that its readers will pursue the work already started here. If the work goes into a second printing, we hope the author will make the corrections and additions suggested here.

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joins the Editors
in wishing you

A VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS

and every grace and blessing for

A HAPPY AND FRUITFUL NEW YEAR

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our December issue were drawn by Brother Gregory Zoltowski, O.F.M., a novice member of Holy Name province, residing at St. Francis Friary, Brookline, MA.

the CORD

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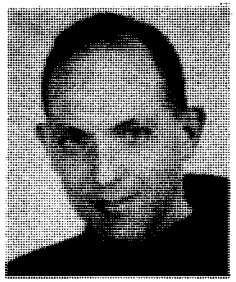

A REVIEW EDITORIAL

What Is Religious Life?

THE WORD PITCHED HIS TENT AMONG US, is the beloved disciple's carefully chosen way of crystallizing for us what happened when God assumed human flesh. That is, the eternal Word of God immersed himself radically and definitively into our human race. He became the center of our human community and the leaven enabling every member of that community to be transformed into his own image and likeness. He became the incarnate presence of God among us, through whom God thenceforth has fed and nurtured all his sons and daughters; and thus he made all of us, fashioned in his own image, the normal channel of divine love, guidance, sustenance, and salvation for one another.

Father Murphy-O'Connor holds that the very essence of religious life is to witness to this communal reality of the Christian dispensation. The family, as a natural institution, can be an ambiguous sign, not challenging enough to those who behold it even when it is a deeply religious, truly Christian family. The parish (and a fortiori, the diocese) is too diffuse to serve this witness function as the local churches did in the early days of Christianity.

Every other facet of religious life, then, turns out to be "secondary" in this special sense, not of "unimportant" or "inessential," but rather derivative from and supportive of the communal ideal. The author goes so far, in fact, as to maintain that the other facets—apostolate, the evangelical counsels, etc.—can be assumed and practiced by people other than religious.

In this series of articles originally published in the Supplement to *Doctrine and Life*, Father Murphy-O'Connor makes expert use of his scriptural training to build his case: to subject past and current views of religious life to judgement in light of the ultimate criterion which is the New Testament. First he distinguishes between communities of action and of being, emphatically insisting that religious communities

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What Is Religious Life? A Critical Reappraisal. By Jerome Murphy- O'Connor, O.P., et al. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1977. Pp. 144. Paper, $4.95.

belong primarily to the latter type, so that their communal life, rather than their apostolate, deserves primary attention. Communities of being are further distinguished into those of being properly so-called—i.e., communities of the "perfect"—and those of becoming—i.e., of "formation." And religious belong to the latter type.

Not only does this sub-distinction enable him to reject the pernicious characterization of religious as belonging to a state of perfection already attained, but it also has deep and far-ranging implications for a proper understanding of obedience and authority. I have never seen a better rationale for viewing the superior mainly as the inspiring embodiment of the Christian ideal, rather than a commander-in-chief wielding absolute authority.

The treatment of poverty and celibacy, while perhaps somewhat less provocative than that of the essence of religious life and authority, is equally elegant and original, well integrated into the unified perspective that makes the book so attractive. Voluntarily to assume a penurious existence is to play a game, forfeit people's respect (even that of the very poor), and arouse suspicion. Celibacy is for service, all right, but not mainly for apostolic work—rather for communal love. And we do have to watch out for the tendency today to transfer our affective life outside the community; few things can be more destructive and enervating.

There is a separate chapter devoted to "the prayer of petition and community," in which the author deals fascinatingly with the perennial problem of the infallibility of such prayer (Mt. 21:22; Mk. 11:33). He maintains that God normally works "incarnationally," along the lines set forth in the opening paragraph of this editorial. It is not through direct divine intervention, ordinarily, but through the human, caring response of our brothers and sisters that the needs expressed in prayer will be met. So it is not enough to promise someone in need that we will "make the intention" of committing their care to God in our prayers to him; some human, interpersonal follow-up is in order.

The author's essay takes up only about half of the volume. The remainder is devoted to critical comments by other religious and replies to those criticisms. Only two of the critics, it seems to me, make valid points: one focuses on an unfortunately ambiguous sentence (which I noticed on the way through but frankly couldn't see making an issue of because it lent itself to a quite acceptable interpretation), and the other asks for a more explicit balance which was, after all, at least implicit in the original essay. The other authors are, in my opinion, convincingly refuted by Father Murphy-O'Connor's replies.

What Is Religious Life? is an important and stimulating contribution to the current effort to clarify our religious vocation—stimulating, not in any sensational, irresponsibly radical sense, but rather in the best sense of offering us a genuinely subtle and systematic analysis of our life firmly rooted in biblical theology as well as our own contemporary experience.

The book deserves the sympathetic attention of every religious seeking to understand and articulate more adequately the mystery of his or her special modality of life in Christ. And the author's stress on the centrality of the Incarnation and the incarnational mode of God's dealings with us make his book especially appropriate reading in the current season.

Fr. Michael D. Maitland, sfm

Venite ad Me Omnes (Mt. 11:28)

O Lord, whom do you need?
Why do you call?
What is common between us?
O wondrous consideration of our God!
O unutterable Love!
Lo! He invites enemies, urges culprits,
charms cynics.

Venite ad Me Omnes (Mt. 11:29)

O honeysweet words, fragrant, God-formed!
Wake up, now, O Christian spirit,
to love such intense friendship,
to taste such sweet pleasure,
to breathe such spritely fragrance!
Take fire now, my spirit,
Grow rich, be sweetened
in the compassion of your God
in the gentleness of your God
in the love of your Betrothed.
Blaze with the passion of your Beloved.
Grow rich in His love.
Be sweetened by His food.
Let no one hinder you from walking in,
taking possession, and enjoying this feast.

Marigwen Schumacher

The Franciscan Style of Caring

JOHN J. PILCH, PH.D.

A NEW WORD has entered many vocabularies: WELLNESS. It's such a simple sounding word; yet everyone seems to understand it differently. Let me share with you my favorite definition of wellness:

> an ever expanding experience of pleasurable and purposeful living, which you and I create and direct for ourselves in any of a million different ways.

With this definition's emphasis on purposeful living and self-responsibility, it is possible for a person to be disabled, chronically or even terminally ill, yet still have a high level of wellness. Conversely, a person can come away from a physical examination certified to be fit as a fiddle or healthy as a horse, but go home and put a bullet through his head, suggesting a low or non-existent level of wellness.

Clearly, the aged can have a very high level of wellness. Father Alfred McBride suggests that high levels of wellness in the aged are manifested in two special ways: wisdom and holiness. Not that these aspects are absent in younger people; rather, they reach their maturity and uniqueness in the senior years. The question for those involved in a ministry to the aged is, How does one care for the aged? How does one respond to their wisdom and holiness, and promote ever higher levels of wellness for them? The answer is simple: lovingly.

Saint Paul's advice on the subject is well known:

Love is patient;
Love is kind;
Love is not jealous,
it does not put on airs,
it is not snobbish.
Love is never rude,
it is not self-seeking,
it is not prone to anger.
Neither does it brood over injuries.
Love does not rejoice in what is wrong, but rejoices with the truth.
There is no limit to love's forebearance,
to its trust,
its hope,
its power to endure.
Love never fails. . . .
There are in the end three things that last:
faith, hope, and love,

Dr. John J. Pilch is the author of "Understanding Scripture" (ROA Filmstrips) *and* What Are They Saying about the Book of Revelation *(Paulist Press), as well as* Wellness: Sound of Mind and Spirit, *About to be released at press time by Argus Communications.*

and the greatest of these is love [1 Cor. 13].

This is how Paul has developed the basic affirmation of Jesus: "There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn. 15:13).

I. Franciscan Style of Caring

THE FIORETTI tell a story that illustrates the kind of caring which impressed Francis of Assisi, a caring he urged his brothers and sisters to imitate.

> One evening Francis and a companion came into the house of a rich and powerful nobleman, who received them with the greatest kindness [*con grandissima cortesia*]. He embraced and kissed Francis as a friend, washed his feet, lit a cheerful fire, fed his guest well, and tended to them tirelessly with a cheerful countenance. He placed his riches at Francis's disposal. Francis had only to ask for whatever he needed, and this nobleman would foot the bill. When they took leave of him, Francis said to his companion: 'This kind man could be just right for our company. He is so thankful to God and has such *cortesia* for his fellow human beings and the poor. You know, dear Brother, such *cortesia* is an attribute of God. Out of *cortesia* he lavishes his sun and rain on the just and unjust. *Cortesia* is a sister of charitableness, erasing hate and safeguarding love. Having seen such great and godly virtue in this man, I would gladly have him as a companion.'

What is this *cortesia* of which Francis spoke? It is an openheartedness to God and to the world. It entails a certain solidarity and empathy with the suffering and the poor. Yes, it contains much delicate reverence, but it also demands real down-to-earth involvement rather than love at a distance. It bespeaks the willingness to enter into a highly personal relationship. One must always look to the other as person, not simply as client, patient, penitent, student, etc.

Cortesia in the *Fioretti* passage can be translated as nobleness,

solicitude, almost hovering attentiveness, empathy, or caring.

Caring, of course, is not unique to Franciscans. The poet-theologian John Shea alludes to the same kind of caring in his Prayer to the God who Warms Old Bones:

> Locked arm in arm,
> the wool of winter still around them,
> three old women hobble
> across the young grass of June.
> They have staged a geriatric escape
> from St. Andrew's Old People's Home
> but varicose veins have forced them
> to rest on the bench outside my window.
> They settle down for an afternoon
> of people watching.
> No one can resist.
> The boy with the baseball mitt says hi.
> The truck driver waves. The mailman
> asks how the girls are today.
> They giggle and think him silly.
> The ladies on the bench believe life
> is friendly and when it is not,
> they scold it
> like a child who must be told he is good.
> Yet they wait
> (and so do we)
> for a passerby, an afternoon visitor,
> perhaps that woman
> with the baby stroller
> to tell them the good news—
> they do not need coats in summer.[1]

Shea's prayer is rooted in the brotherhood and sisterhood of all God's creatures which does make us one another's keepers. Each of us must care for the others. Francis knew this well, but he urged his followers to adopt that mentality in a very radical and special way:

> And let one unhesitatingly reveal his need to the other, that the latter may find and provide what is necessary for him. And each should love and cherish his brother, as a mother loves and cherishes her child, in those things wherein God shall give them grace [Unapproved Rule, ch. 9].

That his followers understood him well is demonstrated in their polished editorial expansion of Francis's insight as found in the

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1John Shea, *The Hour of the Unexpected* (Niles, IL: Argus Communications, 1977), p. 83.

papally approved Rule of 1223:

> And wherever the brothers are located or meet one another, let them act toward one another like members of a family. And each should with assurance make his need known to another; for if a mother tends and loves her child in the flesh, with how much greater attention must anybody love and tend his brother in the spirit [ch. 6].

The Franciscan style of caring is rooted in love and expressed in an almost hovering attentiveness to the needs of others. Its special characteristic is that it surpasses customary human levels of caring experienced in kinship relationships. That is the challenge to one who would embrace the Franciscan style of caring.

II. Basic Caring: Listening and Responding

AT THE VERY least, genuine caring demands listening and responding appropriately. *Listening* is a gift which is often taken for granted. It demands more than just the ability to repeat what was said. It requires a certain intensity of presence. So often a person says. "Go ahead, I'm listening," while continuing to shuffle paper, to put books back on the shelf, or to be busy about other things. Efficiency causes us unwittingly to ignore the person who has come to speak. We hear indeed, but we are not listening.

Francis knew he had this gift. He said, "Among other graces which God's love has deigned to give me is this, that I should as diligently obey a novice of one hour, were he given me as guardian, as I would the oldest and most prudent of my brethren" (2 Celano 151).

Listening demands attention not only to words, but also to actions and paralinguistic behavior such as the tone of voice, inflection, spacing of words, emphasis, pauses, stumbling over words, grunts, sighs, snorts, and so on. So often these speak louder than the words uttered. One of Lois Wyse's *Love Poems for the Very Married* illustrates the point well:

Nothing

I suppose it was something you said
That caused me to tighten
And pull away.
And when you asked,
"What is it?"
I, of course, said,
"Nothing."
Whenever I say, "Nothing,"
You may be very certain there is something.
The something is a cold, hard lump of
Nothing.[2]

The aim of care-ful listening is to hear and understand the other *from the other's viewpoint*. It requires an appreciation, not only of the thoughts, but the feelings and emotions conveyed as well. In a discussion on holistic approaches to health care which would include the active involvement of a spiritual counselor (priest, minister, rabbi, seminarian, nun, deaconess, etc.), the Jewish member of the group said that in his experience of such an approach he felt as if he was the object of a conversion attempt. The Christian members immediately hastened to assure him he was mistaken. What the Christians failed to do is listen. They failed to hear what the Jewish gentleman was saying from *his* point of view.

Perhaps what is of equal importance is to listen to the self, and not only to the other. From a psychological point of view such listening contributes to self-understanding and growth. From a spiritual point of view, this is important because the inner self is one place where God likes to speak. Biographers of the Poverello point out that an indispensable component of Francis's psychic chore was the way in which Francis knew and experienced God, the way in which he walked in God's company and felt at home.

Prayer, of course, is where Francis experienced God above all. His prayer was a direct dialogue of question and petition and answer, dealing with concrete issues and addressed very personally to God. Francis wrestled with God like Jacob, and dialogued with him after the fashion of Tevyeh in *Fiddler on the Roof*. This intimate communion with God was essential to Francis's caring.

Responding is a second basic skill in communicating genuine care. Responding is not just saying something, but knowing how to say the right thing. The most fundamentally correct thing to say is that one has understood the other, one has truly grasped the situation from the other's viewpoint. This is basic accurate empathy.

Empathy means that a person has truly felt into the emotional experiences of the other. It is basic when the person who has been listening has correctly understood what has been heard, without drawing further conclusions or making judgments.

[2]Lois Wyse, *Love Poems for the Very Married* (New York: World Publishing, 1967), p. 7.

Francis seems to have had just such a knack. Again the *Fioretti* supply an illustration.

> Having returned from the Holy Land [in the summer of 1220], Francis, weary from his long journey, was riding a donkey. His companion, Brother Leonardo of Assisi, followed behind on foot. He too was tired, and he thought to himself: 'My parents and his parents were of the same social class. But he rides while I go on foot and keep an eye on his donkey.' Scarcely had the thought struck him when Francis dismounted and said: 'Brother, it is not proper that I ride while you go on foot. You come from a more distinguished house than I do.' On the spot, Brother Leonardo asked forgiveness from Holy Francis.

On another occasion a Brother tore the night's silence with screams from hunger pains. In imitation of Francis, he had fasted beyond endurance. Francis went to the Brother, invited him to eat, and sat down and ate with him. In fact, Francis gorged himself so that the Brother would not feel guilty at having failed to keep the entire fast.

How difficult it is to make such a response can be seen in another situation. At a health conference not long ago, a wheel-chair ridden arthritic was invited to share with the audience her thoughts and feelings about the treatment she receives in the health care system. Her ten-minute report was one unending tirade against the system, physicians, nurses, hospitals, recounting complaints about mistreatment or insensitive treatment and the pain brought on by her arthritis as well as by the healers and helpers. Later at the coffee-break, two health professionals commented on her report: "Wasn't she typically arthritic? A classic case!" Unwittingly they had confirmed the woman's report. Few people have ever understood her from her perspective.

The converse would be a response made with respect, a response that prizes another person simply because he or she is another human being. Two of the most challenging ways to demonstrate this kind of respect are suspending judgment and respecting the other's right to self-determination—even to live less effectively! Francis illustrated both well. "Blessed is the servant," he said, "who would love and reverence his brother as much when he is far away as when he would be with him, and would say nothing behind his back that he could not in charity say to his face" (Admonition 29). Obviously the best way to follow this advice is to suspend judgment.

The second challenge: namely, to respect the other's determination even to live less wholesomely, is difficult for everyone, but perhaps most especially for those in the healing and helping professions. The education for these professionals inevitably imposes on the graduates a rescuer script or messiah complex. Parents are not immune to this either. It takes great restraint to respect self-determination in others.

Francis did not hesitate to urge his followers to strive for such respect:

> If any of the friars is misled by the wicked enemy and sins mortally, he is to be bound by obedience to have recourse to his guardian. And all the friars who may know that he has sinned must not shame or reproach him. They should rather show great mercy toward him, and keep his sin entirely hidden; for it is not the healthy who need a physician, but they who are sick.

Francis does not condone the sin; he does not compromise his own convictions. But he respects self-determination and freedom. And he urges the same on his fellow friars. Francis cherished self-determination in others and desired the same in return. When he was founding his brotherhood and all manner of advisers were suggesting rules and patterns for him, he resisted, saying that the Most High himself had shown him what to do, and no human would deter him.

The positive corollary of this attitude is to regard the other as unique and respond to that uniqueness by promoting it. What a tremendous challenge to those who would exercise the Franciscan style of caring in the ministry to the aged: to promote their unique wisdom and holiness, and to cultivate further development of their resources. Francis was really to the point: "And let us love our neighbors like ourselves, and if there is anyone who has not the inclination or the strength to love them like himself, at least let him not bring evil on them, but do good to them."

One doesn't have to be a Franciscan to care in the style described in this article. But Franciscans ought to be the best examples of the style incarnated by their founder. It isn't easy, and it takes a long time to develop. But it is worth the effort.

The Skin Horse's advice to the Velveteen Rabbit as he continued to show interest in becoming real might apply to those interested in enhancing their skill in communicating the Franciscan style of caring.

> 'Real isn't how you are made,' said the Skin Horse. 'It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but really loves you, then you become real.'
>
> 'Does it hurt?' asked the rabbit.
>
> 'Sometimes,' said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. 'When you are Real, you don't mind being hurt.'

'Does it happen all at once, like being wound up,' he asked, 'or bit by bit?'

'It doesn't happen all at once,' said the Skin Horse. 'You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out, and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real, you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand.'[3]

[3]Margaret Williams, *The Velveteen Rabbit* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, n.d.), p. 17.

Anawim

The snow falls incessantly on the cold, bare earth
Disguising the harsh cruelty of its defilement,
And a lowly figure trudges through it all
Slowly, steadily, onward toward his goal.

In the distance, the mountains of a great land
Spread out their branches in open defiance of the immorality,
And a lowly figure trudges through the snow
Slowly, steadily, keeping to his goal.

Choirs of birds fill the bare-branched trees
Which refuse to bring forth fruit,
And a lowly figure passes them by
Slowly, patiently, seeking something more.

Now the heavens drop down dew from above
And the skies rain down the Just One;
There a lowly figure kneels in adoration
As the earth buds forth in Life.

Timothy James Fleming, O.F.M. Conv.

Service to Others, Work, Availability to Others, Messengers of Peace

NICHOLAS LOHKAMP, O.F.M.

IT SEEMS quite apparent that none of the topics included in the title of the present article can be adequately treated in the scope of one essay, much less all four. But there does seem to be a common aspect to the four subjects, in that our work is the way, concretely, in which we become available for the service of others, and this service in view of the Gospel (2 Cor. 5) and of our Franciscan vocation should always take the shape of a ministry of reconciliation. Accordingly, I shall limit myself to a consideration of our "work."

I want to consider our "work" in the context of the opening statement of the Madrid, 1973, document, "The Vocation of the Order Today":[1]

> . . . we Friars Minor . . . feel ourselves questioned from all sides about the meaning of our life and options about the specific nature of the vocation of our Order . . . we ourselves . . . are searching . . . to find our identity and the particularities of our vocation in the contemporary world.

This tone of "search" and "questioning" pervades this entire document, indeed is explicitly indicated in at least twelve places.

It is my conviction that this sense of "quest" and "search," of "questioning," points to an *attitude* that is crucial, radical, and positive. It is *crucial* because I believe the effectiveness of our efforts at renewal depend on it. Renewal, the Gospel, our life demands conversion, a change of hearrt and attitudes. It is *radical* because such questioning, searching, concerns our very life, our very identity, the roots of our existence. It is *positive* because what we seek through this questioning and searching is not the destruction of our life as friars

[1]Published in *Madrid, 1973: General Chapter Documents* (English-Speaking Conference of the Order of Friars Minor, 1974), pp. 57-105; henceforth cited in text as V.O.T. The present article is a commentary on §§26-35.

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minor (cf. the negative part of "As I See the Order"), but precisely a fuller understanding of the life we have vowed so that we may come to live it more fully and fruitfully.

In all of this, *attitude* is of primary concern. There is little or no hope of changing our behavior or our life-style, unless we change our attitudes; and this presupposes a *willingness* to change, as well as some awareness that questions about our present life and work may be desirable—even necessary. It seems to me, however, that (1) we cannot and will not take to heart, much less implement, the "urgent call" of this document (V.O.T., §2) unless we dare to question the status quo, unless we admit the possibility that we ought to question our present attitude concerning the status quo; and (2) presupposing this willingness to question the status quo, I believe the *crux* of the matter may well lie in our "work," in what we *do* in the Lord's service. Hence, I offer you an observation and a question.

I. The Observation

ONE THING I keep hearing over and over again—in the 1967 General Constitutions, in the Medellin Document on Formation, in "as I See the Order," in the "Declaration of the General Chapter" (1973)—and it seems to be coming through ever more clearly, ever more strongly. It is this:

> The fundamental apostolate of the Friars Minor is to live the Gospel with a simple and joyful heart [CCGG, art. 93].

Articles 99-103 stress the theme that the friars are to choose apostolates that give witness to *fraternity* and *minority*: "Whatever form of work the friars engage in, it should always be a witness before men of fraternity and minority" (art. 106).

"The essential mission of our fraternity, its vocation in the Church and in the world, consists in the lived reality of our life-commitment" (V.O.T., §31); "it is by our way of life that we bear witness." And again,

> The description of our way of life makes it obvious that we are not an organization structured for one or several specific tasks. We are a community of brothers, who wish simply to live an evangelical type of life, convinced that such a life is a particular contribution to the over-all witnessing of Christians [V.O.T., §36].

The more I become conscious of this, the more uncomfortable I become. The reason: This is not my experience of Franciscan life. This is what leads me to the question that will follow. But first, let me amplify a bit:

(1) It has been my experience,

over the past thirty-one years in the Order, that by and large my "work" has determined my life, my style of living. Many times when questions arose about prayer, community service, poverty, minority, etc., I have felt constrained by my work to be satisfied with something less than I felt called to by reason of my promise to live a Gospel life in the manner of Francis. My work (as priest, teacher) has basically shaped my life. While it is ever possible that I am peculiar in this sense of having "compromised" my vocation as a friar minor, that the conflict is due to my own ignorance, weakness, lack of generosity, yet I frequently hear the same thing from other friars in my province.

(2) When I consider such topics as "service to others," "work," "availability," "messengers of peace," my immediate reaction is to look at these and consider how, in terms of my *present situation and involvement*, I might improve (renew). I quickly run into a wall! I believe I am working to the full extent of my energies (most of my friends say "beyond my energies"). So, I see no hope there. Perhaps I should do different work, or work in a different way. But that immediately raises the question: on what basis, in what context, am I to consider different work, or different ways of working? Will not the different work still determine my life-style?

In short, I believe most friars, like myself, are engaged by and large in work suitable to their talents and to the limitations of their energies. So, what's to renew? Yet the fundamental question keeps surfacing: Does it make a difference what "work" we do? Can I be faithful to my Franciscan vocation, the Gospel

life that is characteristic of the Order, when my work determines my life?

II. The Question

TO SITUATE this question more fully, I want to refer explicitly to my first assumption, already cited above: "The most basic apostolate of the Friars Minor is to live the Gospel with a simple and joyful heart" (CCGG, art. 93; cf. 2 Rule, ch. 1).

I am further assuming that the meaning of this sentence is this: that our basic vocation as Friars Minor is to a "life," a style of living that is truly evangelical and is characterized especially by prayer and fraternity (celibate, loving, obedient), poverty and littleness; and precisely out of this style of life we are open to Church and world, and we offer our peculiarly Franciscan witness and service.

Still further, I assume that this basic understanding is generally accepted in the Order. It surely seems to emerge in the General Constitutions, the Medellin Document on Formation, "As I See the Order," and "The Vocation of the Order Today."

Next, I would like more clearly to delineate my question by expanding my observation—my perception—that by and large *we have inverted this priority*. Instead of our life, the way we live as friars minor, determining and shaping our work, our service, our availability, it seems to me that our work is shaping and determining our life.

Consider whether the following observations are or are not true.

First, we have become a clerical, a priest-dominated Order. Most friars are priests. About two out of every three friars are engaged in parishes, missions, institutional chaplaincies—all oriented to the priestly ministry. We are scattered all over the United States in almost 200 different places; and most of these live in 1, 2, or 3 man friaries. Our formation centers are predominantly preoccupied with preparing friars for the priesthood. Our provincial and local superiors are usually all priests. Administrative, staff, educational activities in our provinces are almost invariably headed by priests.

And secondly, these are the consequences I believe I detect. The above facts are long standing and have led us over the years to the point where, in my judgment, the provinces, their personnel and resources, the operative attitudes of their friars, their formation centers—all give practical priority to work, priestly work, so much so that this is what practically determines our life-style as friars. Let me illustrate.

1. Usually personnel assignments are made primarily in terms of the work to be done; it is presumed friars will get along as best they can in their life together. Perhaps the clearest evidence of such a priority is the fact that in some instances friars are assigned to work where they basically live alone; in other instances they live with only one other friar. By and large this is "justified" either because of the importance of the work or because the friar prefers to live alone. Even in places where three, four or more friars live together in parishes, missions, or chaplaincies, the nature and extent and demands of the work seem to limit and define their fraternal life, their attitudes, interests, and activities.

2. Such existential facts and the corresponding attitudes they generate, appear to color the preparation of the friars for the priesthood in formation centers. Such centers tend to prepare friars for the priesthood in terms of the "way it is" in the provinces. The goal is the priesthood; Franciscan life seems often to be secondary. Perhaps this is most clearly revealed when solemnly professed friars decide not to go on to ordination and then invariably leave the Order.

3. This same priority given to work, priestly work, has serious consequences for the non-clerical friars. Insofar as the "work" of the province is "priestly," and all that this entails educationally and in terms of the *life* in the local friaries, the non-clerical friar is almost necessarily going to feel second-class, and exist with a very ambiguous and dubious sense of his role. To such friars words that speak of "equality as brothers" will not ring true!

All this forces me to ask the question: Have we really and seriously over the past hundred years inverted our priorities so that our work, priestly work, has come to dominate our orientation, our attitudes, our very lives and life-style?

As long as our priestly work predominates, it seems our shared life as brothers (*fraternity*) will suffer from the scattered and isolated existence required by that work, from the disparity between ordained and non-ordained friars, from the demands of our work. This will inevitably have detrimental effects on the contemplative aspects of our brotherhood. It is often difficult, if not impossible, to pray together because of the demands of work, or because there are no other friars to pray with. There are obvious consequences for the spirit and practice of *poverty*, moreover, when so many in the province—because of their work—are quite comfortable as to food, clothing, housing; are financial administrators,

handle money or have a checkbook, have a car at their personal disposal, etc. In effect, we tend to become middle-class (factually and attitudinally) and quite content to be so—even justify being so—*because of our work*. There are also consequences in terms of *minority*. In parishes, missions, and chaplaincies the friars are, in reality, in positions of power, affixed to places and institutions, identified with parochial, diocesan, or educational structures. It is very difficult to be and live in fact as a little one, as a pilgrim and stranger, under these circumstances.

So, it is in this light and on these assumptions that I raise the question (in two parts): (1) Is it really possible for us, under the status quo, to take seriously §§31 and 36 of V.O.T.: "We are a community of brothers . . . [who] wish simply to live an evangelical type of life, convinced that such a life is a particular contribution to the over-all witnessing of Christians"? And (2) Is it really possible to look for real renewal in our Franciscan life so long as we are so extensively engaged in an overwhelmingly clerical and priestly work, in such a way that *this work*, and not our life, is the predominantly determining factor in our style of life?

III. The Future: A Response to the Question

I MUST CONFESS deep gratitude to the Order and to God for being challenged to look anew at my Franciscan life, and at my work in terms of this life. It is very uncomfortable so radically to question the way I have been living for 31 years, but I feel new hope and new courage in what the Order is saying. I do not condemn my past, nor that of my province, or the Order; but I do sense a strong challenge to re-evaluate our priorities.

I like to consider myself—at least in my better moments—as a realist. I have no illusions that the Order, my province, or I myself will change radically and suddenly, particularly in something so deep as this. There is no way I can see that we can morally leave all our present commitments, regroup the men of a province, and begin at once to give priority to our Franciscan way of life so as to allow our work, service, and availability to flow from our shared life as friars—priests or otherwise.

But I also like to think I am a man of hope. So I look to the future. I believe there are real possibilities: (1) to change our attitudes, our priorities, without decreasing our service; (2) to *plan* for the future—to plan for real reorganization of our friaries in terms primarily of the life to be lived; and (3) to make a beginning *now*.

We can make this beginning now, it seems to me, in two main ways: first, by positively encouraging greater priority to formation in Franciscan life as something distinct from, prior to, preparation for ordination—i.e., by a formation that is basically of the same quality for all friars (with particular stress on fraternity, prayer, poverty, minority, service, witness); and secondly, by positively encouraging those friars who are now able and willing to live together so as to give basic priority to the evangelical life and the peculiarly Franciscan qualities thereof—especially prayer, poverty, and minority.

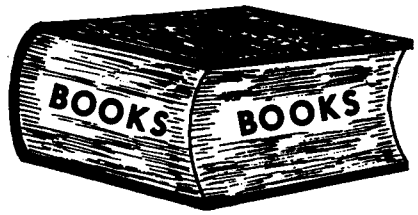
▲

"You Surround Me with Songs of Deliverance. Selah."

Psalm 32

walk angel voice within
all haven't heard
the yearly old(incredibly) resistible news
that retires to a shed
electronically blacked out
in the shadows of the holiday inn
leavened by star light
for the regal visitors' welcome
to find the Lord's realm's Lord
at home with a donkey
not tethered
nor galloping in flight
but soothed by Joseph's
voice and pat and double ration
to crown their journey—
strange conspirators of liberty
these kings
eluding a lightweight
in the weighty ride home
entourage dismissed
beasts and souls
sleeping in the hay forever
with their unlaid highways
undrilled wells
and uncomposed poems—
they at least believed
paved so long ago
progress's way
sang non-martial anthems of freedom
and walked off history's course
the unseen voice of angels

Hugoline Sabatino, O.F.M.



The Mass: An Historical, Theological, and Pastoral Survey. By Josef A. Jungmann, S.J. Trans. Julian Fernandes, S.J., ed. Mary Ellen Evans. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1976. Pp. xvi-312, including indices. Cloth, $9.95.

Reviewed by Father Vincent B. Grogan, O.F.M., J.C.D. (Catholic University of America), a member of the faculty at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, New York.

Truly, this book contains something for everyone. Interested in the historical development of the Mass from the Last Supper to the present? Father Jungmann traces this growth. Concerned about the theological issues inherent in the Eucharistic celebration? You will find these discussed in the work. Are you more of a liturgical bent? The author can satisfy you with his treatment of the various elements of the Mass ritual. And if you are desirous of celebrating the Mass more effectively and meaningfully for your congregation, you also will discover much of value here. What Jungmann has done and done masterfully is to divide his study of the Mass into four segments: historical, theological, liturgical, and pastoral/spiritual (with some necessary overlapping). For such an eminent scholar, his style and vocabulary make surprisingly easy reading. Enhancing this volume are its extensive footnotes, bibliography, and analytical index.

In light of the liturgical developments of the last decade, the author makes some telling points, such as the sacrificial nature of the Last Supper event. The actions—ritual gestures—of the Lord at the Last Supper were clearly related to the Jewish liturgy of a sacrificial offering to God—a factor that had obvious consequences for his death the next day but also for his followers as they went about fulfilling his command, "Do this in memory of me." A further point is well taken. While the elements of the Mass—bread and wine—are obviously intended to be consumed as spiritual nourishment, the author cautions against overemphasizing the banquet-aspect of the liturgical celebration. It is more than Christ giving himself to be eaten; here again, there emerges the theme of the Eucharist as sacrifice.

The attempts of the Church Fathers and theologians (both medieval and modern) to explain how the Mass is a sacrifice—and its relationship to Calvary—are examined in the section devoted to the theology of the Mass. In this section, the author makes a point of emphasizing that the Mass is the offering/sacrifice of the Church as well as the offering of Christ. And for this reason, Jungmann sees the offertory rite as concretely symbolizing this important dimension and warns against the tendency

excessively to downplay this already streamlined part of the Mass. Another high point of the theology segment is the clear presentation of the sixteenth-century reformers' position vis-à-vis the Mass and Eucharist, thus enabling the reader better to comprehend the meaning of Trent's pronouncements on the Eucharist.

Amidst the emotionality of the issue of open (or unrestricted) intercommunion, Father Jungmann notes that the Mass is a celebration of unity and states boldly that "the Eucharist celebrated together only factually without the theological basis of Church unity can result in nothing but a mere appearance of unity" (p. 276).

Discussing the need for a creative tension between authenticity (the felt needs of the congregation and the celebrant) and the official *Ordo* of the Mass ritual, Jungmann recalls that freedom in selecting from among the many options provided in the *Ordo Missae* should be governed by objective attitudes, not by caprice or arbitrariness (a good rule of thumb, as well, for utilizing options not found in the official ritual).

The author concludes his opus by recognizing the various tensions that will always be part of the Eucharistic celebration: mystery, yet the need to explain and celebrate it in a meaningful way; simplicity vs. splendor; the role of the community and the role of Church authority.

Some minor falws detract slightly from the highly favorable impact of the book: a misprint (*seen*, instead of *been*—p. 262); a reference to Paul as the author of the Letter to the Hebrews (p. 97); a failure perhaps on the part of the translator or editor to include a reference to the document of the Holy See on Masses for children (Nov. 1, 1973) when the book discusses the possibility of adapting the Eucharistic Liturgy for special groups (p. 266); the use of the term Offertory (pp. 185ff.) instead of Preparation of the Altar and Gifts, as found in the revised Sacramentary.

In sum, Jungmann's *The Mass*, published in this revised edition after his death in January of 1975, marks an appropriate *Nunc dimittis* for a man who devoted his life and talents to the study of the Liturgy, thereby enriching all of Christendom. The book provides an understanding of the overall purposes of the Conciliar liturgical reform and many of its specific practices. This is recommended reading for both celebrants and faithful who wish to know more about the central Act of our Faith and derive a deeper meaning from its celebration.

Christians and Jews. Edited by Hans Küng and Walter Kasper. New York: Seabury Press Crossroad Books, 1976. Pp. 93. Paper, $4.95.

The Spirituality of Judaism. By Roger le Déaut, C.S.Sp., Annie Jaubert, and Kurt Hruby. St. Meinrad, IN: Abbey Press, 1977. Pp. ix-137, including bibliography. Paper, $3.95.

Reviewed by Father David M. Bossman, O.F.M., Ph. D. (St. Louis University), Head of the Religious Studies Department at Siena College.

Christian interest in Judaism is a natural consequence of Christian roots in the biblical people and their thought world. This alone justifies a keen concern about the religion of the Jews; yet there is more to motivate interest: the Jewish people have continued to develop in their religious experience, continuing an ancient line which numbers Moses, Jeremiah, Jesus, Hillel, Maimonides, Herzl, and Buber among its family members.

Today, dialog with Jews has been spurred by the openness which the Second Vatican Council initiated (*Nostra Aetate*, 1965) and the 1975 Vatican Guidelines Encouraging Catholic-Jewish Dialogue further specified. Scholars have attended to the historical question of Christian dependence upon Jewish sources, and recent studies have provided exciting insights into the nature of the dependencies (e.g., *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*, by E. P. Sanders, 1977).

The Jewish people stand before Christians as a witness of shared religious values, both those lived and those neglected. They challenge Christians as a prophetic call to know what it means to be Israel, as well as what to do when they fail. Dialog between Christians and Jews is clearly a promising pursuit.

Two recent studies contribute to the literature supporting dialogue; they are *Christians and Jews*, edited by Küng and Kasper, and *The Spirituality of Judaism*, by Le Déaut, Jaubert, and Hruby. Each serves a pressing need for Christians to fulfill the call of the 1975 Vatican Guidelines which encouraged Catholics "to strive to acquire a better knowledge of the basic components of the religious tradition of Judaism . . . to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience."

Christians and Jews is a collection of essays by twelve notable Christian and Jewish scholars on topics such as Law, Liturgy, Religiousness, Hope, Jesus, and the Future of Dialogue. Each topic is treated from the Jewish side and from the Christian side, thereby offering a fascinating set of comparisons well suited for further discussion by dialog groups.

Christian readers of Saint Paul have sometimes overlooked the positive value of Torah which Paul sometimes slights in the interests of his rhetorical concerns. Louis Jacobs offers a suitable response that renews a sense of reverence for Torah as "the link between God and man" which Christians profess when acknowledging the Old Testament as revelation, but often fail to recognize. The legalism which Jesus condemned is undesirable in Judaism as well as in Christianity; yet Torah can be valued without subscribing to bureaucratic abuses. W. Davies agrees with this distinction and acknowledges Christian belief in the principles of Torah, as Jesus taught and Christians profess in their belief that the Church shares in the role of the new Israel.

On the question of Jesus, David Flusser offers Christians a challenge to reconsider the meaning of the Jewish Messiah, especially the future dimension of the messianic age which both Christians and Jews profess. Flusser observes: "Many Christians today simply cannot conceive that the Christian idea was originally identical with that of the Old Testament prophets, namely that at the end Israel and believers from the

Gentiles will be saved and attain blessedness" (p. 70). Flusser surprisingly suggests: "I do not think many Jews would object if the Messiah when he came again was the Jew Jesus" (p. 71). On the other hand, Flusser argues, "Wouldn't many Christians be uneasy if they found that the messianic ideas of the Old Testament prophets were fulfilled, even though the Old Testament is also Scripture for them?" (p. 71). J. Moltmann, on the Christian side, concedes that "the Messiah will not appear in Jerusalem, nor in Rome nor in Geneva. He will come among the poor, the mourners, those who hunger for righteousness and are persecuted for it. Only when the suffering of those who have the messianic hope becomes the hope of those who suffer in this world will Jews and Christians really understand their provisional finality and honour god-forsaken mankind's Messiah" (p. 66).

This book is a thrilling set of challenges and contrasts which should startle both Jews and Christians who are more concerned with institutional trappings than religious meaning. Reading it and discussing its consequences would do a world of good for all who profess religious creeds of Christian or Jewish character.

The Spirituality of Judaism is less exciting. Lacking the incisiveness which comparison and contrast imply, the book recounts some of the principal dimensions of Hebrew religious belief and practice, treating them historically and somewhat systematically. As a sourcebook, it serves a real purpose for those pursuing a course in the essential elements of the Jewish religious experience. A useful bibliography furthers this end, offering a chapter-by-chapter listing of the principal writings available on each of the subjects treated.

The two books together can be an ideal pair of readings for Jewish-Christian dialog groups seeking a starting point with material to prompt discussion as well as background for the discussion.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Saint Francis Prayer Book. By Auspicius van Corstanje, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978. Pp. 110. Paper, $2.25.

This pocket-size collection of prayers composed and used by Francis, together with those attributed to him, is a valuable piece. Included in the 38 prayers are the famous Prayer for Light, Peace Prayer, *Adoramus Te*, Blessing and Curse of Saint Francis, and the Canticle of the Sun. Not so well known prayers, such as "Why are you so disturbed, little man," and "Thank you, Lord, for these pains," will appeal to many. The numerous prayers of praise will delight those whose charismatic prayer experiences have initiated them into that type of prayer.

Saint Francis Prayer Book is a wonderful gift for any Franciscan, or for anyone captivated by the Poverello's ideals.

Don't Let Your Conscience Be Your Guide. By C. Ellis Nelson. Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. vi-110. Paper, $1.95.

This small work comprises four lectures: The Roots of Religion and Conscience, The Unreliability and Inadequacy of Conscience, The Inversion of Conscience, and Growth in Faith. I found the middle two lectures the most valuable—particularly distinctions between positive and negative conscience and manifest and latent functions of behavior. A work which seems stronger psychologically and pastorally than theologically, it can be a help to all those who are involved in minstry or are reflective enough to apply the author's observations to themselves.

The Hard Life: Values for Young Adults. By Michael Adams. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. 96. Paper, $1.95.

In a series of hard-boiled "pep talks," the author ranges over the gamut of Christian and Catholic life, from conscience to prayer and apostolate. While directed to young lay adults, the talks' vocabulary and the way the concepts are handled limit potential readership to quite educated Catholics—and the directive, hard-nosed approach shrinks that potential still further.

Challenge to Morality: Life Issues—Moral Answers. By Charles J. Mc Fadden, O.S.A. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. 256, including index. Paper, $3.95.

Challenge to Morality is a most welcome publication. Using the question and answer format, the long-time medical ethicist Father Charles J. McFadden treats nine areas: The Marriage Contract, Family Planning, Genetic Engineering, Abortion, Patients' Rights and Duties, Preservation of Bodily Integrity, Sterilization, Preservation of Life, Death and Dying. Weaving the latest medical and scientific data into his answers, Father McFadden evaluates those data and any problems they generate into a thoroughly careful and Catholic synthesis, marked in addition by clarity of style. Would that this work find a place on the pamphlet racks in our churches and in the bookstores of our colleges!

Loneliness Is for Loving. By Robert Lauder. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 143. Paper, $2.75.

The title of this excellent book expresses its theme: loneliness is "a call to and for love" (p. 23). Our society, Father Lauder tells us, is filled with lonely people—consumerism is a symptom of the void we feel in ourselves. Loneliness is related to dying, the awareness of our own "terminally ill" condition as contingent beings as well as the experienced absences of those loved ones who have gone ahead of us in

death. Loneliness is related to love and friendship, which are its remedies. And love and friendship for the Christian mean entering into prayerful companionship with the risen Lord as well as the human beings around him. Loneliness is related to hope, Christian hope in God, not pollyanna optimism or the specific cravings which plague us. Well thought out, well written with examples from literature, film, and personal life, *Loneliness Is for Loving* is a book any adult—but particularly, celibate adults—can profit from. And you don't have to wait till you are feeling blue to read it.

Steps into Light: A Prayerbook of Christian Belief. By James W. Lyons. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 164. Paper, $1.75.

Father Lyons, long active in parish and hospital ministry, offers a contemporary prayer-book with a format of explanation, quotation, and prayer. After an introduction on the need to slow down and take time for reflection, ensuing chapters take up the Light of Conscience, the Light of Faith in Christ, the Light of the Spirit, the Light of Love, and the Light of Glory. Included in the quoted pieces are Newman's famous "Lead Kindly Light" and the anonymously offered "One Solitary Life." The spacing and photographs make this an attractive book physically as well as spiritually.

Ten Responsible Minutes: A Pleasant Approach to Homily Headaches. By Joseph E. Manton, C.Ss.R. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. 232. Cloth, $9.95.

This eminently readable book should have been subtitled: "A Pleasant Approach to *Homiletics*," for what it is, is a sustained treatment of techniques of writing and delivering sermons. After establishing the importance, value, and need of homilies, Father Manton goes on colorfully to illustrate "The Magic of Words," the "Mold of Sentences," the "Five W's" and their application in homilies. Handy advice for television and radio writing is the icing on this delightful cake—a book on preaching which any priest or pulpit speaker can read with profit.

Kitchen-Table Christianity. By Isaias Powers, C.P. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. vi-169. Paper, $2.75.

There are twenty brief, well-writ-written essays which orchestrate the theme that holiness is wholeness. Jesus calls us to the growth and freedom from bonds like bitterness, resentment, false expectations. Life and religion are not always simple, and "healing" is an integral part of each. Father Powers's work is in a sense a kind of pre-evangelization that priests and others counselors are called on to do so often—to address the emotional hang-ups and problems that the faithful bring to us. His chapters on the Mass and Heaven speak to religious themes most directly and adequately. *Kitchen-Table Christianity* is a book any counselor should know about and have about.

Your Faith and You: A Synthesis of Catholic Belief. By James Finley and Michael Pennock. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. 2 vols., paper: text—pp. 270, $3.95; teacher's manual—pp. 118, $2.25.

This is an excellent text for its intended audience: juniors and seniors in high school who are receiving a full year course in the Catholic Faith. The text is designedly content-oriented and covers quite thoroughly the areas of Creed, Code, and Cult, but not under those headings. Especially valuable are the chapters on Catholic Identity (a theme throughout the work) and contemporary questions about sexuality and celibacy, angels and devils, etc. In all cases the approach is thoroughly and intelligently orthodox. Written as a text, the book has sets of questions, pre-tests, and various exercises for groups. The manual has a more than adequate list of background reading and a succinct rationale of each of the units. I highly and unreservedly recommend this book, not only for high schoolers in a religion class, but for Catholics of college age or beyond who want a clear exposition of what it means to be a Catholic.

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John at the Crib

Tomorrow the soaring eagle
poised on eternity's crest.
Tonight a gentle dove
above a Baby's breast.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

Doty, William L., *Meet Your Pastor.* Canfield, OH: Alba Books, 1978. Pp. 163. Paper, $1.95.

Marbach, Ethel, *More Once-upon-a-Time Saints: Faith Tales for Children.* Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. x-68. Paper $1.95.