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COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The circle used in our cover drawing represents wholeness. We are seen as persons (the red ball) in movement towards becoming one whole. This and the other drawings for the January issue have been furnished by Brother Ronald A. Chretien, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province and a full time artist resident at St. Francis Friary, Rye Beach, New Hampshire.

the CORD

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Francis: Father of One Brotherhood

FOR THE FIRST TIME in the history of the Franciscan Order in the United States, a common questionnaire was sent during January and February of 1978 to each of the more than 5,000 Capuchin, Conventual, and O.F.M. American friars—including those on foreign assignments. All the friars were queried on two points: the *desirability* of a common celebration of the 800th anniversary of the birth of Saint Francis in 1982, and the *desirability* of working toward the reunification of the three branches of the Order or at least toward greater unity among them.

The brief, two-page questionnaire was designed by an eight-member committee of O.F.M.'s, Capuchins, and Conventuals over the course of the previous year. The committee, which described itself as "an unofficial inter-Franciscan exploratory service committee," wrote to each Conventual, Capuchin, and O.F.M. Provincial in September of 1978, outlining a plan for gathering this information and noting the value it would have for the O.F.M. English-speaking Conference, the North American Capuchin Conference, and the newly-formed American Conventual Conference.

All the respective Provincials endorsed the sending of the questionnaire and permitted the use of their Provincial communications offices for getting the questionnaire to each friar of their Provinces. A Provincial liaison was appointed for each Province, who coordinated the distribution itself among the three branches.

Some 54% of the friars replied, an above-average statistical response, apparently reflecting the growing interest in the reunifiaction issue among American Franciscan religious since the renewal chapters of their three families.

The poll revealed that 70% of the friars believe the time has come to

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With this January issue we inaugurate a series of articles dealing with the theme of unity among the branches of the Franciscan First Order, most of them to be contributed by members of the committee described in this guest editorial. The survey's results have already been reproduced in Exchange *(Contact Paper of the Franciscan Brotherhood in India), 11:5 (5-6/78) and summarized in* Franciscan Herald *57:10 (10/78); but in view of the subject's importance, we reproduce it once more following this editorial.*

begin working toward eventual reunification of the First Order of Saint Francis. They also support, by 93%, a proposal to celebrate in common the 800th anniversary of their Founder's birth in 1982.

The survey uncovered for the first time the widespread grass-roots support for reunification among American Franciscan priests and brothers that could only be surmised until now. Some 74% said that they desired more than the current status quo and simple inter-cooperation, and 67% indicated this further step should be a common federation or reunification itself among the three branches.

From another point of view, only 30% of the friars believe the Order has adequately responded to Vatican Council II's directive that religious orders with a common founder should foster efforts toward unity.

Distinctions among the three groups do not seem to be a major obstacle to inter-cooperation, though 22% of the Conventuals, 22% of the O.F.M.'s, and 40% of the Capuchins believe their branch of the order is distinctive.

Franciscan theological schools, common research projects, and communication were seen as three areas where cooperation could begin at this time. The friars also suggested that ecumenical ventures could be made in houses of prayer, justice and peace efforts, publications, assistance to the Second and Third Orders, common novitiates, mixed apostolates, mixed communities, and the missions—in that order.

The friars preferred a national gathering of at least five days in 1982 to celebrate the 800th birthday of Saint Francis, and some 1,300 expressed interest in attending. Regional celebrations were also approved. Asked to volunteer topics for such a national meeting, the friars suggested their common heritage, spiritual life, inter-Franciscan activity, and the impact of Franciscanism on American society. Half of the friars responding to the poll believe that division in the Order has weakened the Franciscan influence in this country.

The members of the inter-Franciscan committee are Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., Our Lady of Consolation Province; Joachim Giermek, O.F.M.Conv., St. Anthony's Province; Regis Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., St. Mary's Province; Allen Gruenke, O.F.M.Cap., St. Joseph's Province; Alan McCoy, O.F.M., St. Barbara's Province and President of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men; Louis Vitale, O.F.M., St. Barbara's Province; Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Director of the Franciscan Institute, Holy Name Province; and the present author, chairman of the committee and Director of Holy Name Province's Communications office.

Roy M. Gasnick, O.F.M.
Communications Director
Holy Name Province

RESULTS OF THE INTER-FRANCISCAN QUESTIONNAIRE

Note: T=Total; P=Capuchins; V=Conventuals; F=OFM's

PART I: A COMMON CELEBRATION OF THE 800TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF ST. FRANCIS

1. The Anniversary should be celebrated in common by all American First Order friars who profess Francis's Rule & Way of Life--OFM's, Conventuals, and Capuchins.

T	Strongly	61%	Agree	32%	Not Certain	3%	Disagree	2%	Strongly	2%
P	agree	49%		40%		3%		4%	disagree	2%
V		62%		32%		3%		2%		1%
F		66%		29%		4%		2%		1%

2. As a witness to our common Franciscan heritage and mission in the U.S., the Ministers Provincial should arrange for:

T	One major	21%	smaller regional	35%	both	41%	neither	3%
P	national	20%	gatherings	33%		40%		6%
V	gathering	22%		36%		39%		3%
F		20%		35%		42%		3%

3. Topics for a common gathering to celebrate the 800th Anniversary should include (total percentages only are recorded here):

Franciscan spiritual life 64%; our common Franciscan heritage 67%; Franciscan reconciliation 44%; areas for possible inter-Franciscan activity 57%; internal Franciscan ecumenism 32%; Franciscan impact on American society 54%. (There were many "other" write-ins here. These will be saved until the Provincials decide upon the 1982 gatherings.)

4. A common gathering of Conventuals, Capuchins, and OFM's should last for how long (total percentages only)?

One day 10%; a weekend 32%; five days 37%; a week 17%; longer than a week 4%

5. I personally would be interested in attending one of these (total numbers rather than percentages are recorded here):

T	National	409	regional	1190	both	776	neither	300
P	gathering	71	gathering	239		197		60
V		88		238		206		45
F		250		713		373		195

(For U.S. Friars outside the country: If I were to be in the U.S. at the appropriate time, I would be interested in attending one of these (totals only are recorded):

	National gathering	58	regional gathering	111	both	103	neither	48

PART II: INTERNAL FRANCISCAN ECUMENISM

6. American Franciscan friars have responded adequately to Vatican II's directive that branches of religious Orders with a common founder should foster efforts toward unity:

T	Agree	30%	Disagree	38%	Not certain	32%
P		23%		40%		35%
V		29%		41%		30%
F		33%		35%		32%

7. Despite our collective numbers, division among Conventuals, OFM's, and Capuchins has prevented Franciscans from having a stronger influence on American society and values:

T	Agree	50%	Disagree	25%	Not certain	25%
P		40%		31%		27%
V		53%		25%		22%
F		53%		22%		25%

8. The branch of the First Order to which I belong has a distinct charism that transcends our common Franciscan charism:

T	Agree	26%	Disagree	46%	Not certain	28%
P		40%		34%		26%
V		22%		50%		28%
F		22%		50%		28%

9. Reunification of the First Order (Conventuals, Capuchins, OFM's) is desirable:

T	Strongly	39%	Agree	28%	Not sure	19%	Disagree	10%	Strongly	4%
P	agree	28%		25%		24%		14%	disagree	8%
V		37%		27%		20%		12%		4%
F		45%		29%		16%		8%		2%

10. The time has come for Capuchins, OFM's, and Conventuals to begin working toward eventual reunification of the First Order:

T	Strongly	40%	Agree	30%	Not sure	17%	Disagree	10%	Strongly	3%
P	agree	29%		27%		24%		15%	disagree	8%
V		34%		31%		16%		11%		4%
F		45%		30%		14%		9%		2%

11. In what areas could Conventuals, OFM's, and Capuchins begin to cooperate? (Totals only are recorded here)

Common Franciscan Research 70%; mission to *minores* (justice & peace) 53%; publications 49%; foreign missions 43%; mixed OFM, Capuchin, and Conventual communities 38%; mixed apostolages 47%; communications 50%; houses of prayer 55%; common novitiates in regional areas 44%; Franciscan theological schools 71%; ministry to 2nd and 3rd Orders 47%; others (these varied much and will be forwarded to the Provincials).

12. The ultimate goal of inter-Franciscan activity should be (check only one):

T	Status	2%	simple inter-	24%	a federation	18%	reunification	56%
P	quo	2%	cooperation	33%		19%		45%
V		4%		27%		15%		54%
F		2%		19%		17%		61%

∞

Number of questionnaires sent: 5178 (P-1060; V-953; F-3145)
Number of responses: 2805 (P- 634; V-612; F-1559)
Percentage of returns: 54% (P- 59%; V-64%; F- 50%)

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The Unity of the Contemporary Franciscan Experience

JOACHIM A. GIERMEK, O.F.M.CONV.

THERE IS A ferment that continues to grow and rise within Franciscanism today. It is a leaven that permeates all three Orders of the Franciscan family and every order and congregation that is affiliated to the three primary groupings. This ferment, this leaven, is a desire to seek a more intense and authentic expression of the Franciscan charism in the Church and in the world. It is a desire to be and be seen to be a real extension of the Body of Francis alive today. If, by some doubtful chance, the lived experience of every Franciscan is considered insufficient to support this claim, the contemporary documents that chronicle efforts at reform and renewal leave no possibility of error in asserting that it is so. A thoughtful examination and reflection upon the texts—constitutions, letters of the Ministers General and Ministers Provincial, letters and speeches of our late Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, statements by general and provincial chapters, affirmations, questionnaires, proposed Rules, etc.—lead to the formulation of specific opinions on the Franciscan experience of the last few years. It is an experience that both reflects and stimulates a sense of underlying unity.

Such an opportunity to read, reflect upon, and discuss these documents was given to me last year,[1] and I would like to share some personal opinions on them, particularly in reference to Franciscanism in America. The period of time covered by these texts is roughly fifteen years, i.e., since the end of the Second Vatican Council. The variety of expressions of Franciscanism manifested by the different authors and groups is surpassed only by the fundamental unity of the experience itself.

[1]In the preparation of a course for the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University (Summer, 1978) entitled "Contemporary Franciscan Documents."

Father Joachim A. Giermek, O.F.M. Conv., a member of St. Anthony's Province, has taught at the Franciscan Institute. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in philosophy at Georgetown University.

Two Sources of Unity

THERE were two principal events each expressive of God's grace, that came together at the same time to produce a uniform Franciscan experience during this last decade and a half. If one is aware of them, they can continue to bring unity among the separate members of the one Body. The first of these events was the appeal of the Second Vatican Council itself to all religious to examine their origins and traditions and the charism of their founders, and to bring themselves authentically up-to-date in the modern world without sacrificing anything of their proper status. The second, of particular importance to Franciscan renewal, was the appearance of new critical editions of Francis's writings and the writings about him and his early followers. These texts, many of them unknown to the majority of Franciscans for centuries, spurred an investigation into the person and spirit of the "real" Francis and, by implication, of the "renewed" Franciscan. Thus, source criticism came at the fortuitously appropriate moment to support the renewal directed by the Council.

In that relatively short period of time since renewal began, we have already passed through several stages that are easily recognizable as one reads in sequence the documentation of these years. There was, for example, first following the call for renewal itself, an eager exploration into the "roots" of Franciscanism: the person of Francis, his spirituality, the life of the primitive community, etc. This was followed by just as eager an application of these qualities according to the "signs of the times," very often marked by a haste to get on with the renewal and to enjoy the self-assured fruits of the project. Next came a period of disillusionment which still persists for some today because the hoped-for results were not immediately forthcoming. Many Franciscans stopped hoping and dropped out; but others, continuing to believe that renewal could be achieved, were willing to devote themselves to a painstakingly slow examination and evaluation of the experiments being carried on in the name of renewal, noting the pros and cons of the process. Finally, today, we notice that the focus of attention is on particular themes which aim at long-term results.

Notice that all of this occurred in a relatively short period of time, perhaps even too short to make this type of assessment. Note, too, that the experience of Franciscan religious has been duplicated by every other religious group within the Church

and, indeed, by the entire Church itself. Yet renewed appreciation of the person of Francis and the goals of renewal in the Church have merged to give the members of the Franciscan family an occasion through these last years, not only to grow along similar patterns but, more importantly, to grow together.

Evaluation

AN EVALUATION of Franciscan renewal, particularly by the ministers and superiors of the Franciscan orders and congregations, has shown that many of the well-intentioned but misguided experiments were prompted more by the "signs of the times" than by the Spirit of the Lord and the spirit of Francis. Many men and women needed and used the early stages of renewal to work out personal and communal developmental problems. Others attempted to link the spirit of Francis to whatever cultural or theological trend was in vogue at the time. The contemporary status of renewal, while sometimes reflecting the difficulties encountered in the past, has moved into a period of careful attention to the essentials of the Franciscan spiritual life—prayer and contemplation, minority and community. Social expression and activism are encouraged, but only if they emanate from and are expressive of a deeper personal-communal life in God, according to the model of Francis. In addition, it is generally recognized that true renewal is impeded more by a lack of information and education in things Franciscan than by a lack of desire on the part of the friars and sisters. Too many Franciscans still are not familiar with the writings of Saint Francis, the accounts of the early Franciscan movements, the history of their own communities, and their present constitutions and rules. Franciscan renewal, the spiritual leaders have seen, demands patient and careful examination of origins and traditions as well as fidelity to developing a personal relationship with God and his Church. True efforts at renewal will not attract the superficial nor be accomplished by those who seek instant gratification.

The First Order

WHEN WE examine the documents of these last fifteen years for specific interests or particular conclusions, several areas of great significance appear.

The three orders of Friars Minor, for example—the Order of Friars Minor, the Order of Friars Minor Conventual and the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin—appear to have greater similarities among themselves today than they ever had before in the history of the First Order. This can be seen especially through a careful comparison of the most recent constitutions of each of these three Orders[2] and through an examination of their General Chapter statements and the letters of their Ministers General, singly and collectively, as well as an examination of the letters addressed to the Orders by Pope Paul VI.

There is a sign of great hope in the annual meetings for prayer and discussion held by the General Curias of the three Orders of Friars Minor, joined by the Curia of the Third Order Regular. So, too, in the work to produce a common breviary for the Liturgy of the Hours and the work that continues now toward a possible common Franciscan University in Rome. Through their prayer and discussion the Ministers General acknowledged that "the Franciscan family professes only one fundamental spirituality"[3] and echoed the testimony of Pope Paul VI that these three Orders are but "different branches of the unique Franciscan root."[4] There are signs on all levels in the First Order of an earnest search for greater mutual knowledge and respect and of developing mutual collaboration.

What is it that continues to separate these friars? If one limits himself to the printed texts, particularly the various constitutions of the three Orders, it is difficult to find a single reason for division. Even what some might superficially consider to be *the* significant difference—the acceptance of papal approval to hold property in common by the Conventuals—is not a dividing factor. True, the Conventual constitutions mention ownership in common while the Friars Minor forbid it and the Capuchins do not mention it; but in practice each of the three Orders does administer goods in its own name.

Characteristics of each Order do emerge, moreover, that reflect something of each one's history and tradition. Thus the Friars Minor accentuate in their constitutions a respect for hermitages and houses of prayer, and the Capuchins recall their care for the needy in times of public calamity, fasting, particular respect for the Testament of St. Francis and the (optional) wearing of sandals and a beard. The Conventuals emerge as the most tradition-conscious of the three, reflecting on the origin of the term "Conventual" and on the Order's particular educational

[2]The author's thesis, "A Comparative Analysis of the Constitutions of the Three Orders of Friars Minor" will be published by the Franciscan Institute later this year.

[3]*Habere Spiritum Domini*, 8 (September 1976).

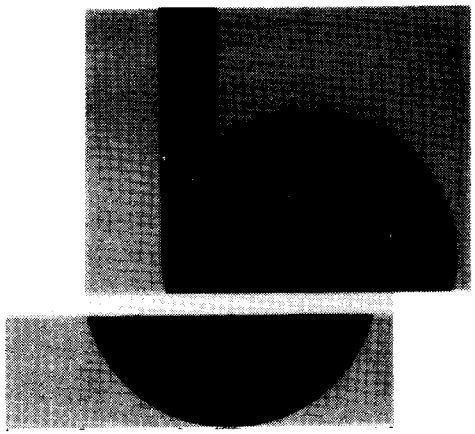
[4]Radio message, Assisi, September 29, 1976.

and devotional heritages. Upon further consideration the Capuchins do present a consciousness of upholding the contemplative, prayerful aspect of the Franciscan charism and appear particularly concerned with preaching and missionary activity. Furthermore, the Conventuals exhibit a greater respect for the communal aspects of Franciscanism and, giving a high priority to communal decisions in chapter—friary, provincial or general—do appear to be the most "democratic" of the three Orders.

But, over and above these proper characteristics, the three Orders exhibit greater similarities than contrasts. First of all, there is an unanimity in approaching and interpreting their common source, Saint Francis's Rule, spirit and intentions. There is unanimity in recognizing their Order to be a brotherhood, a community, a family of brothers in Christ. Furthermore, there is unanimity in expressing Franciscan ideals and, finally, unanimity in the ways outlined to adapt the principles of Franciscanism to the modern world. Even in those areas where there exists differences of tradition, these can be incorporated by each Order under the rubric of pluriformity, a principle to which each of the three Orders subscribes in concrete applications. Pluriformity here is not to be confused with the license of each friar to do as he pleases, interpreting the Gospel life according to personal convenience. Rather, it is to be understood as the awareness by the community of each of the three Orders that Franciscanism can be expressed today in a variety of ways. Pluriformity involves the expression and application of similar principles derived from the Gospel, the Franciscan Rule, and the teachings of the Church. It is this principle of pluriformity which alloows traits characterizing each individual Order to be found to some degree in the other two. Furthermore, if one were to compare the lived expressions of Franciscanism in the various friaries and fraternities of these Orders, one might conclude that often individual friaries and fraternities of one Order bear striking similarities to individual friaries or fraternities of another, while two communities of the same Order, even of the same province, are sometimes very dissimilar.

Repeating the question again, then, what is it that continues to separate these Orders? Looking merely at the evidence of the printed word or comparing the lived experiences is often insufficient to explain the phenomenon. Part of the answer lies in the unwritten, implicit influence of history and tradition which, for better or for worse shapes the thinking, the loyalties and the continued separation of individual groups. Although there really does not seem to be a distinct Friar Minor, Conventual, or Capuchin charism apart from the one Franciscan charism, that still does not permit anyone to disregard the fact that the different histories and shared traditions manifest different aspects of the one charism. While some may look upon this variety as a scandal and as a sign of disunity, others just as adamantly may regard it as an enrichment, a sign of unity without uniformity, and example of the best of pluriformity—and something to be researched, respected, developed and preserved for common enrichment.

Perhaps part of the key to solving this dilemma lies in that last phrase: preserved for common enrichment. This implies, however, at least a mutual respect, mutual recognition and a mutual sharing. It may be that this is what is lacking, particularly in the United States and Canada. The Ministers General have shown courage and leadership in their example of coming together for prayer and discussion, but except for scattered instances on the grass-roots level, the example has not been imitated in this country. The Ministers Provincial of the three Orders have not yet come together to pray and to discuss and to lead their brothers, as only they can,



to common pursuits in the areas of Franciscan theology, research, communications and other areas in which the various traditions could be shared for common enrichment. It may be that, because of the very principle of pluriformity, by which each Order sees itself as already possessing something of the contributions of the others, each order has allowed itself to be concerned only with its own projects, often at the expense of quality and effectiveness. (If this is the case, it is a sad state of affairs, one to be lamented. In such a state there is no witness to the unity desired by Christ which we preach in word alone. What appears to be minimally required to avoid responsibility for real division is mutual contact for prayer and dialogue. In such an environment, who can tell where the Spirit of the Lord would lead?).

Other Areas

IN REFLECTING further upon the contents of the contemporary documents, we can make several other points. The first is the concern manifested by the Ministers General and Ministers Provincial and the other male and female Franciscan superiors today to maintain unity within their orders and congregations in the face of mistaken applications of pluriformity by friars and sisters who appeal to this principle to hide their overly personalistic approaches to Franciscanism. These are the religious who cling to their own plans and projects while claiming that it is in the spirit of true pluriformity to do as they please. The spiritual leaders of these communities are also saddened by the many examples they witness in the exercise of their ministry of Franciscan men and women who put excessive stock in human plans and who refuse to acknowledge the real possibility of falling into sin when one does not include God in these plans. Such religious, they say, have forgotten one of Francis' most basic admonitions: "Do not forget God!"

Secondly, one cannot but be impressed by the continuity in the messages of Pope Paul VI to the Franciscan family. From the very beginning of his papacy until his death, in addresses to Franciscans and to the Church at large, this friend of the Franciscan spirit constantly affirmed his belief that we all live in a graced moment of history and that only the spirit of Francis of Assisi can accomplish the renewal of the Church so urgently desired by the Council. Others, non-Franciscan, may in fact be giving better example of the Franciscan spirit in the Church and in the world today, but only we as a united force in the Church can hope to achieve renewal as Francis did because only we who are his sons and daughters truly understand his spirit—or should. It is part of our histories, our traditions. But, Pope Paul also cautioned, the Franciscans will renew the Church, only when they have first been renewed themselves, individually and communally.

A third item that calls for our attention in this period of the Franciscan experience is the intensity with which Third Order congregations of men and women religious are searching for their specific identity. This is true not only of the Third Order Regular of men who are investigating their roots as an Order of Penance and seeing themselves as possessors of a distinctive spirituality, but also of the women's groups, many of which were founded in the last two centuries but are only recently discovering their identity as Franciscans.

There are efforts among some Third Order groups of men and women toward a greater visible bond of unity among themselves. But there is also great concern expressed by many of these same groups lest their congregation's uniqueness be swallowed up in some general federation according to the lines of a spirituality with which they cannot readily identify. In some cases, they have not even been consulted regarding such possible federations and would like to be able to participate in these discussions when they occur. From the documentation it would appear that the basis for at least a generic type of Third Order unity must be a most general yet most faithful expression of the Franciscan charism which will still allow for a proper manifestation of the peculiar traditions of each congregation.

When one considers the texts that emerge from women's groups, it is evident that they are particularly sensitive on areas of obedience and the exercise of authority—and rightfully so! Any exposure to the inner workings of women's communities quickly reveals that there has often been a great deal of suffering and pain inflicted through unyielding demands of obedience to authority. Even many communities which theoretically admit the Franciscan and theological bases for a more subtle and nuanced interpretation of personal obedience and personal authority must be excused for the time being for not always putting these theories into practice immediately. Despite this, in many ways the women's communities are showing themselves to be ahead of the men's in successfully continuing the challenge of renewal.

Finally, a reflection on the documentation that has emerged from Franciscan renewal during these last fifteen years shows that the focus of concentration for renewal today has been directed to the "converting-Franciscan-in-community." This one phrase is packed with meaning. It conveys notions of on-going personal conversion, of education in and identification with elements of Franciscan history and spirituality, and of viewing the community in which one lives as the arena in which there is enacted the drama of religious life as reflective of the nature of the Church-sacrament.

In this focus, too, attention has been drawn to the community chapters—local, regional, universal—with emphasis on shared involvement and shared responsibility, on the service and pastoral ministry of the local spiritual leader and the recognition of personal talents at the service of the community. While it can be supected that the emergence of the community chapter as a forum for shared involvement and

responsibility is often merely a response to the directive of the Second Vatican Council, it can also be shown that such chapters are consistent with the oldest practices of the Franciscans, preserved throughout history by at least one tradition.

These reflections have been offered for the sake of showing that Franciscanism in the last fifteen years has shared a unifying experience—unifying each order and congregation within the one family and unifying the entire family itself. Much of this experience has been lived in common with other religious and with other Christians, but much of it is peculiarly Franciscan, inspired by the same spirituality, the same personality of Francis, the same Gospel. An awareness of this common experience can go far in convincing all of us that the similarities that unite us are far greater than the differences that separate us. At the same time they should serve to remind us of how much still remains to be done, even within our own Franciscan family, to make the prayer of Jesus Christ a reality: "That all may be one."

Matins

Rain sounds on the roof;
psalms ballet by the Fire.
Hearts gather,
each alone with her Lover.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

Pax et Bonum

DOMINIC J. UNGER, O.F.M.CAP.

WE FRANCISCANS have a good motto and a good greeting—in Latin. Of course, the motto "Deus meus et omnia" is also good in English: "My God and my all." The greeting "Pax et bonum," However, has been a problem in English. In the past few years I have seen a number of different translations even in places like the English *L'Osservatore romano*. It is unfortunate that we have no uniformly accepted translation of this powerful and beautiful greeting. A uniformly acceptable translation is most desirable.

The Latin "Pax et bonum" is concise and rich in meaning. Any translation should be as concise as feasible and as rich in content as the original; if not, it will lose its force as a common Franciscan greeting. There is no problem with *pax*. "Peace" is the only possible translation, and it fits quite well. The problem is with *bonum*. This is an adjective turned noun. It is a concrete noun, not an abstract one. It means all good or all blessings, both natural and supernatural, that one can possess. As an aside, I would note that in that broad meaning it is really a synonym for the biblical *pax, shalom*. Now if *bonum* is a concrete noun, indicating the sum total of blessings, it should not be translated by "goodness," which would at best be ambiguous. Nor should it be rendered "good," in which the true meaning of *bonum* is not immediately apparent. To add a noun like "things" does not help much.

In order to get a discussion started and possibly reach some agrement, and eventually win favor for one translation, I would suggest "blessings" for *Bonum*. In the plural it can stand by itself: "Peace and blessings." This would certainly be concise enough, and in meaning it would include all the blessings of God, natural as well as supernatural. Maybe, however, the force of the Latin would be made stronger if we use the singular and add the adjective "every": "Peace and every blessing." Some might prefer "Peace and all blessing": What do you say?

I think we should strive for a standard translation in English, so that this greeting will be immediately recognizable and become very popular. We should not have to miss out on the value of the greeting so dear to Franciscans: "Pax et bonum." And we should not have to use the Latin for the lay people. And so, "Peace and every blessing."

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The Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

SISTER MARY LEAH KRAUTH, O.S.F.

FRANCIS of Assisi was, Celano tells us, "not so much praying as becoming himself a prayer."[1] Baptized John but affectionately called Francis by his father Pietro Bernardone, he grew to young manhood and was educated to take his place in the merchant's world of the Middle Ages. He felt called to another way of life, however, and subsequently broke all ties with his family, especially his father. A series of events led him to frequent secluded spots in the hills around Assisi where he could importune the Lord in prayer for guidance. It was during this time that Francis was gifted with a vivid awareness of God's love for him. As Bonaventure writes,

> One day as he was praying in solitude, Jesus Christ appeared to him, hanging on His Cross. He made Francis realize so vividly the force of the Gospel words, "If any man has a mind to come my way, let him renounce self, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mt: 16:24), that his heart was filled with compassion and burned within him with the fire of love. His soul melted at the sight of the vision, and the memory of Christ's passion was impressed so intimately on the depths of his heart that the wounds of his crucified Lord seemed to be always before his mind's eye, and he could scarcely restrain his sighs and tears. Now that he no longer had any regard for all that he owned in the world, and thought nothing of it for love of Jesus Christ, Francis felt that he had found the hidden treasure, the brilliant pearl of great price mentioned in the Gospel. He was eager to make it his own and he decided to give up everything he had; in a business deal worthy of a saint, he would renounce his position as an earthly trader and become like the trader in the Gospel.[2]

Exactly when this occurred we do not know. We do know that Francis began in his early twenties to seek God's company in prayer, and gradually his way of life changed radically. He turned from the ways of a rich young man to that of a poor and humble penitent. He mourned for his sins, begging for God's mercy, and earnestly petitioned Him to know what was His will for him. From this initial struggle, he emerged with a joy and gratitude that grew with each year of his life. From then until his death in 1226, he strove with all his being to return the love God so lavishly bestowed upon him.

Consider the change to which Francis's gift of prayer led him, and the transformation which Thomas of Celano indicated became so evident, I propose to look at a few of the extant expressions of Francis's prayer to discover, as far as possible, both his attitude toward God: Father, Son, and Spirit, and the effect such prayer had in turn upon himself.

That Francis valued his gift is evidenced by the fact that he prayed. Numerous witnesses attest to this. As Celano writes of his early days of conversion, Francis

> withdrew for a while from the hustle and business of the world and tried to establish Jesus Christ dwelling within himself.... The man of God... would enter the grotto while his companion would wait for him outside; and filled with a new and singular spirit, he would pray to his Father in secret.... He prayed devoutly that the eternal and true God would direct his way and teach him to do His will.[3]

Even Francis's fear of his father's anger was eventually turned to courage. Through his almost constant contact with his Lord in prayer, he learned to trust the God he was beginning to know in so personal a way. Celano tells us:

> Praying, he always prayed with a torrent of tears that the Lord would deliver him from the hands of those who were persecuting his soul, and that He would fulfill his pious wishes in His loving kindness; in fasting and weeping he begged for the clemency of the Savior, and distrusting his own efforts, he cast his whole care upon the Lord. And though he was in a pit and in darkness, he was nevertheless filled with a certain exquisite joy of which till then he had had no experience; and catching fire therefrom, he left the pit and exposed himself openly to the curses of his persecutors.[4]

One significant prayer Francis uttered in the early days of his conversion was that which he prayed before the crucifix in San Damiano:

> Great and glorious God, I pray to You, and my Lord Jesus Christ, to illumine the darkness of my heart. Instill within me a correct faith, a firm hope, and a perfect love. Lead me, Lord, that I

[1]2 Celano 95; *Omnibus*, p. 441.
[2]St. Bonaventure, *Legenda Minor*, I, 4; *Omnibus*, p. 795.
[3]1 Celano 6; *Omnibus*, p. 234.
[4]Ibid., 10; p. 238.

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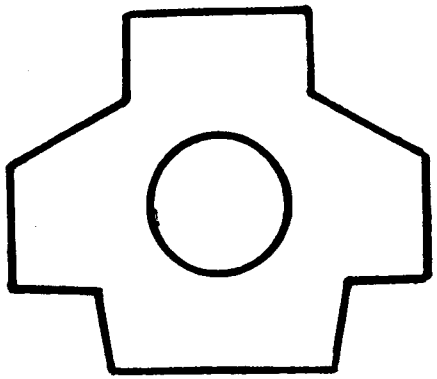
may come to know You, and knowing You, may Your holy will truly be accomplished in all that I do. Amen.[5]

This utterance shows that Francis saw himself as greatly lacking in comparison to the One who deserves praise and adoration. He approached both Father and Son, the latter particularly as He shares in humanity, as "my Lord"; and he begged for enlightenment, for the graces that would dispel his inner darkness, and for the virtues that have God as both Source and End. He besought the eminently praiseworthy Lord to grant him true knowledge, which is an experience of Himself, that all God willed might be accomplished in him. This is the cry of a man who has fallen in love, and who aches for oneness with his beloved. And, as has already been indicated, when he was given light, Francis responded with total, grateful love; his joy was boundless.

The persecution he had once feared was now a joy to him—even an occasion for praise.



Celano tells us of his response to a beating by robbers in the woods near the town. Having been thrown into a ditch full of snow, he waited until the robbers had gone and then "jumped out of the ditch, and glad with great joy, he began to call out the praises of God in a loud voice throughout the grove."[6]

Though Francis never ceased mourning for his sins, his prayer soon became more expressive of praise than of repentance. Bernard of Quintavalle "noticed that Francis would pray all night, sleeping but rarely, praising God and the glorious Virgin Mother of God."[7] No doubt it was out of his tender love for Jesus who

[5]K. Esser, *Die Opuscula des hl.Franziskus von Assisi* containing translation by Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M.Conv. (Grottaferrata, 1976), p. 356.

[6]1 Celano 16; *Omnibus*, p. 242.

[7]Ibid., 24; *Omnibus*, p. 248. The prayer, "My God and my All!" attributed to Francis in this same incident first appeared in *Actus Beati Francisci et Sociorum Eius* by a Brother Ugolino more than a century after the Saint's death. Though it is certainly an expression of Francis's spirit of prayer, whether it is his own distinct expression is questioned; see *Omnibus*, pp. 1281 and 1516.

gave His life for him that he instructed his brothers to pray, and prayed himself as he tells us in his Testament: "We adore You, Lord Jesus Christ, here and in all Your churches throughout the world, and we bless You, because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world."[8]

The longer Francis lived, the more he recognized God's goodness to him. He could not stop praising and thanking his God for who He is in Himself and for the goodness He continually showered on him. He never attributed any good to himself, but referred it to his heavenly Father. His written prayers are outpourings of his grateful heart. One example is found in his "Praises before the Office: "Allpowerful, 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."[9] Perhaps by such prayer he was responding to the words of Jesus, "No one is good but God alone" (Mk. 10:18), and for Francis, the word of Jesus was the word of life.

In 1221, when Francis felt obliged to revise the format of the Rule by which he and his brothers lived, he apparently could not prevent himself from bursting forth in praise and thanks once again. It is another example of his recognition of the Father as the Source of all blessings, and of Jesus as the Way through whom we both receive these blessings and return perfect thanks. His conscious belief in the Trinity is clearly expressed too, as he addresses the Father and explicitly names the Son and the Spirit:

> Almighty, most high and supreme God, Father, holy and just Lord, King of heaven and 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

[8]Testament; *Omnibus*, p. 67.

[9]The Praises before the Office; *Omnibus*, p. 139.

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" (Mt. 17:5), 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.

All good is through Jesus, the beloved Son, and in the Spirit. But then he calls on all the saints and angels and begs "them all most humbly, for love of You, 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, forever and ever. Amen."[10] Again we see Francis's realization of his own nothingness before God; and yet we see him so joyously happy because he knows and acknowledges the goodness of the Father who will continue gifting him with all he needs.

In his desire to give himself totally in love, Francis begged with his whole heart to share somehow in the sufferings of his Lord and elder Brother, Jesus. The wish of his heart was granted in September of 1224, when on Mount Alverna the wounds of the crucified Son of God were imprinted on his own body and became for him a means of both intense love and intense suffering. The "Praises of God" which he penned with his own stigmatized hand for Brother Leo indicate the fullness of his grateful, self-forgetting praise:

You are holy, Lord, the only God,
and Your deeds are wonderful.
You are strong.
You are great.
You are the Most High.
You are the Almighty.
You, holy Father, are King of heaven and earth.
You are Three and One,
Lord God, all good,
You are Good, all Good, supreme Good,
Lord God, living and true.

Then he breaks forth:

You are love,
You are wisdom.
You are humility,
You are endurance.
You are rest,
You are peace.
You are joy and gladness.
You are justice and moderation.
You are all our riches,
And You suffice for us.

Notice that Francis does not describe God; he names God.

[10]1 Rule 23; *Omnibus*, pp. 50-51.

He does not call him "loving," but "love." And he ends by proclaiming again that God is all we really need. He gives voice also to his recognition that it is God's initiative that bridges the distance between Himself and us:

You are great.
You are gentleness.
You are our protector,
You are our guardian and defender.
You are courage.
You are our haven and our hope.
You are our faith,
Our great consolation.
You are our eternal life,
Great and wonderful Lord.

Though Francis's Lord is "God almighty," He is "merciful Savior" as well.[11]

Notwithstanding his special graces, Francis never relied on his own strength or virtue, but in all things turned trustfully to the Father. He ends his Letter to a General Chapter with a fervent plea for the grace to be faithful in following in Jesus's footsteps:

Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God, grant us in our misery that we may do for Your sake alone what we know You want us to do, and always what pleases You; so that, cleansed and enlightened interiorly and fired with the ardour of the Holy Spirit, we may be able to follow in the footsteps of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and so make our way to You, Most High, by Your grace alone, You who live and reign in perfect Trinity and simple Unity, and are glorified, God all-powerful, forever and ever. Amen.[12]

Again, incidentally, we see expressed our holy Father's explicit awareness of the Trinity as a reality in his life.

It seems to me that Francis's prayer formed a spiral of Love. Through in his prayer expression we clearly see his deep faith in the Trinity, his consciousness of being son of the Father, brother (together with all men and women) of the Son, and one led and made holy by the Spirit; his sensitive sorrow for sin and his gratitude for creation and redemption. His prayer really began with the recognition that God loved him and gifted him with all that he needed for life both here and hereafter. God's love was the source of all the good he knew or possessed in himself, and consequently all good, for him, was gift. He gave thanks and thus opened himself to receive even more from the Source of all good.

Francis's sorrow for his sinfulness and weakness grew out of his recognition that sin is a selfish refusal to accept such love and return thanks for such unmerited kindness. His life of penance was

[11]The Praises of God; *Omnibus*, pp. 125-26.
[12]Letter to a General Chapter; *Omnibus*, p. 108.

a part of his way of returning all to the Father with grateful love, and thus of readying himself as far as he could to receive all that the Father willed for him. Even the grace to live this way, he acknowledged as gift. His whole-hearted response to the love he received from God only opened him to accept a fuller out pouring of the Lord's love, and it was in turn the source of a fuller respnse of loving praise and thanks to the God who so loved him.

Looking at what Celano and others have written about Francis and his prayer, and at the few prayers of his we have extant, I see a crescendo of praise that eventually burst forth in a total self-forgetting tribute of love to the Other. It begins in a barely audible cry, a response to the call of Love, and reaches a magnificently resounding summons to thank and praise the God of Love through all of creation.

The heights to which his love and praise soared are exemplified in the "Canticle of Brother Sun," composed in the last year of his life. Especially is this true when we consider that the first nine verses were written when he lay in intense suffering in the garden of the Poor Clares' convent at San Damiano. He begins with his usual salute to the "Most High . . . all good Lord," and proclaims that all praise and glory and blessing belong to Him alone. He then moves to praise God *through* His creatures—not in union side by side with them, but through them. As he names the creatures, he reminds God of the good that He gives us through them and of how they remind us of God's own attributes. In return, all praise is due the Lord, and through them he gives God His due:

Most High, all-powerful, all good, Lord!
All praise is Yours, all glory, all honor
And all blessing.
To You alone, Most High, do they belong.
No mortal lips are worthy
To pronounce Your Name.
All praise be Yours, my Lord, through all that
You have made,
And first my lord Brother Sun,
Who brings the day; and light
You give to
us through him.
How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendor!
Of You, Most High, he bears the likeness.
All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon
and Stars;
In the heavens You have made them, bright
And precious and fair.
And fair and stormy, all the weather's moods,
By which You cherish all that You have made.
All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Sister Water,
So useful, lowly, precious and pure.
All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
Through whom You brighten up the night.
How beautiful is he, how gay!
Full of power and strength.
All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our mother,
who feeds us in her sovereignty and produces
Various fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Not very long after he composed the Canticle and set it to music, he added two more verses in an attempt to restore peace between civil and religious authorities in Assisi. Again he sings that praise comes to the Lord through His creatures who relate to one another:

All praise be Yours, my Lord, through those who grant pardon
For love of You; through those who endure
Sickness and trial.
Happy those who endure in peace,
By You, Most High, they will be crowned.

When his own death was imminent, he added a few more lines praising the Lord through even Sister Death:

All Praise be Yours, my Lord,
Through Sister Death,
From whose embrace no mortal man can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Happy those she finds doing Your will!
The second death can do no harm to them.

He ends with a plea:

Praise and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks,
And serve Him with great humility.[13]

And so ends the earthly prayer of Francis of Assisi, Seraphic Lover and herald of Peace. May the spiral of love that began in his heart in Assisi continue to grow through the grateful, loving praises of those in whom, by his own response to God, he has inspired a like desire of total, self-forgetting love.

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[13]The Canticle of Brother Sun; *Omnibus*, pp. 128-31.

A Simple Heart

A tiny seedling
Sprouting forth in the dead of winter
Trying to live, to grow,
Someday to bear fruit
Against seemingly impossible odds

It struggles patiently.

A little Baby
Born on a late December night
Into the wilderness called man
Shivering in the cold
Starving in hunger
Clothed in poverty
Heat cannot warm him
Food cannot satisfy him
Material cannot clothe him

He cries in silence.

A ragged beggar
In a makeshift manger
Singing so sonorously
The Word of his Lover
As the biting wind
And the cover of darkness
Envelops this faraway place called Greccio
His faith refuses to be shaken.

In a scene so far removed
In a season so cold and barren
In souls so seemingly dissimilar
A union takes place
Befuddling the visionless mind;

For poverty is not penurious
Innocence is not isolated
And simplicity is not sterile
But all bear the fruits of love
In a heart nourished
By a stream of never-ending grace.

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

Connoisseur of Wine

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

IT IS true! Jesus, the God-man, was an authentic connoisseur of wine. At Cana he not only tasted, but made wine; and, as if in criticism of the wine already used for the feast, he made wine far superior to what the host had given his guests. As is stated in the Gospel account:

> The waiter in charge tasted the water made wine, without knowing where it had come from; . . . then the waiter in charge called the groom over to him and remarked, "People usually serve the choice wine first; then, when the guests have been drinking awhile, a lesser vintage. What you have done is keep the choice wine until now" [Jn. 2:9-10].

Some writers have conjectured that perhaps Jesus felt a bit guilty since he had not come alone but had with him his whole "College of bishops," thus depleting the supply more rapidly. Others have implied that Jesus and his friends were, indeed, party crashers, but, whatever the case, Jesus made ample reparation. In fact, as is always his way, he went beyond the expected generosity. The best wine!

It seems appropriate that Jesus would begin his public ministry giving the best wine, since he completed his earthly ministry also with the best wine: himself! And it is of further interest for today's woman that Jesus did this at the request of a woman: a woman who was obviously sensitive to the needs of others. She asked him to alleviate the embarrassment which would result for the young couple.

One wonders how important this wine really was. It was, first of all, important to the young couple as the party givers; to the guests for their enjoyment; to Mary as an interested member of the party; to Jesus, in particular, as an expression of his concern for and blessing on married couples as well as his own debut into the public eye. But why wine of such excellent quality? Why not just ordinary wine, such as the couple would normally put out near the end of the celebration? Was it not perhaps to teach his followers and us a few lessons? First, God

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will give only the best; secondly, anyone who asks of Mary will receive in the name of her Son; and finally, those who have faith in him will be given and be given only the best.

It was through the use of wine that Jesus anticipated the opening and the end of his public life. In both instances wine was used for a celebration, and both celebrations anticipated a new life. In both, Jesus was actively involved in the use of the wine, and in both a change was effected. May one not affirm that the water changed represented the hidden, pure life of Jesus which sudently blushed as he stepped out into the public to proclaim his law of love? And may one not further affirm the wine changed as the drastic act of love we witness at Mass? It is reasonable to affirm a substantial change from water to wine, from hidden life to public life, from public life to glorified life. Just as one can see water and wine, one can recognize an individual emerging into the public eye; and, so too, one realizes limitations as far as the transformation of wine into Jesus's Blood as well as Jesus's attaining his glorified condition. He presented us with the former that we might believe in the latter.

Yes, Jesus really knew his wines. Recall the parable of the wine skins: "No one pours new wine into old wine skins. Should he do so, the new wine will burst the old skins, the wine will spill out, and the skin will be lost. New wine should be poured into fresh skins. No one, after drinking old wine, wants new. He says, "I find the old wine better" (Lk. 3:37-39).

The aging process of wine and skins must commence simultaneously, so that the wine will be of the finest quality and so that any waste will be prevented which would result from the bad combination of new wine and old skins. This is, then, an on-going process rather than something instantaneous. It continues to be so even in our instant-everything society.

Our Connoisseur expected people to be intelligent enough to understand this parable as a practical application analogous to the human maturing process. Body and soul must grow together to become the best, spiritually, that an individual can be. Just as each wine ages to its own perfection, each person must reach perfection in his own unique way. The pattern for this perfection is, moreover, found in the life of the Connoisseur. He tasted and made only the best wines.

He desired and created only the best of everything—but sometimes, just as wineskins can be split by holding something too potent, fresh new life can be wated by poor or rash judgment.

There are many more concrete images of Jesus and his use of wine or in his role as wine-presser, throughout the Old and New Testaments, which emphasize the importance of wine to the people as a drink as well as the product of an occupation of their livelihood. And Jesus, as a good teacher, uses only those images which have meaning in the lives of the people.

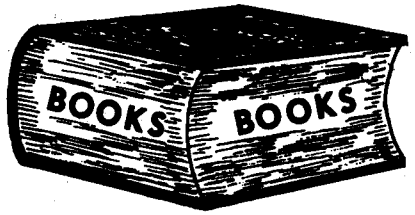
Perhaps the Connoisseur is well described in these lines:

The wine of the feast He changes free;
upon request—He gives the best.
Yet—not alone this wine He gives,
but life and love are truly His
To place upon the altar bare;
His life, His blood—is passing there.

Can men this concept fully know?
Can man distinguish heaven so?
Jesus speaks plainly to those who hear,
and for this knowledge He has paid dear.
Such water—such wine—such life to seek,
That man who needs shall his soul keep.

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.



Spirit of the Living God. By Wilfrid Harrington, O.P. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1977. Pp. xii-180, incl. bibliography. Paper $2.95.

Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Editor of this Review.

Father Wilfrid Harrington, Professor of Scripture at the Milltown Institute of Philosophy and Theology and the Dominican House of Studies in Dublin, has placed every Christian in his debt by acceding to the long-standing request of his friend, Michael Glazier, for this book.

The author is not involved in the charismatic movement; but James J. Haley, who has been so involved for many years, rightly welcomes the book (in the Introduction) as a thoroughly competent guide to biblical pneumatology for all, whether in or outside the charismatic movement.

In his first chapter, Father Harrington sketches a brief overview of biblical references to Father, Son, and Spirit, pointing out that except for Mt. 28:19 which is probably a liturgical formula adopted by the sacred author, there is no explicit treatment in the Scriptures of trinitarian theology. Rather than a theoretical discussion of the nature and relations of the divine Persons, there is a functional description of the roles they play in our creation and salvation.

Succeeding chapters discuss in detail the theology of the Spirit found in the Old Testament, then in Mark and Matthew, in Luke-Acts, in the Pauline and Catholic Letters, and in the Johannine writings. While it is tempting to pass along the many rich insights he sets forth, it seems preferable here, in the interest of brevity, simply to indicate that the exegeses are uniformly good, up-to-date, and thoroughly edifying, containing no surprises.

Two ensuing chapters are more systematic, dealing respectively with the life we live in the Spirit and the Gifts of the Spirit. A final brief chapter consists of a summary of the entire book and a fervent exhortation to devout Christian life in the Spirit.

Father Harrington writes well; in this book he maintains a direct and popular style, with even an occasional touch of humor, as when he suggests a translation (p. 85) of Eph. 5:18: "Do not get high on spirits but on the Spirit." His warning against the Pentecostal error of separating baptism with water and baptism in the Spirit (pp. 166-67 and pp. 170-71) is of great pastoral importance today, as in his repeated insistence that the Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus and that therefore devotion to the Spirit should not be distorted into something "special" and independent in our spiritual life. Filial life in the Son means openness to the Spirit and awareness of his power and presence in our lives.

Spirit of the Living God is, as I said, a popular work. It contains no controversial discussions, and even the few references are placed in text rather than notes. It does have a bibliography of some thirty-one items, most of which are in English, which the reader should find helpful. At the low price of $2.95, it should find a welcome place alongside the very much longer, more detailed, and finely indexed 1976 book of Father George T. Montague, *The Holy Spirit: Growth of a Biblical Tradition*, which in all candor covers the same ground with equal reliability.

The Order of Priesthood: Nine Commentaries on the Vatican Decree Inter Insigniores. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. xiii-145. Cloth, $7.50.

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

Recently the Anglican bishops in conclave at Canterbury overwhelmingly voted in favor of accepting the ordination of women priests. The National Assembly of Women Religious meeting in Pittsburgh expressed their belief that Roman Catholic women who feel called to the priesthood have the "right to have their call tested just as men do." In view of this trend, is the Roman Catholic Church being oppressive of women's rights by not admitting women to ordination for ministerial priesthood? The publication of the Vatican decree *Inter Insigniores*, along with the official commentary sponsored by the sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and a collection of nine essays by outstanding church leaders gives a definite "No" to this question. The Decree *Inter Insigniores* was signed and approved by the late Pope Paul VI on October 15, 1976, the feast of St. Teresa of Avila.

While it will not end the discussion of the subject of the ordination of women priests, this short volume of 145 pages gives the theologian and the informed Catholic lay reader a good resume of the official Roman Church's teaching and the thinking of some outstanding Catholic scholars and churchmen. Each essay as well as the decree itself has a good set of footnotes for further study and scholarly pursuit of this subject.

The first twenty pages are devoted to the text of the decree and the commentary prepared at the Congregation's request. Many readers will be familiar with this, and it suffices to give the ordinary reader the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on the ordination of women to ministerial priesthood. The rest of the essays give a more detailed expose according to scripture and tradition as to why the Church does not admit women to ordination, while insisting that the Church is now and has been the champion of women's rights. "In fact no one, male or female, can claim a 'right' to ordination. Therefore not to ordain women would be an injustice only if ordination were a God-given right of every individual; only if somehow one's human potential could not be fulfilled without it" (p. 145). Both the essay "The Advancement of Women according to the Church" by Raimondo Spiazzi, O.P., Professor at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, Rome, and "The Ministerial Priesthood and the Advancement of Women" by Archbishop Joseph L.

Bernardin, past president of the U.S. Episcopal Conference give well documented evidence of the concern of the Holy See for the rights of women. "The Male Priesthood: A Violation of Women's Rights" considers what is essential in a candidate for the sacrament of Orders. Two other essays shed light on the nature of the priesthood by considering the theological formula, "In persona Christi" and "The Mystery of the Covenant and the Ministerial Priesthood"; they are by Monsignor Martimont and Gustave Martelet, S.J., respectively. The essays are rounded out by a consideration of the Mystery of Mary and the Ministerial Priesthood.

Finally, a new generation of women and a new age demand reasons; hopefully this volume will shed light on the real nature of ministerial priesthood and the fundamental human rights of both sexes. It should make the reader aware of the diversity of roles in the Church, in which equality is not identity. And it should foster the realization that "the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven are not the ministers but the saints." Thus in a less complicated time St. Therese of Lisieux could pray, "The vocation of the priesthood—with what love, my Jesus, would I bear You in my hands when my words brought You down from heaven . . . yet, with all my longing to be a priest, I admire and envy the humility of St. Francis of Assisi and feel myself drawn to imitate him by refusing that sublime dignity."

Pope Paul and the Spirit: Charisms and Church Renewal in the Teaching of Paul VI. By Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. xiii-258, including 3 appendices. Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Father William A. Meninger, O.C.S.O., St. Joseph's Abbey, Spencer, Massachusetts.

(Let us begin parenthetically by forgiving Father O'Connor for calling Pope Paul VI "the great Guru of the West.")

In his brief introduction to this helpful book, Cardinal Suenens calls it "an exhaustive survey of what Pope Paul has said about the Holy Spirit." He recommends the book to those in the Charismatic Renewal, especially in reference to those texts involving discernment of spirits, the connection between charism and hierarchy, charism and sacramental life, and charism and Mary.

Father O'Connor wishes to acquaint "all who are open to the spirit of Jesus" with the teachings of Paul VI, "a real man of the Spirit." Obviously the book has special meaning to those in the Charismatic Renewal, whom, the author feels, are very little acquainted with the late Pope's teachings, even though Paul VI "has been somewhat reserved in his appraisal of them" and his comments "rather heavily laden with cautions and warnings," admonitions which Father O'Connor feels are "salutary and pertinent."

The book is well planned and documented. There is no index, but the Table of Contents gives a comprehensive review of the contents. There are two Parts and three Appendices. Part I is "An Overview of the Pope's Teaching." This contains Father O'Connor's reflections (with extensive quotations from Paul VI and dozens of footnotes) on the Pope's personal charism, his attitude towards the Renewal, his misgivings, and his admonitions. Some of the more platitudinous sections could have been dispensed with. We know that Paul VI approves of the Holy Spirit and hardly doubt that the Spirit has a significant role to play in Church renewal! Perhaps, however, some of this is necessary for completeness.

Chapter Four, on the Rome Conference of Charismatics (May 16-19, 1975), is well written and worth some attention. A genuine attempt is made to assess frankly the cautious approval indicated by Paul VI's presence and in his four addresses (printed in full in part II). Chapter Eight gives careful attention to the Pope's remarks on the sacraments, the hierarchy, and Mary—areas that other denominations find perplexing. "Even Catholic Charismatics not rarely have a difficult time relating [them] . . . to the action of the Holy Spirit."

Part II comprises the actual texts of Pope Paul VI, complete with footnotes. These begin June 21, 1963, on his election to the Papacy, and conclude on May 19, 1977. Together with Father O'Connor's comments in Part I, it is worthwhile having easy access to these texts.

As a whole, the book is a significant manifestation of the growth (and guarded approval) of the Charismatic Renewal in the Church from the time when Father O'Connor wrote the "first definitive study of the movement from the standpoint of Catholic theology": *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Ave Maria Press, 1971).

Authenticity: A Biblical Theology of Discernment. By Thomas Dubay, S.M. Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1977. Pp. 208. Cloth, $7.95.

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

Discernment of God's will is not a matter of mastering certain techniques or processes, but rather of openness to being guided by the objective norms of the Bible and the teaching Church. Father Dubay reminds us of lessons we heard in our novitiates and perhaps have almost forgotten in this subjective age of ours. *Inspirations must be tested,* and that means that they must be submitted to the judgment of a spiritual director, a superior, a bishop, the doctrine of the Church. That we are all too likely to deceive ourselves is not only abundantly taught in the Bible, but also confirmed by what psychology teaches us about unconscious motivation.

God cannot contradict himself. If we hear God speaking to us something other than what he has revealed, we have garbled his message (cf. Gal. 1:6-9). Both the pastoral epistles and the Pauline corpus reject any illuminism, or private interpretation of the message of Jesus.

Especially valuable in a work uniformly valuable throughout, are the analysis of the experience of God,

the specifying of conditions for discernment (humility and readiness to be corrected are primary), the reminder that lifestyle (holiness vs. selfishness) is one of the basic indicators of the origin (divine or human) of inspiration. The unearthing of the skepticism inherent in the false theological pluralism which plagues us today is a special bonus. Father Dubay masterfully points out that such pluralism is as self-refuting as any skepticism.

Authenticity is a book for every priest, religious, and educated Catholic. But it is, of course, a book to be lived, not just read.

Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil. By Morton Kelsey. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. viii-158, including bibliography. Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy, Fordham), Associate Professor of Philosophy at Siena College and Associate Editor of this Review.

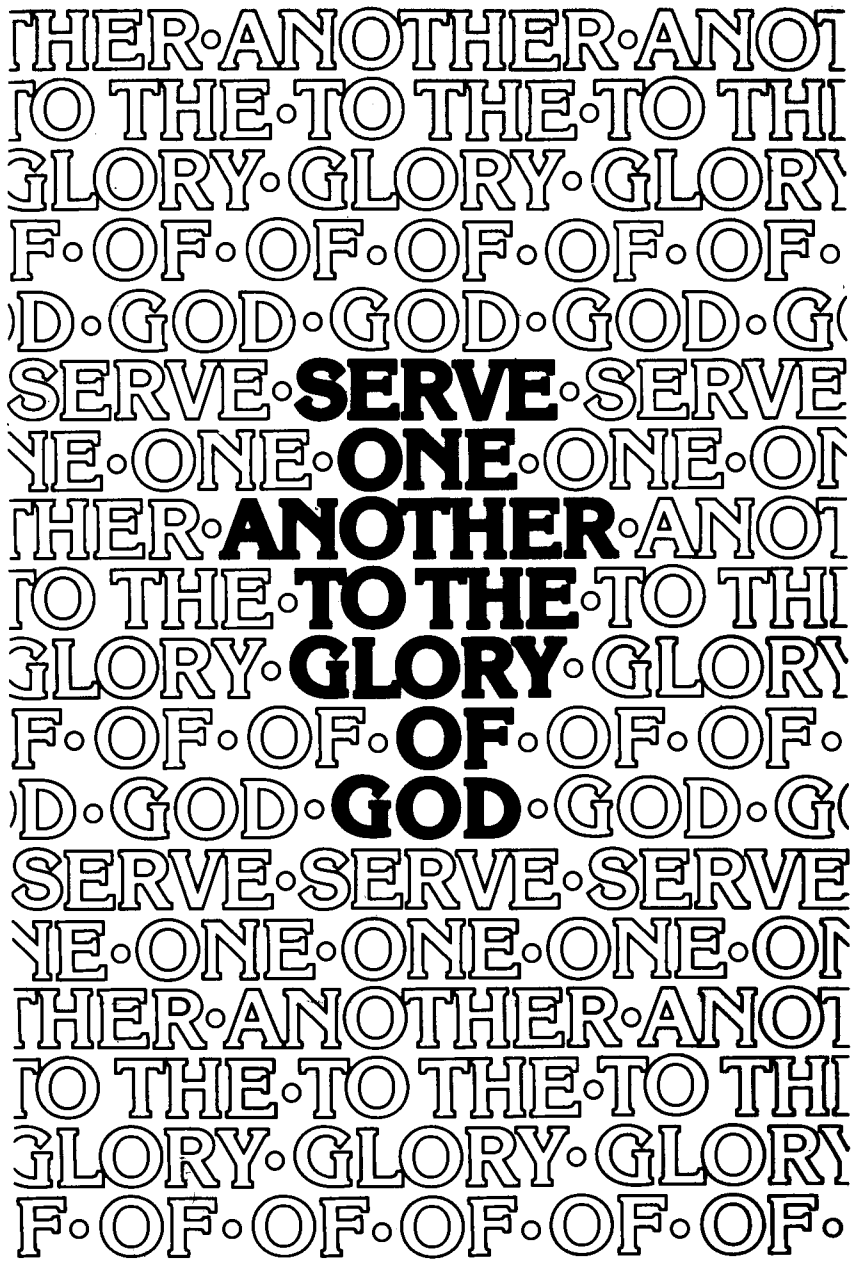
In this age of charismatic renewal, more and more of us meet people who have had religious experiences like speaking in tongues, being healed at a prayer service, or being slain in the spirit. Those who have heard about or witnessed such events wonder whether they are from the Holy Spirit, from an evil spirit, or perhaps only from man's own psyche. The most substantial chapter of Morton Kelsey's latest work is devoted to a description of the phenomenon of slaying in the Spirit, its parallels in primitive religions, its possible sources (he lists eight), and criteria to apply in evaluating it. The criteria, as one might suspect, indicate that where self-seeking and feelings of superiority are present, we do not find the action of the Holy Spirit, whereas where faith, hope, healing, and love are, we do. Kelsey regards "slaying in the Spirit" as a start on the way to conversion and argues that follow-up is most important.

He also builds an excellent case for the existence of angels and devils by a thorough documentation from New Testament sources. He indicates how the existence of good and evil spirits is really a presupposition of the very concept of salvation as well as of the Lord himself. Criteria are furnished for distinguishing the angelic from the demonic; here again, the seeking of power over others is a sure sign of an evil influence.

Kelsey continues with a discussion of myth and language, pointing out how the "parrational" type thinking of the former is valuable in explaining the existence of evil. The need to acknowledge the reality of evil, and the conquest of it through sacrifice are among his most important themes.

In his penultimate chapter the author offers a description of various stages of life and an imaginative, original account of the human psyche. He closes by treating of discernment in counseling, with special emphasis on the need for the counselor's himself having found meaning in life.

Discerning readers can find in *Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil* some worthwhile suggestions and insights.



1979 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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

the CORD

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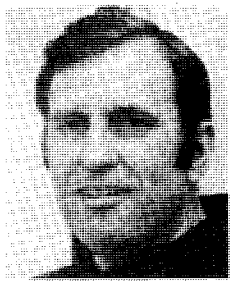

A REVIEW EDITORIAL

Esser's Testament

THE RECENT DEATH of the learned Franciscan author Cajetan Esser makes this work in a way his own Testament to fellow Franciscans. The briefer of the two parts of the book is a series of conferences on the Rule. Esser discusses the influences of legend, asceticism, and a legalistic mentality on Franciscan per ceptions of the Rule. Abandoning the 12-chapter division, he divides the Rule into 40 sentences and has a commentary on each. Three themes are underscored: the Rule is a genuine reflection of the mind of Francis; the Franciscans are first of all a fraternity, a brotherhood; the Rule is a spiritual document which proposes a form of *living.*

Part Two includes fourteen conferences on the Testament of Francis, conferences dating from 1974-1976. In each Esser is careful to delineate the *Sitz im Leben*—the historical context—of each passage. Then follows an application to present-day Franciscan living. Esser shares something of himself throughout. He recalls, e.g., how he gave away every year a pull-over made for him by his mother, for which he found no use, until he finally prevailed on his mother to make the garment for the poor. The themes of the conferences which struck me most were that of Francis as Pilgrim, as Eucharist-centered, as obedient to the Church. With respect to the last of these, explanation of Francis's "obediential" emphasis on praying the Office was new to me: The Cathari, rejecting the Old Testament, had no use for the Psalms. In this section, too, Esser sharply criticizes Mario von Galli, who seems to have imbibed much of the anti-Curial bias which Sabatier (p. 158 speaks of Sartre!) read into the Rule and Testament.

The Rule and Testament of St. Francis: Conferences to the Modern Followers of Francis. By Cajetan Esser, O.F.M. Translated by Sister Audrey Marie, O.S.F. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. viii-226, including Appendix. Cloth, $7.95.

The Rule and Testament of St. Francis communicates a sense of the organic growth and continuity between the two basic Franciscan documents. The blend of scholarship and commitment to Franciscan values which comes through every page fills the reader with admiration for one who has given so much to Franciscans. What I have called Cajetan Esser's "Testament" is must reading for every Franciscan.

D. Julian Davis ofm

●

Reflections on a Box of Wheaties

Tasting cereal
promises a share
in one man's glory.
Yet the taste, so
like his finish, is
split-second, passing,
was.
Jesus is
this day. Our yawned
"alleluia" is response
to a glory too intense
for early morning.

Ennui changes
nothing.
Jesus is
in triumph where
his coordination is supreme—
a marvel of Spirit.
It is dawn. Time
to unplay the cynic;
to move from glory to Glory;
to leap with childheart
into the energy of a
Victor.

Sister Antoinette Kennedy, O.S.F.

Franciscan Unity

SERGIUS WROBLEWSKI, O.F.M.

IN THE beginning of my search for the meaning of Saint Francis I singled out his poetry of poverty, like everybody else. Poverty seemed to capture the essence of his life and ministry. There is no question but that the will to be poor was a defining imperative of Francis's life.

But in recent years it dawned on me that a negative quality like poverty could never exhaust the meaning of the greatest human being in the West, as Toynbee called Francis. The more I studied his writings the more I realized that his whole intent was worship: that poverty was subordinate, a self-emptying, an elimination of self-glorification in order to glorify the Lord God.

At the same time I had the growing realization that in the history of the Jewish People and the Christian Church the divine intervention through Moses and Jesus was intended to prepare a clean oblation unto the honor and glory of God. Worship had always been central to the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Some years ago I was confirmed in this insight upon reading Kenneth Kirk's *The Vision of God*, published in 1932. In this remarkable history of the Church, Kirk demonstrated the thesis that Christianity had come into the world with a double purpose: to offer men the vision of God and to call them to the pursuit of that vision; to call men to contemplation and worship, to intimacy with God and to His glorification.

In my view Francis grasped this as the substance of the Catholic faith; in fact, he was called to enhance it. To demonstrate this, I want to sketch the history of worship in the Church from Moses to Constantine and to place Francis's contribution in that context. I base myself on a recent book, *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*, by Robert J. Daly, S.J.

The key phrase in his book is "the spiritualization of worship."

Father Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., author of several books on Franciscanism and a member of the summer faculty of the Franciscan Institute, delivered this address at a workshop held at Siena College, Loudonville, NY and sponsored by the Reinhold Niebuhr Institute of Religion, June 24, 1978.

By that Daly means getting at the true meaning of sacrifice—at the inner, spiritual or ethical significance of cult, over against the merely external understanding of it. But he makes it clear that this "spiritualization" does not exclude the "incarnational element" that Paul mentioned when he called upon Christians "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship" (Rom. 12:1). In other words, Paul advised them to offer all they did in the body provided they walked in the Spirit.

The Stages of Spiritualization

LET US NOW look at the stages of spiritualization. The Old Testament shows the divine intervention in the history of the posterity of Abraham to have promoted a progressive spiritualization of worship. Consider the great moments.

Under divine guidance Moses provided the People of God with cult and code. As time went on, the people tended to separate the covenant from the cult: that is, to violate the code but to continue the cult. The prophets reproached them, as when Isaia told them, "Bring no more vain offerings. . . . Cease to do evil, learn to do good" (Is. 1:13, 17). In effect, Isaia declared that submission to God's word was imperative and that without such obedience cult was useless.

The admonition went unheeded, and the Babylonian Captivity followed. The Jews found themselves without Temple or cult. They had the word of God only, around which the synagogue service developed. They learned that God takes "no delight in sacrifice" (Ps. 51:16). After the Return, however, the people soon fell into the old ways.

In the New Testament Jesus came to cleanse the Temple; more, to build a spiritual one. It was to worship that Jesus himself gave absolute priority. Jesus came to purify worship and to provide a clean oblation. During his public ministry he chastised the religious leaders for allowing the profanation of the Temple (cf. Mk. 11:17). He branded the current cult hypocrisy (Mk. 7:5). More, he promised a new Temple and a new cult (Jn.4).

To that end, he offered himself on Calvary and passed over into the heavenly Sanctuary to mediate there as our priest, victim, and altar (cf. Hebrews). Thus a spiritual Temple replaced the Temple in Jerusalem, as Jesus promised the Samaritan woman: "When the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him" (Jn. 4:23).

Jesus is now the Head of the new Temple while his members are "like living stones . . .built into a spiritual house to be a holy priest-

hood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:7). Christians of the apostolic age felt no need of church buildings or sacred furnishings or an expanded ritual. Besides, these were neither available nor deemed necessary.

So it was until Constantine, when the "edifice complex" took hold of the Christian community. Basilicas sprang up and an elaborate liturgy was developed; but at the same time, walking in the footsteps of the Suffering Servant faded with the cessation of martyrdom and the rise of the Imperial influence of the Church. Bishops began to adorn themselves with Greek tinsel. Rites and sacred things and buildings loomed as "religion."

It seems that worship always tends to degenerate into a purely cultic thing. People tend to reduce religion to "going to church," while their lives and passionate concerns are strictly secular, unrelated to the divine will.

After Constantine, the process of spiritualization went on through monasticism. It was through religious life that the Holy Spirit promoted the interiorization of worship.

Negatively, monasticism was a reaction against the drawing-room kind of Christianity that arose with the union of Church and state. Hermits and monks reacted against "pomp and circumstance" in society as well as in the Church.

But the positive thrust of monasticism was worship. Antony, Pachomius, Basil, and Cassian gave priority to worship and contemplation—that is, to "seeing God." This latter phrase did not have the sense of questing for ecstasies and visions, but of "looking towards God" and glorifying him.

The amazing thing is that even in barbarous times (the fifth to the tenth centuries), the praise of lips resounded in monastery chapels and churches. The Rules of St. Columbanus and St. Benedict guided many in contemplation and worship even while barbarians ravaged Europe.

But from the Carolingian period onwards, monasteries acquired large tracts of land which made for a certain attachment to the goods of this world. Keeping up the property became a passionate concern which diminished devotion to adoration.

Already in the second half of the tenth century there was a new stirring, a renewal, as new forms of Benedictine life sprang up. An eremitical trend arose around the powerful personality of St. Romuald and his Camaldolese, who along with other groups of contemplatives prized a stance of adoration above everything else.

Thus, even in this age of cathedrals worship was being "spiritualized," for these contemplatives gave attention to inner action and a eucharistic disposition.

A century later the Cistercians aimed at purity of worship. This is clearly shown in the correspondence between Peter the Venerable and St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Cluny, headed by Peter the Venerable, prided itself on splendid churches and liturgical grandeur. The Cistercians, however, with Bernard as spokesman, opted for liturgical simplicity.

Bernard's first objection was to Cluny's emphasis on the aesthetic:

> . . . but these are small things; I will pass on to matters greater in themselves, yet seeming smaller because they are more usual. I say naught of the vast height of your churches, their immoderate length, their superfluous breadth, the costly polishings, the curious carvings and paintings which attract the worshiper's gaze and hinder his attention, and seem to me in some sort a revival of ancient Jewish rites. . . .[1]

Not only did Bernard decry the return to Old Testament externalism, but he was even more upset by the aesthetic side of Cluny's churches, which by their beauty diverted attention from the Lord.

His other objection was the extravagance, the expense at the expense of the poor:

> Hence the church is adorned with gemmed crowns of light—nay, with lustres like cartwheels, girt all around with lamps, but no less brilliant with precious stones that stud them. Moreover, we see candelabra standing like trees of massive bronze fashioned with marvellous subtlety of art, and glistening no less brightly with gems than with the lights they carry. What, think you, is the purpose of all this? The compunction of penitents or the admiration of beholders? O vanity of vanities, yet no more vain than insane! The church is resplendent in her walls, beggarly in her poor; she clothes her stones in gold, and leaves her sons naked; the rich man's eye is fed at the expense of the indigent. The curious found their delight here, yet the needy found no relief.[2]

Such costly outlay cannot be reconciled with the misery of people. How can a monument of injustice house an altar to the praise of the God of justice?

Francis's Contribution

IN THE twelfth century the new movements were eremitical and

[1]Bernard of Clairvaux, *Apologia*, viii-xiii. Trans. G. G. Coulton, *Life in the Middle Ages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1930-1954), IV, 169-74, *passim*.

[2]Ibid.

apostolic. They were a more naked spirituality, less involved in institutions, already trying to shake themselves loose from the Constantinian era. Within this framework Francis received the directive, "Rebuild my Church" at St. Damian's.

His first response was masonry and he accordingly repaired four churches. This was, of course, an inadequate response. The crumbling Lateran of Innocent's dream symbolized a Church given to much building but to neglecting the building up of the People of God by providing them with a sure foundation in Christ, in the Jesus of faith and the Jesus of history.

As Francis learned to walk in the footsteps of the Suffering Servant and gave himself to discipleship, he and his followers worshipped in poor churches and lived in them. "We were only too glad to find shelter in abandoned churches."[3] His concern was with the quality of worship, which did not depend on the beauty of the church but on the disposition of the heart.

Accordingly Francis's whole endeavor was purity: to bring

[3]Francis of Assisi, Testament; *Omnibus*, p. 68.

singleminded devotion to worship. He advised all the faithful, e.g., that "we must love God . . . and adore him with a pure heart and mind, because this is what he seeks above all else. . . ."[4] In the same way he exhorted the friar priests

> to be free from all earthly affection when they say Mass and offer singlemindedly and with reverence the true sacrifice of the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, with a holy and pure intention, not for any earthly gain or through human respect or love for any human being, "not serving to the eye as pleasers of men" (Eph. 6:6).[5]

This purity or singleminded devotion was prepared by poverty, which eliminated self-glorification and arose from interiority—i.e., from an obedience to the Word from the heart at personal cost. Hence Francis inserted these words in his office of the Passion: "Prepare your hearts and take up his holy cross. Live by his holy commandments to the last."[6] He insisted on this costly discipleship as the necessary ethical dimension of cult.

The whole Franciscan community was committed to worship and saw its ministry as calling upon all men to glorify God. In his first Rule, Francis advises his preachers to call men to praise the Lord: "Whenever they see fit my friars may exhort the people to praise God with words like these: Fear him and honour him, praise him and bless him, thank and adore him. . . ."[7] The same Rule contains a Franciscan manifesto which declares the friars' commitment:

> We Friars Minor . . . humbly beg and implore everyone to persevere in the true faith and in a life of penance. . . . 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.[8]

Thus it is evident that from the very beginning the Franciscan intention was to "spiritualize worship." As the friars moved from town to town, they concerned themselves with the cleanliness of churches, with reverence for word and sacrament and priest, and with discipleship as the substance behind worship in spirit and truth.

[4]Letter to All the Faithful; *Omnibus*, p. 94.
[5]Letter to a General Chapter; *Omnibus*, p. 104.
[6]Office of the Passion; *Omnibus*, p. 147.
[7]1 Rule, 21; *Omnibus*, pp. 46-47.
[8]1 Rule, 23; *Omnibus*, pp. 51-52.

Worship and the Secular Age

FRANCIS'S sublime project fit in well with Christendom. That ideal was the Christian *Pax Romana* in a society ruled by God and God's agents—King and Priest. In that Christian order religion embraced all aspects of human activity. This world, in that perspective, pointed to another; and man was a pilgrim, on the way to the true fatherland. In such a mental environment Francis made sense: his yearning for God—to be with Him and to glorify Him.

But how acceptable is this in a secularized society? With the separation of State and Church, science, art, philosophy, economics, and morality have been emancipated from their religious origins. No particular sphere of existence is sacred. Nature is no longer perceived as filled with the divine Presence. People go along without God; they are men and women "come of age." This post-Christian world is bent on humanization, not adoration. What can the medieval Francis have to say to contemporary man, whose consciousness is this-worldly? I would say the following:

1. Intentional Christianity is in order. So many, like Francis, were born and raised Catholics; they are conventional Catholics. But now that membership in the Catholic Church is no longer popular or customary but one of several options, they must want to be Catholics; they must become intentional Catholics.

2. Believers must become servants. There are many who hear God's word, but not many who obey it; there are many believers but few disciples and servants; many churchgoers but a limited number of followers of Christ. Only to the extent that Catholics live by the word as the only norm (and this is the whole point of the Letter to All the Faithful), shall "his will be done on earth as it is in heaven" and shall "his name be hallowed."

3. There has to be a lessening of preoccupation with church buildings. No matter how beautiful the church building, ultimately the people of God are the Church. Even a "good liturgy" is only an expression of faith. Unless one brings to it a living faith (by which Francis meant purity of heart and discipleship) the worship is empty. People have to be called to community and to a fidelity to the New Covenant. Only in this way is the Church, the "koinonia," built up.

fidelity to the New Covenant. Only in this way is the Church, the "koinonia," built up.

4. Catholics have to become witnesses of eschatological hope who live here as pilgrims and are eager to join the angels and the saints in the heavenly Temple, where there will be "no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb" (Rev. 21:22). Worship will have been spiritualized.

In October of 1971 I was visiting Assisi and had the privilege of entering the Basilica of Saint Francis on his feastday. The moment I entered the sacred precincts I fell ill. Perhaps I was subconsciously disturbed. Elias, after all, had built a magnificent church, an architectural marvel, but contrary to the wishes of Saint Francis, who in his Testament warned his friars "not to accept churches," much less build them, 'unless they [were] in harmony with poverty." Francis had hoped to put an end to the Constantinian era and to help spiritualize worship. Perhaps we can move in that direction and interiorize cult.

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1982: Franciscan Year in America

WAYNE HELLMANN, O.F.M.CONV.

THE IMAGINATION and dream of Franciscans of every sort, shape, and color has been captured by the suggestion to hold a national celebration of the birth of Saint Francis. In the New York *Daily News* and in many sectors of the Catholic press articles have appeared which show the broad appeal this project has in the hearts of many Americans. The spark to ignite America into a Franciscan celebration has been flashed. All that yet needs to be supplied is a little fuel in the form of support and endorsement by those Franciscans in positions of authority and service.

To put the matter somewhat less positively, the obstacle blocking further progress toward this project's realization is the lack of any organized endorsement from the ministers provincial. In the United States, unlike in other countries of Europe and South America, there is no unified leadership in the Franciscan movement. There is neither a conference nor a federation for the direction of Franciscan life in this country. The fledgling National Franciscan Communications Conference is the first really common endeavor that calls together Franciscans of all three orders and branches. For some time, true, Franciscan vocation directors have been meeting; but, though the gatherings support mutual interests and concerns, neither the Communications Office nor the vocation meetings serves as a forum for the formation and direction of Franciscan leadership. Thus, the majority of American Franciscans who desire a national celebration of Francis's birth in 1982 have no one to whom they can turn.

A National Franciscan Conference

SOME FORM of Franciscan Leadership Conference is needed to serve all the Franciscans of various shapes and shades. If a conference representing the three orders of Franciscans were alive and vital, the planning and the execution of a national celebration in 1982 would be simple and easy. This is not the case. The forces and the spiritual energy of the three orders presently dissipate. The three orders have little impact upon one another, and together as a Franciscan presence they are hardly noticed by our hierarchy or by our age and society. When one reflects upon the number of Franciscans, the spiritual dynamism and vision of many of them, and their desire for a deeper unity, there is cause to weep when nothing is done.

The present dispersion is contrary not only to the present desire but also to the Franciscan tradition. The desire for a deeper unity among all Franciscan brothers and sisters is deep at the root of the Franciscan experience. The radical witness of Franciscans rests so much in their fraternity. Unlike the previous monastic experience, Francis initiated a new vision, in which each community was no longer autonomous but there was rather a single brotherhood—sisterhood—in which all members, wherever they were or whatever work they did, were to treat one another as members of the same family. A national Franciscan Leadership Conference would help make the one family of all Franciscan brothers and sisters more visible. The credibility of the Franciscan vocation to rebuild the Church into a deeper communion and fraternity would be increased and multiplied.

As the friars, who later called themselves the 800th Anniversary Committee, began to meet, they concentrated their attention on their own First Order. This was a practically necessary development, of course, given the limitations of time, energy, and other resources. Several things became immediately clear. First of all, there is no national forum in which their goals could be worked out and attained. Secondly, they saw that of all the three orders it is the First Order that gives the poorest witness of unity among the brothers.

The Third Order Secular has already surpassed the division that exists among the First Order friars. The Third Order of religious women who make up the various modern communities has already formed the Franciscan Federation of Religious Women. The Second Order has a thread of unity in its own American history. All Poor Clare monasteries in the United States trace their history to the first monastery established in Cleveland. Although there presently exist among them more than one federation, they are

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The questionnaire published in our pages last month resulted primarily from Father Wayne Hellmann's plea (first made in an address to nearly a thousand Franciscans in St. Louis, April 1976, and later published in our July-August issue of that year) for a national or worldwide congress in 1980 to celebrate the 800th anniversary of St. Francis's birth. In this second article of our present series on Franciscan Unity, Father Wayne offers reflections on the developments of the last two years and further suggestions for the future. The author is Associate Professor in the Department of Theological Studies at St. Louis University and also serves as Guardian for the formation community at St. Bonaventure Friary in St. Louis.

miles ahead of the First Order on the road toward coooperation and sharing of resources. The friars who began to plan for the 1982 celebration thus concluded that they should begin at home, within their own First Order. Their intention was not to exclude the possibility that something be done in common by all three orders, but it did not seem proper that First Order friars call all Franciscans to some corporate venture when they themselves give the worst example. They believed that a celebration of Franciscan life in 1982 would offer more to the Church and the next generation of Franciscans if each of the three orders would take a look into the mirror for itself.

An important step in this direction was taken last year. For the first time in the history of the First Order in the United States a document formed by American friars of all three branches of the First Order was sent to each American friar. The event was small in itself, but it has great significance. Every province, commissariat, vicariate, and custody cooperated. This is an indication that cooperation on the national level is indeed possible. The majority of friars responded, thus giving a clear signal to the ministers provincial: bring the project of a national celebration to an actuality, and have no fear to take bold steps toward cooperation and unity in some form.

After the questionnaire results were tabulated, a letter was written to all the ministers provincial by the 800th Anniversary Committee. The first suggestion was that the ministers provincial form a national conference. Three different conferences do exist, but the three have never met together. This is so unlike the example of the ministers provincial of Europe and South America, who meet regularly. In America there has never been any formal cooperation or planning on a national level for the development of the First Order in the United States. All decisions affecting planning, apostolates, education, investment of men and money have been made independently and without any serious mutual consultation. One fears to fathom the waste of manpower, money, and opportunity for effective impact on the American Church.

The most immediate concern of the 800th Anniversary Committee was to find someone to whom they could turn to carry out the friars' desire for a national celebration. This is why the first suggestion flowing from the questionnaire results is that the ministers form a conference. The first official act of that conference should be to establish an "ad hoc" committee of two provincials from each branch of the First Order which would then authorize and approve a national

celebration of First Order friars. This same conference could then also serve as an instrument of official communication with the Second and Third Orders. Out of this communication could develop a Franciscan Leadership Conference which would represent and serve all Franciscans.

Time to Plan

IT IS NOW 1979. It will soon be a year since the questionnaire was sent out. As it is already late, it might be better that each of the three conferences of ministers provincial appoint two of its members to form an inter-jurisdictional 800th Anniversary Committee to authorize the planning and the expenses for the 1982 celebration. These six ministers could become the liaison committee between the three conferences of the OFMs, the Capuchins, and the Conventuals until such time that there is one conference of Franciscan ministers provincial. If this celebration is to happen in 1982, concrete planning must begin immediately. Otherwise the project will die, and the opportunity will be lost to the present generation of friars.

So one hopes that the planning to implement the desires of the friars will indeed begin. To plan well, the committee should touch on all areas of Franciscan life,

from the ascetical and scholarly to the apostolic and pastoral. The needs for planning should determine the most urgent research and writing. The few scattered Franciscan scholars in the United States should be contacted to seek their cooperation, so that by 1982 there could be a series of studies and translations available and dedicated to the celebration of Francis's birth. We can hope, e.g., that by then there would be a new translation of Francis's writings from K. Esser's critical edition with introduction and commentaries. Translations of important mystical and spiritual works by Saint Bonaventure and a new Omnibus of the writings of Saint Clare are other projects yet to be completed. There are others who could write a compendium or even a synthesis of Franciscan spirituality. To enhance liturgical celebration of Franciscan events and saints, we must see that a companion volume to the Franciscan lectionary and sacramentary is written; and Franciscan musicians should be encouraged to compose both liturgical and other music.

All of these projects could be published and disseminated through the celebration in 1982. Artists in all the different media should be called forth and supported. The celebration should feature an art display of works created by Franciscans or according to a Franciscan theme. One or two major works of art that directly present Francis should be commissioned and financed. A part of the preparation should increase support given to the Franciscan Communications Center in California so that Francis's voice may be heard in the mass media. All of America should be brought to hear that 1982 is a Franciscan year, so that the Poverello's gospel message may be communicated to the American people in a new way.

This may indeed sound like a lot, but the resources are already present and available. They are simply not mobilized. It is possible to direct the friars' energies and vision toward a national celebration of Francis's birth in 1982. The friars have already expressed their willingness to engage in such a celebration, and it now remains for the ministers provincial to join together so as to authorize and support the venture the friars have requested.

Beyond 1982

THE MINISTERS provincial should not, however, stop there. They should rather follow the example of the ministers general and begin to coordinate the various talents, energies, and apostolates of the friars. This is a part of their ministry. Each minister provincial is responsible not only for the friars in his own province but also—to the extent that he shares in this office of ministry on that level within the order—for all the friars and the entire Order, that is, the whole First Order. The minister provincial, in other words, has in the Order an office analogous to that of the bishop in the Church. It is certainly in the spirit of Vatican II that the ministers have a national conference to help them become aware of the various needs of the Order in the United States and to enable them to minister to the whole Order, beyond provinces and jurisdictions. There are many areas of Franciscan life that need immediate attention and action if the Order is to give America a real transfiguration.

The first area of concern is our own tradition and the nature of our own life. It is a sad commentary on Franciscan life that we together cannot adequately fund, staff, and maintain a vital center for Franciscan research, study, culture, art, and formation. The Franciscan Institute struggles, and the burden must be carried by only a few. A fund should be established to award scholarships to students and grants to professors. Those called to give their life and energies to the pursuit of drawing life from our untapped resources are the ones who offer spirit and life to the Order, to the Church, and to the world.

In the area of publication on a popular level THE CORD barely survives. It is all we have. More support from all the provinces is certainly due in order to build on what we already have and to continue to improve its quality.

Friars are rarely encouraged to write for publication. Thus the Franciscans—the largest group of religious in the United States—are forced to turn to Jesuit, Cistercian, or Carmelite publications to nourish their spiritual life. This need not be the case, as the Order has the resources; but the leadership, again, provides little support and direction.

Vocation directors have been meeting for some time. They have been perhaps the most forward looking group of friars. They deserve more support and funds. Costs of local and independent printing of vocation material are prohibitive. If this were centralized the best artists, writers, and theologians could be utilized, and the dollars would be used more wisely.

In the area of dollars, thousands are merely thrown away into the hands of big and rich business though our present method of insurance. Most agree that we do need insurance to care for sick and aging friars; but would not the First Order be big enough to insure itself if there were one central insurance fund for friars—or better, for all Franciscans? Would this not be more in a spirit of trust and poverty than our

present method of making the rich richer through high premiums? The Franciscan Communications Center in California is presently subsidized only by the English Speaking Conference of the Friars Minor. This is hardly an example of justice. All Franciscans reap the benefits and the publicity of their labor, and all should share in the burden. This burden should be considered, moreover, both in terms of financial support and in terms of manpower. How many ministers provincial would consider encouraging a friar gifted with these kinds of talents to offer his services to the Communications Center? How many provinces in the First Order give Franciscan Communications a place in their budget?

If all the ministers provincial were to form an American Franciscan Conference and begin to direct and coordinate the manifold resources that are now so dispersed, scattered, and hidden under the baskets of myopic vision, the Franciscan presence and contribution to the Church would increase a hundredfold. This would be true nationally, but more importantly their action would inspire a greater cooperation and unity among friars and other Franciscans at the local level and thereby give witness in the local Church. Some of the local Churches in our country (Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Los Angeles, etc.) can number several thousand Franciscans, but hardly anyone— including the local Ordinary, is ever aware of it. St. Louis, for example, is full of Franciscans, but there is no Franciscan presence evident in the life of the local Church. Gatherings or small chapters of the friars of a given province that cross a broad area of the country may be deep experiences of Franciscan life for the friars, but they give little witness to the local Church. Franciscan fraternity will never be a witness or a dynamic grace within the local Church unless it is seen and felt by the people who make up that Church. This means that the fraternity of all Franciscans of the First, Second, and Third Orders must become visible in the local Church. The unity and cooperation among Franciscans in a given area is just as important as their union and cooperation with the members of their own province that embraces large areas of the country. Every diocese should have its own local chapter of the Franciscan Leadership Conference representing all the Franciscans within that local Church. If each major American city had such a local Franciscan Leadership Conference, the American Church and the whole American scene might be different. And of course this local endeavor would also help support the Franciscan Leadership Conference on the national level.

Rebirth of a Movement

A FRANCISCAN Leadership Conference on both the national and local levels would help Franciscans become a vital movement in the Church. This is the very reason that there are three orders of Franciscans. Saint Francis's life and vision are for all Christians who seek to live the gospel. To be a movement rather than a group of stable and isolated religious orders, they must foster the emergence of some form of dynamic leadership. Franciscans in America have yet to come out of their shell, and the most effective way to help them do so is to establish as soon as possible this proposed Franciscan Leadership Conference.

Finally, this should be accomplished before Christmas of 1979.

If the ministers provincial of the First Order begin to take the lead in showing communion with and concern for the whole First Order, they will indeed be following the recent example of the ministers general. This could bear fruit for all Franciscans. Perhaps Thomas of Celano's observation interpreting the beginnings of the Franciscan movement could again be realized, and 1982 could become the year of Franciscan rebirth:

> Many of the people, both noble and ignoble, cleric and lay, impelled by divine inspiration began to come to Saint Francis, wanting to carry on the battle constantly under his discipline and under his leadership. All of these the holy man of God, like a plenteous river of reavenly grace, watered with streams of gifts; he enriched the field of their hearts with flowers of virtue, for he was an excellent craftsman; and, according to his plan, rule, and teaching, proclaimed before all, the Church is being renewed in both sexes, and the threefold army of those to be served is triumphing. To all he gave a norm of life, and he showed in truth the way of salvation in every walk of life [1 Celano 37].

Anima Christi

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

FOR SOME time I have had it in mind to reflect with you, dear sisters, on that profoundly evocative prayer, "Anima Christi," phrase by phrase, petition by petition. So, when that particular hymn was chosen for the first evening of our departed sister's memorial services after the funeral, I was very struck by God's showing me by this delicate touch that the hour had come.

It is a favorite prayer of mine, one I have prayed daily since the age of thirteen, as a sophomore in high school. I discovered myself to be in very good company when I learned that Pope Pius XII also prayed the "Anima Christi" each morning after Communion! But I take this prayer as a chapter theme not because it is a devotion of mine, but because there is such a wealth of theology and devotion in it for the enrichment of our thought and the deepening of our understanding of Christology. I think that as contemplatives most of us have a rather small stock of vocal prayers outside the Divine Office. And probably again for most of us as we grow older the stock, if anything, further decreases as we become more and more absorbed in the liturgical prayer of the Church which blends into our most private prayer so as to leave no longer any sign of boundary. Liturgical communal prayer and the deepest private prayer flow in and out of each other. And we develop what I call certain "code expressions" in our very private life of love with God. Perhaps little aspirations, or fragments of aspirations. You know my own. It is not to propose the adding of a vocal prayer to your own elected store that I want to reflect with you on the "Anima Christi," but to plunder with you its immense riches which each one can invest as God leads her.

What do we mean by "anima Christi"? What idea are we conveying when we speak of the "soul of Christ"? Although we would not articulate it even to ourselves in words so crude, is it not true, dear sisters, that we tend to lapse into some kind of vague quasi-concept of the soul of Christ as being somehow the Divinity infused into a human body? This is not the soul of Christ. His was a created human soul.

In considering this, we enter into a realm of great mystery. We are speaking of a divine Person, the Son of God. And we readily accept in faith a fact which of course we can never of ourselves comprehend, that this divine Person had a created human body which began life in the womb of the Virgin Mary solely by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit and without intervention of man. We follow the human growth of the Son of God through the Scriptures, as Jesus is born, learns to walk and to speak, questions, comprehends, matures, passes through all the phases of human growth to full manhood, and dies a human death after enduring human suffering and human temptation. This divine Person is God; yet this body was created. So, too, was this human soul.

"Anima" is the Latin root of how many English words! We speak of a person as being animated. We say, "She has such an animated countenance," and everyone knows what we mean. Her face is very much "alive." Slang has something to tell us when it offers the expression, "a dead pan." We know what that means, too. An animated person does not have a dead face, but a face full of life. We speak of a person's animated way of speaking, of her animated gait, her animated gestures. And by all of these we mean: Life! If we are trying to help a person in her reading aloud or directing a person in a play, we might have occasion to say: "Dear sister, show more animation!" Be more alive! And we speak of inanimate creation which is literally creation without the vital life principle. Rocks and stones are part of the inanimate creation of God. Plants already enter into animate creation which involves the life principle of beginning, growth, death. And animals (tempting to digress on the noun here!) testify by their very name that they are a higher part of animate creation. Then we ascend to man with his exalted created life-principle given to him by the creating Father, given to each one of us, given to Christ. It is this created soul of Christ to which we cry out: "Make me holy! Sanctify me!" "Anima Christi, sanctifica me." In him is the source of life, of the animation which makes it possible for us to be completely alive in holiness.

Each of us has her own created animating principle, her own soul created by the Father. Unlike Christ, we are in need of redemp-

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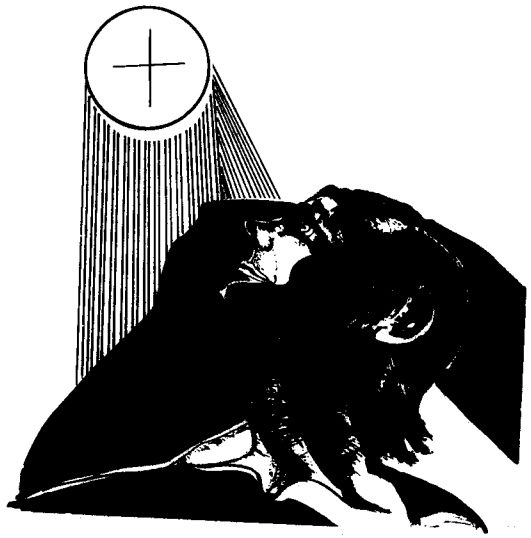
Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico, is well known to our readers as the author of numerous books of spiritual conferences, including the popular Blessed Are You, *and poetry, including the recent, well received* Variations on a Theme. *The present article is the first in a series of twelve conferences on the prayer,* Anima Christi, *originally given at chapter to the Poor Clare Nuns in Roswell. To preserve the spontaneity of the spoken conferences, the barest minimum of editing has been done on the transcriptions.*

tion, of continual sanctification of our spirit. But the vital life principle, the animating principle, is like unto Christ's soul in being the creation of the Father and in having the same ministering faculties: memory, imagination, intellect, will. And in being served by the senses.

Now, dearest sisters, as we know only too well, our vital animating principle, our soul, is often ill served by its ministering, subservient faculties. Christ's soul was all-perfect, and its ministering faculties served it perfectly. It is to the soul of Christ that we must, therefore look for our sanctification. We shall not find it in our own animating principle so wounded by original sin and so weakened again and again by actual sin. In Christ's soul, never subject to original sin, never damaged in the slightest way by actual sin but "like unto us in all things save sin" (Heb. 4:15), we have that pure force of the one animating principle in which we can be made holy.

Now let us look at some of these ministering faculties of Christ's soul. He had a memory, and he made human decisions about how to use his memory. We need strength to make right decisions, a strength not to be found in our weakened life principle but only in the soul of Christ. How many incidents in the Lord's life we could point to here as showing us the choices he made about how to use his memory! Let us take just one or two.

You know so well the Gospel incident of the ten lepers made clean, but only one returning to thank Christ. You know it as a favorite reflection of mine because of all that it reveals of the human heart of Christ and the human soul of Christ. He let us know that he was hurt by ingratitude. "Were not ten made clean? Where are the nine? Only this stranger has returned to thank me" (Lk. 17:17). We can say, dear sisters, that Christ's memory was assaulted by the sorrow evoked in him by the ingratitude of the nine. But he chose not to "remember" after that one revelatory cry of his human heart which should be enough to break the ungrateful hearts of us all. He let us know how he felt, and the struggle with the hurt of his human heart; but then he made a human decision not to "remember" this in the sense that he would be very slow to grant his favors again. Or, to put it in the most ordinary language, that he would really think twice before he worked another miracle for this ungrateful mass of mankind. Instead, he chose to remember that one was grateful. We need to remember that a human Jesus suffered many temptations and needed to make human resistance



and human choices. It was not just a matter of the initial three "classic" temptations (Lk. 4:13).

We find decisions like that quite difficult sometimes, don't we? It is so easy to remember the hurt, the misunderstanding, and so tempting to rehearse to ourselves these ingratitudes. Christ elected to remember what would enable him to go on doing good, so that his memory did not enfeeble his soul, but served it. Perhaps this is example enough, except that I cannot quite go on without some advertence to dear Saint Peter. When Jesus, after his resurrection, asked the famous triple question, was he not telling us what he would choose to remember about Peter? Wasn't he giving his poor, weak, but loving child, Peter, the opportunity to present him with what he would remember? Jesus could have remembered only the denials. He chose to remember the love, and gave us our first pope.

Then there is another ministering faculty to the soul of Christ: his human imagination. We must be careful never to think of the imagination as a kind of perverted faculty of the soul. True, Saint Teresa of Avila calls the imagination "that crazy woman in the house." We know what she means. And certainly if we allow the imagination to wander about undirected, it can be just like that: a crazed woman wandering in the house of our life. But the imagination, *per se*, is a glorious faculty. It is our inbuilt TV created by God long before man ever thought

of throwing images on a screen. Man is always so far behind God! So, yes, the imagination is a marvelous creation. But we cannot allow it to overpower the soul. We must bring it into subservience, not as a chained chattel of the soul, but as a good servant.

Imagination is particularly strong in some persons, and the suffering it can cause to them can likewise be a channel of suffering to others in whom it is less strong. This still does not imply that there is anything wrong, anything base, about imagination. When I was a postulant, we read an article about the bombing of a convent in a certain country. The chaplain was trying to evacuate the nuns, with chaos all about him The bricks were falling, the glass was flying. Would he make it? Could he save the nuns? And the writer said, with a very nice literary turn, "It was certainly not a good hour in which to have a strong imagination. And unfortunately the chaplain was a poet!" Well, dear sisters, Christ also was a poet, the like of whom we shall never hear again. And so his imagination, being perfect, presented to him possibilities in a fuller color than any of ours ever will. In the Garden of Gethsemane, what his imagination presented to him of the sufferings to come could have been completely overpowering except that the soul of Christ made of that imagination a servant to itself and kept it in dignified subservience, kept it in its right place of contributing servant. The fuller color screen of what is coming, what may be, what the physical sufferings will feel like, look like, the "uselessness" of it all for how many souls . . . this had to be on the full screen of Christ's all-perfect imagination. And keeping that imagination what it is created to be, the good servant of the human soul, was part of his saying: "Not my will but thine be done" (Lk. 22:42).

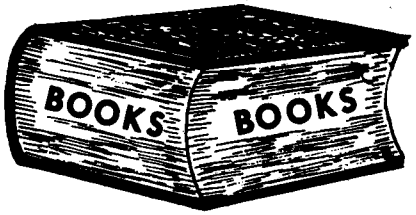
Now, our weakened and damaged soul, though so beautiful and glorious and full of potential for eternal perfection, must find its strength to actuate its potential not in itself but in Christ. The apostle says: "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). It is not that we abdicate our own principle of soul, our own mind, but that the mind of Christ takes possession of our own. So that again the apostle testifies to his own humanity being perfected in the soul of Christ, of having made the animating principle of his own life that of the soul of Christ: "I live now, not I, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). This is perfect human fulfillment—that Christ has taken me over, that the soul of Christ has sanctified me, that the perfect and unblemished animating principle of the created Christ becomes my own.

Therefore, dear sisters, when we speak of an animated person, in the loftiest spiritual sense we would mean a Christlike person. The more Christlike we are, the more animated we are in the very literal, basic, etymological sense of the word. We are progressively "dead" as we do not live in Christ. To be animated in this exalted sense is to be Christlike; to be more animated is to be more Christlike; to be totally animated is to "live now, not I, but Christ in me."

When the apostle says, "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus," what does he tell us that mind was? Does he present us with some dizzying galaxies of speculation? No. Does he tell us of things that belong in the third heaven, as he said in another place, and not to be understood in the language of men? No. What is the mind of Christ? It is to be totally emptied out in the service of the Father. This was the decision of our Lord. "Being made in the likeness of God . . . but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:6-7). He poured himself out. That is what the Scriptures tell us is the mind of Christ, the soul of Christ, the principle of the human life of Christ. Thus, when we pray, "Anima Christi, sanctifica me," we are making a very bold prayer, a tremendously exacting prayer. We are saying that we want to be emptied out, to experience our own kenosis as he experienced his, totally given, totally spent. So, let us remember what a bold and beautifully dangerous prayer we are beginning: "Soul of Christ, sanctify me." It will not be painless. No passion ever was.

God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost,, but may have eternal life.

(John 3:16)



Strannik: The Call to Pilgrimage for Western Man. By Catherine de Hueck Doherty. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 84. Paper, $2.25.

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

Those who have not read *Poustinia* and *Sobornost* will be sent scurrying by *Strannik* to those earlier works in this trilogy of reflections on Eastern spirituality for the West by Catherine de Hueck Doherty. Those who have read them, on the other hand, may find *Strannik* something of a disappointment. Not only is it a brief 84 pages; but ten of those pages are given to a reprint of her poem, "Journey Inward," which already appears as Chapter 8 in *Sobornost*. While the reprint of the "little mandate" on p. 45 is also a repetition, she does give more of its history and thus provides more insight into her mystical experience.

While the author tells us about external pilgrimages such as she herself experienced as a child and later as a "refugee" in Canada after being driven from her beloved Russia, the pilgrimages she is writing about are principally interior. She writes: "But it is another thing to pilgrimage within oneself to meet the God that dwells within, and having met him to understand that from that moment the pilgrim does not belong to himself at all."

In the first chapter, "Remembrance of Paradise," the author finds the hunger for pilgrimage goes goes back to Adam and Eve after the Fall. Pilgrimage received its perfect fulfillment in "Jesus Christ the great Pilgrim who came from heaven down to earth and went from earth back to heaven." Since then every Christian has some desire to pilgrimage. In this brief treatise she leads the reader down the inner road of poverty and humility; she walks with him down the road of fasting and self discipline and obedience to the will of God. All is done in an orderly fashion; and yet she herself alludes to the fact that her mystical experience is far greater than she can put into words. Still, in chapters such as "The Soles of My Feet Were Bloody," "Pilgrimage to the Heart of Men," "Pilgrimaging in the Resurrected Christ," she sees the life of the pilgrim as truly blessed and evangelical, for "he constantly reproduces in his life the Incarnation, the preaching, the suffering, the death and the resurrection of the Lord."

If you want to touch God more closely, then you have to become a pilgrim; and this book, *Strannik*. may help you understand what that means to one pilgrim on her long journey to God.

Christian Anthropology: A Meaning for Human Life. By John F. O'Grady. Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1976. Pp. viii-231. Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Dr. Robert E. Donovan, Assistant Professor of Theology at St. Bonaventure University.

As is obvious from an overview of religious as well as secular literature, the question of the meaning of human life, of what it means to be a healthy human person, is in the forefront. The old optimistic certitudes produced by the rationality of Western Christianity have fallen before a world war, the destruction of European Jewry, and the atom bomb. The romantic reaction of the sixties is now recognized as rather exaggerated, but as pointing in the right direction. It has become obvious that being a full and open human person is primary. Anything that takes away from human growth is to be deplored. Anything that adds to it is to be applauded.

So, John O'Grady is to be applauded in his attempt to synthesize the old Western rationalistic tradition with much of the new or recent Western rationalistic tradition. It is a well done synthesis. I could find very little fault with his presentation. All the big names are present: Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Rahner, *et al.*; and yet the work is not cluttered by too many citations. It reads rather well.

From a systematic and historical perspective, which is that of the author, it is a success. Father Grady, a former seminary professor, begins his theological manual not with God, One and Three, but with man, the *image* of God. He then proceeds to discuss man in his relationship with God. He is very quick to point out the problems that much of the old Western rationalistic theology has in speaking to man as seen through the eyes of evolution and psychology. There is a masterful handling of the idea of predestination (from God's side) and sin (again from God's side). In this and other chapters Father O'Grady succinctly presents the old and the new. He roots his understanding of the new in recent studies into the meaning of the Scriptures. So for him "predestination and election are rooted in the eternity of God . . . [and] this adds to man's value and dignity" (p. 35).

Going on to the question of man's being ordered to God, (ch. 3), O' Grady again gives an insightful presentation of the old and the new. He traces very vividly the passage from the answer being found in pure human nature to its being situated in the supernatural existential. This brief treatment of the question is the best I've seen. I recommend it for those interested.

Having discussed man as the image of God, O'Grady now turns his attention to man as creature, as needing others, as trinity (Body, Soul, Spirit), and as sexed. Then he begins to approach man as I know him and am concerned with him—the man who works for a living, tries to be creative, and—best of all—celebrates life. The chapter on man as celebrator is the best and most real in the book. The author himself seems to think so too, since it takes up a disproportionate amount of space in the conclusion. As he says there, "If we are ever to become what we are called to be, we need fantasy in every aspect of our lives: How things might be!" (p. 215). I would have like to see

how the book would have come out if he had started there.

All through the chapters before those on man as I know him, I was impressed with O'Grady's scholarship, style, and organization. It is a great synthesis of the material to be found in the old theology manuals; and it is also, as I was forced to conclude, a new theology manual. As such it is excellent and could be of great use in graduate or seminary courses. For most everyone else it will be too concise and, alas, not meaninfgul until the later chapters. I have to know myself first and then see God—not the other way around. And so does Christian Anthropology, if it is going to speak to the man of today.

The Soul's Journey into God; The Tree of Life; The Life of Francis. By St. Bonaventure. Edited by Ewert Cousins; preface by Ignatius Brady, O.F.M. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. xx-353, incl. index. Cloth, $9.95; paper, $6.95.

Showings. By Julian of Norwich. Translation & introduction by Edmund Colledge, O.S.A., and James Walsh, S.J.; preface by Jean Leclercq, O.S.B. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. x-369, incl. index. Cloth, $9.95; paper, $6.95.

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

Bonaventure was 47 years dead and not yet declared a Saint and Doctor of the Universal Church when Dante placed him among the Teachers of Wisdom in his Heaven of the Sun in the great *Paradiso* of his *Divine Comedy*. Before he meets Bonaventure, however, Dante listens to a magnificent praise of Saint Francis of Assisi placed upon the lips of Thomas Aquinas. In his portrayal of the sweet, Christlike figure of Francis, Dante follows in the main *Legenda major Beati Francisci* which Bonaventure composed sometime between 1260 and 1263 and which, together with *The Soul's Journey into God* and *The Tree of Life*, all admirably translated by Ewert Cousins, are included in The Classics of Western Spirituality series published by the Paulist Press.

Dr. Cousins's translations were made from the original Quaracchi critical text for *The Soul's Journey* and *The Tree of Life*, with footnotes for the former checked against the new printing in *Opera theologica selecta*. His translation of the major biography of Saint Francis was made from the critical text in the *Analecta franciscana*. I mention this critical apparatus to indicate the high quality of scholarship attendant upon this fine series of classical texts of Western Spirituality now well underway by the Paulist Press. Readers need have no fear of whimsical or random selection of these texts. Scholars and educated laymen are served well, and interested "common" readers are assured of substantial fare in both volumes under consideration here.

In a succinct introduction, Dr. Cousins sets forth his criteria for selecting the three Bonaventurean texts: "(1) works that clearly qualify as such by their acceptance and influence; (2) works which taken together present an integral picture of the essence of Franciscan spirituality as Bonaventure perceived it" (p. 12). Furthermore, Dr. Cousins points out the benefits to be derived from a reading of these particular three in conjunction: "*The Life of Saint Francis* parallels *The Tree of Life* in its focus on the concrete historical details of a human life. *The Life of Saint Francis* and *The Tree of Life* are treatises on the life of Christian virtue which leads ultimately to the spiritual ascent of *The Soul's Journey.*" And so by presenting in one volume these three Bonaventurean texts he hopes "To give a comprehensive picture of Franciscan spirituality according to Bonaventure" (p. 15).

Acknowledging that Bonaventure's highly complex Latin presents special difficulties to the translator, Dr. Cousins has attempted to maintai "the rhythmically balanced phrases and clusters of symbols whose meaning is enhanced by the subtle relations suggested by their rhetorical structure" (p. 47) by breaking the text into sense lines, thereby retaining the original sentence structure and producing an English version that is readable and meditative. This is a handsome and handy volume and highly recommended to readers of THE CORD. A hard bound edition is available for libraries investing in the entire series—a worthwhile investment!

The late Pope John Paul I is reported to have surprised his hearers when during his regular Sunday Angelus blessing in St. Peter's Square he said that God is Father and "even more is Mother, who does not want to harm us." The phrase would have appealed to the fourteenth-century English mystic, Julian of Norwich, who develops the theme in the 58th chapter of her Revelations. In his preface to this edition, Dom Jean Leclercq states: "Julian . . . did not invent the theme. What makes her contribution original . . . is the theological precision with which she applies this symbolism to the Trinitarian interrelationships" (p. 9). And in their perceptive introduction, Fathers Colledge and Walsh elaborate upon that contribution to Western spirituality. Most readers, however, will wish they had spent more time developing the richness of this aspect of Julian's theology than they have done, and somewhat less (assuming the space requirements were normative) in discussing sources and the similarities of Julian's writings to other masters of spirituality.

The editors are careful to point out that "Julian's book is by far the most profound and difficult of all medieval English spiritual writings . . . Julian is hard going. In her own times there seem to have been few willing to attempt it" (p. 32). This difficulty, together with the textual problems associated with the manuscript, have perhaps too long kept contemporary readers from attempting to come to grips with this fascinating 14th-century woman's thought. She is often considered a master of rhetorical art deserving favorable comparison with her own contemporary, Geoffrey Chaucer.

Difficult though she may be, Julian has some memorable and haunting phrases with which more of us ought to be familiar. In chapter four of the short text, e.g., we read: "I saw that he is to us everything which is good

Life and Death

What, Lord is life, but a series of at times chaotic deaths
To become new life for someone else in an unending chain?
Sometimes, death becomes the reason for life;
    Or again, life becomes the reason for death.
He made all things new again, through death and rising,
And the sequence of life and death are ever the same:
    Creation—disintegration—creation,
As our life gives life to another, for the glory of God.
How truly gifted are we to see and to believe!

Sister Carolyn Wilson, O.S.F.

and comforting for our help. He is our clothing, for he is that love which wraps and enfolds us, embraces us and guides us, surrounds us for his love. . . ." And from the same chapter: "And in this he showed me something small, no bigger than a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand, and I perceived that it was as round as any ball. I looked at it and thought: What can this be? And I was given this general answer: It is everything which is made. I was amazed that it could last, for I thought that it was so little that it could suddenly fall into nothing. And I was answered in my understanding. It lasts and always will, because God loves it; and thus everything has being through the love of God" (p. 130).

Just as Bonaventure found an especial consecration within the poetic text of Dante's artistic reation, so also Julian has found it within the poetic text of T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*, considered by some critics to be the greatest religious poem of the twentieth century. In the third section of "Little Gidding," Eliot quotes Julian almost verbatim:

Sin is Behovely, but
All shall be well, and
All manner of thing shall
be well.

Thank you, Paulist Press, not only for providing us with readable, scholarly classics of Western spirituality, but also for reminding us that such masters of the spiritual life can inspire and enrich poets, whether in the fourteenth or in the twentieth century!

Scripture as an Approach to Prayer. Two Conferences by William Meninger, O.C.S.O. One cassette tape, $5.00.

Contemplative Prayer: What Is It? Six Conferences by William Meninger, O.C.S.O. Three cassette Tapes. $15.00.

Historical Perspectives on Contemplative Prayer. Two Conferences by Dom Thomas Keating, O.C.S.O. One cassette tape, $5.00.

All the above available from St. Joseph's Abbey, Spencer, MA 01562.

Reviewed by Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., well known author of several volumes of poetry and conferences for religious and Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Roswell, NM.

It is always distressing when one must make the sorry comment that a poet's early works are much better than his later ones, that a lecturer was much more effective when he began than when he concluded his remarks. So it is nothing but a pleasure to report that Father William Meninger in these six conferences gets much better as he goes on. It would be a pity if anyone closed shop on listening after the first tape which is so inferior to the others, for better and better is to follow as Father William becomes more himself (the "himself" whom this reviewer is privileged to know as a simple, prayerful, clear-minded monk). The first conference's disengaging caustic references to the Supreme Pontiff, the hierarchy and superiors in general, along with the self-conscious slang and painful "those guys" references to the apostles, happily do not appear again. What does appear is an increasingly helpful and eminently sincere effort to help us listen to what God is saying to us in the Scriptures and to pray in the contemplative manner to which all are in some measure called and fashioned by God to pray.

It is nowhere announced to whom these conferences are given, but apparently they were recorded "live" when delivered to a group of diocesan priests on retreat at beautiful Spencer Abbey. One may find some of the "assists" to prayer in regard to physical relaxation a bit contrived, but maybe one not exposed to the high-powered demands of modern parish life is not equipped to pass judgment on methods which might be simple and effective aids to some where they would have to be artificial in the cloister. What is important is that Father William guides us in prayer as one who is familiar with and practised in the ways of which he speaks. He has obviously often been where he is inviting us to come. And he disposes of the more usual so-called difficulties in prayer with a freshness and simplicity that is altogether touching. For example, regarding distractions in this contemplative form of prayer, the speaker says with the authority of one who himself has long listened and learned in prayer: One hundred distractions! What to do? Return to your prayer. And you will have made one hundred acts of love."

Father William's program of not reading the Scriptures so much as listening and then responding is presented in the first two conferences with clear examples, some of them offered in confidence out of his own life. But it is the final tape on contemplative prayer which is, in this reviewer's opinion, Father's best achievement. "Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be!" says Browning in *Rabbi ben Ezra*. Listen to these tapes and know that the best is yet to be—at the end where the truest poets and the best lecturers bring us the finest fruits of their

maturity.

There are also two tapes by Dom Thomas Keating, abbot of the monks of St. Joseph's Cistercian Abbey. Father Abbot gives a history of contemplative prayer through the centuries in the Church. It could be called, "The rise and fall of contemplative prayer." Happily, there is apparent in our days a new resurrection as the speaker points out. Dom Thomas manages to make of what could have been presented as text-book history, an engaging presentation which is itself an invitation to prayer, a guide, and an inspiration. So simply, sweetly, and humbly are these two talks given that one might be almost unaware of the remarkable scholarship evident in them on after-consideration. Learning sits very lightly upon this lovable abbot. We are very comfortable with him. And the history teacher is simultaneously the spiritual director —and such a good one.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Costanzo, Joseph F., S.J., *The Historical Credibility of Hans Kung: An Inquiry and Commentary.* North Quincy, MA: The Christopher Publishing House, 1978. Pp. 383, including indices. Cloth, $12.95.

Kraft, William, F., *Normal Modes of Madness: Hurdles in the Path to Growth.* Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1978. Pp. x-177, including bibliography. Paper, $4.95.

McNally, Thomas, C.S.C., and William G. Storey, D.M.S., eds., *Lord, Hear Our Prayer: A Collection of Traditional and Contemporary Prayers.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. vi-366, including index. Leatherette, $4.95.

Tuley, Walter J., *Called to Teach: A Spiritual Guide for Teachers and Aides.* Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1978. Pp. viii-121. Paper, $3.95.

Twigg, Sister Blanche, M.H.S.H., *God Calls a People: A Journey through the Old Testament.* Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. vi-169. Paper, $2.50.

A Further Clarification

IN OUR November, 1978, issue we issued a caution about the work *Our Lady Speaks to Her Beloved Priests* (listed in our May, 1978, issue). Since that time we have received a letter and literature from Father Albert Roux, National Director of the Marian Movement of Priests. Father Roux points out that the Marian Movement of Priests now numbers among its members some thirty bishops and 1700 priests in the United States, that it has spread worldwide, that the late Pope Paul encouraged Father Gobbi in his efforts, and that the Portuguese bishops were asked by the same Pontiff to encourage their priests to join the movement—something they have subsequently done. Father Robert Fox, in the *National Catholic Register* of December 5, 1978, has spoken favorably of the Movement, which calls priests to pray the Rosary, pray together, celebrate Mass worthily, and be loyal to Magisterium of the Church. The orthodoxy of *Our Lady Speaks to Her Beloved Priests* is vouchsafed, finally, in the following statement printed on page 4 of the 1978 printing:

> **DOCTRINAL REVIEW** by: Fr. Clement D. Thibodeau
> Having been advised by competent authority that this book contains no teaching contrary to the faith and morals as taught by the Church I approve its publication according to the Decree of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. This approval does not indicate any promotion or advocacy of the theological or devotional content of the work.
>
> September 28, 1977
> **EDWARD C. O'LEARY**
> **BISHOP OF PORTLAND**

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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

the CORD

March, 1979 Vol. 29. No. 3

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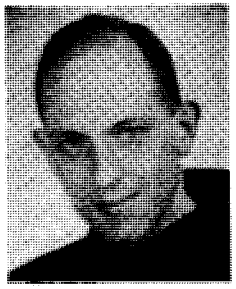

We Plead Guilty

FATHER DAVID FLOOD, O.F.M., whose painstaking, scholarly methodology we have long admired and who has contributed studies to our own pages on Rule interpretation, Franciscan leadership, and solitude, comments in a recent issue of *Haversack* on our approach to the Franciscan Spirit and life.[1] Stating our purpose a bit tendentiously as "seeking a socio-linguistic code for today by dialoguing with the Franciscan past," he evaluates our success in achieving that purpose by a discussion of two articles and two editorials we published in 1977.[2]

Father David's opening challenge eloquently if implicitly furnishes the framework for the rest of his criticisms. We had said (in our November, 1977, editorial) that Francis "responded to the Lord's call" when he "left the world." In saying that, however, we emphasized that the "call" in question was not divorced from Francis's concrete life experience; rather, we understood God as working—as he always does—in and through the empirical realities of Francis's world to manifest himself to him and summon him to a new life. Father David, however, claims that "Francis did not respond to God's call" in "winning access to a new country." Then he goes on, in what can be termed only a contradiction, to cite Francis's Testament: "This is how God led me into a new life."

We said that this furnishes a "framework." The framework is the same as that for reductionist philosophies of religion and extremist applications of the biblical historico-critical method: all historical and theological claims are to be interpreted empirically in terms of psychological and sociological factors.

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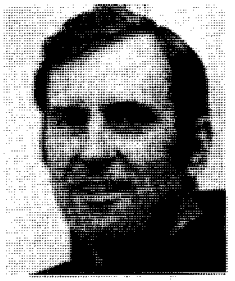
[1]David Flood, O.F.M., "Notes on Franciscan Publications," *Haversack* (4832 N. Kenmore, Chicago 60640) 1:6 (August, 1978), 3-10.

[2]The editorials are segments of "Franciscan Idealism Today" (Nov., 1977, pp. 314-15; Dec., 1977, pp. 346-47) and a review of Rene Voillaume's *Spirituality from the Desert* (Feb., 1977, pp. 34-35). The articles are Roderic Petrie's "Reflections on Corporate Poverty" (Sep., 1977, pp. 251-56) and Berard Doerger's "On Being Lesser Brothers" (Oct., 1977, pp. 283-92).



Think Small

"THE FAULT IS NOT in our *systems*, my friends; it is in *ourselves*." This paraphrase of Shakespeare expresses a good deal of my reaction to Father David Flood's cosmic condemnation of capitalism, organization, affluence, American Franciscans, and the "apologists" for all of these: the editors and writers in THE CORD. In rereading all of the articles mentioned, I was quite pleased to find there a challenge to *individual* Franciscans to respond in concrete ways to the ideals of poverty and fraternity which are the heritage of our Order. Nowhere did I find any shallow rationalizing of the good life which many American Franciscans do enjoy; but rather I sensed discomfort with it.

Nor did I find any "idea history," but rather a history of the development of Franciscan ideals. Presupposed, it is true, in all THE CORD'S efforts is the existence of many Franciscan organizations which have proved themselves viable and valuable to their members and to the Catholic Church in America. We have not "blinded ourselves to the sad and sorry plight of the Order"; on the contrary, we have met and lived with many authentic Franciscans, incarnations of the joyful love which so characterized Francis and so endeared him to the world. It is as simple as Jesus told us: Good fruit doesn't come from bad trees, and the good fruit is right there for all to see.

In rereading Father David's supporting argument, I could not help noticing the flagrant "idea history" he himself was doing, as well as the overriding anarchic *Zeitgeist* of the 1960s that permeates his analysis. To be specific, "Liberty from sin is first of all liberty from an age's arbitrary truths," "Poverty is essentially a social concept," "A Christian cannot accept an identity within a social system which excludes large numbers from human enjoyment of the earth" are three statements of ideology.

The first two statements are at best half-truths. Poverty and liberty from sin were for Francis *religious* concepts—better, realities—resulting from his encounter with the living Christ. And the third is ambiguous enough to eliminate all possible Franciscan life on earth, for where in the world can we find a system which does not as a matter of *fact* exclude large numbers from enjoyment? Besides, don't American Franciscans stand for

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Sociologist Peter Berger dealt masterfully with this approach in *A Rumor of Angels*.[3] Admitting that contemporary theological method must "start with man" and work in a posteriori fashion at least up to a point, Berger goes on to show that every attempt to limit the theologian to this perspective can be turned, as it were, on its head. There is no empirical tool to craft a justification for arbitrary limitations to the empirical.

Of course Francis "interpreted his experience," as Father David puts it, "in the interest of the Franciscan fellowship and movement." Every statement about God's workings in history is at least partly human interpretation. But it is interpretation of *God's workings*, as Father David implicitly admits by citing the Testament.

We have dwelt, perhaps overly long, on this initial point because it is the essential issue in all that follows in Father David's lengthy criticism. Anyone who has read any of the very extensive material now being published on "liberation theology" knows well enough where Father David is coming from as he does battle with "disincarnate ideals," the "ideational superstructure," the "ideological" hampering of the "programmatic," "doctrinal conclusions," and "arbitrary and abstract propositions, the logical conclusions of a conceptual operation on a bloodless text."

That we are in no way unsympathetic to the current effort to give "programmatic" flesh and blood to the Franciscan—and Christian—ideal is a point that might emerge from a reading of our October, 1978, editorial. A more extended, if still somewhat ambivalent, discussion of some aspects of this effort will appear in this space next month. Going beyond mere "sympathy" for this programmatic task, in fact, we gladly admit that it is badly needed today—that it is precisely the crucial challenge addressed, e.g., to the Ministers Provincial in Father Wayne Hellmann's article which we published last month.

What we do object to in Father David's criticism, however, is his naive reductionism. Reductionism is always oversimplification, and almost always a hasty dismissal of whatever does not easily lend itself to empirical methodology. In this case there is also present the clumsy expedient of throwing out the baby (institutional structures—whether secular, Christian, or Franciscan) with the bath water (abuses, excesses, incompetent and visionless *individuals* within those structures).

We will doubtless be accused of renewing in this present response the very sort of activity for which Father David originally criticized us. We are setting forth no radical, subversive program for our nation, our Church, our Order. We plead guilty, Father David. Guilty of continuing to see value in ideas, in ideals, in structures that have borne much good fruit. We badly want your kind of contribution, too, in our pages, to help contemporary Franciscans "arrive at definitions and decisions important for their life." But we do not on that account think that other viewpoints are irrelevant, much less destructive. We do not think, e.g., that the ideal of fraternity set forth by Father Berard Doerger will set Franciscans "scurrying down the alley of the future, oblivious of what is going on" in their lives. Quite the contrary, such ideals remain valid criteria for discussion and for the creation of new syntheses of theory and practice. We do not agree that Father Roderic Petrie's reflections on poverty busy Franciscans with sterile concepts *merely* because they do not *also* embody a concrete program to be accomplished the day before yesterday. And we do not think that the sort of responsible contemplative withdrawal advocated by René Voillaume, as by Saint Francis of Assisi, "induces a soothing reflection into our lives which gently hides what is going on within us."

Father David, then, judges our work as "misinterpreting renewal . . . modifying without changing [our] system of ideas and . . . mode of address . . . [and] continuing in [our] role as apologist for an institutional ideology." We experience a certain diffidence when he asks us to take these criticisms "as those of a brother who shares with [us] responsibility for the Franciscan mind."

Of course we are well aware how acerbic and pointed a theoretical controversy can become between brothers, without the academically sharp divergence marring, or even so much as touching on, their fraternal relationship. Were Father David's present criticisms addressed to particular features of our viewpoint—to questions of means or to specific interpretations of this or that ideal, we could accept them as "fraternal." But what he does in the present case is actually attack the very foundation of our fraternity in the name of fraternity. In his doctrinaire rejection of the entire Franciscan "institution" and of its ideals as expressed in the past, he writes off as dead to bury their dead huge numbers of Franciscans who continue to cherish traditional ideas, ideals, and institutions. This is an ideological clarion call at least as absolute as any of the ideologies Father David decries in his essay.

Surely it must be seen as anomalous that *Haversack* thus seeks to introduce into an age seeking unity and reconciliation a divisive wedge uncannily reminiscent of the early Franciscan Spirituals. "The story of the Spirituals is a tragic one," Bishop Moorman observes, "because at the best both sides were fighting for an ideal, and because in the end it could only lead to a division of the family of S. Francis."[4] To the extent that any healing of that division took place in the past, it did not take place because of relativistic gropings for meaning by small groups of individuals who cut themselves off from the institution. Order was restored, and issues clarified, instead by the authentic declarations of those empowered to speak for Jesus and for Francis: the institution.

Fr. Michael D. Maslach, ofm

[3]Peter Berger, *A Rumor of Angels* (New York: Doubleday, 1969).

[4]John A. H. Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order* (Oxford U. Press, 1968), p. 192.

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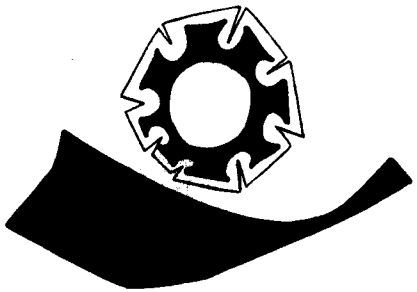
outside the American system as such for the large numbers of Americans, especially in southern states, who think Catholics are "another breed"? Whoever considers our administrative apparatus to be too much like a cooperation in structure and function, moreover, ought to realize that "Keeping in touch" through a hierarchy of superiors and through personal visitation was in the Order long before capitalism reared its head.

Father David's claim that the Rule of 1223 represents a key moment in the moralization and juridicalization of Franciscan life strikes me as tendentious and derived from the a priori view that any form of organization, rule, or structure is a restraint on a living process. But not only classical Aristotelianism sees growth and maturity as the perfecting of form: the Gospel itself tells us to "learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart"; "Take up your cross daily, and follow me." Furthermore, neither you nor I nor Francis is the same at 40 as we were at 24; nor are our perceptions of Gospel ideals and the tools needed to implement them what they were decades ago. The later Francis is still *Francis,* though he was one who learned—as we all must—that people can follow the Gospel ideal without doing it in exactly the same way that we ourselves do.



"The decade of renewal has dissolved a complete conceptual and moral system," Father David tells us. My reading and experience tell me such a revolution has not taken place. From Vatican II on, religious life has continued to summon religious, including Franciscans, not to protest (social or otherwise), but to the total consecration of themselves. Religious, moreover, who have lived through the decade of permissiveness and abandonment of many structures, are opting for, and being commanded to opt for, definite, structured patterns of community that give flesh to professed ideals of fraternity and minority.

Alcoholics Anonymous has a slogan that I would like to close with—a bit of advice I offer Father David: "Think small." Diatribes against such straw men as American Franciscan life and the Order at large may have some cathartic value, but they are not healing of individuals. All the versions of the Franciscan rule indicate, at any rate, that invective is out of place. Many Franciscans are uncomfortable with the affluence and esteem that they enjoy. Father Roderic Petrie's reflections on poverty speak more eloquently to this discomfort than yours, because they address themselves to people and their problems and offer some practical responses. Francis heard Jesus telling him to "rebuild his Church," and he accomplished that spiritual goal by beginning with the lowly task of refurbishing the chapel of San Damiano. We who want so much to follow Francis have a better chance of reaching that goal by revitalizing the communities and apostolates in which we have been placed, than by eliminating or fleeing from them. "Protesting" is like cleaning a room, something you do when you do not want to get down to serious work.

After all, there is no system in heaven or on earth that can prevent your giving your heart and soul to God. But there *is* a "system" which has greatly facilitated such a gift of self: the Gospel form of life embodied in the Rule.

J. Julian Davis ofm

The Prodigal Son

I, the Prodigal, have aimlessly wandered,
Seeking to satisfy the desires of youth.
Dulling my senses with fine wine and pleasure. . . .
Will anything quiet this gnawing within?

Inheritance squandered, the euphoria has faded,
My body is racked with hunger and thirst.
I jealously look at swine feeding on fodder. . . .
Will anything quiet this gnawing within?

Return to the Father and live as a servant,
For sonship I forfeited long, long ago.
Downcast and defeated, I ramble the byroads. . . .
Will anything quiet this gnawing within?

While still at a distance . . . a glimpse of my Father.
A loving embrace and compassionate glance,
A robe, a ring. They dance and make merry. . . .
The son, once thought dead, lives in peace now, within!

William J. Boylan, O.F.M. Conv.

The Franciscan Nemesis

MADGE KARECKI, S.S.J.

THE NOVEMBER, 1978, issue of THE CORD was a vivid reminder that poverty is still very much a thorn in the side of Franciscans, rather than the Lady that she was for Francis. The life-style which Francis outlined for his followers in his writings was very much dependent on his relationship with his beloved Lady Poverty. This relationship is often baffling to his followers and so is his life-style itself. Still, the world looks to Franciscans for the deepest meaning of poverty; for the Franciscan family is, through its tradition, heir to an unique understanding of the life of evangelical poverty.

It is good at the beginning to clarify that Franciscans need to be about giving expression to evangelical poverty, not misery or destitution. The common objection to groups living among poor people in the inner city or in rural areas is that they can never really be poor because they have the benefit of academic or professional training, they can readily find work, and they can manage financial matters in ways that poor people cannot.

All these objections are out of place when speaking about evangelical poverty in such a way that others can readily see that we're not bent on building kingdoms for ourselves, but that we're on the way to the heavenly kingdom, our true home. Francis himself came from a wealthy family, had an education and first-hand experience as a merchant, and was known in precisely this way to everyone in Assisi. He broke with the standards of the world, however, and chose to live among the poor, not only as their servant, but as their brother—poor himself—for the sake of the Gospel. He set about the task of living differently within society. He made his covenant with Lady Poverty: she sould be the guide on his way of pilgrimage.

Franciscans need to re-evaluate their relationship with this Lady. They need to see her as a very special part of their lives, its very fabric. But as LeClerc has pointed out:

> 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.[1]

LeClerc rightly asserts that all too often instead of being witnesses to the value of evangelical poverty we witness to "the good life" made possible by our consumer society. We grow accustomed to the conveniences of modern society, and soon things that were once a luxury for our life and work become necessities. We begin to justify how we live by saying that certain things are "musts" for our apostolic work, or in the name of profesionalism. We cast aside the values of the Gospel, not in some deliberate sense, but rather by our subtle assimilation into society.

Though all Franciscans readily admit that there was real credibility to what Francis preached because he lived in a way that was consonant with his words, we are not all that ready to accept his counsels. We become entangled in endless debates and haggle over the question, "What is poverty?" We who are to enter into a covenant with Lady Poverty are the very ones who cannot answer the question, while people without any background in theology, sociology, or Franciscan studies know perfectly well that poverty has to do with economics. It has to do with living in a part of the city that no one wants to live in by choice; with wearing clothers not of the latest styles; with renting places to live in, not owning them; with eating simple meals; with sharing anything that is surplus with the poor because it belongs to them. In short, it is to be satisfied with what is sufficient, to be able to distinguish between what is necessary and what is luxury and be content with the former.

This is not to deny the spiritual basis of Franciscan poverty, nor the necessity of having the corresponding interior attitude; but more often than not Franciscans spiritualize poverty and equate it with humility or availability. We spend our time developing elaborate systems of rationalization to escape from the fact that Francis intended his followers to be poor, not only in spirit—i.e., humble—but materially poor as well.

How else can one explain the first condition for entrance into the Order, that injunction to sell all and give it to the poor, which

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Sister Madge Karecki, S.S.J., whose discussion of Francis and "the World" appeared in our September, 1978, issue, has been serving the poor in Chicago's inner city for the past eight years.

[1]Eloi LeClerc, O.F.M., "Franciscan Poverty in Today's World," THE CORD 28 (1978), 321. The present article is an attempt to continue the dialogue begun in this presentation by LeClerc; references later on to Father Dismas Bonner's position pertain to his rejoinder to LeClerc, ibid., pp. 331-40.

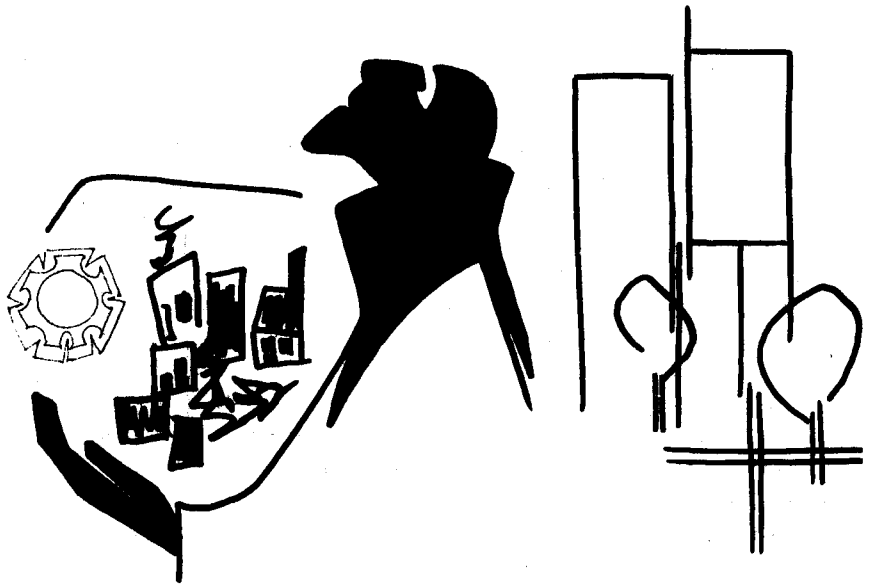
is found in the second chapter of the Rule of 1223? And what of the words in chapter six of that same Rule: "Appropriate nothing, neither a house, nor a place, nor anything else. As strangers and pilgrims in this world who serve God in poverty and humility, they should beg alms trustingly"?

An interior attitude was not enough; rather, identification with the poor was essential to Francis. As he wrote in chapter nine of the Rule of 1221: "You should be glad to live among the social outcasts, among the poor and the helpless, the sick and the lepers, and those who beg by the wayside." But it is not enough to live with the poor; we must live differently among them. There is a need to witness to fellowship made evident in sharing, and a need to evince a wise use of creation. There is, after all, that same and oftentimes gnawing desire for possessions in the hearts of the poor as in the hearts of the rich; the only difference is that the rich can afford to fulfill their desires, while the poor must be satisfied with futile hopes. Poor people need to see that participation in affluence does not lead to "the good life," at least not the good life promised by Jesus in the Gospel. They need also to see that an affluent life-style rapes the earth and is the fruit of injustice to others. Just as Francis was abstemious in his use of created things and grateful for them (cf. the Canticle of Brother Sun), so the need today is for the celebration, not the exploitation, of the created world.

Further, identification with the poor means an active sympathy for the injustices they endure by sharing their lot; and for some who have the necessary gifts and talents, it means working for their human rights. The poor, because they often lack educational skills, are the first to be laid off from work and to feel the pressure of inflation, especially the high cost of food, housing, and medical care. Thus they need a voice that we can often provide.

It seems that only when we make a conscious choice to situate ourselves among the poor and the helpless, the social outcasts, will our discussions about poverty bear a dimension of realism rather than rationalization; that only then will it be our delight, rather than our nemesis, because then it will be our way to the Father, our means of salvation, and our gift to the Church.

The spiritual dimension of poverty is, of course, real; but it is difficult to embrace the Poor Christ as Francis did when our arms are filled with things and our minds and hearts are occupied with keeping them in working order. Francis's genius was that he grasped so clearly that things distract men and women from their main task of



glorifying God and put a wedge into that relationship. Though his motivation was spiritual, his practice of poverty had to do with day to day economics. That, as I said before, is why his words about poverty were credible: because his life-style was consistent with them.

Francis is a parable, and the effort to translate his vision for contemporary society is a lifetime project. Granted it is difficult, perhaps seemingly impossible, however, knowing the ideal clearly, grasping that pristine vision, and admitting the difficulties involved in trying to live it may be a first step. Knowing our tradition is, as LeClerc has demonstrated, of crucial importance. Only such knowledge can give us the inspiration and vitality we need to be faithful to our charism.

Bonner argues that getting back to the original ideal is impossible because of the situation we find ourselves in today. We are owners of property, and most often this property is in choice suburban locations. We need things for our apostolates, and we have them. If we use this as our starting point, as Bonner counsels, we get nowhere; we take no bold steps in creating a more vibrant future for the Franciscan family. We must make a choice in favor of the ideal and *then* take the necessary practical steps to achieve it.

I would agree that we cannot get back to the actual imitation of the early Franciscans' life-style, but that does not exempt us

from the task of translating their inspiration for our times. While calling for "effective expressions of poverty today," Bonner explains the task of Franciscans in terms of a wise use of the property and possessions that we have. This certainly is the task of other religious families, but Franciscans are called to a poverty far more radical; at least, this is what one comes to after reading the sources. Yes, there have been developments, but we must judge them in light of Francis's original mission in the Church and see if they are in line with it. We must go back to the source of our tradition.

There we find that Francis was neither a social activist who saw the evils of feudal society and sought to right them, nor a pious Christian with his head in the clouds. He was a man who had met the Lord face to face, felt the grace of that meeting deep within his heart, and responded with a way of life marked by a solitary pursuit of the kingdom of God. His was, then, a life patterned after the Lord Jesus's own life, the Jesus who became poor for our sake.

Bonner is correct when he says that our primary emphasis cannot be material poverty—it surely was not Francis's—but neither can we be content with a vague notion or spiritualized version of the poverty to which Francis called his followers in his writings.

The current studies in value clarification tell us that a value is not ours, not integrated into our lives, unless it has some concrete expression. We do not hold a thing important unless it makes some impact on our way of living. So it is not enough to talk about living poorly, about the need to simplify our life-style; we need to be poor in fact. And no amount of opening our large friaries and convents for the use of others, or of taking food baskets to the needy at Thanksgiving or Christmas, or of giving mission appeals for those in desperate situations, will change the fact that Franciscans are called not only to individual, but to communal poverty as well. Francis saw his mission to the Church and to the world as calling each back to the standards of the Gospel, as testifying to the importance of being a pilgrim people who are poor for the sake of the kingdom.

At last summer's joint meeting of the LCWR and the CMSM there was recognition of the fact that especially in the United States, religious should reflect the prophetic nature of the Church by living more justly. Franciscans should lead the way, and we won't do so if we continue to spiritualize poverty and speak of it only in juridical terms.

We cannot return to the life-style of Rivo Torto; but we can and indeed must place ourselves among the poor, make conscious decisions that will help us become poor, and thus become able once again to offer a witness that is not blurred by compromise with the values of a consumer society. We must live differently within our society, being little in our own eyes and content with little. Then no matter what our work of service for the Church may be, our main service will be that of offering her a clear model of the value of evangelical poverty.

Our society is saturated with the values of capitalism. It lays stress on unnecessary consumption, affluent living, and the accumulation of material goods and economic resources. It is a clear witness to values that militate against Gospel values. This is the milieu in which we must live out our covenant with Lady Poverty.

Our witness must be equally clear and forceful if it is to have any effect. But to be able to give such clear and forceful witness, we ourselves must first become thoroughly imbued with our heritage. There we will find encouragement and challenge for our endeavor: not a conscience-easing balm, but a source of meaning for our commitment to evangelical poverty and a reason for our life among the poor. Our words, then, will be credible; for they will have taken on flesh in our lives.

Annunciation

Bend downward, good angel,
Say to the wintered earth:
Blanched ground and pale suns
Shall rule no more;
Days shall lengthen and twilight linger.
Hear not the cry of desperate winds,
No longer shall they chill
Know the laughter singing in the melting ice.
See, all things are made new
(the notice of the crocus and the daffodil!)
From you shall rise sweet incense:
In forest and in garden it shall rise
And fill the dead with news of paradise.

Andrew Lewandowski, O.F.M.

The Bull of Canonization of St. Francis of Assisi

TO OUR venerable brother archbishops, bishops, etc. . . .

By a marvelous condescension of the divine graciousness on our behalf, and an unbounded love of high esteem, God handed over his Son to redeem a slave. Even at the eleventh hour, he sends into the vineyard, which was planted by his right hand, workers to cultivate it. He never withholds his gifts of compassion and preserves the vineyard with his continual protection. They root up thorns and thistles with a hoe and an ox-goad, as Shamgar did when he killed six hundred Philistines. Although the vineyard is dried up with a superabundance of branches and spurious shoots which do not have deep roots, they clear out the brambles, that it may produce sweet and delicious fruit, which purified in the winepress of patience may be transferred into the storehouse of eternity. The vineyard was burned by ungodliness as if by fire, and the charity of many was growing cold. The wall was beginning to fall just as the invading Philistines fell with the draught of earthly pleasure. But at the eleventh hour, the Lord, who when he destroyed the earth by the Deluge saved the just by means of lowly wood, did not leave the rod of sinners on the lot of the just. He raised up his servant, Blessed Francis, a man according to his own heart. At the appointed time the Lord prepared and sent a lamp into the vineyard. Though this heavenly light was despised by the rich, it began to root out the thorns and briars, illumine the fatherland, conquer the Philistines who were attacking it, and admonish the workers by zealous exhortation that they might be reconciled with God.

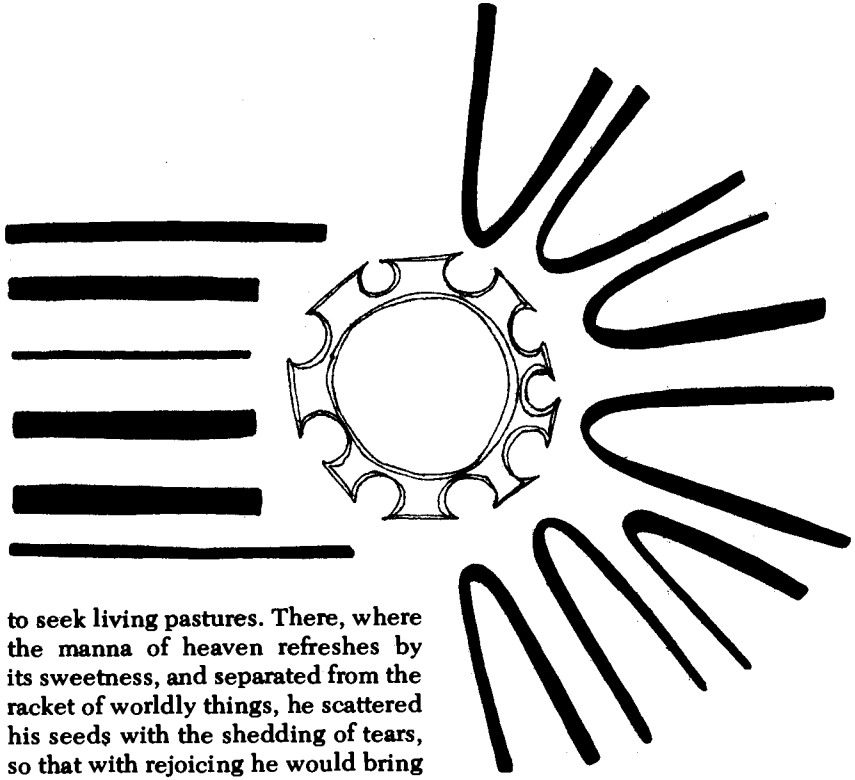
Hearing an interior voice of a friend who was inviting him, and rising up energetically, Francis broke the chains of an enticing world like another Samson. Being previously fortified by divine grace and conceiving the Holy Spirit of fervor, he took up a similar jawbone. Francis's jawbone was one of simple preaching unadorned with any coloring of persuasive words of human wisdom, but enlivened by the mighty power of God, who chooses the weak things of the world to confound the strong.

Called upon to develop a penance service based on the Bull of Canonization of St. Francis of Assisi, the Conventual friars at St. Anthony-on-Hudson found that no English translation was readily available. We are pleased to help remedy that situation by publishing this translation by Father Andrew Ehlinger, O.F.M.Conv., edited by Friars David Alexander Stachurski, O.F.M. Conv., and Donald Grzymski, O.F.M.Conv., all of St. Anthony's Rensselaer, New York.

By the grace of Him who touches mountains and they smoke, Francis overthrew not only one thousand but many thousands of Philistines. This faithful servant brough back into the service of the Spirit those who before had been serving the allurements of the flesh. Having subjected his vices whose worse part had perished, he enrolled himself in the service of God. Then abundant water flowed from his very mouth, reviving and rendering fuitful the fallen, the thirsty, and the filthy ones. This water, which cannot be purchased with money or any exchange, gushes forth into everlasting life. This water turned into streams spreading far and wide, irrigating the vineyard which extends its vines into the sea and its shoots to the river.

Then, mentally following the footsteps of our father Abraham, Francis set out from his kindred and from his father's house, with the intention of going to the land which the Lord by divine inspiration had shown him. He did this that he might run more readily toward the prize of the heavenly calling, and might more easily be able to enter the narrow gate. He discarded the luggage of worldly goods in imitation of Christ, who though rich had made himself poor for our sake. He distributed his property to the poor so that his righteousness might remain forever and ever. Upon one of the mountains pointed out to him he reached the land of vision, namely, the excellence of his faith. Like Jephthah, he offered his flesh in holocaust to the Lord, as his only-begotten daughter, which for some time had deceived him. Francis placed his flesh under the fire of his love, mortifying it by hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, much sleeplessness, and fastings. The flesh, crucified with its vices and evil desires, was able to say with the Apostle: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." Now Francis lived no longer for himself, but rather for Christ, who for our sins died and rose again for our justification, so that we may no longer serve sin. Likewise, having triumphed over vice and in a virile manner taking up the struggle against the world, the flesh, and the spiritual powers, he utterly renounced wife, land, and oxen, which had prevented those from attending the banquet that they were invited to. When the Lord ordered him he arose like Jacob. Armed with the seven-fold grace of the Spirit and the aid of the eight evangelical beatitudes, he went up to Bethel, the house of God. He prepared himself for this through the fifteen steps of the virtues which are contained in the psalms. There Francis built for the Lord the altar of his heart and offered upon it the fragrance of pious prayers. These humble offerings were brought into the sight of the Lord by the hands of angels. Soon these same angels would welcome Francis as a fellow citizen of heaven.

Wrapped in his beautiful contemplation and clinging in his embraces only to Rachel, he descended the mountain and entered the forbidden abode of Lea, lest he should benefit only himself. He led his flock, made fruitful by twin offspring, to interior parts of the desert



to seek living pastures. There, where the manna of heaven refreshes by its sweetness, and separated from the racket of worldly things, he scattered his seeds with the shedding of tears, so that with rejoicing he would bring sheaves to the storehouse of eternity. When later crowned with the crown of righteousness, Francis would be placed among the princes of his people. Certainly he did not seek the things that were his own, but rather those which were Christ's. Serving Him diligently as a sun shining in the Church of God, he took a lamp and a trumpet into his hands so that by his example of shining works he might draw the humble to grace. Terrifying them with severe chiding, he withdrew the wicket from their baneful excesses. Impelled by the virtue of charity he rushed fearlessly into the camp of the Midianites, who were swerving from the judgment of the Church through contempt. With the help of Christ, who when he was closed in the virginal womb encompassed the whole world by his dominion, Francis took away the weapons in which the strongly armed man trusted while guarding his house. He distributed the spoils which he gained and brought those held captive to the allegiance of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, placed in the world and having overcome the three-fold enemy, he offered violence to the kingdom of heaven and took it by storm. After very many glorious combats in this life and triumphing over this world, he passed happily to the Lord. Although knowingly ignorant and wisely unlearned, he surpassed many who were endowed with knowledge.

Indeed, although his valiant and remarkable life sufficed of itself to gain the fellowship of the Church triumphant, the Church militant sees only the face and does not presume to judge by her own authority about those who are not in her domain. The Church does not assume to venerate them only for their life because sometimes the angel of Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. The almighty and merciful God, by whose grace it is that the above mentioned servant of Christ served in a worthy and admirable manner, does not permit such a great light to remain hidden under a bushel. Instead, he wishes it to be placed on a lampstand to give the consolation of light to those who are in the house. Many outstanding miracles prove that Francis's life was pleasing to God, and that his memory should be venerated by the Church on earth.

Therefore, since the outstanding facts of his glorious life were fully known to us from the great familiarity he enjoyed with us when he was in a lower rank, and full assurance has been given to us by competent witnesses about the manifold brilliance of his miracles, confident through the mercy of God that we and the flock committed to us will be helped by his prayers and that we will have as a patron in heaven him who was a familiar friend on earth and, finally, after receiving the advice and consent of our brothers, we have decided to inscribe him in the catalog of the saints to be venerated.

Decreeing that his birthday be celebrated devoutly and solemnly by the whole Church on the fourth of October—the day on which he was freed from the prison of the flesh and reached the heavenly realms, we therefore ask, advise, and exhort all of you in the Lord, ordering you by this apostolic rescript that on the day mentioned, in his commemoration, you gladly perform divine praises and humbly implore his protection, so that by his intercessory merits you may attain fellowship with him, with the help of God who is blessed forever and ever.

Given at Perugia on the fourteenth of August in the second year of our Pontificate.

Gregory IX

Remember all your sons, Father, who, surrounded by inextricable dangers, follow your footsteps, though from how great a distance, you, most holy Father, know perfectly. Give them strength that they may resist; purify them that they may gleam forth; rejoice them that they may be happy. Pray that the spirit of grace and of prayers be poured upon them; that they may have the true humility you had; that they may observe the poverty you observed; that they may be filled with the charity with which you always loved Christ crucified, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns world without end. Amen.

—From the "Prayer of Francis's Companions to him"—2 Celano 224

Unity among First Order Franciscans:

An Ecumenical Witness

THADDEUS HORGAN, S.A.

FROM AN ecumenical perspective the reintegration of the Franciscan First Order into a united world-wide fraternity would be most welcomed by Roman Catholic ecumenists. This could witness to the ultimate goal of the ecumenical movement, which is the organic unity of all the churches and Christian communities throughout the world. At this point in history the reintegration of the First Order could be a powerful witness as well to the intermediate ecumenical step needed prior to visible organic unity, namely the process of reconciling divided Christians to one another, then to each other as churches.

All Franciscans are experiencing anew the fact that Franciscanism is a movement for renewal within the Church. This is true for all three traditions within the Franciscan movement: the Minors, the Clares, and the Penitents, lay and religious, men and women. Franciscans not in the Minorite tradition hope that First Order friars will look beyond their own concern for unity and see it in the larger dimension of the whole movement's witness value for our own church's ecumenical ministry. Together all of us who are Franciscan can offer the church and the churches a living example of true unity without the image of monolithic structures. To an ecumenist this is important. The various Franciscan traditions manifest that the single source of faith and fidelity and motivation for living the gospel neither prohibits nor prevents a variety of lifestyles for gospel living. Within the whole Franciscan movement are the basic ingredients for a living withess to at least three ecclesial characteristics that all in the ecumenical movement recognize as essential to the future united church for all Christians: unity in essentials, catholicity for life, and diversity of expression.

Unity in Essentials

ALL FRANCISCANS share in the charism of Saint Francis. Perhaps no one can say what, specifically and precisely, that is. To live the gospel in a believing, worshipping, serving community, and to preach it with peace in our hearts and on our lips is to live Christ. We can never exhaust the meaning of Christ. Yet certain biblical values for gospel living are associated with each of the three branches of the Franciscan movement. They are not mutually exclusive. Some Franciscans do not associate fraternity (*fraternitas*) and evangelical service (*minoritas*) with the First Order, contemplation with the Clares, and witnessing to continuous *metanoia* with Penitents, lay and religious. Many Franciscans do, nevertheless—especially Third Order religious. Among them a rediscovery of the Penitential Tradition is taking place, highlighted by the Fourth Franciscan Interobediential Congress of Religious Tertiaries held in Madrid in 1974, and set forth in the document, "A Statement of Understanding of Franciscan Penitential Life."[1]

This has ecumenical significance today because all Franciscans view fraternity and evagelical service, contemplation, and metanoia inclusively, not exclusively. According to the gift of the Holy Spirit, Franciscans in each tradition try to live the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ emphasizing one or another of these characteristics of gospel life. This, it seems, is what distinguishes one tradition from another. Yet all Franciscans have one source for life: the Son of God. All have one norm to guide them: the word of God, especially the gospels lived and proclaimed by the Church. And all have one general purpose: to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3). "In this way we are all to come to unity in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God until we become the perfect Man, fully mature with the fullness of Christ himself" (Eph. 4:13).

More and more, Franciscans are appreciating the historical origins of their movement. It was and is a renewal movement within the Church. As such, it does not exclude any gift of the Spirit nor the variety of expressions for the Holy Spirit's gifts which are given to build up the body of Christ. The mutuality of gifts, inherent to the Franciscan charism, and raised up at various times and in different places to meet the Church's needs, is an efficacious sign of unity to the Church and churches in our day. The ecumenical movement is the churches' response to the inspiration of the Spirit to reintegrate the Christian family in the world.

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[1]Information about this can be obtained from The Federation of Franciscan Sisters, Box A 3033, Chicago, IL 60690, and from the Secretariat for the Franciscan Interobediential Congress, Ss. Cosma e Damiani, Via dei Fori Imperiali 1, 00186, Roma, Italy.

The key to reunion is renewal. No one gift of the Spirit is the sole operative principle of renewal, nor of reunion. All have legitimate place and purpose when they are rooted in the essential bond of Christian unity, Jesus Christ himself, and when they are used for the one purpose of building up the body of Christ, the Church.

Catholicity of Life

EVERY CULTURE, every circumstance, every calling by the Spirit is a valid context for the gospel to be lived. The Franciscan Order is the largest in the Roman Catholic Church. It is present almost everywhere and embraces people of most cultures. In this it is physically catholic or universal. It is equally catholic because Franciscans are involved in a multiplicity of situations. Historically the three orders came to be because of circumstances of a particular time. It could be said that the Friars Minor came to be because Francis was inspired to give new expression to what religious life could be. The Clares lived gospel life as projected by Francis in enclosed convents because thirteenth-century social circumstances required this. The Franciscan Order of Penance developed as a result of the living influence of Francis on the existing Penitential movement. Lay Franciscans are most catholic because they bring into every kind of human situation the Franciscan charism and spirit. The multiplicity of congregations within the Third Order Regular were established by founders and foundresses who brought their gift of insight into the Franciscan charism to specific needs of the Church. Their followers try to give expression to the Franciscan way of life in order to serve the Church in meeting those needs.

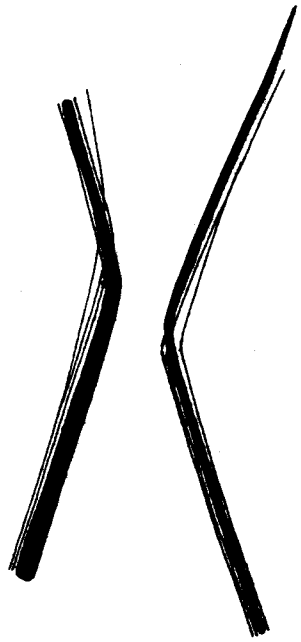
But the Franciscan movement is eminently catholic in its center and source, Jesus Christ. Salvation in Christ is for all humanity. The way of salvation, living the gospel, is for all humanity. This inspiration of Francis, incarnated by Franciscans, witnesses eminently the catholicity of the Church (Eph. 2:11 - 3:11). For the ecumenical movement this can be an even more efficacious witness. In the past different situations caused seperations and divisions among Christians. The Franciscan movement demonstrates that living the gospel based on differing insights, or in different places and circumstances need not be the cause of separation nor division. The total Franciscan movement can witness to the enrichment that diversity gives to unity. Not even the threefold variation of the First Order, a variation brought about by a concern for reform and renewal, caused total rupture or

fraternal alienation, even though it brought structural differences. The reintegration of the First Order can demonstrate to divided Christians that their developed traditions can result in forms of evangelical life enriched by past concerns for reform.

Unity in Diversity

UNIFORMITY IS not a characteristic of the Church or of the Franciscan movement. It never has been, and in view of the ecumenical witness the Franciscan movement can offer to Christians, it never should be. The Church is one because Christ is one, the one way of salvation revealed by God for all humanity. The Franciscan movement is one because its vital principle is the literal gospel, the life of Christ. Gospel freedom incarnated in Christ is open to all humanity by the Holy Spirit. Based on the charism of Saint Francis, this is the purpose of the Franciscan movement's witness and mission to the world.

Because there are three traditions within the movement, Franciscan principles for gospel life are embraced by a variety of persons, in a multiplicity of situations, circumstances, and places. This variety witnesses to the ageless missiological principle of adaptation. Adaptation of gospel living and the gospel itself has caused disunity as schisms in the Church demonstrate, but this does not have to be so, as the Franciscan movement shows. Even now, with the First Order structurally distinct in three branches, this could still be affirmed. That it should be affirmed for the whole Franciscan movement is certain. There is a practical genius to the movement that requires Franciscans to adapt for witness, mission, and ministerial service. It is integral to the Franciscan charism. The rise of religious congregations in the Penitential tradition particularly demonstrates this. Lay Franciscans adapt the charism and live its gospel values in the situation of home, family, neighborhood, employment, and professions. By their lives of poverty and prayer



the Clares provide a witness within the movement itself and a spiritual support needed by all Franciscans to be faithful to the gospel.

This perhaps may seem to be an argument against the reintegration of the First Order. This is not the case. Unity should be encouraged because among the First Order Franciscans their distinctions are not a matter of basic essentials. Rather, the effort for unity seems to be suggested because of a common purpose and lifestyle, as well as the need for common practical structures to eliminate useless duplication. What originally brought about distinctions in the First Order may no longer pertain today or justify maintaining separate structures. If this is the case, then eliminating them witnesses ecumenically to the uselessness of needless multiplication. Among Christians, especially in the United States, several separate church bodies exist within the same tradition. A helpful step toward total Christian unity would be the reintegration of these bodies. The First Order Franciscan experience of reintegration could provide a useful example of rapprochment..

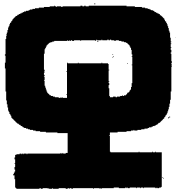
More importantly, the two characteristics of the First Order, *minoritas* and *fraternitas*, would be highlighted by reintegration. Marshalling the energies of the First Order for *minoritas*, evangelical service, particularly in mission, would be a vital contribution to the Church and the churches. It could activate the evangelical renewal character often associated with the First Order as well. *Minoritas*, evangelical service, intensified as a result of reintegration, could make the Friars Minor a greater influence on behalf of the gospel to all Christians. Their just pride in being the descendants of Francis's first followers should make them special to other Christians. Saint Francis is known by other Christians—particularly among Anglicans and Lutherans. He is admired because he incarnated gospel life in his heart. Francis is appreciated as a reformer whose method was to herald the peace of Christ. Preaching the gospel in the simplicity and with the clarity of Francis could be an ecumenical objective for reintegration. Undoubtedly it would be an important contribution to the ongoing reform and renewal of the Church and the churches.

Fraternitas, evangelical living in ecclesial communities, is the self-understanding that many of the churches of the Reformation and Radical Reformation have of themselves. One potential result of First Order reintegration could be a more vigorous, intensive, and extensive revival of evangelical living. In itself this contribution to the ecumenical ministry of the Roman Catholic Church would be outstanding, particularly in its relations with Christian communities in the Reformation tradition. As an example of the process of reconciliation, the intermediate step needed prior to visible organic unity among the churches, it could contribute to the development of the whole ecumenical movement.

Undoubtedly, the reintegration process for First Order Franciscans will take time. Part of that process will be bringing into harmonious contact representatives from the different branches of the First Order. They will plan reintegration in such a way that no First Order Franciscan will feel that he is losing what is essential to the tradition of the Friars Minor. This is no small task. If successful, it will manifest reconciliation or "seeking the truth in charity." The process of reconciling divided Christians is the main task of ecumenists today, particularly at the local level. Reintegration of the First Order would serve as a sign to Christians in the same tradition that organic unity is possible without the loss of anything that is essential to living the gospel faithfully in the one Church.

* * *

IT IS NOT unreasonable to view the First Order's consideration of reintegration at this time as inspired by the Holy Spirit. In view of a need that the Church and the churches are conscious of in our day, reunion, and recalling past moments in Church history when Franciscans responded to the Church's needs, reintegration appears to be more than mere practicality for the First Order alone. Reintegration can serve the Church and the churches in ecumenical ministry. It could have enormous significence for the movement toward Christian unity.



Friday

I loved him dear, my firstborn child,
and laid him on my lap.
While I gazed into his dark brown eyes,
my heart was filled with wonder.
How will you fare and grow, my son;
will ever your heart be broken?
Forever and forever,
will kind words to you be spoken?

Hand in hand, with my little man,
we picked the flowers fair;
And when he cried a little bit,
the thorn I gently drew.
I crowned his head with roses then,
and set him on a chair.
I kissed his little hands again,
and knelt upon the floor.
And joining me, he prayed right there,
his radiant face aglow.

Then came to pass my little son,
at last a man was grown.
A mother's day of loss must come,
but need it be so soon?
This lad of mine, this son grown tall,
his Father's will to do;
The lame and sick are healed—
the hungry, they are fed.
He taught and wrought with mighty signs,
while across the land he strode;
A duty to perform for man,
not turning back at all.

O must you go afar so quickly,
and can't you rest a bit?
Blest child of mine with eyes so kind,
how can you be forgotten?

So innocent you are, my son,
to walk about the land;
No longer for me to hold your hand—
to wipe away your tears.
How can I make your load more light—
repay your love for me?
For were you just to stumble now,
how could I bear the sight?

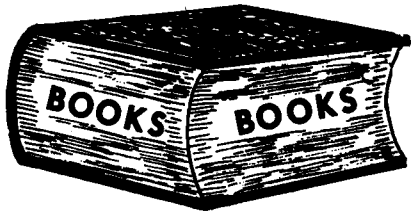
And now this day you come my way,
a mountain on your back!
My child—what can I do?
How can it be this way?
I look at you and long to say,
"Let me carry it part of the way!"
You look at me with eyes that say,
"No, mother, you have enough this day."

My son, my son, so innocent and fair!
How can you bear the crown of shame you wear?
Your hands which I have kissed
with blood are covered now!
My child, my child,
how can I help and share?

And to a hill they take you now
and throw you on a tree!
And through your feet flames of pain,
they firmly fix you there!
I washed your feet-how can I now?
My child, how can this be?

You raised him high—my perfect child—
and left him there to die.
My little boy is dead this day—
upon my lap he lies.

Charles Goering



Searching for God. By Cardinal Basil Hume, O.S.B. New York: Paulist Press & Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow Co., 1978. Pp. 192. Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard Leo Heppler, O.F.M., Chaplain to the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in West Paterson, NJ.

Searching for God is a collection of conferences given by the then Abbot of Amplefort to his Benedictine community over a period of thirteen years (1963-1976).

The framework for the talks is contained in the Introduction wherein the author points out the tension between the "Desert" and the "market place," the struggle between the contemplative and the apostolic life, the life of prayer and the life of service. He goes on to say that this tension has always existed in apostolic communities and is beneficial as long as the proper balance is maintained. All this is nicely put in the sentence, "We shall never be safe in the market place unless we are at home in the desert" (p. 34).

Both the tone and the content of the book are praiseworthy.

As for the former, one can almost hear the father Abbot speaking to his community in a gentle, understanding, paternal voice. He skillfully blends humor with seriousness. He has that word choice and sentence magic we so envy in the British. He mingles understatement with public admission of personal failings. And all the time he is offering guidance with the confidence of a genuine leader.

Then there is the sureness about the monk's prime purpose in life (seeking God). There is the first-hand knowledge of the daily life of the monastery and in the apostolate. There is the mastery of the elements of the spiritual life. There is the comprehension of human nature. There are the revelations of a remarkable man.

The book will afford profitable reading for anyone interested in the spiritual life. All of us, the author points out, have the vocation to search for God. Here is a guide book.

The religious store I patronize was out of copies of *Searching for God*, an indication that it is being "discovered." I hope more and more will find out about it.

A Hunger for Wholeness. By Joan Huston. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 87, illus. Paper, $2.95.

Your Father's Business: Letters to a Young Man about What It Means to Be a Priest. By Charles W. Harris, C.S.C. Nore Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 110, illus. Paper, $1.75.

Reviewed by Father Richard J. Mucowski, O.F.M., Ed.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology and Staff Counselor at Siena College, Loudonville, NY.

The Ave Maria Press has made available two more in its extensive list of helpful books: one in the field of general spiritual development, and the other more specifically addressed to young men considering a priestly vocation.

I

All of the major human weaknesses which detract from a person's relationship to God and others are considered in *A Hunger for Wholeness*, the format of which is a series of meditations. These reflections take a negative quality and reshape it into a positive direction for human and spiritual growth. In all, nineteen topics are considered by Huston, ranging from self-love through superiority, inordinate ambition, conflicting selves, and fear of suffering.

It is clear that this book is meant to be read and reflected on in the fashion of a chapter here and a chapter there. Tastefully illustrated with the author's own art work, the compilation of meditative chapters beckons a person to journey into himself and his relationship with his Creator.

This book would appear to be an ideal gift for anyone who quietly wishes to reflect on his own growth and development. While it is not a substitute for a spiritual director, it is certainly a contribution to the contemporary literature of a spiritual nature. In that capacity, it provides personal food for thought and growth.

II

Your Father's Business represents a compilation of personal reflections from Harris to Bill, a college senior who was contemplating a vocation to the priesthood. The sharing which occurs on Harris's part is a sensitive blend of the real experience of his own vocation as a priest with the addition of a contemporary theological reflection on the Church and the meaning of the priesthood in that institution.

The difference between this collection of letters on the journey of a person who is called to understand God's work in his heart, and that of other books of its kind, is in the presentation. Harris begins with a personal introduction to his friend and then moves into an almost homiletic reflection on a particular theme: the need for priests, the vocation to be a shepherd; learning a sense of personal sacrifice and dedication; being a prayerful man; and celibacy as a love for the Lord Jesus.

The book is written in a popular style and at a high-school reading level. Although some of the transitions from the personal introduction to the almost homiletic sharing are not always as smooth as they might be, the reader is not distracted by the presentation. There is much in this book which might aid a young man in searching to understand how God works in his life. I would certainly recommend the book highly to any individual contemplating a vocation to the priesthood. Vocation directors and spiritual directors or campus ministers as well as the parish clergy

might do well to keep a couple of copies on hand for those individuals who feel the stir of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. The questions which Harris raises might aid the work of the Spirit and spiritual director as a constructive vehicle for a person's growth with his Lord.

Chanticleer: Chants to the Son. Lafayette, NJ: Christ House, 1977. Record or cassette, $7.00: book, $4.00.

Reviewed by Brother James P. Scullion, O.F.M., a third-year theologian at Holy Name College, Washington, DC.

The "Christ House Community" has come out with its second record and accompanying songbook: *Chanticleer.* It differs from their first in two ways, the first a strength and the other a weakness. The strength is that this effort is not just a collection of songs but a thematic meditation on the life and vision of Saint Francis of Assisi. Featured are the songs from Zeffirelli's film, "Brother Sun, Sister Moon." To anyone who loved this movie, this is a real value because Donovan's songs from the film were never released.

The second difference is a weakness. This album does not have as much original material as the first did, and this group sounds best and most inspired when performing songs written by its own community, especially Pat Leyko. [See our review in the July, 1976, issue, p. 237 —Ed.]

The best songs on this disc, then, are those written by the members of the group. Among these is Pat Leyko's "Be Near, O Lord," which has a simple yet haunting melody. The song's production is excellent and adds to its aura. A second very simple and yet very good piece of liturgical music is Dennis Tamburello's "My Heart Rejoices," based on Psalm 16. This song has a sung antiphon and a chanted verse, ideal as a responsorial psalm at Liturgy. A slightly offbeat yet catchy song is "Herald of the King." It has a Nashville flavor complete with Johnny Cash voice and steel guitar. The lyrics are very good and the melody catchy. The "Peace Prayer" by Donovan and the "Canticle of Brother Sun" by John Fanelli are two other excellent songs which put to music words dear to all lovers of Saint Francis.

The rest of the songs are rather nondescript. The songs by Donovan from "Brother Sun, Sister Moon" tend at times to be not simple but simplistic. Also on the negative side, the album at times seems to be sloppily produced, with many flat or screeching notes which detract from the record's quality.

The accompanying songbook is very well done. Not just a music book, it is as Father Richard points out in the introduction a meditation book as well. For each song there is a brief description given from the life of Saint Francis, frescoes by Giotto, and various centering exercises. Each song, then, is a "prayer experience." The whole book forms a meditation on the life and dreams of Saint Francis of Assisi. Included in the book are notes and finger picking notation for the guitarist. The latter are a little confusing—the standard tablature used in most guitar books would have been better. Also in two of the book's songs ("There is a Shape in the Sky" and "Herald of the King") there are chords missing, which could cause some confusion to the musician.

Overall this collection has much to offer, including the heretofore unreleased songs by Donovan and the modern meditation on Saint Francis. These advantages are, however, somewhat negated by sloppy production and a lack of original material.

To Heal as Jesus Healed. By Barbara Leahy Shlemon, Dennis Linn, and Matthew Linn. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 107. Paper, $1.95.

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

The Church, the People of God, was given the command to cure the sick (Mk. 16:18). Using the official guidelines of Pope Paul's decree on the Anointing of the Sick (Nov. 30, 1972), the authors over twelve chapters interlace the discoveries and insights they have gleaned from scriptural, historical, scientific, and other empirical perspectives and summarily incorporate the principles of healing by believers in the name of Jesus. Their thesis is that healing prayer is normal in the Christian life. Their goal is to teach individuals of all faiths and to assist all better to pray each part of the ritual so the sick may receive all of the Lord's healing love. They insist throughout that healing is not limited to priests and professionals, but that Jesus answers the prayers of lay persons when they pray for physical healing. Their words, moreover, are illumined by their own witnessings and the testimonies of others.

There are two emphatic changes in the new Roman Catholic ritual for Anointing: (1) the Anointing of the Sick is to be *communal*, using not only the priest's but also lay people's prayer-power for healing; and (2) the Anointing is a rite for *healing*, rather than for preparing the dying for death. The old rite stressed the latter.

The new rite returns to the early Christian tradition. In the early years of Christianity all family members were designated to pray for their sick. Centuries later Pope Innocent I (418 A.D.) said consecrated oil was to be used for healing by all Christians for the "needs of members of their household." Lay Anointing continued through the 9th century—indeed, never died off totally until 1758 when Thomas Netter stated that previous textbooks erred in maintaining that lay people could anoint the sick. The Church in turn corrects his error and now again, as lay people administer the Eucharist so they may again become ministers of the Sacrament of the Sick by both prayers and loving presence.

And the concern now is for physical healing. The early Fathers' emphasis was foremost on physical healing with prayers for the sick and blessing based on James 5. All thirteen blessings of oil still in existence from that period mention physical healing, and the five most ancient refer to it exclusively. The focus of the Greek

Church even today emphasizes physical healing. Only after the 8th century is there a shift from lay people praying for the sick with physical healing to the priest's praying for the dying—for a happy death. Why the shift? Three reasons:

1. Desire for redemptive suffering rather than for healing. Under Emperor Constantine the age of martyrdom ceased, and a theology of illness as redemptive suffering developed, which ignored prayer for the healing of illness.

2. Delay of Anointing until deathbed confession. After the fifth century confession of sins gradually became a requirement, since the imposition of extreme penances led most to put off Confession and Anointing until they dug their graves.

3. Lay abuse of oil. Martyrs were rare, their veneration increased, and Christians felt unworthy to pray for healing unless at a martyr's shrine or with the use of a martyr's relics. Seeking favors and oil at shrines became a profitable business marked by greed and superstitious practices. To stop this, the authorities restricted the use of oil to the clergy. Also the eighth-century Carolingian rituals unfortunately included prayers for Anointing after the deathbed penance, again linking Anointing with prayer for the dying.

Today, however, the new rite invites all to join the priest in using the power of prayer for physical healing. The introductory rite declares that healing is for all Christians, in the twentieth as in the first century.

The authors, renowned and recognized in the healing ministry, share principles, concepts, and insights that release the healing powers of the living God who wants wholeness in body, mind, and spirit for his people. With the presupposition that the sick one is willing to be prayed over, the time is right, and you are the person that God wishes to use, the authors weave through the chapters the following identifiable elements that release healing power: (1) group prayer; (2) forgiveness, the absence of which is the greatest barrier to healing; (3) scripture reading; (4) imagery; (5) prayer by the sick themselves for others; (6) laying on of hands; (7) consecrated oil; (8) praise and thanksgiving; (9) the mind and heart of Jesus; (10) specific prayer; (11) guidance from the "still, small voice" of the Holy Spirit; (12) the Lord's prayer; (13) reception of the Lord's Body; and (14) soaking prayer. Their use may make healing seem rather complex, but actually prayer for healing is as free and creative as true love. God cannot be put into a box and manipulated, but he honors his Word and respects the ordinances that have been discovered. The acid test is, Does it work? The cases discussed throughout the book give confirmation that healing prayer works. If we only had expectant faith, appropriated the authority given us by Christ, and used the means, Christians would be the healthiest of persons in all the world.

The last pages of the little book give two models for healing prayer, along with the official ritual prayers.

This small book makes the ritual for Anointing of the Sick a living, dynamic grace, a gift that God lavishly gives us to use to heal sick, wounded, broken humanity. We have the freedom to accept or reject this grace provided for us. Not only priests who minister to the sick, but all prayer groups in the charismatic movement, and hopefully all Christian homes should own and read, and reread, this small classic. It contains in its depths too much to be read at one sitting. There is need for reflective, meditative absorptionof its revelations and teachings. It gives life and spirit to what would be just another decree from the Holy See to gather dust on book shelves. Indeed, Jesus wants all of us to be concerned *communally* with the sick and to pray the power prayer for the sick, not for their dying, but for their *physical healing.*

Francis: Bible of the Poor. By Auspicius van Corstanje, O.F.M. Trans. by N. David Smith. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. vi-228. Cloth, $5.95.

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

The unique charism that Saint Francis bestowed upon the Church and the world was not that he asked new and profound questions about life and living, but that he gave new and optimistic answers to man's perennial questions: Who is God? Who is my neighbor? and Who am I? Father Auspicius van Corstanje, O.F.M., in his book *Francis: Bible of the Poor,* gives some insight into how Francis answered these questions. This book is in no sense a biography, but when the reader lays the book down he will feel he knows Francis a little better, for the author uses legend and fact to bring the Poverello's spirit alive. As the title indicates, Francis was truly the "bible of the poor," because the Gospels were the most important element in his life.

Francis's relation to God as loving son and so perfect mirror of Christ is brought out most effectively throughout the book: in the third chapter, e.g., "The Case before Bishop Guido," in two chapters entitled "All Creatures Praise the Lord," and in chapter nine, on Saint Francis's experiences of God. On p. 101, the author writes, "Francis has gone down in history as a saint whose whole personality is our guarantee that God can be known and experienced." The point is not so much that Francis testified verbally to such an experience; ir is rather that he appeared to people as one who showed by all that he was, said, and did that he had been overpovered—possessed—by God.

The treatment of Francis's relationship to Jesus in the Eucharist rounds out this portrait of a man totally absorbed in God. On p. 132, the author writes that "Francis lived by virtue of the Eucharist. The Protestant, Paul Sabatier, recognized this. 'The holy sacrament,' he said, 'was the soul of his spirituality.' Francis was convinced and the theme of his love was 'God has revealed it to me.' "

As for Saint Francis's relationship with others, the reader will find a balanced attitude manifested by Francis toward the evils of his day (Chapter II, "The Kiss of the Leper"). The author does not see Francis as a social reformer with Bible in hand,

fulminating against the establishment. "We believe that the great significance of Francis's reform movement does not ultimately depend on the material benefits he obtained for the poor but on his discovery of a deeper and mystical dimension, namely, that the Church is a Church of the Poor" (p. 35). The ritual for Lepers as described by the author helps one appreciate why Francis could write, "When I was in sin, the sight of lepers was bitter for me, but the Lord himself led me into their company and I had pity on them."

For those who would have a better understanding of the relations of Francis and Clare, Chapter VIII on "Fire, Love, Death, and Ashes," gives some insight into this meaningful relationship. It includes both the legend of the miracle of the roses when Francis and Clare were walking from Spello to Assisi and the story told in the *Fioretti* of how the townspeople thought the church of our Lady of the Angels was on fire as Francis and Clare shared a meal with some of the brothers and sisters.

Like every man who is conscious of himself, Francis too asked himself who he was. The question concerned him throughout his life, but he approached it from a totally different experience of life than modern man. In an interesting chapter entitled "Francis in Search of His Identity," the author points out that Francis lived in the world of God's creation; modern man lives in the city of man surrounded by manufactured products. In a sense it was easier for Francis to find his way: "He found Christ and in him—grandiosely, overwhelmingly—his own identity" (p. 121). Francis truly knew who he was, as the author points out time after time.

Father Auspicius van Corstanje has written several other books, including *Covenant with God's Poor* and *Third Order in Our Times*. He has also published a short meditation called "Look at Jesus" [THE CORD, 10/78, 283-87]. In the present volume he is perhaps saying to the reader, Look at Francis, the Christ of Umbria, "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 world, in the way we look at them/ in our judgments, in our brotherly love/ for he is our teacher/ our guide/ our model."

This is what it means to be bible of the poor. Better arrangement of the footnotes and a good index would have made this book even more appealing to this reviewer.

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Recker, Colane, O.S.F., *All the Days of Lent*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 63. Paper, $2.45.

Sawyer, Kieran, S.S.N.D., *Developing Faith: Lesson Plans for Senior High Religion Classes*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 120, plus "tear-out" section. Paper, $5.95.

Worthington, Robin, *Beyond the Kitchen Sink: A Cope-and-Grow Book for the Full- or Part-Time Homemaker*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1979. Pp. vi-98. Paper, $1.95.

the CORD

April, 1979 Vol. 29, No. 4

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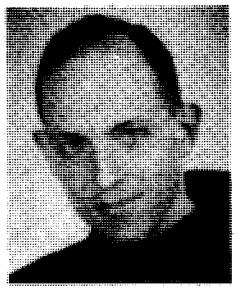

A REVIEW EDITORIAL

Religious Life and the Poor

IN LAST DECEMBER'S review editorial I said that Father Jerome Murphy-O'Connor had made a good case for his position that communal living is the essence of religious life. Two of that author's partners in dialogue took particularly emphatic exception to that fundamental position, but I agreed with Father Murphy-O'Connor's reply that the application of the term *essence* to community has to be understood with some subtlety—that it does not relegate the vows or the apostolate to the realm of the insignificant or render them dispensable.

That fundamental position, at any rate, implies two especially difficult issues: (1) Is a religious community primarily, as the author maintains, a community of *being* (more strictly speaking, of *becoming*), or a community of *action*—i.e., which takes precedence, community or apostolate; and (2) with particular reference to poverty, is the witness of common life so predominant (even over traditional categories of evangelical living) that poverty can no longer be seen as something to be embraced—e.g., in imitation of the poor Jesus—but must rather be viewed exclusively as something to combat and wipe out?

These two issues emerge with renewed urgency in a book just published by Orbis Books: *Religious Life and the Poor.* I'd like to return to them after giving a brief account of the book itself. The author, Father Alejandro Cussiánovich, is a Salesian, a native of Peru who has studied theology in Lyon. Hence his theological view of the religious life is explicitly "liberationist," and the words *on our continent* and *Latin America* appear on just

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Religious Life and the Poor. By Alejandro Cussianovich. Translated by John Drury. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979. Pp. viii-168. Paper. $6.95.

about every page. Will American and European readers therefore be repelled by the book's apparent "provincialism"? I found myself wondering, most of the way through it, whether Father Cussiánovich even meant for them to read it;and my misgivings were hardly allayed by his statement in Chapter Four that religious who work with people in the world's more affluent areas should be left to bury their dead.

To make up my mind, not only whether I should bother continuing to read *Religious Life and the Poor,* but also whether its message is applicable to the religious life as we know and live it in the United States, I was forced to recall and ponder another book, reviewed in this space last October and also published by Orbis Books: Father Michael Crosby's *Thy Will Be Done.* As I said in reviewing that volume, (1) the involvement of the author's Capuchin Province in political and economic "subversion" as well as the excellent documentation of his book does incline me to think that this "subversion" is as important and central to our lives and work as religious as he says it is; and (2) we ought to keep up to date in our understanding of the meaning of a balanced and mature Christianity, which may indeed be "liberationist."

Like Father Crosby's book, this one too has very impressive documentation. Frequently cited are the Medellin Conference, the Peruvian Bishops' statements, the Brazilian Conference of Religious, and the Latin American Conference of Religious. The author's tone is, as much because of this authoritative support as because of his extensive personal experience, urgent, confident, polemical, even belligerent. Not that he presumes to give us a definitive theological synthesis of the religious life—on the contrary, he insists that no one can do so at this juncture. His constant use of the progressive form of the present tense indicates how fluid the situation is, and how gradual is the emergence of the kind of theological awareness which forms the substance of his radical call to action.

In the first chapter, Father Cussiánovich insists that not only a theological understanding of the religious life, but all of theology must start from concrete experience rather than from disembodied revelation or theoretical speculation. And for him, concrete experience is the life of the poor. Religious life is, then, quite simply an "option that is not optional" *for the poor*—a thorough immersion in their life which results in our assimilation of their culture, their economic and political way of life, and course their own approach to religion.

RELIGIOUS LIFE is thus seen, in Chapter Two, no longer as either a withdrawal from the (relativized) world for exclusive concentration on the Absolute, or an evangelical radicalism that has fostered a certain elitism and seen the vows (in practice if not theory) as ends in themselves. It is a "project," an extension of the mission of the prophets and the Lord himself "to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favor" (Lk. 4:18; Is. 61:1f).

The third and fourth chapters spell this out in greater detail, moving from the more general to the more concrete and practical, to the point where religious are urged to take up quite specific political and economic challenges (not necessarily, but quite legitimately, party affiliation). It seems that there are two stages historically involved: first, an identification with the poor and an immersion in their life; then (the stage now emerging) active work to subvert the oppressive institutions and further the liberative process. Much of the language here is Marxist; but that in itself is no reason to reject the project to which the author summons us.

Chapter Five emphasizes the sign value of the religious life as witness to the kingdom of God present among us. Needless to say, this witness (in which the imitation of Christ, discipleship, and kingdom are strictly equivalent) must not be "spiritualized"—i.e., interiorized within the individual. The author's outlook is emphatically activist and collectivist. The theology of the religious life, at any rate, can be revitalized "only insofar as it is a theology of liberation" because "the poor are the bearers of the message of human solidarity." Each of the vows is considered here and its meaning revised in accord with Father Cussiánovich's perspective.

In his final chapter, the author concentrates on the spiritual life—the quest for holiness. Here too, it hardly needs to be said, a shift is urged from the individualist and interior view of sanctity—"the practice of the virtues"—to liberation praxis. Not that our transformation in Christ can be reduced to liberation; but, according to the author, liberation activity alone mediates the kingdom's presence and growth and thus is "the decisive factor in our love for God and in the sanctifying action of the Spirit." The old "flight from the world" to the Absolute now becomes a flight from the *present*, oppressive *condition* of the world toward a utopian society. (There is no claim that the goal is within easy reach or will be reached soon; but it must remain the motivating ideal for all our work.)

Worthy of special note, finally, are the author's occasional discussions of asceticism and prayer. The former is not a means to attain holiness—not something to look for and practice deliberately; it is rather the inevitable *result* of our radical commitment. That is, the opposition aroused by our combat will necessarily lend a paschal character to our lives. With regard to prayer, it moves parallel to liberation praxis and, as with the mystics, pervades our whole being in all that we do. I found no injunction in this book against "prayer apart" such as that practiced by the Lord himself—but on the other hand, prayer is said to "lose force insofar as it is removed from what happens every day," a claim which can surely be understood in an acceptable sense.

Religious Life and the Poor, which appeared in Peru in 1975, seems to be a quite competent, authoritative, and up-to-date reappraisal of the meaning of the religious life in light of liberation theology. Abundant reference is made by its author, not only to the weighty sources mentioned above, but to numerous theologians (including the Franciscans Leonardo Boff and William Barańa). Its message is disturbing to me—something about which I know I have to do some more thinking. The book is well written, for sure, and one which I feel sure that all religious ought at least to read and think about.

IT IS TIME now to return to the two "especially difficult issues" mentioned at the outset.

First, is a religious community a community of becoming (being) or one of action? As I observed in October, this is not an exclusive disjunction; it is a subtler question than that, i.e., a matter of emphasis. If our common life is the essence of our witness, we are a community of becoming; if our apostolate is primary, we are a community of action. Now, Father Cussiánovich sees the religious life, in a felicitous phrase, as "a *sensus plenior* of the gospel message, i.e., a particularly radical interpretation of the gospel *read from the "standpoint of our option for the marginalized classes and races."* The entire thrust of *Religious Life and the Poor* is that religious must live with, work with, be thoroughly immersed in the entire being of, the poor classes (the author even refers to the French experiment with worker priests). It would seem, then—though I'm not sure about this—that this book sees our community as one of action. On the face of it, nothing could be more obvious. But as I said, the question is subtle: it could be that the liberation praxis to which we are summoned is one that we, precisely as religious, must do communally. If so, then communal gospel life would be primary and the font from which the liberation praxis would invariably and necessarily flow. The importance of this first issue is, of course, that in concrete practice, particular courses of action must be judged from one or the other viewpoint: if common life is primary, certain "apostolic" demands may have to be sacrificed; if apostolate is primary, common life may in certain circumstances have to be adversely affected "for the greater good." If Father Murphy-O'Connor is right, as I think he is, then no practical demand of the apostolate—in this case, the liberation praxis—can be allowed to infringe upon the ideal of communal living. I would like to think myself justified in reading *Religious Life and the Poor* in a vein compatible with this conclusion. To insist that religious are what they are "essentially" because of common life in no way compromises Father Cussiánovich's characterization of their *Christian and human* reason for being. But to take the opposite viewpoint—that the liberation praxis is their reason for being *religious*—

raises the obvious retort that, as Father Cussiánovich himself points out, there are innumerable dedicated Christians in Latin America following the path laid out for them by liberation theology without taking vows or living in community. Then why are there religious at all?

In the second place, is poverty an ideal to be embraced, not exactly for its own sake as an end in itself, but as a positive value in union with the poor Jesus and in identification with the poor members of his Body? Or is it plainly and simply an evil to be combatted? Again, we have here no neat disjunction. Father Cussiánovich's point, in fact, is precisely that to combat the evil which is poverty, we must assume it! Something similar was said by Father Joseph Nangle in our May, 1978, issue. "... with poverty the follower of Christ takes on himself or herself that very reality which must be overcome," though "how this is, lies at the heart of the mystery we call the Redemption," and here "there is no human logic ... only the logic of the Cross which is paradox."

The fourth chapter of *Religious Life and the Poor* opens with a discussion of the poor Christ, born into a "condition of poverty" which is no accident but "a necessity of all salvation history," for "the liberating love of God is even linked historically to the poor." What seems clear from Father Murphy-O'Connor's discussion of poverty, however, and the investigations of those he cites in the context, is that "real indigence is in contradiction with the very nature of the kingdom of God." The poor are blessed, "not because of their poverty, but because they have the infallible promise of release from its chains" (pp. 43-44). The story of the rich young man (Mk. 10:17-22 etc.) "is essentially a narrative revealing the true nature of faith ... [and] only incidentally concerns poverty" (p. 45). It is not clear, despite the "Son of man has nowhere to lay his head" statement, that the Lord lived a life of penury. His garment, taken from him on Good Friday, was of such good quality that the executioners didn't want to tear it.[1]

Note that the point here is *not* poverty of spirit or detachment. In *that*, surely, the Lord excelled; and we religious are called to imitate him as perfectly as we can. The question is, rather, our communal standard of living. The passage of Father Murphy-O'Connor's book briefly cited last October deserves more extended quotation here:

> [Religious and the poor] are working together towards something better. Merely to stand by and be poor says nothing. Not only is there no witness, but there may be the exact reverse. Respect is an essential ingredient of witness, and there can be no genuine respect where there is an element of fake. The poor may lack education but they are not unperceptive. They know that religious have the intelligence, the education, and the contacts to ensure themselves a comfortable living. Their first reaction to a group of religious living at their standard is one of suspicion. They suspect that they are being condescended to, that some sort of silly game is in progress at their expense. And this response will remain until it is modified by an appreciation of the quality of the motivation behind such a gesture. All of which goes to show that the gesture in itself has no impact, and therefore no witness-value. Living in a slum is just as bad as institutionalized charity in the sense that the individual or a group hides behind a material gesture. Paradoxically, it is the easy way out [p. 51].

Father Murphy-O'Connor's point is perhaps more easily discerned with the addition of the last part of the paragraph to the short reference I gave last October. The gesture *in itself*—i.e., as a gesture without proper underlying motivation—has no witness-value and may even be both offensive to the poor and a cop-out.

The next step in this enervating dialectic is easy enough to see: the solidarity with the poor advocated by Fathers Nangle and Cussiánovich must be permeated with love for them—motivated by the thirst to bring about (at least eventually) *their release from poverty—a condition not to be seen as positively valuable or even acceptable.*

Now the end is, at least for the time being, in sight: is this sort of solidarity attainable by a religious raised in an, if not affluent, at least bourgeois (Father Cussiánovich's term) society? One individual I talked with at length about this recently thought not, and a correspondent wrote, in one of Holy Name Province's communications bulletins, that "we friars, like other member of [the American Middle] Class fail to realize that our attitudes towards our own economic well-being are formed early and unconsciously."[2]

The conclusion to which I am forced frightens me. Is Father Murphy-O'Connor right—that our individualizing and interiorizing of the religious ideal (the vows, asceticism) has so distorted our understanding of the religious life, that it needs a radical reformulation along the lines suggested by Father Cussiánovich? Is the psychological difficulty mentioned by Father O'Shea so formidable (he draws no such conclusion!) that a large percentage of contemporary religious are unable to accept even theoretically—much less live out—the reality of evangelical poverty? And what, then, are we to make of the religious life as it is lived today? Your comments (for publication or otherwise) are most welcome.

Fr. Michael D. Meilach, ofm

[1] See, on this question of the Lord's poverty, Father Dismas Bonner's discussion in our issue of November, 1978. (He also cites Father Murphy-O'Connor.)

[2] Father Howard V. O'Shea, O.F.M., Letter to *Forum*, a Journal of Opinion for the Franciscan friars of Holy Name Province (New York: Franciscan Communication Office, 7/31/78).

Corpus Christi, Salva Me

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

NOW TO continue our series of reflections on the great prayer, "Anima Christi." We considered in the last conference how we should not allow ourselves to drift into vague conjectures or even to "hold" on nebulous concepts about the soul of Christ, the mind of Christ, as though this were the Divinity set down in the created human body as into some kind of cabinet. So too we cannot disengage the body from the soul. And in this inspired prayer, beloved of how many saints, we see this immediate progression. It is not as though we are to be concerned only with the soul of Christ, agreeing that he had to have a body to get about in—a kind of second class instrument necessary for divine locomotion as man and for carrying out the various enterprises of human existence. To guard us against any such lowly concept of our own body (and that concept depends upon our concept of the body of Christ), the prayer proceeds directly from "anima Christi" to "corpus Christi."

"Body of Christ, save me!" we pray. And that sets us back on our mental heels a bit, doesn't it? What do we mean: Body, save me? Was it not the soul that saved us? Again, dear sisters, there are depths to plumb here. The Church in approving and indulgencing this prayer has given us a great course in theology. We shall see this more and more as the prayer unfolds.

Our bodies are so noble. And we know that the infamous carnal sinners of history are not those who loved their bodies too much but those who loved their bodies too little. They are those who failed to respect or perhaps even to understand the dignity of this magnificent creation of the Father, the human body. It is a creation so marvelous that the Father did not hesitate to give it to his own divine, eternal, infinite, all-comprehensive expression of himself in the Incarnation of the Son in the same way that it is given to us and with the same senses and faculties possessed by our own bodies. The Father did not, as it were, think this unbecoming! No, his own expression of himself, his

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divine Logos, would become incarnate in a human body brother to our human bodies.

What seems to me to be meant in this prayer, "Body of Christ, save me," is not what might ordinarily come first to our minds—and that certainly a glorious consideration, to be sure—the Blessed Sacrament. Indeed, in this way "Corpus Christi"— the Body of Christ— does save me. But I think that there is also a revelation here about our own bodies as they are meant to be and which they can be only through the body of Christ, who is himself "the firstborn of all creation" and whose created body was the perfect partner of his created soul.

When we have a lowly estimate of our bodies, we are a prey to all manner of sins as a result. When we consider the body as a necessary adjunct so that the soul can get about, as I said before, we are doing our body a great dishonor. Again and opposite-wise, when we hold the body as supreme, we likewise do it a great injustice and, really, again a dishonor. Body and soul are co-related, coordinated from the act of creation forward; and both will endure. True, the human body will fall into dust in the burial vault, but it will be resurrected in glory for eternity. We shall have glorified bodies in eternity; we shall not be disembodied spirits. We hope to be there with Jesus who shows to his Father the glorified wounds of his human body.

The body is ordained for ultimate glorification, and the very act of its decay in the tomb is a fulfillment of the penitential curse laid upon it in Eden. One might say that decomposition is the protest of the body at being temporarily parted from the soul, a protest appropriate in its very horror to manifesting what such a dissociation really is. We recognize the horror of the grave easily enough. Do we likewise recognize the horrors we create in life when we do not allow the body to act with the soul, to be served by the soul, and in its turn to serve the soul? The body must be taught that the soul is its animating principle. To take a ready example from our own state of life, when the body asks for the pleasures and satisfactions it could very legitimately enjoy in the married state, it must be educated by the soul, led by the soul to understand that these wonderful expressions and rewards are to be foregone for a yet greater love.

Again, when the body has desires which go beyond the bounds of what the soul, its animating principle, knows to be rightful boundaries, it must be admonished by the soul, the mind. If the body desires more food than it needs and tends to be gluttonous, it has to be persuaded

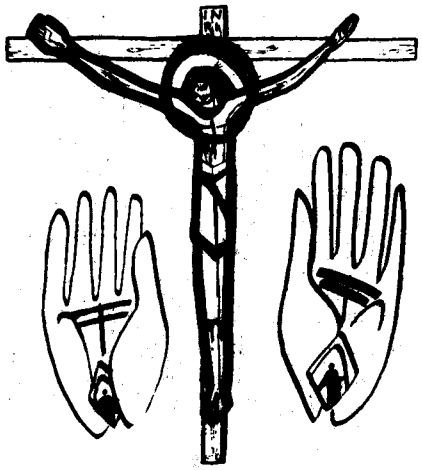
by the soul to say, "No." However, dear sisters, as the soul directs, educates, admonishes the body, so does the body need in its turn sometimes to admonish the spirit. We are an integrity of body and soul, one human being. And the body expresses through the faculties of mind and heart its own feelings. It is surely not difficult to illustrate that.

The body beholds something that makes it fearful, and there are bodily reactions: the heart begins to pound, sometimes a sweat gathers on the palms, the knees tremble, perhaps the muscles twitch and quiver. But there are also reactions within the incorporeal faculties themselves. For instance, a body subject to long and arduous strain will be accompanied in its duress by a tired mind. The intelligence will not be able to function as it ordinarily would.

Again, the incorporeal network of emotions are affected. If one is fatigued beyond a certain point, it is not possible to react with emotional élan except in a very artificial and even damaging way. When a person has been ill for a long time, the faculties of the mind also experience a kind of languor. Nor can we pray when the body is totally exhausted. We could go on multiplying examples. And to me, dear sisters, these are very beautiful considerations going in both directions. For when there is disappointment of hopes, the body becomes dis-spirited—a very precise expression. Lacking in spirit, it is not quite a body, so to speak.

Surely any superior has experienced that when she suffers disappointment in a sister's reaction or lack of response, she herself feels physically tired. On the other hand, when I am privileged to see a sister sincerely confronting the truth, to witness a truly humble reaction, to behold a real striving for holiness, my body becomes animated. I am not tired, even though work might have left me so. Reserves of strength come surging up in me. You, too, assuredly experience this when you are inspired by one another or when you suffer from one another the disappointments inevitable to fallen human beings wherever they dwell together. Body and soul act and interact. The incorporeal faculties admonish the body; but the body also in its way admonishes the faculties of mind and spirit.

A tired body admonishes the mind: "Stop working, now; let's rest together." And we know what happens when the mind refuses to follow the direction of the body. A very fatigued body can lie awake all night long because the mind says, "No, I will keep on thinking," when the body has said, "It's time to stop now and for us to go to sleep together." Body and soul cannot sleep apart, you see, at least not in proper



and healthful co-functioning.

Indeed it is the body of Christ which saves us in the Blessed Sacrament. But it is also the body of Christ in his human functioning during the historical period of his corporeal activity upon this earth, when his body perfectly served his soul and his animating principle perfectly coordinated its activities with his body, which saves us. We do not see in ourselves or of ourselves these perfect coordinations. I see you smile as I say that, because we know how often we are tossed about by our lack of coordination. The soul says to the body, "Do not pass this boundary"; and the body replies, "I will!" The body wishes to disobey the incorporeal faculties. Or, again, in the example I just gave you, the body rightly declares: "It's time to go to sleep now"; and the mind refuses to obey the advice and direction of the body.

It is only in Christ, the perfect Man, the Firstborn of all creation, that we see the perfect functioning of the body. And so it is his body which will save us, which will show us how to be whole. What does "salva" mean? Save us, make us whole. Salvation is wholeness of life, just as sanity is wholeness of mind. There is a basic shared root. *Salvatus*, saved. *Sanatus*, made whole. We are saved when we are whole beyond assault. And Christ was the perfect whole creature, body and soul working in perfect coordination. It is his body which will save ours that is so often unruly and disobedient to the incorporeal faculties. Just as his animating principle alone will sanctify ours, so when we are torn by temptation, racked by passion, weak in languor, disspirited with fatigue, when our bodily desires get out of hand, we cannot use ourselves as a punching bag. We cannot order: "Get in line, there, body!" We must say, "Body of Christ, save me!" I shall never save myself. And this beautiful body of mine, this creation of God, can become the enemy of salvation just as my incorporeal faculties can. But the body of Christ can save me. So, dear sisters, you might want to make that a favorite prayer in time of temptation, of languor, of frustration, of sensual attraction, of sloth—whatever.

It is possible that the body can truly be all that it is destined to be in the mind of the eternal Father, that it can achieve even here on earth some of the glory it will fully know only in heaven, but solely through the body of Christ. Love to look at that crucified body. Love to say, O "Corpus Christi, salva me." And he will—he will save us. May we all be made able to allow our bodies their beautiful fulfillment in God's plan through a frequent turning to Christ in the Blessed sacrament, but also through daily reflection on the human functioning of Christ's human nature as we see it in the Gospel. We shall be saved and be saving agents to one another, not of ourselves, but of Christ who literally dwells within us physically at Holy Communion, who presents himself to us throughout the Scriptures, and is present in all around us as the created Incarnate Word of God, the Firstborn of all creation.

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The Anointing

For the poor always with You,
Christ,
it goes not hard.
I have costly perfume
of real aromatic nard
to fragrance all room,
balm for wounded feet.

Take this extravagant whole,
this poor man's mite:
my body, Christ, my soul.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

Pope John Paul II at Assisi

HERE I AM in Assisi on this day that I have wished to dedicate specially to the Patron Saints of this country, Italy; a country to which God has called me in order that I may serve as St. Peter's successor. Since I was not born in this land, I feel more than ever the need of a spiritual "birth" in it. And therefore, on this Sunday, I come as a pilgrim to Assisi, at the feet of Saint Francis, the Poverello, who wrote Christ's gospel in incisive characters in the hearts of the men of his time. We cannot be surprised that his fellow citizens have wished to see in him the Patron Saint of Italy. The Pope, who, owing to his mission, must have before his eyes the whole universal Church, the bride of Christ, in the various parts of the globe, particularly needs the help of the Patron Saint of Italy in his See in Rome; he needs the intercession of Saint Francis of Assisi.

AND SO HE arrives here today.

He comes to visit this city, which is always a witness to the marvellous divine adventure that took place between the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century. It is a witness to that surprising holiness that passed here like a great breath of the Spirit: a breath in which Saint Francis of Assisi participated, as well as his spiritual sister Saint Clare and so many other saints born from their evangelical spirituality. The Franciscan message spread far beyond the frontier of Italy, and very soon it also reached Polish soil, from where I come. And it still operates there with abundant fruits, as, moreover, in other countries of the world and in other continents.

I will tell you that, as Archbishop of Krakow, I lived near a very ancient Franciscan church, and from time to time I went there to pray, to make the "Via Crucis," and to visit the chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows. Unforgettable moments for me! One cannot fail to mention here that it was just from this magnificent trunk of Franciscan spirituality that the blessed Maximilian

This address, reprinted from L'Osservatore Romano *of 11/16/78, was delivered by Pope John Paul II on November 5 in the Basilica of St. Francis, in the presence of religious and civil authorities, clergy, and a very great multitude of faithful.*

Kolbe came, a special patron in our difficult times.

I cannot pass over in silence the fact that just here, in Assisi, in this Basilica, in the year 1253, Pope Innocent IV proclaimed saint the Bishop of Krakow, the Martyr Stanislaus, now the Patron Saint of Poland, whose unworthy successor I was until a short time age.

TODAY, therefore, setting foot here for the first time as Pope, at the sources of this great breath of the Spirit, of this marvellous revival of the Church and of Christianity in the thirteenth century, linked with the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, my heart opens to our Patron Saint and cries: "You, who brought Christ so close to your age, help us to bring Christ close to our age, to our difficult and critical times. Help us! These times are waiting for Christ with great anxiety, although many men of our age are not aware of it. We are approaching the year A.D. 2000. Will they not be times that will prepare us for a rebirth of Christ, for a new Coming? Every day, we express in the eucharistic prayer our expectation, addressed to him alone, our Redeemer and Saviour, to him who is the fulfillment of the history of man and of the world.

Help us, Saint Francis of Assisi, to bring Christ closer to the Church and to the world of today.

You, who bore in your heart the vicissitudes of your contemporaries, help us, with our heart close to the Redeemer's heart, to embrace the events of the men of our time. The difficult social, economic, and political problems, the problems of culture and contemparary civilization, all the sufferings of the man of today, his doubts, his denials, his disorders, his tensions, his complexes, his worries. . . . Help us to express all this in the simple and fruitful language of the gospel. Help us to solve everything in an evangelical key, in order that Christ himself may be "the Way—the Truth—the Life" for modern man.

THIS IS ASKED of you, holy son of the Church, son of the Italian land, by Pope John Paul II, son of the Polish land. And he hopes that you will not refuse him it, that you will help him. You have always been kind, and you have always hastened to bring help to all those who appealed to you.

I heartily thank His Eminence Cardinal Silvio Oddi, Pontifical Delegate for the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, and Bishop Dino Tomassini of Assisi, and all the Archbishops and Bishops of the pastoral Region of Umbria, with the priests of the various dioceses.

A greeting and special thanks to the Ministers General of the four Franciscan Families, to the Community of the Basilica of St. Francis, to all Franciscans, and to

all Religious Families—men and women Religious—inspired by the Rule and the lifestyle of Saint Francis of Assisi.

I TELL YOU what I feel deep down in my heart:

The Pope is grateful to you for your faithfulness to your Franciscan vocation.

The Pope is grateful to you for your apostolic activity and evangelical mission.

The Pope thanks you for your prayers for him and according to his intentions.

The Pope assures you that he remembers you in his prayers.

Serve the Lord joyfully.

Be servants of his people gladly, because Saint Francis wishes you to be joyful servants of mankind, capable of lighting everywhere the lamp of hope, trust, and optimism which has its source in the Lord himself. May your, our, common Patron Saint, Francis of Assisi, be an example to you today and always!

I then extend my cordial and respectful greeting to the civil Authorities present here:

—to the Lord Mayor of Assisi,

—to the Members of the City Council and Board,

—to the civil Authorities of the Umbrian Region and the Province of Perugia,

—to the Members of Parliament of the Region.

Thank you! Thank you for your presence, thank you for having wished to join in common prayer at the tomb of Saint Francis!

To the sentiments of my deep gratitude I join my most fervent wishes of happiness, prosperity and progress for their persons and for the whole beloved population of Umbria.

From Assisi, from this sacred place so dear to all Italians, a heartfelt greeting and a special blessing for the whole of Italy, for all Italians spiritually present at this meeting of ours for prayer, for the whole Italian people.

I wish to address an affectionate thought, and a special memory to Italian emigrants, to Italians scattered in every continent of the globe. I know that in their homes, often so far from Assisi and Italy, there is always a souvenir brought from Italy and connected with Assisi, an image of Saint Francis, and in their hearts a sincere and active devotion towards the Poor Man of Assisi. And then a greeting to all those who have the honour of being called "Francis," finding in our Patron Saint an example of life, a heavenly protector, a spiritual guide, an inner inspiration!

For everyone, in Assisi, a special prayer of the Pope!

And to everyone, from Assisi, a special Apostolic Blessing!

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The Active-Contemplative Life:

A Living Out of the Gospel

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

At the Portiuncula, Francis believed he would really be able to carry out his dream of living the Gospel. Located in the midst of a wood, the hermitage was made up of the chapel of Our Lady of the Angels, a large thatch-covered cabin which served as the community house, and as many huts as there were religious. The large cabin was of puddled clay; the huts were made of wattles; and the whole was surrounded by a hedge. And that is the way the Saint would have liked to see all his residences. Even the churches he always wanted to have "small and built of earth or wood."

—Omer Englebert, *Saint Francis of Assisi*[1]

THE SUPERIOR of the brotherhood was, of course, Francis. But Francis did not spend all his time giving orders. He delegated part of his authority to a friar who bore the name of "mother" and, like a mother, looked out for the community's needs. The "mother" played the role of Martha and led the active life. Thus the others could, like Mary, give themselves to the contemplative life. From time to time, to reverse the roles and even things up, the "children" became "mothers"; and the latter, "children."

This arrangement was kept up for a time in the hermitages, where the number of religious was limited to three or four. But the "mothers" were soon replaced by the "guardians" or "local superiors" ("superior" is not a word used by Francis). Their name came from the fact that they "guarded" the door and watched over their brethren.

In 1222 or 1223, about three years before the death of Francis and approximately one year before his reception of the stigmata, Francis deemed it necessary to write a rule for the Religious Life in Hermitages just as he had written a rule for the Friars Minor and for the Third Order, since he saw it as having a place within the Order. Because of the increase of activity even during his lifetime, Francis wished the continuance of these places of retirement so that "some at least, of the friars, could lead a life of seclusion, . . . to which others could retire at least occasionally."[2]

After five years of establishing, planning, and experimenting, this proposed Hermitage Community Program for the Active-Contemplative Synthesis seems to be the most realistic and workable for those in our day who have the inclination to follow it and for those who are given permission to live in this manner in a prayer apostolate for the sake of their communities and for the sake of the Kingdom. We thought that readers of THE CORD would be interested in the following practical details as we have worked them out in our own community.

Schedule

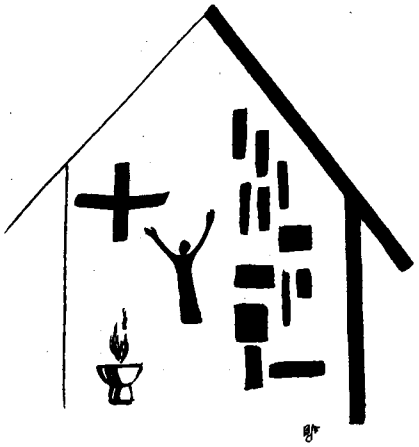
Rising and breakfast—on your own.
5:30 Morning Prayer and Meditation.
6:15 Leave for Mass.
6:30 Mass at Immaculate Conception Church.
7:00 Travel to Apostolate. (schedules for the day to be discussed by the core group).
4:45 Evening prayer and Rosary.
5:15 Supper and Recreation.
6:00 Office of Readings. Quiet time: read, walk, pray, prepare for apostolate.
8:30 - 9:30 Adoration, followed by Night Prayer.
Retire at pleasure

Weekends
(First Friday all night adoration—sign up for hours.)
Saturday
7:00 Mass (Rising and breakfast on your own).
8:30 Morning Prayer and Meditation
9:30 - 11:30 Charges, etc.
11:30 Little Hour (Midday Prayer)
12:00 Dinner, followed by Recreation.
1:00 - 4:30 Quiet time: pray, read, walk, prepare classes, etc.
4:30 Evening Prayer and Rosary.

[1]Omer Englebert, *St. Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1965), pp. 136-37.

[2]Placid Hermann, O.F.M., introd. to St. Francis, "Religious Life in Hermitages," *Omnibus*, p. 71.

Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F., formerly Chairman of the English Department at Assumption Catholic Academy, Syracuse, NY, and presently residing with the Poor Clare Nuns in Lowell, MA, pioneered her community's development of its ritiro at Fayetteville, NY.



Supper on your own.

7:00 Office of Readings, sharing (if desired), reading of the Sunday readings, Night Prayer.
(Sisters may rise for a holy hour at any time.)
Sunday

8:00 Mass at St. Mary's Church in Minoa (Rising and breakfast on your own).

9:30 Adoration all day until supper; sign up.

4:30 Evening Prayer and Rosary.

5:15 Supper and Recreation.

7:30 Office of Readings; study of the Rule for Religious Life in Hermitages or some other Franciscan work; Night Prayer.

Retire at pleasure.

(This schedule should remain flexible enough for personal prayer and for adaptation to circumstances. Each sister may take one hermit day a month and during vacation two sisters may take advantage of being isolated hermits.)

Resolution of Possible Conflicts

SCHEDULED activities for our Community's apostolates have to do with education; they include PTA meetings, clubs, and faculty meetings—the usual types of meetings which a school teacher would be obliged to attend. PTA meetings are generally not more than once a month and take place during the evening. Club meetings (cheer leaders, Third Order, History or French Clubs) and faculty meetings are held immediately after school—again, usually once a month (except for cheer leaders or a special meeting for a project). These extra activities should be made known to the group so that all may work together to adjust to one another's needs in a family spirit.

A school calendar is generally sent out the June before the next school year begins, and it is only rarely that unscheduled activities creep in. If this should occur, the individual sister should make it known to the group, and provisions will be made to help her fulfill her obligations for the apostolate.

Economics

SINCE THERE may be an inequality in salary due to poverty missions or the type of work in which a sister is engaged, it woud seem advisable that these salaries be forwarded to the Bursar General, expenses estimated for the year, and the Bursar send the agreed-upon salary to the Hermitage Community for its support.

Transportation

AS EXPLAINED in II above, under "Conflicts," we will be a one-car family unit which must share obligations and plan our daily program for commuting.

Placement within the Area

IF ALL ARE school teachers, we have a number of schools in the immediate area for placement. It would be good if they could be rather close for the purpose of commuting.

Correction

The title of Father Sergius Wroblewski's article (the cover article) in our February, 1979 issue should be, not "Franciscan Unity," but "The Spiritualization of Worship."

Alverno

Where can I mark
it
to remember
Jesus loves me?

Where can I write
it
big enough to know
and not forget?

Where is a
sign
to say it new
forever?

Fresh for always
sensible and real

In the body, be it!
cross-engraved,
passion prompted
francis-follower.

Open
multiplied by five.

Certain signs
of love

(do not forget!)

Sister Carol Ann Munchel, O.S.F.

Easter Vigil Mass

Here
in this very darkness
where I grope
the Light is risen.
Now
in this time
that is my own
the Christ is given.

Lo . . .
my tomb of heart
all rent apart,
and self-died-to-sin
rises with Him.

O Radiant Christ!
Forever shine
in me.
Your Easter peace
every day be
gift that is given . . .
given through me.
Proof You are risen,
living in me.

Mother Mary Clare of Jesus, P.C.C.

The Liturgy of the Hours in the Franciscan Tradition

ARTHUR ANDERSON, O.F.M.

MUCH DISCUSSION has been raised among friars lately over the relevance of the Divine Office to their communal prayer life. Apart from the juridical questions of detail (what part of the membership has to say the Office; when may it be dispensed with, etc.), the deeper question being raised is whether the Canonical Hours have any real part to play in our lives as Franciscan friars. The present article is an attempt to answer that question through an examination of the earliest sources in our tradition.

In prescribing the recitation of the Divine Office, Francis adopted a practice which had developed within the monastic tradition, but he omitted many of the trappings of that tradition. The Office did in fact constitute the prayer life mainly of the monks, but the notion of Canonical Hours has its origins in the life of the early ascetics.[1]

Several factors influenced the development of this practice during the time of Saint Francis. First, what was formerly and solely the public prayer of the monks was adapted by the clerics for use in large churches or other places connected with secular or monastic communities.[2] Before long, they began to follow the monastic *cursus* of the Office, which consisted of morning prayer (a combination of matins and lauds), the day Hours (prime, tierce, sext, and none), evening prayer (vespers), and night prayer (compline). Secondly, the books used for the Office underwent many changes, mostly due to the

[1]Stephen J. P. Van Dijk, O.F.M., *and* J. Hazelde [illegible]r, "The Daily Office," in *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy* (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1960), p. 15.

[2]Ibid., p. 17.

Brother Arthur Anderson, O.F.M., a member of the Sacred Heart (Chicago-St. Louis) Province, who teaches math at Hales Franciscan High School in Chicago, is pursuing graduate studies at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University during the summer sessions.

increasing number of prayers, psalms, and feasts.[3] The revision most closely related to Francis is associated with the reform of the breviary by Innocent III. Thirdly, the legislation on reciting the office began to reflect new trends. At first, only the public prayer of the monks in choir was recognized as the official form of the Office. But with the inception of itinerant preachers and the mendicant Orders which introduced the element of mobility in religious groups, no longer would choral recitation be the sole manner of saying the Office. Moreover, circumstances of literacy affected the manner of praying the Hours.[4] It is interesting to see how these developments unfold during the time of Francis.

Our holy Father was not unfamiliar with the practice of reciting the Divine Office. During his formative years, he participated with other members of his local church community in saying the Office as well as assisting at the worship services. Moreover, in those days, his reading primer was the psalter, and his manuals of religious instruction were the liturgical books.[5]

Francis retained much of what he learned in his early experiences, as Thomas of Celano tells us:

> At times he would ready the sacred books and what he put into his mind he wrote indelibly on his heart. His memory substituted for books, for he did not hear a thing in vain, for his love meditated on it with constant devotion.[6]

Celano does not explicitly refer, here, to the recitation of the Hours, but he does allude to Francis's early prayer experiences, which were to influence the prayer life of his early community.

Two of that community's members were familiar with the Office: Sylvester, a priest of Assisi, and Peter Catanii, a former canon of the cathedral.[7] Francis and his early followers, however, did not take up this practice until later, largely because they had no breviaries. Instead, they practiced mental prayer and used common, familiar prayers of the Church:

[3]P. Salmon, "The Divine Office, Roman," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1967), IV, 919.

[4]Van Dijk, "The Choir Breviary," op. cit., p. 38.

[5]Idem, "Franciscan Practice and Legislation," op. cit., p. 180.

[6]2 Celano 102. This and all the following citations from the early Franciscan sources are taken from Marion A. Habig, O.F.M., ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1972).

[7]Cf. the footnote in the *Omnibus* (ibid.), p. 33.

> At that time, walking in simplicity of spirit, they did not know as yet the ecclesiastical office. [Francis] said to them: When you pray, say Our Father, and We adore thee, Christ, here and in all thy Churches which are in the world, and we bless thee, because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world [1 Celano 45].

Celano also describes an occasion when a poor mother approached Francis for alms. When Francis asked his confrere Peter whether they could fulfill the woman's desire, the latter replied. "There is nothing left in this house that could be given her. . . . We have one New Testament from which we read the lessons at Matins since we do not have a breviary" (1 Celano 91). This passage is cited not only in confirmation of the fact that the friars had no breviaries, but also as illustrative of how they creatively improvised in compensation for that lack. Once, e.g.,

> in the beginning of the Order St. Francis was with Brother Leo in a little place where they did not have any books to use in saying the Divine Office. One night when they got up to recite Matins, St. Francis said to Brother Leo: "Dear Brother, we have no breviary with which to say Matins, but so as to spend the time in praising God, I will say something and you must answer what I tell you, and be careful not to change my words. I will say this: 'O Brother Francis, you have done so much evil and sin in the world that you deserve hell'—and you, Brother Leo, shall answer: 'It is true that you deserve the depths of hell' " [*Fioretti*, IX].

Francis, then, obviously needed no breviary to fulfill his obligation to pray.

In all these episodes, we see the friars following the Canonical Hours with simple prayer forms and exercises. But the Order's rapid and vast expansion rendered impractical the continuation of this sort of prayer exercise, which had allowed the friars to master a

love for prayer and to deepen interiorly their personal dedication to the Gospel life by spending their time "praying continuously, devoting themselves especially to fervent mental prayer" (*Leg. maj.*, IV, 3).

Clerics continued to join the Order in greater numbers, however, and Francis had to accommodate both their desire to say the Office and their obligation to do so, which had been so integral a part of their lives. He spells out this requirement in chapter 3 of the Rule of 1221. Notice, in this somewhat lengthy passage, how he tries to avoid a distinction between clerics and laics and still accommodate the various groups on the basis of literacy:

> . . . all the friars, both clerics and lay brothers, must say the Divine Office with the praises and prayers, as they are obliged to.
>
> The clerics should celebrate the liturgy, praying for the living and the dead, like the clerics of the Roman Curia. Each day they should say the *Miserere* and one *Our Father* for the faults and failings of the friars, together with the *De Profundis* and an *Our Father* for the dead friars.
>
> They may have only those books which are necessary for their religious exercises. The lay brothers who can read the psalter may have a copy of it, but those who cannot read are not allowed to have one.
>
> The lay brothers are to say the *Creed* and twenty-four *Our Fathers* with the *Glory be to the Father* for Matins. For Lauds they are to say five; for Prime the *Creed* and seven *Our Fathers* together with the *Glory be to the Father*. For Tierce, Sext, and None, they are to say seven; for Vespers, twelve; and for Compline, the *Creed* followed by seven *Our Fathers* with the *Glory be to the Father*. For the dead they must say three *Our Fathers* for the faults and failings of the friars [1 Rule, 3].

Included in this legislation, in addition to Francis's concern that all the friars should pray for their brothers, are several items that call for explicit mention. First of all, Francis seems to presume that the clerics possessed breviaries. This is not difficult to imagine, for as Van Dijk notes, some of the clerics "were not so convinced that voluntary poverty relieved those in holy orders from their canonical duty."[8] These clerics are, at any rate, to say the Office "like the clerics of the Roman Curia."[9] To do so, they probably had access to the reform breviary of Innocent III, which combined a good deal of material from other breviaries while omitting many of the prayers which had crept into these earlier texts, and which had been prescribed for use at the Roman Curia.[10] Secondly, we note that Francis allows the literate lay brothers to have a psalter from which to say the Canonical Hours. This psalter was a book used commonly by lay people[11] and was probably the same used by Francis while he was yet associated with his local church. In the third place, for those who couldn't read, Francis prescribes the Office of Our Fathers. This office was not uncommon in other religious orders during Francis's time.[12] Finally, Francis was not about to encourage learning for the sake of saying the Office. He was saddened, Celano records, if "learning was sought to the neglect of virtue. . . . To a lay brother who wanted to have a psalter and asked his permission for it he offered ashes in place of the psalter" (2 Celano 195).

Although he does so in less detail, Francis prescribes the use of the Canonical Hours also in his Rule for Hermitages. The basic emphasis here is on ordering the daily prayer life of the friars who occupied these places for as long as they remained in them:

> At sunset, they should say [the] Compline of the day. They must be careful to keep silence and say their Office, rising for Matins. Their first care should be to *seek the kingdom of God and his justice* (Lk. 12:31). Prime and Tierce should be said at the proper time, and after Tierce the silence ends and they can speak and go to their mothers. . . . Afterwards, they should say Sext and None, with Vespers at the proper time [Rule for Hermitages. p. 72].

It is interesting to note that there is no specification regarding the content of these hours. Perhaps this rule presumes that the hermits had breviaries or some sort of prayer book divided according to these hours, or perhaps they followed the prescriptions of the Rule of 1221. In any case, it is clear that Francis endorses the canonical Hours as an expression of fraternal community in his hermitages.[13]

In his Letter to the Whole Order, too, Francis firmly emphasizes the importance of the Office:

> And so I beseech the Minister General, my superior, to see that the Rule is observed inviolably

[8]Van Dijk, "Franciscan Practice and Legislation," p. 184.

[9]See Kajetan Esser, O.F.M., "The 'Novelty' of the Order of Friars Minor," in *The Origins of the Franciscan Order* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1970), pp. 104-05.

[10]R. T. Callahan, "Breviary, Roman," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967), II, 791.

[11]Cf. the footnote in the *Omnibus*, p. 34.

[12]Esser, p. 106. This is probably the Office to which Celano refers in the passage cited above (1 Celano 45).

[13]Ibid., p. 104.

by all, and that the clerics say the Office devoutly, not concentrating on the melody of the chant, but being careful that their hearts are in harmony so that their words may be in harmony with their hearts and their hearts with God. Their aim should be to please God by purity of heart, not to soothe the ears of the congregation by their sweet singing. I myself promise to observe this strictly, as God gives me the grace . . . [p. 107].

Although Francis says nothing here directly to the lay brothers about saying the Office, he does address himself to the clerics, admonishing them not to extinguish the spirit of prayer through the performance of the Office in chant. Perhaps we can see here that the clerics were beginning to say the Office in the manner of the monastic communities, as Francis implies they might perform the Office merely to edify the lay people in attendance.

As the Office developed into a substantial medium of prayer through which the friars encountered God in his holy Word, Francis desired that the friars, with their minds wholly intent upon and thoroughly attentive to the prayers, should deeply integrate the contents of these prayers into their hearts.

Still, Francis was not opposed to singing the Office. On the contrary, singing the office reflects another increment in the friars' developing prayer life. As Celano observes, "Because in choir we sing in the sight of the angels, [Francis] wanted all who would do so to come together in the oratory and there sing wisely" (2 Celano 197).

In parallel legislation of the Rule of 1223 one can readily notice a change from the previous Rule of 1221. This later legislation is at once more precise and more brief than the earlier:

> The clerics are to recite the Divine Office according to the [ordo of the Holy Roman Church], except the Psalter, because[14] they may have breviaries. The lay brothers are to say twenty-four *Our Fathers* for Matins and five for Lauds; for Prime, Tierce, Sext, and None, for each of these, they are to say seven; for Vespers, twelve and for Compline seven. They should [pray for the dead] [2 Rule, 3].

Note the change from "like the clerics of the Roman Curia" to "according to the ordo of the Holy Roman Church." This clarification means that the clerics should follow, not merely the *example* of the curial clerics (which the former legislation seems to suggest), but the *rubrics* of the curial

[14]Van Dijk's translation of "ex quo" is here accepted in preference to the *Omnibus* rendition of "and so." Cf. below for further discussion of the point.

Office. It was because they had no community ordo of their own, as Esser points out, that the friars had to adopt this Roman ordo, which was principally that of the breviary of Innocent III.[15]

Notice, too, the clause "because they may have breviaries"—"ex quo habere poterunt breviaria," about which there has been much discussion. The preceding phrase, "except the psalter," refers to the Roman psalter.[16] The whole sentence is important here. In previous legislation it was the educated lay brother who employed the psalter; now this provision forbids the clerics to use this psalter, and it also highlights the fact that the distinction between clerics and laics no longer depended upon the degree of literacy, but rather upon the former's juridical status. "Because they may have breviaries," then, suggests that the clerics will no longer *need* psalters with this permission to have breviaries. No doubt there may have been a polemic between Francis, with his concern for poverty, and the clerics who realized their canonical duty. But Francis, who was after all a cleric himself, here clearly accommodates the latter's concerns.[17]

A third important feature of this passage is that the Office of Our Fathers is prescribed for the lay brothers, regardless of whether or not they could read. We find here no specification of the supplemental prayers mentioned in the former Rule; and in the varied number of Our Fathers set forth by Francis we see clearly that this was simply the lay brothers' way of reciting the Canonical Hours.

The influence of Cardinal Hugolino in the draft of this Rule is evident in the precision and clarity of its language. Yet the substance of this prescription is basically consistent with Francis's own desire that the friars pray according to the custom of the Church the Office which had become the friar community's prayer.

Francis regarded the Office as of no less importance than Scripture itself for his spiritual life. Even in infirmity, we read, he "recited the Canonical Hours no less reverently than devoutly."

> He did not lean against a wall or a partition when he chanted, but he always said the Hours standing erect and without a capuche, without letting his eyes roam about and without interruption. When

[15]Esser, p. 106.

[16]Van Dijk, "Franciscan Practice and Legislation," p. 106.

[17]There were some clerics who could not read, of course, and this provision implied that they would have to learn to read the Latin of the Office since they could not avail themselves of the psalter.

> he went through the world on foot, he always stopped to say the Hours; when he was on horseback, he got down upon the ground. . . . For he used to say at times: "If the body takes its food in quiet, which, along with itself, will become the food of worms, with what great peace and tranquillity should not the soul take its food, which is God himself [2 Celano 96].

Francis had always reverenced the word of God, in whatever form it was presented to him. Now the Canonical Hours became for him one more means by which he would take time to nourish his soul.

It is in this sense of reverence that Francis expresses his experience with the Divine Office in his Testament: "Those of us who were clerics said the Office like other clerics, while the lay brothers s aid the *Our Fathers*." Francis does not embellish this simple statement with allusions to the distinction between clerics and laics. If there was any distinction at all in his mind, it was that he was conscious of this development in the Church. His ensuing observation that "We were only too glad to find shelter in abandoned churches"[18] is directly relevant to what precedes it, moreover, since it was still customary at this time to recite the Office in churches. His love for the Church and his devotion to the Office are thus seen to be intimately intertwined, and both are rooted in "God's holy operation," of which he speaks throughout his Testament.

One may draw many conclusions from this integration of the Liturgy of the Hours into the Franciscan way of life. Most immediately, Francis's use of the Divine Office illustrates his love for prayer and the importance he attached to it as the wellspring of his Order's apostolate. From Francis's earliest days in the movement, it is prayer which allowed him to aspire to the greatness to which God had called him. The way he went about prescribing the recitation of the Hours shows that he intended the Office to be an integral part of the friars' constant practice of prayer, even apart from any juridical obligation involved.

But, in the second place, we also see from the legislation contained in the Rules that Francis in no way minimized the juridical obligation to recite the Office. When the clerics sought to do so, in spite of all that this implied with respect to poverty, he saw in their request a desire to maintain their obedience to the Church—and Francis was not one to deter anyone from living in obedience. As a matter of fact, in his Letter to the Whole Order, he considers the obligation so important in the life of the friars that should one of them neglect it, he would not "regard him as a Catholic or as one of my friars."

In all this, thirdly, Francis maintains his notion of spiritual poverty and extends it to the obligation of saying the Office. A merely external observance of this, as of other, prayer exercises can prove to be naught:

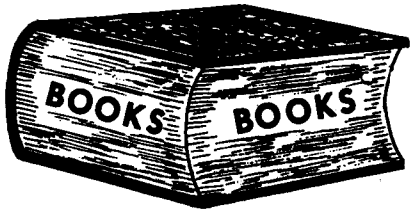
> There are many people who spend all their time at their prayers and [the Office] and mortify themselves by long fasts, and so on. But if anyone says as much as a word that implies a reflection on their self-esteem or takes something from them, they are immediately up in arms and annoyed. These people are not really poor in spirit [Admonition XIV].

Sheer performance of prayer is insufficient, then, for a life of poverty. One must be so poor that his very fulfillment of the duty to pray fosters detachment and poverty of spirit.

Finally, and of immediate practical import today, we see that, even though the practice of reciting the Office had been bound up with monastic usages, its development within the Franciscan movement is rooted in the unique charism of the Poverello himself. This is what this article has been designed to show. With Kajetan Esser, we would insist that, just as the Divine Office was from the beginning a bond of unity among the friars, so its inclusion in our prayer life today "must not be considered a betrayal of [Francis's] ideals."[19]

[18]This may not be the best translation of the Latin, "Et satis libenter manebamus in ecclesiis," but my main emphasis here concerns the fact that the early friars stayed in churches, most likely to pray.

[19]Esser, pp. 104, 109-10.



Songs of the Peacock. By Patrizia de Rachewiltz. Illustrations by Tien. New York: Paulist Press, 1977. Pp. 160. Cloth, $9.15; paper, $5.95.

Reviewed by Marigwen Schumacher, author/translator of Bonaventure, Rooted in Faith *(Franciscan Herald), a Consultant in Humanities with the Indiana Humanities Project.*

This fascinating book is both enjoyable and puzzling. Thus it is difficult to review adequately. Patrizia de Rachewiltz has written a collection of seventeen stories reflecting, as she herself expresses it, "not an escape from reality but a magical way of being in communion with the surprising beauty of Nature's subtleties, its secret happenings from which so much can be learned and understood" (quoted on the book's back cover).

The black/white line drawings by Tien which accompany the stories are enchanting—perhaps enchanted. Although each series reflects the individual story it surrounds, there is a refreshing continuity of design themes (e.g., flower faces in the leaves) throughout the whole small volume.

The stories deal with eternal verities in the guise of very simple stories. We are again caught in the world of fable and fantasy where animals talk, trees weep, time coalesces. The author tells us that "each one of these tales is a symbolic vision of reality" (again, from the back cover), and we are wrapt in joy and sorrow, delight and longings of dreams, events, happenings, ponderings, all told in the utmost simplicity of word and phrase. Some of the stories are easily "decoded"; the meaning is transparent at surface level:

> Two tiny tadpoles came to life one sunny April day, in a ditch by the waterfall./ They stared at each other, fascinated, and slipped out of the soft water lily's net./ "You are joy," said the more imaginative, squeezing his little eyes for the great occasion. So Joy, happy to have a name, waggled his tail and called his companion Life . . . ["Two Tiny Tadpoles," p. 11].

Several others, however, are teasing in their puzzlement—probing in the remembrance for days afterwards. In this group, I include "The Star Carver," "Lilliput Lee," and "Tsuki San," amongst others. When "the light dawns," the thought proves nourishing!

It is rash and unfair to pick favorites from such an interesting variety of stories, but I must share some since, in a short review, I cannot mention all. "The Dwarf's Sign" recounts the story of "the little dwarf of the wood, whose name was Risk," who was caught in a "cobweb among the branches of an oak tree. . . . This cobweb had been woven by the elf of loneliness, who passed from branch to branch, holding a very thin thread in his hand, so that he might not get lost" (p. 17). The manner in which "Risk" freed himself from that web spun by the elf of loneliness speaks directly to each one of us who has ever encountered that primal fear of "risk-taking"! Again, in the title story, when the peacock and his Lady finally take the time to really look at each other instead of being engrossed in individual vanities, "they faced each other and discovered that they were both beautiful in each other's eyes" (p. 109).

Humor is not lacking in stories such as "The Teasing Crows," nor is beauty, as in "The Poet of the Desert," and wisdom can be found in . . "Lemonpips" and in "The Deer with a Thousand Horns" have we but ears to hear and hearts to comprehend. Like *Hope for the Flowers, The Little Prince*, and other books of their genre, *Songs of the Peacock* should be read on multi-levels of understanding from the simple delight of children to the reflective, prayerful inquiry of contemplatives. The book is a treasure—worth the exploring, worth the mining.

The Koran in the Light of Christ: Islam in the Plan of History of Salvation. By Giulio Basetti-Sani, O.F.M. Trans. W. Russell Carroll, O.F.M., and Bede Dauphinee, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. xiv-223. Cloth, $8.50.

Reviewed by Karl K. Barbir, M.A. (American University of Beirut), M.A., Ph.D. (History, Princeton University), Assistant Professor of History at Siena College and author of Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708-1758, *to be published by Princeton University Press.*

It is rare that an author conducts the reader through both the treatment of a topic and the process by which the author was led to take up that topic. Such personal revelation is most often confined to a preface or appears only indirectly, usually unintentionally, in the text proper. Father Giulio's study is therefore as much the story of a spiritual and intellectual journey as it is a scholarly investigation of the Qur'ān. The reader will find here much to ponder, and to admire, whether or not he accepts the interpretation offered.

The starting point of Father Giulio's book is the perennial problem of a non-Muslim's approach to the Qur'ān in particular and to Islam in general. In the past, that approach was either dictated by polemical and apologetic considerations (particularly in medieval times) or the application of the techniques of biblical criticism developed during the last century and a half. The former approach was militant and often characterized by ignorance; the latter has tended to avoid the difficult question of the Qur'ān's place in the history of monotheistic religions and has treated it simply as a text. Father Giulio recounts his education in Islamic studies and his experiences in Egypt and elsewhere, as well as showing the weaknesses of the two approaches so far prevalent—approaches which he successively adopted before discovering what he describes as the "key" that permitted him to pursue studies of the Qur'ān without the limitations of the past. That "Key" was to see the Qur'ān as a work in which the theme of Muslim expectation and anticipation of Christ was of great importance and often overlooked. Furthermore, the

key permits Christians to enter into dialogue with Muslims without the mutual recriminations of the past. In this respect, Father Giulio follows in the footsteps of his teacher, the late Louis Massignon, Christian ecumenist and one of the greatest scholars of Islam in this century.

What, then, of Father Giulio's interpretation and of his contribution to scholarship on Islam? Because of his approach—his ecumenical concern for dialogue—it would be difficult to fault his interpretation unless one did not accept his premise. First, his scholarship and understanding are beyond reproach: he has given most of his life to this study and clearly knows his subject matter thoroughly. On the other hand, his apparent assumption that the Qur'ān alone is the basis for understanding Islam may be questioned. It is important to mention that there is a vast body of Qur'ānic exegesis (*tafsir*) developed over the centuries by Muslim scholars to explain and interpret the text, not to mention popular religious beliefs or folk Islam and Sufism. Given the historical context in which the Qur'ān and its exegesis evolved, the role of Jesus was determined for Muhammad the Prophet by his knowledge of both Christianity and Judaism. Of the former, Muhammad knew little, by word of mouth and contact with isolated Christians who were either Monophysite or Nestorian; hence Muhammad's assault on the Trinity as composed of God, Jesus, and Mary. Of Judaism, Muhammad knew considerably more, and Old Testament stories figure prominently in the Qur'ān. The traditional Muslim interpretation of the two monotheistic faiths is that Judaism was exclusive, that it rejected Jesus (whom Muslims consider to be in the line of Old Testament prophets), and that Christianity was polytheistic. Muslims, then, cannot accept the Christian doctrine of the Word's becoming incarnate. On the other hand, Islam, as another monotheistic faith, claims for itself the finality of revelation; Muhammad is the "seal of the Prophets," the last in the line. What precedes Islam, then, is imperfect. Yet the Qur'ān *does* contain verses of expectation; it *does* accept the eschatological theme of the Messiah who will come to judge mankind at the end of time. In popular Islam, this has been a powerful theme: the *Mahdi* or Messiah is expected to inaugurate an age of justice and punish the unrighteous. Father Giulio reverses this interpretation and, to put it in summary form, sees Islam as a milestone on the way to Christianity: the *Mahdi* is Christ, and Islam waits in expectation of Him. Thus, Islam is the imperfect religion awaiting perfection and completion in the knowledge of Christ.

To sum up, Father Giulio has written a work of importance to Christian ecumenists who hope to engage in a fruitful dialogue with Muslims. Setting aside the difficulties of the past, his interpretation offers Christians an opportunity for the future. Whether this hope and opportunity bear fruit is a matter for speculation, for what is involved is the confrontation of rival faiths, each demanding exclusive allegiance.

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COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our April issue were drawn by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, a professed member of the Franciscan Brothers of Sacred Heart residing at St. Anthony's Novitiate, Riverton, Illinois.

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the CORD

May, 1979 Vol. 29, No. 5

CONTENTS

THE CORD (ISSN 0010-8685) (USPS 563-640) 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. 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.

A REVIEW EDITORIAL

Evangelical Mariology

AS A FRIAR long accustomed to reading and writing on our Lady in the tradition of John Duns Scotus ("Where our Lady is concerned, I prefer to err by excess rather than defect"), I found it a novel and moving experience to read this earnest plea for a restoration of Mary's rightful place in both the theology and the spirituality of evangelical Protestantism. I guess it's one thing to know abstractly and second-hand the Evangelical outlook, and something else to see it "close up" and in operation . . . .

The book is framed, as it were, between an introduction tracing recent convergent trends on the part of Catholicism and Protestantism, and a conclusion drawing together the threads of its argument and exhorting Evangelicals to enter this "neglected dimension" of their inheritance. The argument itself is, as one must expect, essentially biblical, based largely on Luke's account of the Annunciation and the Ascension and John's depiction of Calvary and the Resurrection-Ascension. Entering into frank and fruitful dialogue with a good number of contemporary theologians both Catholic and Protestant (among whom Pope Paul VI figures remarkably prominently), the author builds his case for the acceptance of the Blessed Virgin's roles as (1) Mother of God, (2) her Son's most faithful disciple, and (3) Mother of the Church. In the process he furnishes forceful vindications and enlightening explanations of many Marian titles—particularly that of "New Eve."

Catholic readers will be unable to agree, of course, that belief in the Assumption is merely reasonable but not required for salvation. They will feel somewhat uneasy with the rather frequent references to the "deformation" of the faith in the middle ages. And they will consider "offensive to pious ears" the twofold reference to Mary as a sinner (pp. 51 and 74), even though the author clearly shows he understands and accepts in a totally orthodox sense our Lady's pre-redemption as explained by Duns Scotus and later defined by Pius IX.

But there is much in which Catholics will delight. The discussion of the Incarnation itself and of our Lady as the point of *emergence* for the divine, rather than of *intrusion* from outside is superb. The way in which the author draws upon iconography and Eastern theology, particularly with regard to the Communion of Saints, is another example.

Though expressly addressed to an Evangelical audience, the book should prove of real interest and profit to all readers who seek a deeper, more balanced understanding of the role played by the Blessed Virgin Mary in the history of salvation and in their own lives.

Fr. Michael D. Mailack, ofm

Down to Earth: The New Protestant Vision of the Virgin Mary. By John de Satgé. Wilmington, NC: Consortium Books, 1976. Pp. x-162, including indices. Paper, $4.95.

Resurrection

You have chosen this earthen vessel,
So dull and scarred
With its pitiful offering
Of egotistical weeds.

Come, lift it in Your sacred hands;
Take it, break it—
Let the trembling bits of clay
Cry to be born anew.

Then say but the word—
Heal it, transform it
Into a dwelling
Worthy of Yourself.

Let the radiance of Your countenance
Fill it, change it
Into a likeness
of Your image.

Still will it be an earthen vessel—
But risen, radiant—
Containing the finest wheat,
the tender grape.

Sister Barbara Marie, O.S.F.

Chapters in the Writings of Saint Francis

BILL BURNSIDE, O.F.M.

USE OF THE WORD *chapter* to designate a coming together of members of a religious community can be traced to the monastic practice of gathering each day to hear a chapter of the rule read. In time the gathering place came to be known as the chapterhouse, and the meeting itself came to be called the "chapter." The term *chapter* was probably not used before the eighth century and was quite common in the ninth.[1]

While the rule (530-540) of Saint Benedict provides the first definite prescriptions for the conventual (local) chapter,[2] "the institution of general chapters among religious really begins with the *Carta Caritatis*, a set of constitutions determining the Cistercian system."[3] The *Carta Caritatis* was approved by Pope Calixtus II in 1119 and prescribed that a general chapter, one representative of the whole Order, be held every year with all the abbots present. As the Order grew, the prescription to come every year was relaxed.[4]

This Cistercian idea of a general chapter was adopted by other Orders, and the spread of the chapter was due principally to Pope Innocent III.

> Seeing the great good that came to the religious life from these chapters and perhaps realizing that it would be much easier to bring these federated groups under the control of the Holy See, he encouraged and promoted them. His program finally culminated in the 12th canon of the IV Council of the Lateran (1215) which made these chapters obligatory upon all independent religious houses and with this canon the provincial chapter was introduced into ecclesiastical legislation.[5]

[1]Gordian Lewis, *Chapters in Religious Institutes* (Dissertation—Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1943), p. 1.
[2]Ibid., p. 13.
[3]Ibid., p. 18.
[4]Ibid., pp. 20, 48.
[5]Ibid., p. 20.

Brother Bill Burnside, O.F.M., a member of the Province of St. John the Baptist, is currently pursuing graduate studies at the Franciscan Institute.

This chapter was a regional chapter based upon the boundaries of some province or kingdom.[6] It was in the Order of Preachers that the chapter first reached full development. The earliest constitutions of the Dominicans (1228) contain the local, provincial, and general chapters.[7]

This brief historical overview of the early development of religious chapters sets the stage for a study of chapters in the writings of Francis. He speaks explicitly of chapters in four of his writings: The Rule of 1221, the Letter to a Minister (before the chapter of 1221), the Rule of 1223, and his Testament (1226).

In chapter 18 of the Rule of 1221 Francis has written:

> Each year, on the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, the ministers and their friars may hold a chapter wherever they wish, to treat of the things of God. All the ministers are bound to attend the chapter at St. Mary's of the Porziuncola at Pentecost, those from overseas or beyond the Alps once every three years, and the others once each year, unless the Minister General, who is the servant of the whole Order, has made some other arrangements.

Here Francis indicates that the friars of a particular province could hold a chapter once a year. He indicates the purpose for such a gathering: when the friars of a province come together they are "to treat of the things of God." This provincial chapter was to focus on the spiritual life of the community.

Cajetan Esser indicates that this was the original form of chapter in the Franciscan Community: a gathering of all the brothers with their ministers. By the time Francis wrote this rule, however, the Order had become too large for all to gather with him, so the friars of a particular province gather only with their provincial minister who takes the place of Francis.[8]

In his First Life of St. Francis, Thomas of Celano indicates that the friars held such gatherings very early, as early as 1209. The idea for such a gathering can be attributed to a movement of the Spirit in Francis's life, and to his love for and longing to see his brothers whom he has sent out to herald the good news. To have a chapter seems to flow naturally from his vision of a brotherhood. He has a desire to gather his family together. Also, the chapter seems to be a significant event in light of the friars'

[6]Ibid., pp. 48-49.
[7]Ibid., p. 31.
[8]Cajetan Esser, "Ordo Fratrum Minorum: Uber seine Anfange und ursprunglichen Zielsetzungen," *Franziskanische Studien* 42 (1960), 319.

deep commitment to poverty. For any friar his brothers and the Lord are his only riches (2 Rule 6:1-8; 1 Rule 8; 9:1). Such gatherings, then, are surely treasured moments of fraternity.

Esser summarizes this passage from Celano (I Celano 30) and comments:

> When the number of brothers had reached only 8, Francis sent them out two by two in the four directions to preach penance. However, he soon longed to see them all again, and prayed to God to lead them back. So they soon found themselves all together again. The Brothers told Francis about all they had experienced, admitted their failings, and asked for corrections and penance. Francis however explained to them more thoroughly the purpose of his way of life. These three elements—reporting, acknowledging faults, and instruction—seem to have become the lasting content of these "coming togethers" of all the brothers with St. Francis. Celano emphatically remarks: "Thus they always strove to do when they came to him."[9]

It seems, then, that the earliest chapters were very much centered on the lives of the brothers. Francis called these chapters because he had a deep sense of responsibility for his brothers. "When the Lord gave me some brothers . . ." (Testament, 14). The fraternal spirit of these gatherings comes through in the earliest testimony we have of these chapters. There is an eyewitness report contained in *The Passion of St. Verecondo, Soldier and Martyr.*[10] Near the monastery of St. Verecondo, "Francis assembled his first three hundred Friars Minor in a chapter."[11] The abbot and his monks procured food and lodging for the friars. The fine food that was served and the warm hospitality of the monks indicates that there was a festive, fraternal spirit about this chapter. The friars gathered to enjoy one another's company.[12] According to Esser, "this chapter belongs to the earliest times of the Order, when the number of brothers was still insignificant."[13]

To this original vision of the chapter as a loving, coming-home celebration for all the friars, Francis now adds here in chapter 18 of the Rule of 1221 two other types of chapters. One is for all the ministers in Italy. They are to gather each year on Pentecost at

[9]Ibid., p. 316.
[10]Ibid.
[11]"Miracles at the Friary of San Verecondo," in the *Omnibus* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973), p. 1602.
[12]Ibid.
[13]Esser, p. 317.

St. Mary's of the Porziuncola, unless something else has been directed by the Minister General. Under the same arrangements all provincial ministers, even those from across the mountains and from overseas, were to assemble every three years. These two types of chapter are specifically for superiors in the community in the sense of the 12th canon of the IV Council of the Lateran, which reads in part:

> In every ecclesiastical province there shall be held every three years, saving the right of the diocesan ordinaries, a general chapter of abbots, and of priors having no abbots. . . . Such a chapter shall be celebrated for several consecutive days according to the custom of the Cistercian Order. During its deliberations careful attention is to be given to the reform of the Order and to regular observance, and what has been enacted . . . shall be observed inviolably. In each of these chapters the place for the holding of the following one is to be determined.[14]

Chapter 18 of the Rule of 1221 (¶2) indicates that Franciscan superiors do not convene in separate provinces or kingdoms as the IV Council of the Lateran says, but with a common superior, the servant and minister of the brotherhood.[15] Yet this section clearly indicates that Francis is responding to the wishes of the Church. He wants to implement the decree of the IV Council of the Lateran. He greatly desires to be a faithful son of the Church: "Brother Francis and his successors as head of this Order must promise obedience and reverence to his holiness Pope Innocent and his successors (1 Rule, Pro., 3; see also 2 Rule, I, 2). While adding these two new types of chapter in response to the Council, Francis at the same time retained his original vision of a chapter: all the brothers gather "to treat of the things of God" (1 Rule, 18:1)—a spiritual and fraternal event. There is one change. Instead of the worldwide fraternity meeting with Francis, each provincial fraternity meets with its minister provincial.

Concerning changes in the chapter, Esser comments:

> As the friars became firmly established and lived in "settlements" in which the monastic life became stronger and stronger, the chapter had to lose its original sense. Similar to the chapters of the other Orders, they became increasingly more elective bodies, which helped the ministers in the direction of the Order. One must, however, always observe that with the growing number of friars the chapter in its original sense was no longer feasible, and because of

[14]Lewis, p. 27.
[15]Esser, p. 319.

the settling of the brothers, it no longer seemed a necessity.[16]

In chapter 5 of the Rule of 1221 Francis has written: "Then, if he [a minister] has failed to amend, they [the friars] must denounce him to the Minister General, who is the servant of the whole Order, at the Chapter of Pentecost, notwithstanding any opposition" (1 Rule, 5:4). From this it seems that the Chapter of Pentecost was also a time for the ministers to deal with difficult friars. In this Francis indicates that efforts are to be made to resolve such problems on the local level, within the province. However, if no headway is being made, the matter is to be brought to the attention of the Minister General at chapter.

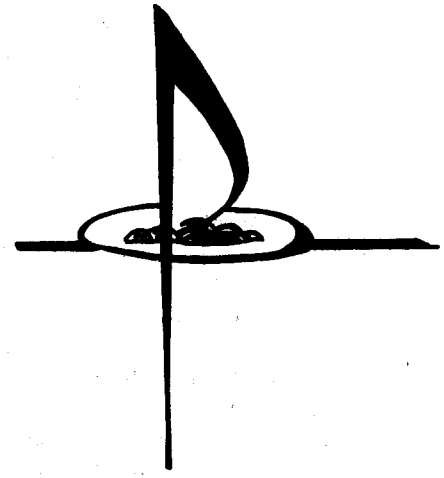
The Pentecost Chapter of or 1221 was a significant one not only because of Francis's work on the Rule of that year, but also because it was the last one in which all the friars were together. It surely must have been a moving experience for the brothers. It is interesting to read Jordan of Giano's description of this chapter in his chronicle.[17] He was present at this chapter and paints a joyous picture of spiritual and fraternal festivity. "Both professed and novices came to this chapter."[18] The people of the neighborhood brought "bread and wine in abundance."[19] Francis preached and "taught them virtues and exhorted them to patience and to give a good example to the world."[20]

In the third paragraph of Francis's Letter to a Minister we read: "At the Pentecost Chapter, with God's help and the advice of the friars, we shall make one chapter out of all the chapters in the Rule that speak of mortal sin (§13). It is evident that the upcoming chapter was going to be doing some work on the Rule. Chapter for Francis was a time to make necessary changes in the life of the community. While this reflects a faithful response to the call of the IV Council of the Lateran to reform, there is more to be said for the Spirit of the Lord at work in Francis. For here is a man who feels called to preach penance, to urge others to reform their lives and follow in the footprints of Jesus Christ crucified (1 Rule, 1:2-5; 21:1-6; Testament, 1-3). For Francis, religious life and all of life is a journey, to be filled with change of heart, an inner conversion that brings us closer to the Lord and to which we must re-dedicate ourselves every day. "Let us begin again" (1 Celano 103).

It seems that discussions on renewal and reform in the community were to involve both the ministers and the friars from their respective provinces. In this letter Francis also writes: "You will attend the chapter with your friars" (Letter to a Minister, 21). I feel it is important to note here that Francis humbly requests the advice of his ministers and friars. He wants all to have an opportunity to speak up, to contribute to the renewal of the community. Each brother is an instrument of God's grace. He says: "*We* shall make one chapter" (ibid., 13). Together "*we* will do the work that needs to be done," he continues, and it will be done "with God's help."

In chapter 8 of the Rule of 1223, Francis has written:

> At his [the Minister General's] death the provincial ministers and the custodes are to elect a successor at the Pentecost Chapter, at which the provincial ministers are bound to assemble in the place designated by the Minister General. This Chapter should be held once every three years, or at a longer or shorter interval, if the Minister General has so ordained [2 Rule, 8:2-3].



Here Francis indicates that the general chapter is the time for the provincial ministers to hold an election for Minister General. Francis says, as a rule, there is to be a general chapter every three years, reflecting the Rule of 1221 (18:2) and the intentions of the IV Council of the Lateran. Esser comments:

> The agenda for these Chapters, when no election is held, is not specified. Evidently this was well "regulated" in practice. Therefore Francis felt no need to say anything about the matter, just as he is equally silent about the manner of election and all other related questions. Because there were as yet no acute problems in this area, he simply passes over the whole question in silence and leaves it to the future.[21]

[16]Ibid., p. 326.

[17]Jordan of Giano, *Chronicle*, trans. Placid Hermann, in *XIII Century Chronicles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1961), pp. 30-32.

[18]Ibid., p. 31.

[19]Ibid., p. 32.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Cajetan Esser, *The Definitive Rule of the Friars Minor—Round Table of Franciscan Research* 34 (1969), p. 33.

Again in chapter 8 of the Rule of 1223 it is written: "After the Pentecost Chapter, the provincial ministers and custodes may summon their subjects to a chapter in their own territory once in the same year, if they wish and it seems worthwhile" (8:5). After the general chapter, a provincial minister may, if it seems advisable to him, bring together all the friars in his own province for a chapter. "The provincial Chapter, therefore, like the preceding genuinely 'general' Chapter in the Order, ought to be an assembly of all the friars totether with their minister."[22] These provincial chapters were to take place after the Chapter of Pentecost so that a provincial would have an opportunity "to inform his friars about everything that was considered and decided at the general chapter."[23] That all be brought into the dialogue process seems to be a special quality in Francis's vision of the chapter. It was two years since the Pentecost Chapter of 1221, the last in which all the friars were present. There now existed a new need: to ensure that all the brothers are made aware of the events of the general chapter. Francis seems here to be expressing a concern that all the friars be informed, that all have an awareness of the directions in which the brotherhood was moving.

Esser offers one further significant comment on this section of the Rule of 1223:

> This sentence adequately describes the purpose and significance of the provincial Chapters for the practical life of those days. They were to facilitate a unity of outlook between the "whole fraternity" and the "fraternity in each province." These Chapters served as the spiritual framework for both the internal and external life of the Order.[24]

Finally, in his Testament, Francis makes the following reference to chapters: "They should always have this writing with them as well as the Rule and at the chapters they hold, when the Rule is read, they should read these words also" (36-37). Francis has picked up on the monastic tradition of reading a chapter of the rule at chapter. He assumes that this custom is self explanatory when he here enlarges it to include in the future a reading of his Testament as well.[25] This section speaks about the spiritual and fraternal flavor of the chapter. Francis asks that the friars have the Rule and Testament nearby. These are holy writings, full of

[22]Ibid., p. 34.
[23]Ibid.
[24]Ibid.
[25]Esser, "Ordo Fratrum Minorum," p. 321.

the Spirit and the life of the brotherhood. They are the center of our brother, Francis. To hear, prayerfully reflect on, and discuss these words at chapter is to give us a sense of the vision of Francis and a taste of his very presence.

In Celano's first Life of Saint Francis there is a reference to a provincial chapter held at Arles in 1224 (1 Celano 48). Brother John, the provincial, at this chapter "was preaching very fervently and devoutly to the brothers on this topic, 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.' " While he was preaching Brother Monaldo had a vision of Francis, and "all were seen to be filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit." Esser comments on this passage, pointing to both the spiritual and the fraternal importance of such chapters:

> Apparently the brothers were still so accustomed to assemble in Chapter with Francis that they could not imagine one without at least the spiritual presence of their father. Therefore this incident gives us a valuable witness of the inner bond of the friars with Francis as well as the prominent significance that the Chapter had in the first Franciscan generation.'[26]

On the surface, then, a study of chapters in the writings of Francis reveals the following conclusions.

First, with regard to the development of the General Chapter: in the early days of the Order, as early as 1209, a general chapter was a meeting of all the friars with Francis at the Porziuncola. In 1221 a general chapter was a gathering of all the Italian provincials once a year, and of all the provincials every three years, both being held at the Porziuncola on Pentecost. In 1223 a general chapter was for all provincials on Pentecost at a place designated by the Minister General, and was to be held every three years "or at a longer or shorter interval if the Minister General has so ordained" (2 Rule, 3).

Secondly, with regard to the development of the Provincial Chapter: in 1221 a provincial chapter is a meeting of a provincial minister with all his friars in whatever place they decide on the feast of St. Michael the Archangel "to treat of the things of God" (1 Rule, 18:1). In 1223 a provincial chapter is one held after the general chapter of Pentecost at which the provincial informs his friars of the events of the general chapter.

In the third place, we see the following three influences in the development of the chapter: (1) the IV Council of the Lateran, which decreed chapters every three years for superiors (2 Rule 8:3; 1 Rule 18:2); (2) the growth

[26]Ibid., p. 322.

of the brotherhood, which at the Pentecost Chapter of 1217 occasioned the division of the community into provinces and the institution of the office of minister provincial (1 Rule, 4:2); and (3) the movement of the friars into houses in which their life style became more monastic (Testament, 24).

This is what is first seen about chapters in Francis's writings, but on a deeper level one finds that Francis envisaged chapters as spiritual and fraternal events. Esser says that at the beginning of the Order

> they were not so much elective bodies, but more means to the common life. The days of the chapter were yearly days for renewing and strengthening life in the fraternity. If one wants to use the modern term, they were a type of annual "retreat." They caused the brothers to once again experience their unity and thus promoted a greater experience of community and the growth of a sense of solidarity.[27]

Other Franciscan sources confirm a spiritual and fraternal focus for these early chapters. In chapter 18 of the Fioretti we read that the friars at chapter were

> occupied only in talking about God or in praying, weeping, or doing deeds of charity. . . . Wherever a group of friars gathered either they prayed or recited the office, or they wept over their own sins or those of their benefactors, or they talked about the salvation of souls. Francis . . . stood up and with fervor of spirit explained the word of God and of life . . . and . . . preached to them whatever the Holy Spirit made him utter. . . . And when St. Francis ended his sermon, they all ran and gave themselves to prayer. Francis . . . sent them all back to their provinces comforted and filled with spiritual joy, with God's blessing and his own.

The *Legend of the Three Companions* says that

> at the Pentecost meeting the brothers discussed how to observe the rule more perfectly; and some of them were appointed as preachers and others were assigned to different posts in the various provinces. . . . None of the friars assembled at the chapter ever dared to recount any worldly events: they spoke together of the lives of the holy fathers of old, and how they might best live in God's grace [L3C, 59].

In his letter of 1216 Jacques de Vitry describes the chapter as a time of celebration. The friars gather in the name of the Lord to be encouraged and strengthened. The simple coming gogether, the fraternity, is the focus:

> Once a year, in a place on which they agree the men of this Order assemble to rejoice in the Lord and eat together; and they profit greatly from these gatherings. They seek the counsel of upright and virtuous men. They draw up and promulgate holy laws and submit them for approval to the Holy Father; then they disband again for a year and go about through Lombardy, Tuscany, Apulia, and Sicily.[28]

On this passage Esser comments: "The yearly chapters are accordingly the reunion feasts of the brothers who are otherwise living scattered throughout Italy; at these reunions which included a common meal they experienced their togetherness in holy friendship."[29] Together they would reflect on the experiences of the past year. From these discussions flowed the holy laws to guide their fraternal living in the year ahead.[30]

For Francis, then, the chapter was a spiritual and fraternal event.

A spiritual event: At chapter the friars are "to treat of the things of God" (1 Rule 18:1). Chapter was a time for each friar to look at his spiritual life, and for the fraternity as a whole to evaluate its spiritual growth (2 Rule 10:8-9). It was a time for reform, a time to change what needed to be changed in the brotherhood. It was an opportunity for the friars to realign their lives more closely to the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Rule, 12:4). The brothers gathered in the presence of the Lord to pray together and to confess their sins and failings (Ep. Ord., 38-39; 1 Rule, 7:12; 11:11-13). They retreated for a few days from their various apostolates to reflect on their work (2 Rule, 5:1-2) and to discern further the will of the Lord (2 Rule 9:2; 12:1-2). Renewed in their commitment to following in the footprints of Jesus Christ (2 Rule, 1:1), Francis blessed them and sent them on their way "filled with spiritual joy" (*Fioretti*, 18).

A fraternal event: Chapter was a time for the friars to be reunited with one another (Ep. Ord., 9). It was an occasion to celebrate their friendship and to rejoice in being called to this family of brothers (2 Rule, 6:7). The friars shared with one another about the deeds of God in their lives. Through encouraging one another they were strengthened in their commitment to this brotherhood (2 Rule, 6:8). Unity was deepened through sharing the Body and Blood of the Lord and through festive meals. The brothers departed from chapter one in mind and heart (Ep. Ord, 41; 1 Rule 7:15-16; 9:10; 11:5-10).

[27]Ibid., p. 326.

[28]"Jacques de Vitry's Letter, 1216," in the *Omnibus*, p. 1608.

[29]Esser, "Ordo Fratrum Minorum," p. 317.

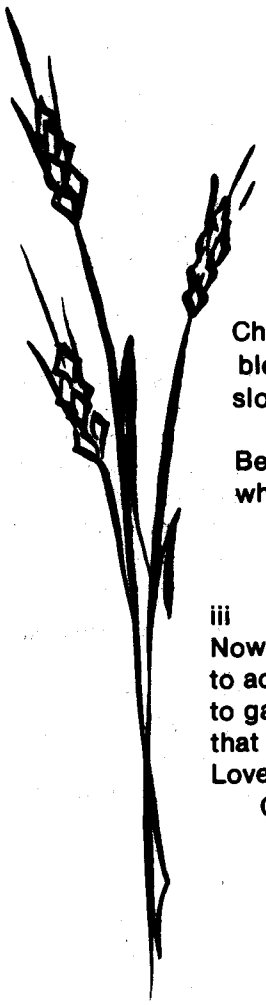
[30]Ibid., p. 318.

The writings of Francis and other Franciscan sources bear witness that this was indeed Francis's vision of a chapter for his brotherhood: a coming together that focuses on spiritual life and fraternity. While this vision, from his own day to ours, has been tempered by numerous historical developments in the Church and in the Order, it nevertheless speaks to the heart of what Francis was about (1 Rule 22 and 23), and it serves as a challenge to Franciscans today who gather in chapter to draw ever closer to his spirit. Let us then begin again (1 Celano 103).

Communion Suite

i
An old nun
shuffles quickly
from the table of the Lord
and clutches my hands
that ease her down the step.
    She is annunciation to me
    of the Word for Whom I thirst.
He comes toward me again,
slowly now, in this gnomed frame
hunched over a heart that harbors His whole Church.
    The Burden is light to my lift.

ii
I move forward to
the Christ-filled cup
as He passes by,
    whole God in each Sister.
Then I, too,
with Bread am fed,
carry my Savior
past the pulsing throng
of the young
with their shining eyes and eager feet,
their innocent demands
that will not let me flag.



Christ,
bless each ardent heart that kindles anew
slow fires in mine for You.

Be all in all to these aged in their stall
who show me still
        how to wait, listen,
                follow when You call.

iii
Now I kneel beside my Sisters
to adore,
to gather Strength
that daily bears us up;
Love that binds us into one.
    Christ
        Christ
            Christ.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

The Friary (Conventual) Chapter

JOACHIM A. GIERMEK, O.F.M.CONV.

Readers will have noticed, in recent issues, a "documentation" feature. We hope to use this from time to time to supply documentation on official statements, addresses, etc., from Rome and other authoritative centers on Franciscan themes. We think this set of practical guidelines for House Chapters forms a fitting instance of this documentation, as well as a fitting sequel to the preceding article on the importance of Chapters for Franciscan life. The guidelines were drawn up by Father Joachim for a Spiritual Leadership Workshop attended by the Guardians of the St. Anthony of Padua Province and appended to the text of a report delivered by Father Ambrose Sanna, O.F.M. Conv., to the General Chapter in Assisi, May, 1978. Although they were drawn up with Franciscan men in mind, they are equally applicable to chapters and house meetings of Franciscan women.

THE FOLLOWING paragraphs comprise a set of (A) principles governing the friary or conventual chapter, and (B) concrete practices which, if observed, should enhance the conduct and the value of the chapter.

A. Principles

1. The friary chapter is not solely, nor primarily, a business meeting. It is, rather, the means by which "the common life is effectively expressed and promoted and . . . questions are treated concerning the life and the activities of the community in such wise that all might proceed in fraternal harmony and collaboration" (*Constitutions*, §87, ¶1).

2. Like any other gathering, however, a friary chapter requires planning. Generally, the larger the community, the greater the amount of planning which is necessary.

3. The date and the time for the friary chapter should be set far in advance of the proposed meeting, keeping in mind the schedules of the individual friars and the demands of the apostolates. Generally, a set day (or date) and time every month, established at the beginning of the year (calendar or apostolic), allows everyone to keep those dates in mind when scheduling other activities. Because of the friary chapter's importance to the life of the community, its scheduling should receive every priority in the friary.

4. Once the date and the time for the friary chapter have been chosen, it should not be changed or cancelled arbitrarily or without serious reason. Such a casual treatment of what should be an important focal point of the month creates an attitude of disregard for the value of the friary chapter.

5. While some communities (especially smaller ones) may hold frequent "mini-chapters" at table or at a moment's notice, a formal monthly meeting in chapter is desirable for discussing more serious matters of attitude or of growth that develop over a longer period of time.

6. Every effort should be made to view the friary chapter as an occasion to participate in sharing insights relevant to the life of the fraternity, offered for the common good. It should even be viewed as a *celebration* of community life. Attitudes that tend to put down the friary chapter or to belittle it should be discouraged. Attention should be drawn to creating an atmosphere in which spiritual as well as temporal concerns may be exchanged in freedom.

7. The agenda for the friary chapter should be posted well in advance of the meeting to allow the friars to prepare for the topics and to ask pertinent questions for their information.

8. New items that arise in the course of the friary chapter should, after initial discussion, be decided in the next chapter, unless they are of such a nature and importance that they cannot be postponed.

9. The Guardian is required by our Constitutions to preside over the friary chapter, but he need not necessarily chair the particular sessions. His position and authority is known and preserved regardless of his actual chairing. At times, especially in larger communities, it may be of benefit to rotate the chairmanship of the friary chapter among appointed or elected leaders.

10. Because of the topics to be discussed in the friary chap-

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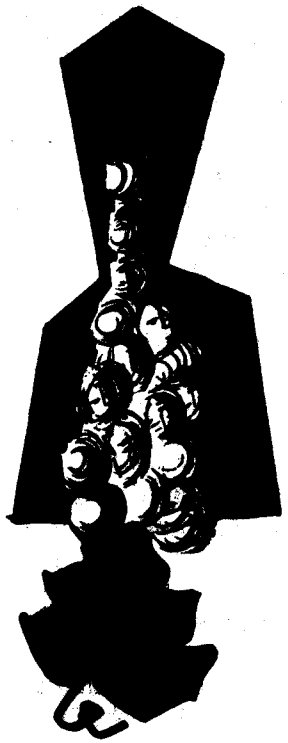
ter, it is highly recommended thet the meeting be divided into two separate parts, one dealing with things of a spiritual nature and the other with temporal affairs. These two parts may be held in the same meeting or may be divided by separate times, or even separate days.

B. Practice

1. The friary chapter should be called to order by the Guardian at the appointed time and place. It is fitting that the meeting open with a prayer or song invoking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. A few moments of silent prayer may give all the friars the opportunity to recollect themselves and to place themselves in the proper disposition for the chapter to follow.



2. The "spiritual" aspect of the friary chapter should be celebrated first. The secretary of the chapter should begin by reading the report of the last "spiritual" gathering.

3. Next, some friary member, previously appointed and suitably prepared, should read a selection brom Sacred Sripture, the Rule of Saint Francis, the Constitutions of the Order, or the Provincial Statutes. The Guardian or chairman should lead a discussion in which the friars share the impressions of the impact of the Word of God or the other document on the life of the local fraternity: how does it affect us, what are we doing to put it into practice, what is our attitude toward it, etc.? Everyone should be made to feel comfortable to share his insights with the rest of the community. This aspect of the meeting should be a true spiritual dialogue among spiritual brothers for whom the things of the Spirit are the most important factors in their lives, both personally and communally.

4. The chapter should turn to a discussion of the spiritual welfare of the friary, its

prayer life, its liturgical life, the sick members of the community, the needs of the suffering and the dying, the spiritual aspects of the common or individual apostolates, personal and community problems of a spiritual nature which are offered for common compassion and healing, etc. (Obviously, such discussions both require and manifest the faith, trust, and love of the friars for one another. The more honest and sincere they are with one another, the more open and unself-conscious will the friars' discussions become.)

5. The friars should discuss their spiritual future and that of the apostolates, their participation in the ongoing liturgical year, the spiritual goals of their fraternity, the foreseeable threats to community peace and harmony, etc.

6. To prevent the discussions from wandering aimlessly or from dissolving altogether, the friary chapter should attempt to make some specific resolutions to which the members will pledge themselves. Here the Guardian should be visible as the focal point of unity, spiritual leadership, and vision, exercising as much personal authority as he judges necessary to carry out the spiritual development of all the friars. Sometimes, particularly in friaries where the members of the community are in true fraternal communication and are united in a common desire to seek perfection in the things of the Spirit, the necessity for the Guardian to exercise his personal authority will be reduced. Such a situation is a tribute to God's Spirit having found a receptive community.

7. New issues and proposals should be offered or requested from the friars for the good of the community. New proposals that are not pressing for decision but which need more study and prayer, should be placed on the agenda for the next friary chapter.

8. If the spiritual meeting is to be separated from the temporal, it should conclude with a prayer or song of thanksgiving.

9. The second part of the friary chapter, if separated from the first by time and place, should be called to order by the Guardian with a prayer, a song, or a few moments of reflective silence.

10. The minutes of the last similar meeting should be read by the secretary of the chapter. He should be followed by the treasurer of the friary, who reads his financial report for the examination and acceptance of the friars.

11. Matters of temporal concern to the friary and to the apostolates attached to the friars' care should be discussed

clearly and openly—both business of a standing order from the last friary chapter and new business.

12. In the case of the material welfare of the apostolates entrusted to the care of the friars, it should be recalled that, while each apostolate has its leader and director (at times responsible to an authority outside the Order, e.g., the local Ordinary, board of education, etc.), the apostolates *as such* are entrusted to the entire province or custody, which is represented by the local community. Thus all the friars have the right and the responsibility to raise questions pertinent to the temporal (as well as the spiritual) administration of the apostolates connected to the friary.

13. To avoid the impression of totally divorcing the spiritual from the temporal in the friary chapter, the friars should all remember that their Christian and religious vocations call them to examine all aspects of their lives together in the light of faith and under the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord.

14. The friars should be encouraged to speak freely and openly on all matters of concern to the friary and to its apostolates, contributing their particular gifts and talents for the common good. Those friars who are shy or hesitant to speak should be made to feel that their opinions are both desired and valued.

15. When new business is proposed that is not on the agenda for the meeting, it should generally, be moved to the next chapter for decision lest hasty or uninformed decisions be made to the detriment of all. In the meantime, the friars should be encouraged to pray for enlightenment concerning the matter, to seek advice or information, and to discuss its merits among themselves in the spirit of concern for the common good. If necessary, a group of individuals may be appointed to act as a task force to present expert information for the next friary chapter.

16. If a matter is of pressing concern to the community and cannot be delayed, it should be discussed to the point where the best possible decision under the circumstances can be reached. Rushed or uninformed decisions, however, are to be avoided whenever possible.

17. Guardians or other friars entrusted with administrative decisions should not habitually present the community with a decision that is an accomplished fact, for which the community is asked its approval as a "pro forma" or "rubber stamp" authorization after the fact. Sometimes such decisions must be made by the administrator, on the spot, when the community cannot be consulted. But it would be a violation of the spirit of our community and fraternity, a usurpation of the prerogatives of personal authority, and the destruction of the fraternity's respect and openness to act in this manner habitually.

18. The leadership of a Guardian emerges in the way and in the number of times thet he chooses to exercise his personal authority. Prudence, confidence, and a loving concern for the friars and for their apostolic works cannot be legislated in any man.

19. After all the business on the agenda has been considered, each friar should be asked to propose anything that he considers for the good and the advantage of all concerned. Everyone should be made to feel and to know that his opinion will be heard and will be treated with the respect that it deserves.

20. The friary chapter should conclude with an appropriate prayer or song of thanksgiving.

21. The secretary of the friary chapter should make his book of minutes available for the examination and the signature of the friars who had participated in the previous month's chapter. The friars' signatures in the chapter book are records of their presence and are testimony to the fact that the chapter was indeed held.

C. Some Concluding Observations

1. In a very real sense, the monthly friary chapter formalizes and guarantees the existence of a fraternal exchange which, ideally, should characterize our daily life together. The spirit of free and open exchange and discussion which is necessary for its success can come about only in a community which is consciously striving to create such an environment on a daily basis. A key person in the establishment of such an environment is, of course, the local Guardian as spiritual leader.

2. The office and ministry of the Guardian derives from the appointment of the Provincial Chapter with reference first and foremost toward serving the friars' needs. One does not bear the title and the responsibility of Franciscan Guardian for the apostolate (parish, school, hospital, coordination, etc.), but for the Franciscan community. The

primary responsibility of the Guardian's office is the ministry of spiritual leadership to his friars.

3. Thus the relationship of the Guardian to his confreres is important. The way in which he regards ("sees") his fellow friars will determine how he ministers to them or doesn't minister to them. Does he see them for what they really are: brothers, God's gifts, necessary associates in working out his own personal sanctification and salvation? Are they spiritual brothers or merely business associates?

1982 Celebration: National or Nationwide?

VINCENT ROHR, O.F.M.CAP.

"THE IMAGINATION and dreams of Franciscans of every sort, shape, and color have been captured by the suggestion to hold a national celebration of the birth of Saint Francis." Thus does Father Wayne Hellmann begin his plea for such a celebration, and for the formation of a National Franciscan Conference for the United States.[1] While supporting his call for such a national leadership group, I wish to raise some questions about the desirability of a national celebration in 1982, or even about its usefulness. The basic question I raise is this: will the needs of Franciscanism in our age—and the ideals of the Franciscan message—be better served by a *national* celebration, or by many local and regional celebrations held *nationwide*? I submit in these pages that (1) we should indeed plan public observances of the anniversary of Francis's birth in 1982, (2) the emphasis ought to be on local and regional observances rather than on a national celebration, and (3) the observances ought to be planned by and participated in by all Franciscan groups, and not only by the branches of the First Order.

Why a Celebration?

DOES THE Franciscan message have any validity today? In what precise way? For whom is the message intended? What is the purpose of celebrating an anniversary of Francis of Assisi? What do we want to say through such a celebration, and to whom? Are we Franciscans perhaps taking advantage of a date in order to pat ourselves on the back? Are we looking for an op-

[1] See the February, 1979, issue of THE CORD, p. 44.

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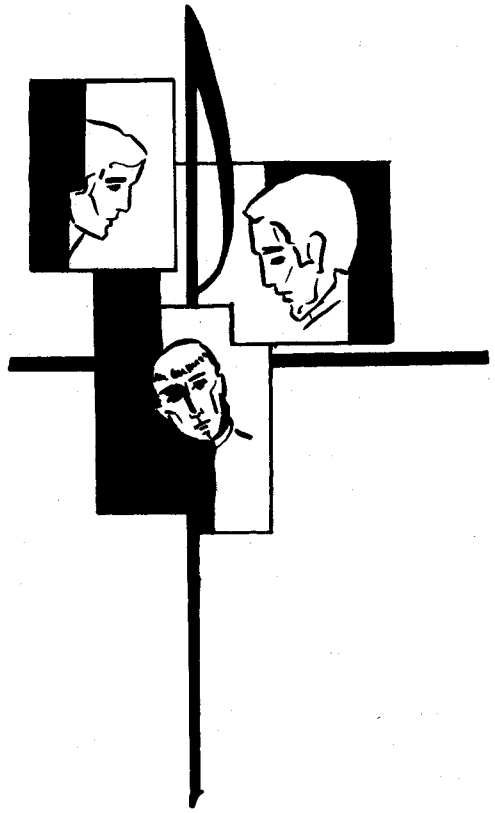
portunity to stand up and be counted? Are we trying to reassure ourselves that we are on the right track, asking all of us to hold up our hands in support of our values, when many of us might be too shy or too insecure to do it alone? Obviously we need to determine just *why* we want to celebrate the 800th anniversary of Francis's birth. Having established that, we will readily see the whos, whats, and wheres of such a celebration.

Whatever other reasons there might be, it seems to me that there can be only one reason ultimately justifying a celebration in 1982: our conviction that the message of Francis of Assisi is both pertinent to and needed by our age. If we Franciscans honestly have that conviction, then we ought to express it, again and again, in word and letter, to everyone within reach. The anniversary in 1982 provides us a marvelous opportunity to do just that! Can any Franciscan worthy of the name doubt the importance of Francis's simplicity, faith, poverty, peace-making, straightforwardness, detachment, and mortification to a world (and an American culture) so beset with secularism, materialism, greed, injustice, competitiveness, and sensuality? Is it not time for us again to be reminded that Franciscanism is not our private affair, but is a call to the gospel life which has relevance for all? Oh, yes, we do indeed need to stand up and be counted—not for any self-aggrandizement or triumphalism, but to reassure all those many of all faiths who have always seen something special in this man from the Umbrian valley, and who continue to look in his direction for hope and inspiration. There is no question but that we ought to take advantage of the anniversary year 1982 to reassert the vitality of that gospel life which Francis espoused, and which we Franciscans have professed as our life.

Not National, but Nationwide, Celebrations

NOW, HOW will we best accomplish our purpose? There is something to be said for a national celebration. It would almost surely be in the national spotlight. It would bring together Franciscans of every sort on perhaps a grand scale. It would likely draw on the talents of the best Franciscan scholars and resources. But, we need to ask, what will be the lasting effects of such an extravaganza? How many people's lives will we touch by it? Really, what meaning will such a celebration have for the ordinary American, aside from what might appear in a news story or a three-minute film clip on national television? Will a national celebration really do much to accomplish our objective? I



would argue that it will not, and that, therefore, a national celebration should not be held, or, at any rate, should certainly not be the main thrust of our efforts in 1982. I submit that many celebrations held nationwide will receive far more publicity and touch many more people. Local and regional observances can repeat our message again and again for an entire year, rather than proclaim them once, in a single event. They can reach people from one end of our nation to the other, millions of people who would very likely be oblivious to or unimpressed by a national celebration. Local celebrations can involve the participation of many more Franciscans. And, perhaps most intriguing of all, local celebrations present realistic possibilities of continued efforts and follow-up on what has been begun.

To these considerations we need to add another question: how credibly will we be witnessing to the Poor Man of Assisi by a celebration that would obviously cost many thousands of dollars

if held on a national scale? Can we really justify the enormous outlays for travel, accommodations, and meals that would be required? How ironic, to plan a celebration honoring the Poverello in a way that will surely exclude many, many people from participating because it will cost too much! Are we professed Franciscans too quick and too casual in planning such extravaganzas because we have become so accustomed to knowing that the provincial office or the motherhouse can and will cover our bills? I have the deep fear that a national celebration would be more a cause for scandal than for edification. Is this what we are dreaming up, to "honor" our Seraphic Father?

A word needs to be said also about the suggestion made by the 800th anniversary committee (and repeated by Father Wayne in his article) that the majority of friars in the United States have expressed a strong desire for a national celebration. The actual statistics of the questionnaire show something quite different. Only 54% of the friars contacted actually responded to the questionnaire. Of that 54%, 21% called for one major national celebration, and 41% favored a combination of a national celebration and also smaller regional ones. Obviously, 46% of the friars contacted did not feel strongly enough about a celebration even to respond, and of those who did respond, 38% did not express any interest at all in any national celebration. And of all the friars who were consulted, only 11% actually expressed support for one major national celebration.

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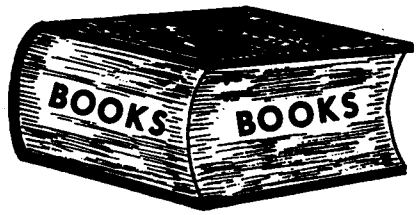
Witnessing to Franciscan Unity of Purpose

MY THIRD point is that the observance of the anniversary of Francis's birth should draw on and involve as many Franciscans as possible, of all Orders, federations, and groupings whatever. What Father Wayne says about the lack of communication and cooperation among the various Franciscan bodies is sadly true. But rather than just lament that situation, we ought to do something about it, and 1982 offers us an opportunity. And how much more promising this can be if the observances are on the local and regional scene, rather than nationally! Why cannot all the Franciscans in the Kansas City area where I live, for instance, plan and produce a celebration for that area? How much we have to say to the people there, and how forcefully we could say it to the people there in our parishes and neighborhoods and schools and hospitals! And how much we have to say to one another! If we

Franciscans would serve the Church, we must serve the local Church first of all. And this "we" is so extensive, so beautifully diverse, so graced and gifted—and all just there, waiting for an opportunity to speak. Now, is the same not true also of Boston, Chicago, and Washington, and Los Angeles, and St. Louis, and Dallas, and Miami, and . . .? All Franciscans, whether friars or sisters, cleric or lay, have a message to speak to one another and to the people we live with and minister to. Is it not time we raised our voices in unison, and spoke our message loudly and clearly from city to city and from one corner of our nation to the other?

Obviously there is a need for direction if anything is to happen at all, whether nationally or locally. It does seem that the motions have begun to create the leadership necessary for this. My own reflections here are meant to urge that the efforts for 1982 be made in the right direction, that we concentrate our time and energy on local and regional observances rather than on a national celebration. To be sure, local celebrations too require leadership and planning. And perhaps all the more so, because they seem to have so much more to offer. They assure that the message is received by many more people. They provide more realistic opportunities for follow-up. They facilitate the involvement of all Franciscan groups in every area. They can be planned and conducted in a way that is more in keeping with Franciscan poverty and simplicity. And finally, they offer more concrete possibilities for all of us Franciscans to serve the local Church. Now, isn't this what this celebration should be all about?



Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites: The Theology of Bonaventure. By Ewert H. Cousins. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978. Pp. xx-316, including index. Cloth, $12.95.

Reviewed by Father George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D., a member of the faculty of the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University and Editor of the Institute Series Publications.

Since a meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association in 1974, at which Dr. Cousins spoke, this reviewer has been studying rather closely the many articles that writer has published on St. Bonaventure. Dr. Cousins has a particular knack for making Bonaventure relevant to the twentieth century. To do this, he makes comparisons between Bonaventure and significant thinkers of our age, in particular process thinkers like Teilhard de Chardin, Whitehead, and Hartshorne. We noted also Dr. Cousins's renewed insistence on the theme of the coincidence of opposites. He has long felt that this theme, so explicit in the thought of Nicholas of Cusa, is a key to the thought of Bonaventure as well.

The book happily put out by the Franciscan Herald Press brings together a great many of the essays that Dr. Cousins has published in the last decade or so. Most of these essays were, in fact, printed or reprinted by THE CORD between 1966 and 1975. Of course, there is more in the book than a mere reprinting of good essays. Dr. Cousins has arranged the materials in a logical order and composed some transitional passages to create the continuity that any book needs.

As it is the book can be divided into four unequal parts: (1) the introduction, which tells the reader about the theme and how it fits into the Trinitarian and Christological thought of Bonaventure—and also gives the latest biographical data on Bonaventure; (2) the major part, including chapters 3-6, in which Dr. Cousins describes Bonaventure's thought as expressed principally in the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*—in reverse order, starting from the final chapter; (3) an in-depth study of the coincidence of opposites in all its varieties; and (4) a synthesis of the author's views on the relevance of Bonaventure, relating his thought to process thinking, existentialism, and ecumenism.

We are thankful to Dr. Cousins for having brought his many articles together. We are thankful as well for the new material he wrote to help make more explicit how he thinks the coincidence of opposites fits into the intellectual scheme of Bonaventure. Indeed, the whole of chapter 7, on the kinds of coincidences, is new, at least to this reader.

As to the success of Dr. Cousins's thematization, I have some reservations. As I study Professor Cousins, I naturally compare his work to that of the very best students and commentators of Bonaventure: Etienne Gilson, Ephrem Longpré, John Quinn, Guy Bougerol. It is not to say, then, that he is taken lightly; I do appreciate his efforts to make Bonaventure understandable by making explicit his special Dionysian dialectic. I am, however, left with the impression that after Dr. Cousins's work is done there is a very significant remainder. Dr. Cousins strives so hard to unify the thought of Bonaventure and to make it relevant to our age, that he leaves behind, as it were, what is typically medieval and what does not lend itself to unification. Surely Dr. Cousins spends little time with the historical trivia of the circumstances of Bonaventure's writings; yet that is part of the whole Bonaventure. Surely, as a very narrow instance, Dr. Cousins spends little time looking at Bonaventure's use of numbers—the artificial Bonaventure, if you will; yet that is part of the whole Bonaventure too. What I am trying to say is that, although I regard highly the insights and understanding that Dr. Cousins gives us into some of the key concepts and texts of Bonaventure, I do appreciate too getting back to the Bonaventure of the *De Triplici Via* and the *Apologia*, and getting back to the simple and forthright enthusiasm of the man, and getting back to his interest in, and medieval use of, the Scriptures. In these areas I don't find the dialectic of the coincidence operating.

Perhaps what has been said here in the negative could be better said in the positive. A new reader will no longer have to scurry about to read the thoughts of Dr. Cousins. They are gathered here neatly and succinctly. And what the new reader will be getting is a series of reflections on the dialectic that Dr. Cousins has discovered to be operating in the most difficult theological passages of the Bonaventurian corpus. And as the reader is introduced to the play of opposites in Bonaventure's thought, he will be made to feel that Bonaventure is in fact a theologian fit for our times.

God and America's Future. By Frederick Sontag and John K. Roth. Wilmington, NC: McGrath Publishing Co., Consortium Books, 1977. Pp. xi-224. Cloth, $11.00; paper, $5.95.

Reviewed by Dr. Robert E. Donovan, Assistant Professor of Theology at St. Bonaventure University.

Sontag and Roth have masterfully presented a "Liberation Theology" for America and for today. Although this is the first of their books that I have read, it won't be the last. They are obviously well versed in American studies, especially the philosophical and theological. Simply put, this book is a challenge to religion in America "to assume its responsibilities for stimulating a new American Revolution" (p. 13).

Why a *new* American Revolution? Well, because, according to Sontag and Roth, "we have made little progress in the areas of achieving individual freedom and human liberation" (p. 9). Oh, yes! America has done wonderfully. "Our record of achieving a good life for vast numbers at least matches that of any other culture" (p. 10). Yet there is need for more. Indeed, the real revolu-

tion, and the revolution of today, must be a spiritual and internal one. In the age of internality "our struggle must be directed more at ourselves than at outsiders" (p. 32).

Who or what is the enemy? What are we revolting against? Quite simply, we are to be in revolt against any force that oppresses or restricts, i.e., evil. We must admit, Sontag and Roth agree, that "evil's trademark now includes the label 'Made in USA' " (p. 74). It well may be that America has made great strides in extending freedom to all its people, but such progress is not automatic. The children of America do not automatically inherit the desire for freedom; it must be inculcated, renewed, strengthened, and made to look important to each new generation.

Freedom, however, is not unambiguous. As desirable as it may be, it is also threatening. "Freedom makes it possible for us to tyrannize others . . ." (p. 95). So we must be involved in a constant effort to be free ourselves and never in the process to enslave another. If we must work like that, so must God. Because God created us free, he must constantly be on guard lest we turn his creation into chaos. Man's task—indeed, our task—is to care for others, to touch them with a liberating spirit of equality just as God cares for and touches us.

This God of revolution, this God of the future, is a God whose freedom is reflected in every man and women struggling to be free. This "image" of God is not paring his nails in some far-off Heaven, but a partner and model for the never-ending revolution. He is God-with-us, Emmanuel. And this revolution to be fought, with God on our side, is to be fought nonviolently.

Our model for revolution must be Jesus, and, as Sontag and Roth point out, "Jesus is indeed a strange liberator" (p. 112). By his death he brought us freedom; not by the death of any "other." So the liberation theology put forward by Sontag and Roth—or by Jesus, if you will—is not the waste of "liberation-through violence" but the hope of "liberation-through-love" (p. 114). The God of this type of revolution is involved. He cares. He suffers.

Obviously any revolution must be concerned with "power," political, economic, social. Yet the real fight is not to Christianize the power, but to move all men to love selflessly. This, more than all the power of human accomplishments or "liberating movements," is the sign of salvation. So our emphasis today as yesterday in America must be on individual freedom and the indeterminacy of the future. The God of this revolution must be seen as cooperating while demanding "neither necessity in the world's course nor complete control over man's decisions" (p. 124).

It is this sort of concerned, involved, God-with-man/woman that must be witnessed today. Only a constant vigil will make God the countercultural sign we find ever anew in Jesus. Bodying forth this image of God, we can make revolution. "It all depends on whether we discover that God alone is the ultimate source of human liberation and learn to detect how he sets to produce a revolutionary spirit among his suffering—but chosen—people" (p. 216).

As the reader has doubtless perceived, I found this book "important." It is well written and well thought out. It shows the depth of the authors' awareness of history, religion, and philosophy. At times it is a bit repetitive and a bit too philosophical for my taste, but it is important and challenging. I recommend it highly.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Meet Your Pastor. By William L. Doty. Canfield, OH: Alba Books, 1978. Pp. 163. Paper, $1.95.

This delightful little book describes in diary form the daily routine of a small-town pastor. The diary form also allows Father Doty to raise and answer old and new difficulties with the Church—her teaching on sexual morality, private Confession, Mass obligation. All priests will be able to relate to the "quarreling couple," the "convert," the "scrupulous young lady." Friends and relatives of priests will enjoy the book too, and may feel inclined to try some Charismatic prayer meetings, which receive quite favorable attention throughout the book.

Sacred Signs. By Romano Guardini. Introd. by Melissa Kay. Rev. ed., Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1979. Pp. 106. Paper, $2.95.

Humans are body and spirit, and hence the physical and spiritual are always entwined. In Liturgy we make use of many symbols—pointers to God: not only bread and wine, but candles, gestures (of hands, of feet, of standing, kneeling), places, time and space, objects such as chalices, patens, linen cloths, etc. The aptness and import of these "sacred signs" are reflectively and personally suggested in an "old" book which is just what is needed to ground liturgical experience. Everyone can profit from this work.

The Age of Miracles: Seven Journeys to Faith. By Morton Kelsey. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 77. Paper, $2.45.

The story of the Passion of Jesus is powerful, and God's grace is ever at work. Episcopal Father Kelsey tells the story of the impact of both on seven people who happened to be part of the worshiping congregation one Good Friday. All were healed in their hearts and began new lives. The stories of these seven—seven who had been down on themselves, the world, and God—give evidence that miracles are still happening, and that, as Bonaventure said many years ago, "The Crucifix is still the best book on religion."

Normal Modes of Madness: Hurdles in the Path to Growth. By William F. Kraft, Ph.D. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1978. Pp. x-177, incl. bibliography. Paper, $4.95.

All of us at some time or another have admitted to being a little crazy. Dr. Kraft shows how some of our madcap techniques—over-working, over-playing, over-feeling, over-religiosity—are harmful both to others and to ourselves. He lays bare the all too common fallacy of lying to oneself, and he points the way out of the coping techniques that we dig ourselves into. That way is love: giving, receiving, listening, caring, honest love. Dr. Kraft also reminds us that neurotic and psychotic people can grow spiritually and insists on the need and fruitfulness of treating the latter with dignity. *Normal Modes of Madness* is a balanced, well written work that can be of value to all in the helping professions, as well as to anyone with a modicum of life experience enabling him to reflect on himself with some equanimity.

Called to Teach: A Spiritual Guide for Teachers and Aides. By Walter J. Tulley. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1978. Pp. viii-121. Paper, $3.95.

Special about this short treatise on spirituality, religious education, and human psychology, is the concept of the religious education teacher as one who is called by God for that purpose. Recognizing that the task of communicating Christ seems awesome, the author stresses that fears can and must be overcome by confidence in Christ. Besides speaking of prayer and the sacraments, Father Tulley has some advice for directors of religious education with regard to their relationships to the teacher and to the pastor. Community receives its rightful emphasis, as does the role of the teacher. *Called to Teach* is a helpful book, useful for preparation both of volunteer religious educators who form the backbone of parish CCD programs, and of their professional directors.

Christ Who Lives in Me: Rosary Meditations. By Ronald Walls. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. 144. Leatherette, $4.95.

These meditations on the fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary form a treatise on the spiritual life. Thinking about the Joyful Mysteries leads to lessons on prayer, humility, the sacraments, Christ in the Church. Consideration of the Sorrowful Mysteries highlights God's redemptive love and the obstalcles to that love raised by man's sinfulness and tendencies to sin. Reflection on the Glorious Mysteries reveals the connection of thought and life in Christian living, points to our hope of eternal life, places in perspective the Holy Spirit and his charismatic Gifts, and calls our attention to Mary, our Mother. A strong sense of commitment to the Magisterium is evident throughout all the reflections. These meditations are solid food and are recommended for all who want to make the Rosary the meaningful prayer it can be.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Annese, Lucius, *The Purpose of Authority? A Recent Emphasis.* Andover, MA: Charisma Press, 1978. Pp. vi-120, including index & bibliography. Paper, n.p.

Catoir, John T., *Catholics and Broken Marriage: Pastoral Possibilities of Annulment, Dissolution, the Internal Forum.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 69. Paper, $1.95.

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Lawrence of the Resurrection, *The Practice of the Presence of God: The Complete Works of Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection.* Trans. Sister Mary David, S.S.N.D. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. 127. Paper, $2.25.

Scupoli, Lawrence, *The Spiritual Combat.* Trans. William Lester & Robert Moran, New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. xvi-240. Paper, $3.45.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our May issue were drawn by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., of the Monastery of Sancta Clara, Canton, OH, except for the "Franciscan Unity" series symbol, on page 155, by Brother Ronald A. Chretien, O.F.M.

the CORD

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THE CORD (ISSN 0010-8685) (USPS 563-640) 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. 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.

Celibacy, Grace, Experience

A NEW YORK TIMES feature article on the "mixed reactions" to Pope John Paul II's Holy Week message reaffirming celicacy for priests brought up several points worth pondering. First, it indicated that the celibacy issue is symbolic of the Church's stand on sexual matters. Hence the strong stand on celibacy is continuous with the strong stand on sexual morality that Catholic Christianity continues to maintain. And this, I believe, is correct. Underlying both stands is a dogmatic belief in *the power of God's grace,* which enables people to cope with and even consecrate their sexual powers. Genital sex is an option for human beings, not essential to their nature. The sexual character of human existence need not imply romantic or genital love. Jesus, and the whole biblical tradition with him, speaks of celibacy as a gift of God.

Pope John Paul II indicates to us that God has not of late decided not to give this gift. Not of ourselves, to be sure, but in God who strengthens us, as Paul points out, we can do all things. What is impossible with men, is possible with God; and these words of the Lord remain applicable to celibacy.

A second issue raised in the article was the relevance of *experience* to the question of celibacy. The suggestion that the Pope speaks from out of puritanical Polishness (stemming from Marxism as much as from Christianity), is about as absurd as suggesting that Peter's views on the Lord's Resurrection reflected his Jewishness. For the believing Catholic, the successor of Peter does have a *charism of office.* And de facto, John Paul II is an *international person*—more so, I suggest, than many of his American critics whose secularism and sexual idolatry continue to destroy rather than build faith.

"People are true to their own experience," rather than to someone telling them what their experience means, according to Dr. Eugene Kennedy, cited in this article. Some people fit this definition; we don't, however, call them *believers,* for it is the function of religion to *interpret* our experience for us, to reveal to us dimensions we might never otherwise consider. Faith depends on *hearing*, and the person who listens for a beat he is already marching to is like the man who looked into a mirror and walked out, forgetting what he looked like.

Actually, I do not think celibacy is foreign to human experience. Many cultures have esteemed it, and millions have found that the consecration of their bodies to God has opened up their hearts and lives beyond their wildest dreams. The promised hundredfold is for real! How welcome it is to hear John Paul II remind us of God's special Presence in the faithful who have left all for him.

W. Julian Davis, Jr.

[1]Kenneth A. Briggs, "Pope's Message on Celibacy Gets Mixed Reaction from U.S. Clergy," *The New York Times,* April 13, 1979, p. A21.

Bright/Brown

Holding tight a post (worm-weathered)
she was claw and muted coat.
Motion moved her then to flight.

Caught against the distance,
her graceful lift
exposed a hidden happy blue,
whirring promise of a brighter palette
in the undersoft of wings.

Who are they for?
Those sky feathers,
held beneath the wooden, sombre brown
    blue to reach for rainbows
    blue to soar toward dippersful of stars.
I think I saw her soul,
not brown and drab at all,
no more than Francis ever was,
fire-bright with Alleluias
and aurora bursts of color
at his finger's ends.

Franciscan minor Gospel preacher,
leave one blue promise here.

I need it when the world seems only brown.

Sister Carol Ann Munchel, O.S.F.

Francis's Volterra Letter:

A Gospel Spirituality

BERNARD TICKERHOOF, T.O.R.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI was in part a product of the medieval penitential movement. Upon recognizing the call of God to give over his life, Francis spent three years living as best he could around the neighborhood of Assisi, repairing churches and leading the life of a penitent hermit. On that eventful day in February of 1208 when Francis listened to the Gospel being read on the feast of St. Mathias, his penitential life took a decidedly different direction. He became a preacher of the gospel of conversion, and along with the men who soon gathered around him, he began to proclaim the need for repentance to all he met. The early biographers tell us that after some initial misunderstanding those who heard his words were deeply moved, and many men and women were led through Francis and his friars to embrace the penitential life.

Thus not only was Francis a product of the penitential movement, but in time he became the spearhead of it. So great was his influence on this Order of Penance, as the movement was recognized within the Church, that it completely adopted his values and spirit. Soon after his death it began to be recognized as the Third Order of Saint Francis, and down to our present day it continues to form the largest part of the Franciscan family. It consists of the Third Order (Third Order Secular—now known as Secular Franciscans) and of the various priests, brothers, and sisters communities that comprise the Third Order Regular.

In light of these times of renewal the Third Order, as much as any movement within the Church, recognizes the need to examine its roots. It looks for that elusive original charism that sparked its life and gave it a dynamism that so transformed society in the High Middle Ages. Those of us within the various branches of the Third Order have come to see that charism as the spirit of penance, that biblical *metanoia* that represents the process by which the Christian turns from a sinful state to an ever deeper life in Christ lived out in anticipation of God's Reign. In searching for this charism we have sought to rediscover the pre-Franciscan penitential movement and re-examine the conversion process of Francis. But part of this spirit of *metanoia* also lies in that early preaching of Francis that touched the depths of an already vibrant movement and gave it the strength to multiply its energies. In a general way that's what this article is about.

In 1975 Kajetan Esser published an article on a manuscript first published in 1900 by Paul Sabatier.[1] As Esser's title suggests, the Volterra manuscript appears to be an early edition of the Letter to the Faithful (*Omnibus*, p. 93). Until Esser's recent work it was considered important only insofar as it offered certain "variations" on the more complete piece.

Esser has theorized in his article, however, that the manuscript has eignificant value in its own right. "*Vo* is not only a copy of one of the oldest texts, but contains also a text which is independent in itself and at the same time older than the rest of the tradition of the *'Epistola ad fideles'* " (p. 33). As such the Volterra letter represents an early stratum of Francis's writing. That it was added to and perhaps improved upon by Francis in later editions does not take away from its importance as an original work. Furthermore, as an independent text it offers a complete train of thought that, while not in conflict with the later Letter to the Faithful, presents us with a different intentionality that deserves to be studied.

Esser also offers some conclusions as to whom the letter is addressed. "It is quite clear therefore that we have before us a written instruction directed toward persons who have joined the penance movement of the later Middle Ages, a movement to which Francis and his brotherhood were deeply attached and obligated" (p. 38). Here, then, we have preserved for us, if Esser's theories are correct, a simple and direct statement of Francis to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance, the grass roots movement of his age which not

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[1]Kajetan Esser, "A Forerunner of the 'Epistola ad Fideles' of St. Francis of Assisi," first appeared in German in the *Collectanea Franciscana*. The English translation appeared in the *Analecta T.O.R.* 14 (n. 129). The article concerns itself with a Latin manuscript (Cod. 225 of the Biblioteca Guarnacci of Volterra), which Sabatier published in 1900—hence the name "Volterra Letter."

only helped to produce the Franciscan Order, but which in turn was radically renewed by it. The letter concerns itself with those who have taken up the penitential life, and also with those who have for various reasons not yet embraced a life of conversion. Such a letter is bound to be of great importance in the quest for the charismatic roots of the Third Order's existence.

Thomas of Celano, in his First Life (n. 37), implies that in his early preaching Francis set forth some norms for penitential living for the many men and women who listened to him and were moved by his call to *metanoia*. There is, however, no way of determining in what these norms consisted. They have, like most of Francis's preaching, been lost in antiquity. The Volterra manuscript is not anything like a rule; it is, however, a spiritual statement of the greatest importance. While in the form of a letter, it has the enthusiastic and imaginative preaching of Francis as its core. While directed to penitents of the thirteenth century, its scriptural sense of spirituality reaches out to all Christians of every era.

If we are to examine more closely the spirituality of the Volterra letter, we must of course make the text available. What follows is an English rendition offered, not as a critical translation, but as a means of bringing Francis's letter into the proximity of the average reader.

Francis' "Volterra Letter" (written probably ca. 1215)

In the name of the Lord.

Chapter One: Concerning those who do penance.

1. All who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with all their strength, and who love their neighbors as themselves,
2. and have a hatred of their bodies with its faults and sins,
3. and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,
4. and produce fruits worthy of penance:
5. O how blessed and praiseworthy are those men and women as long as they do this and persevere in such things,
6. because the Spirit of the Lord rests upon them and makes a dwelling place among them,
7. and they are children of their Father in heaven whose work they do, and they are the lovers, the brothers and the mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ.
8. We are lovers when our faithful soul is united with our Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit.

9. We are brothers to him when we do the will of his Father who is in heaven.
10. Mothers when we carry him in our hearts and our body through divine love and a pure and sincere conscience, and we give birth to him through holy actions which should shine as an example to others.
11. O what a glorious, holy, and great thing it is to have a Father in heaven.
12. O how holy, fair, beautious, and wonderful to have such a lover.
13. O how holy and beloved, gratifying and lowly, how peaceful, delightful, lovable, and above all desirable to have such a brother and son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave life for his sheep
14. and prayed to his Father saying: "Holy Father, in your name keep those whom you have given me in the world. They were yours and you gave them to me,
15. and the words you have given me, I have given to them. And they have received them and have truly believed that I have come forth from you; and they know that you have sent me.
16. I pray for them and not for the world.
17. Bless and sanctify them and for them I sanctify myself.
18. Not for them do I pray, however, but for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may be sanctified in their unity as we are.
19. And I wish, Father, that where I am, they also may be with me, that they may see my splendor in your kingdom." Amen.

Chapter Two: Concerning those who do not do penance.

1. However, all those men and women who are not repentant
2. and do not receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
3. and commit vice and sin, and who follow evil appetites and the evil desires of the flesh,
4. and do not observe what they have promised the Lord,
5. and who bodily serve the world, the desires of the flesh, following the anxieties and cares of this life:
6. detained by the devil, they are his children and do his work.
7. They are blind, for they do not see the true light, our Lord Jesus Christ.
8. They have no spiritual wisdom for they do not have the Son of God, who is the true wisdom of the Father;
9. it is said of them: "Their wisdom has been swallowed up;" and "they speak evil who turn away from your commands."
10. They see and acknowledge, they know and yet they do evil, and they themselves knowingly lose their lives.
11. Look, you blind, deceived by your enemies, by the flesh, the world, and the devil; for to the body it is sweet to commit sin and it is bitter to serve God;

12. because all vice and sin come forth and proceed from the human heart as the Lord says in the Gospel.
13. And you have nothing to look forward to in this world nor in the next,
14. and you think you are going to keep possession of the vanities of this world. But you are deceived, because the day and the hour will come of which you neither think nor know and of which you are ignorant. One's body becomes sick, then death approaches, and thus he dies a bitter death.
15. And no matter where or when or how a person dies in guilt and sin without repentance or due satisfaction, if he can make satisfaction and does not do so, the devil snatches his life from his body amid such anguish and distress that no one could understand it if he has not experienced it.
16. And all the talent and power, all the knowledge and wisdom they believed they had will be taken from them.
17. And relatives and friends bear their property away and divide it among themselves, and afterwards they say: "Cursed be his soul, for he could have acquired more to give us but he did not."
18. The worms consume the body and thus they lose body and soul in their short life, and go into Hell where they will be tormented without end.
19. All those to whom this letter might reach, we ask in that love which is God that they fovorably receive with a divine love these great and precious words of our Lord Jesus Christ,
20. and those who do not know how to read should have them read often,
21. and keep them with them, practising what is holy to the last, for they are spirit and life.
22. And those who do not act in this way will be held to account for it on the day of judgment before the seat of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Latin text: *Analecta T.O.R.*, Vol. XIV, No. 129, pp. 42-45.)

Modern biblical study has employed several tools by which to further our understanding of Scripture. It has been the genius of contemporary Franciscan research to apply these same tools to the body of the early Franciscan writings. Esser's article on the Volterra Letter is an example of such a tool, textual criticism. Through an examination of the various texts available to us he has not only reached some important conclusions as to the origin and purpose of the letter, but has also concerned himself with providing for us a critical Latin text. Yet it still remains for other methods of research to be utilized so that the richness of the text may be explored still further. One such method is form criticism, which seeks to move behind the written text and examine the preliterary and oral composition of a work. Another method is literary criticism, which explores the content of a text from the aspects of language, composition, and origin. Much of the remainder of this article will be concerned with briefly applying these tools to the Volterra Letter in order to draw out the penitent spirituality contained within it.

Here is not the place to examine at length the differences between the Volterra Letter and the Letter to the Faithful. First of all, Esser has already done that in sufficient detail in his article (pp. 34-37). But we pass over the Letter to the Faithful here more than simply to avoid redundance. An examination of the longer text would be imperative if we were attempting to trace the development of Francis' thought in regard to the Order of Penance. An analysis of the additions that made their way into the longer text would then be essential. Instead we are moving in the other directions. What concerns us now is not tracing Francis' development, but rather discovering the roots of his spirituality. Only upon examination of the foundations of his penitent spirituality can we be free to observe its movement as Francis became more self-conscious of the role he played in the popular spirituality of his day.

We begin by asking the question, what do we have before us in the Volterra Letter? It is, as Esser maintains, a letter; II:19 clearly indicates this is so. But Esser is quick to point out (p. 34) that its form predates Francis' complete letter style. There is no real form of address, no admonition to make copies of the letter and circulate it, no exhortation that the letter be preserved. It is a letter only in the barest of structures. Yet the body of the letter possesses a deliberate and polished format. There are clearly two trains of thought, one an affirmative statement on those who do penance, the other a double negative which arrives at the same conclusion. Both statements are not only salted with scripture texts, but scripture is intricately woven into their very fabric. Assuming Francis's extensive and often intuitive use of Scripture, there is still a purposefulness to its presence here (as will shortly be demonstrated) that could lead us to the conclusion that the letter is in some way a spiritual statement on Scripture itself.

This conclusion undoubtedly says something about the intention that lies beneath the letter. There is no direct addressee. There are no personal appeals or exhortations, as there would be if Francis were sure who would actually be the beneficiary of his letter. What we have instead is a didactic tool. The letter is the means Francis has chosen to reach a wider

audience, to increase an original circulation. To commit to writing is an insurance measure. First of all, it insures that one's thoughts and beliefs will be preserved. Second, if this writing is published or circulated, it furthers the spread of these beliefs. But such beliefs and thoughts here pre-exist the form. The letter form has been imposed upon the material, which seems to have a more primitive oral form behind it.

The oral nature of the Volterra Letter is not difficult to notice. It can in fact be seen in many of Francis' writings. The letter does not seek to furnish rational proof. There are no complex arguments that would have to be logically set down and extensively explained. Rather, the content is light and repetitious. It is meant to create an emotional effect. Its style purposely tries to recall familiar phrases that will touch off a spark in the hearer. And the letter concludes with a story (II:14-18) designed to leave the hearer with something to remember long after the words have died away. An extensive use of Scripture makes sense here since it calls forth already existing phrases from the memory. In short there is present in the Volterra Letter sufficient evidence that the basic content of the piece existed first in oral form, and seems to have many of the characteristics of homiletic

material. The bulk of the letter may well be a close example of Francis' preaching, and perhaps the purest example of it that we possess.

While a preacher's style often appears to be light and simple, preaching is itself a complex art form. Several things are going on at once in a good homily. First of all, there is a train of thought which more or less directly leads to a particular theme or point. But the homily or sermon does not embody only this type of linear development. The preacher is also presenting a snapshot of a complete world view with every homily. In theory if we had enough homilies from one preacher, assuming of course a congruence to his life experiences, we should begin to understand his world, for that world lies at the bottom of every homily he gives. Even the simplest, most direct statements are important, for they serve to validate this world view in the preacher's mind and clarify it for his congregation.

If we look at the Volterra Letter as a homily we observe that it presents us with a very simple and straightforward statement on Francis's part. In its purest form it runs something like this: It is highly beneficial for one to do penance, but on the other hand if one does not do penance he will not possess eternal life. But this statement is at the same time a snapshot of something deeper. It is, like all of Francis's writings, a picture of this holy man as he attempts to respond to God and his brothers and sisters from within his own life situation. It is a representation of his world view. Thus the letter can be a key for us. By examining the text we can bring to light many of the beliefs and values which motivated Francis.

It should be no great surprise to us that Francis's primary source for the letter is Scripture, or more specifically the Gospels. We are used to thinking of Francis as the Imitator of Christ, as the one who sought to follow the Gospels perfectly, as the one who hoped to renew the Church through a renovation of the gospel spirit. Yet we too often settle for the belief that Francis's understanding of Scripture was by and large spontaneous, that it was for the most part undifferentiated. Francis used Scripture because it was so much a part of him that he could not *help* using it. It was as natural to him as if it were his very own vocabulary.

To an extent this is true and it speaks well of the holiness of Francis. But if we conclude from this that he "merely" used Scripture spontaneously, then any further examination of the text has little to offer us more than a testimony to one man's holiness. In fact, however, that is not the case. Francis' use of Scripture in the Volterra Letter is quite deliberate, and presents us with a coherent scriptural theology.[2]

The letter is influenced from

[2]It might here be advisable to mention that we speak of Francis as the author of the letter, but do not thereby preclude the contribution of others to its theology. Nor should this keep us from maintaining that the spirituality contained in it is indeed that of Francis. The same, in fact, can be said of much of the body of Francis's writings. Authorship is here understood in that wider sense familiar to anyone who has made even a basic study of the New Testament.

two directions within the Gospels. There is clearly evident both an influence from the Synoptic Gospels and an extensive use of Johannine material. I do not state this merely as a convenient way of dividing the body of the canonical Gospels, for the Volterra Letter uses the two in decidedly different ways. The Synoptic influence, while still important, is recognizably secondary, and appeals more to our understanding of Francis's use of Scripture as spontaneous. There is, however, a primary use of Johannine material quite beyond mere Scripture quoting. Johannine theology has been intricately worked into the text itself, leaving us with the impression that the primitive oral form of the letter may well have been a sermon on some aspect of John's Gospel. We will briefly analyze the Synoptic influence on the letter for it does offer us a picture of Francis's world and thought patterns, but it is the influence of the Gospel of John which will most occupy our attention here.

Synoptic material is recognizable in the letter in I:1,4, 7b, 9, 19b; and II: 12, 14b, 16. There is however no coherent pattern to it. It is used as the situation seems to dictate. The reference, for instance, in I:1 (Mk. 12:30-31; Mt. 22:37-39) sees those who do penance as being a part of (or really synonymous with) those who keep the two great commandments. This can be considered a more or less direct use of the Scripture. The same can be said for 1:4 (Lk.3:8—the Baptist's preaching), I:7b) Mk. 3:33-35 and parallels—the true family of Jesus), and II:12 (Mk. 7:21—the source of impurity). Other Synoptic references, however, simply help to form Francis' vocabulary, as in I:9 and 19b, where he speaks with a decidedly Matthean flavor (cf. Mt. 12:50 and 20:21).

Of special note are the Synoptic references in II:14b and 16. They reveal something of the ongoing understanding of revelation for Francis as well as for the medieval Church in general. The texts refer to several eschatological passages from the Synoptics (II:14b—Mt.24:42, 50; 25:13; Lk. 12:46 and II:16-Mt. 13:12; 25:29; Mk. 4:25: Lk. 8:18), but the eschatology present in the Gospels is quite different from that of Francis. In Scripture the passages are apocalyptic. They describe the final inbreaking of God, the definitive end of history, and the last judgment, whereas for Francis the judgment in question is specifically individual judgment. Francis does not expect an immediate cataclysmic end to creation. Rather the individual should first beware of his own end. Of course this does not mean that Francis would deny a final judgment (on the contrary, see II:22), but it simply implies that his eschatology is primarily salvational and not apocalyptic. Francis has taken the Synoptics' penchant for apocalyptic imagery and has removed it from its metahistorical time frame. He has not been alone in this. The process was already underway in the first century. In fact it had already begun in the Synoptics themselves. Luke deapocalypticizes much of his source material. What is of interest here is the extent to which Francis has taken this process for granted. Nor should we be too surprised if we did not pick up the change of sense in reading the letter; for the most part we automatically assume the process as well.

When we turn to the Johannine influence on the text we see a marked difference in the letter's use of Scripture. To begin with, over one third of the verses in the letter reflect Johannine vocabulary. One complete section (I:14-19) is an extensive paraphrase of the priestly prayer of Jesus in John's seventeenth chapter. When enumerated the Johannine references form an imposing list.

I:6—Jn 1:32; 14:23
I:7—Jn 8:41; 14:12
I:14—Jn 10:15; 17:6,11
I:15—Jn 17:8
I:16—Jn 17:9
I:17—Jn 17:17,19a
I:18—Jn 17:20,23
I:19—Jn 17:24
II:5—Jn 8:23,34
II:6—Jn 8:41,44
II:7—Jn 1:9; 8:12; 9:39; 12:46
II:10—Jn 9:41
II:11—Jn 9:39
II:21—Jn 6:63

But it is not enough to point out the extensiveness of the Johannine vocabulary. We must also note that there is a definite pattern to its use. In the letter's first chapter the core of the John material is positive and is drawn from the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel. John here records a prayer of Jesus addressed to the Father summarizing Christ's mission and praying on behalf of his disciples, the true believers, and for those who will come to believe through their preaching. Francis has chosen material from this chapter specifically bringing out the nature of discipleship in the lives of the penitents. For Francis the penitent has been given by the Father to Christ, and has been instructed through the words of the Son. The penitent has received this teaching and has come to believe. The life of penance is tied to belief. But not only that, for by their example and perhaps by their preaching they will also lead others to believe, and thereby to do penance.

In the second chapter we see the flip side of the coin. The material is drawn extensively from the eighth and ninth chapters of John's Gospel, and is

decidedly negative. The references are now no longer to the disciples of Jesus but to the Jews, representing for John those who are not true believers. The thrust of the Gospel is that while claiming to be begotten of God these nonbelievers are really children of the devil. Moreover they have gone beyond the point where they can truly see their own origin. They are spiritually blind, so that while claiming to have the light they show themselves to be unaffected by it. Francis has drawn from this image of the unbeliever and has applied it to those who refuse to take up the penitential life. While they claim to be Christians, their very actions show that that they are self-deceived. They have lost true wisdom, and so they have created a bleak future for themselves.

This concept of true wisdom is indeed of great importance to us, for it shows the depth to which Francis has plumbed Johannine spirituality. Crucial to our understanding of this are verses 8 and 9 of Chapter Two in the Volterra Letter. The plight of the impenitent is here shown in a double reversal. On the one hand they possess no true wisdom (vs. 8), and on the other the worldly wisdom they do possess proves itself to be ineffective (vs. 9). The latter verse, a composite of psalmic material (Ps. 107:27; 119:21) shows a clear influence of Hebrew wisdom literature. The same is true of verse 8, but with a truly interesting twist. Jesus, the personified true wisdom of the Father, recalls the personification of Wisdom as it appears for instance in Proverbs 8 and 9 and in Sirach 24. But here wisdom is feminine. She springs forth from Yahweh himself, united to him but distinct. She has creative attributes, and offers unending nourishment to humanity.

The surprising element, however, is that the writer of John also developed a theology of Christ around personified Wisdom, transferring her qualities to the masculine *Logos*, the Word, and applying them to Jesus. Compare for instance the parallel thought patterns between Jn 1:1-5 and Prov. 8:22-31, and between Jn 4:13-14; 6:35 and Prov. 9:1-6 and Sir. 24:19-22. Francis does not use any of these Johannine passages directly, and yet he has intuited the sense that John wished to present. Francis does not portray Christ as the Word, but in speaking of Jesus as the Father's true wisdom, he has utilized a pre-Gospel Johannine thought pattern. Such a theological development is truly remarkable, given Francis's limited formal education, and points out most effectively how much he had absorbed the Scripture into his being.

It should here be noted in passing that Francis also uses the scriptural term "flesh" several times within the Volterra Letter (II:3, 5, 11). This term is likewise found in John's Gospel (Jn. 3:6; 6:63), but has not been cited by us as Johannine influence upon the letter, since the term is used quite differently by John. In the Fourth Gospel it is contrasted to the spirit, and represents the outward manifestation of human life, that which is mortal and passing. Francis's use of *flesh* is closer to that found in Pauline theology. Paul uses the term *flesh* in a holistic sense. The flesh is the whole human person as inherently weak and cut off from divine help. The flesh is isolated from God and therefore open to sin. Francis speaks in this vein, but he also shows himself to be highly influenced by a strong Medieval renunciation theology that links the flesh with the world and the devil to form a threefold united front in combat with God's truth and virtue.

The whole thrust of John's theology can be seen as faith-centered. Jesus is the eternal Word who comes that we may believe. He presents himself and the Father through a series of "signs" which call forth from within the observer a decision: Can you put your faith in the Son or not? This understanding of the Gospel is adequately stated in Jn. 3:17-18. "God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him avoids condemnation, but whoever does not believe is already condemned for not believing in the name of God's only Son."

The importance of the Volterra Letter lies in the direct link that Francis sees between this understanding of faith and the penitential life. For Francis following Christ is not simply a matter of degrees. The penitent is not just a little farther along the road. In a sense there is for Francis no middle way; the issue at stake is too important. And the issue, simply stated, is one's belief in God. The penitent has shown himself willing to put his faith into practice by undergoing conversion of life. The one who does not undertake conversion shows himself to be no better than the unbeliever. The penitent through his or her life style demonstrates true discipleship. But the one who is so proud and so avaricious as to feel no need for repentence has already been cut off from God. Such an understanding of the penitential life is indeed radical, but no more radical than John's. "If you were blind there would be no sin in that. 'But we see,' you say, and your sin remains" (Jn. 9:41). No greater gift can be given to a person than the gift of faith, and for Francis it was the penitent who showed what it truly meant to believe.

Sanguis Christi, Inebria Me

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

WE COME in our reflections to the third phrase of the prayer, "Anima Christi." After having called out to the soul of Christ to sanctify us, having looked to his sacred body to save us from any misdirecting or misrepresenting of the role of our own body, we now plead: "Sanguis Christ, inebria me." "Blood of Christ, inebriate me," or, if you prefer, "Blood of Christ, make me drunk!"

Unfortunately, we have come to associate with inebriation only one particular effect of a specific indulgence. We understand the literal kind of drunkenness by which we mean merely overuse of alcoholic beverages. Oh, but there is more to that word than that! Obviously—or it would not be in this prayer. The kind of drunkenness to which we refer in our ordinary use of the word is a debasement of what true inebriation should be, that of which the poets and mystics have written when they said that they were drunk with the love of Christ, inebriated with God, set reeling with the thought of God's glory and of God's love for them.

Dear sisters, in this prayer we return the word and the concept to truth. Although its ordinary use cannot really be called merely connotative so much as a universally accepted actual meaning, still, beyond and beneath that we want to look at the purity of the word and of the concept. Inebriation really means a state of exaltation, of enlivement above what is ordinarily possible. Do we not see immediately in that consideration how the present almost sole debased use of the word outside of mystic treatises or poetry has nevertheless taken on the lineaments of the actual and radical meaning? I mean, do not many persons seek by the stimulation of alcohol, as many others also presently do by the use of drugs, to bring themselves to a state of enlivement and exhilaration beyond what they can otherwise achieve? Of course, because overuse of alcohol is only an artificial stimulant, as drugs can be a really perverse stimulant, both overreach themselves as all artificialities and perversions must invariably do. So, the drunken person, that is, the alcoholic, may experience an initial exhilaration; but this quickly lapses into stupor, complete languor, and sometimes total unconsciousness. Drugs can have the same effect: initial exhilaration and enlivement, and then the subsequent languor and loss of consciousness.

With the inebriation of the spirit, it is different. This is the true exhilaration and enlivenment which lift us above and beyond the ordinary in truth and purity. And this is what the Church proseses to us in this prayer: that we should be enlivened, lifted up and above our ordinary functioning, abilities, even potential, by the precious blood of Christ. It is in this sense that the saints and the mystics have so well understood it. Certainly it was a mystic who wrote this prayer.

"Blood of Christ, make me drunk!" A very bold expression, and a very accurate expresssion. Here is veracity both stark and glorious. It is in this sense that the contemplative most particularly, dear sisters, should be inebriated. Now, unlike the debasing inebriation which the stimulus of liquor or drugs produces, this inebriation is not of the senses. It may have nothing whatsoever to do with emotional response or lack of response. It means that the spirit is enlivened, and the body is enlivened and exhilarated, not by what it feels but by what it can do. We see something of this in the Acts of the Apostles when, on the first Pentecost morning, they were speaking with such an exhilaration that was new and far beyond their ordinary way of acting, in a way obviously exceeding their own potential. And the people said, "These men are drunk!" (Acts 2:13). Well, they were, in a more profound sense than those listening and accusing them could ever have dreamed. They were inebriated with the blood of Christ whose effects the Holy Spirit was at that moment bringing to climactic action. And whenever, dear sisters, we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to exceed ourselves, to surpass our natural capabilities, we are experiencing and eexpressing the inebriation which is the effect of the blood of Christ outpoured.

It is the spilled blood of Christ which through the ages has inebriated souls unto martyrdom. One has to be enlivened beyond one's own possibilities to be a martyr. One has in the mystical and profoundly spiritual sense, to be quite drunk—drunk with God. And so the martyrs were the outstanding inebriates, enlivened and exhilarated beyond nature's possibilities. Nature clings fiercely to its own life. The spiritual inebriate runs singing to martyrdom. All the saints of God were inebriated by the blood of Christ. And if we are to excel our own meager possibilities, we must also be made drunk with that most precious Blood. It is the

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blood of Christ alone which can enliven us to respond with a service beyond ourselves, which can achieve the overextension of ourselves without harm and, in fact, with glory. We ought to love this outcry of the prayer: "Sanguis Christi, inebria me!" For we need so much to be lifted above ourselves and beyond ourselves into God so that thus situated we are most truly ourselves, just as we considered in our earlier reflection on this prayer that we are most fully ourselves when we have that mind in us which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Again, we are best using, even best understanding, our own bodies when we see ourselves saved by the body of Christ. And we are enabled to do the impossible when we are inebriated with the blood of Christ.

Even in considering the unfortunate usual meaning of inebriation, we see a certain parallel there in that first exhilaration and false enlivenment of which we spoke before. But then the stupor, the inevitable comment on artificiality, begins to take hold, much the same way as when we stimulate a storm of emotion or a hurricane of passion and are made somehow to experience a strength beyond ourselves for a brief moment. And because it is wrong or artificial or perverse, it quickly degenerates into the opposite effect. It is easy to see, though, in those first stages, a fleeting strength beyond the ordinary. Scientists and doctors have observed this often enough, that a drunken person can weave his way along, avoiding danger, with a sureness beyond himself. Again, a drunken person in the first stages can often evince a strength he does not appear to have when sober. In the true inebriation of the spirit, the antithesis of all that is perverse or evil or self-indulgent, there is a strength beyond what we could ever have of ourselves, but which never lapses into languor. It is always turned out, dear sisters, never in. That is why I have said that spiritual inebriation is not borne witness to by what I feel, but by what I do.

If the martyrs, many of them, went singing and jesting to martyrdom, it was because they were inebriated with Christ, strong beyond themselves. For the body does not wish to die. We reflected earlier on how the body comments in the tomb on its temporary separation from the soul in a chilling way which is permitted and even penitentially imposed by God. But for the body to desire death in the loftiness of martyrdom, not as an escape, not as the manic depressive might desire death, but in the flaming love of Christ which knows that if to live is Christ, "to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21)., there are needed the in-

ebriating effects of the blood of Christ.

And so when the martyrs went smiling to martyrdom, it was because they were drunk with the blood of Christ. And when we go singing, not necessarily emotionally, but with that great *desiderium* of the will which functions with or without the supportive factor of emotion, into the daily little dyings, it is again the effect of the blood of Christ. In all the hidden, humdrum martyrdoms that are part of real Christian daily living and still more of the intense form of Christian living which is our cloistered life, one must be inebriated to agree to them singing. In all the little sacrifices of each day when God invites us: "Come, and die!" we can respond with that deep joy of an inebriated heart able to overextend its natural limitations and follow a difficult path with unstumbling feet. "Yes, I will die!" We die to our own preferences, we die to the tart response that nature quickly frames, we die to the caustic reply that pride proposes, we die to the sensual urge. One goes singing into all these invitations to the little deaths of every day when one is inebriated with the blood of Christ.

In the lives of our seraphic founders, Francis and Clare, we certainly observe this inebriation. Our Father Saint Francis was so drunk with the love of God, so inebriated with the blood of Christ, that he spent his whole life excelling himself and exceeding his own possibilities. Our Mother Saint Clare was another true inebriate of the blood of Christ, exceeding her own human possibilities all through her life, in the stand she unflinchingly took, in the faith that never wavered, in the long and arduous illness, in the disappointments and frustrations and faith-testings that were her ordinary fare. She excelled herself and raised up in the Church of God a great Order to which we so humbly and gratefully belong because she was inebriated with the blood of Christ.

Dear sisters, this inebriation is there for us also. Why can we not make it our prayer, our faith? When what is asked of us in daily life seems to our niggardliness and fear to be just too much—too much to give, too much

patience to sustain, too much meekness to achieve, why don't we go and get drunk? Why do we not turn to what is so accessible to us in the merits of the precious blood of Christ and become inebriated with it so that we have a strength which can discover: "No, that is not too much! I can do it. I can lift this weight. I can sustain this activity. I can suffer this oppression. I am drunk! I have a strength beyond the ordinary." Could this not be a precious aspiration of our daily life on all the occasions that seem "Too much"? Could we not turn to Christ, look at him upon that Cross, look at the ring upon our finger which bears his crucified image, and say: "Yes, it's too much for me as I am. I have to get drunk! I need a strength beyond my own. Blood of Christ, inebriate me!"

The merits of Christ have been given to us, delivered over to us by the Father through the passion and death of his divine Son. So, may you be true spiritual inebriates, dear sisters. The more that some things seem "too much," the more inebriation we need. And so the more we must turn to the precious blood of Christ streaming out through all his sacraments, given to us every morning in holy Communion, cleansing us in every sacramental absolution, and also mysteriously washing over us in every actual grace as well as every increase of sanctifying grace. Let us not leave untapped the resources we have to be spiritual inebriates to whom no sacrifice at all is too much. Sanguis Christi, inebria nos!

Religious Question

Seen on a wall at St. John's University:

"And Jesus said unto them: 'Who do you say that I am?' And they replied: 'You are the eschatological manifestation of the ground of our being, the kerygma in which we find the ultimate meaning of our interpersonal relationship.' And Jesus said: 'What?' "

Reflections on Father's Day

When the ultimate lightning cut the day's white promise,
Calling your sudden sons like thunder, Zebedee,
And the cloud-burst swelled the rising apprehensions of your pain,
What law stayed the undulating waters at the heart's shore?
What power save love sank new abysses for your pain?

Of Zebedee there is no word beyond the nets, the leaving.
No later clarion call of swift, intoxicating joy
Running dry shod on the waters:
No future clouded churning of off-scoured pride or quested preferment.
But in Mark's spare word that pales our bright effusions,
The Spirit breathes precise encomium for him and kindred Zebedees:
For implicit trust is highest praise,
And love is best revealed in silences.

Sister Catherine Jenkins, O.S.C.

Contemplation in the Franciscan Tradition

MAURICE SHEEHAN, O.F.M.CAP.

SAINT FRANCIS is one of the great contemplatives of the western Church, a man who spent much of his life in the unitive way in perfect possession of Christ. He liked to have contemplatives around him and often made them his counsellors. When Clare and Sylvester told him that God did not want him to devote himself exclusively to prayer but wanted him to preach,[1] the character of the way of life Francis was founding was set: it would be a mixture of retreat and activity, of prayer and preaching, a following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

But the attraction of the hermitages remained compelling, and it has been estimated that Francis averaged four months a year in hermitages. Many of his preaching tours were trips from one hermitage to another. He had some twenty hermitages, and it is no accident that some of them, like the Carceri, Fonte Colombo, and La Verna, as Englebert remarks, are the high places of the Franciscan story. Many of his places of retreat and hermitages of the friars remain today to dot the map of and to give charm to what we call Franciscan Italy.

Both the writings of Francis and his life confirm that he made full, explicit allowances for a contemplative and solitary element in the new way of life he founded. His little Rule for Hermitages succinctly describes the kind of life he envisaged for the friars who wanted to live in a hermitage. There is a passing reference to hermitages in chapter 7 of the Rule of 1221. If there are any references in the Rule of 1223 they are veiled, in chapters 5 and 10. Celano tells how happy he was when a Spanish priest told him how the Spanish friars lived in their hermitages, and the Legend of Perugia says that he called those friars who hid themselves in remote and desert places to pray and to meditate his "Knights of the Round Table."[2]

But once Francis was dead, if we are to credit the accounts that have come down to us, the friars found his ceaseless travel for the sake of the Gospel more appealing than seclusion in some mountain fastness. Francis himself may have been unwittingly responsible for this, since he demonstrated by his life that he did not really need the hermitages. He was a living, walking hermitage. Solitude for him was something entirely spiritual. He could lose himself in prayer in the hold of a ship, on the back of an ass, or in the middle of a crowd. Celano was right to call him a living prayer, and Bonaventure was telling the friars nothing new when he said that Francis prayed constantly, whether walking or sitting, working or resting.[3]

Both prayer and evangelization were constitutive elements of the Franciscan movement. Men of an earlier time, like Peter Damian and Romuald, who wanted to turn the world into a cloister, equated Christian perfection with the monastic life. The more monasteries the better, was their ideal. Francis stuck out on a different—and more Christian—road. He wanted to take the Gospel to the world so that it might become more Christian. He wanted to convert the world so that it might be changed; the monasticizers wanted to change it so that it might be converted. The difference is basic. The one assumed that men could not be fully Christian in the world; Francis challenged men to give to the world what they had first gotten from giving themselves to God.

Thus a very real part of Francis's legacy to his friars was his own divided heart which preferred prayer to everything else even though he knew that he was called to help others. This was part of the friars' dilemma, as was the unavoidable reality of living in the world. There was no way the friars could get around this. To be able to pray and to preach, the Order—so much a part of the world and so economically dependent on its good will—had to adapt itself to conditions imposed on it by the world. This meant, above all, obtaining the good will, or at least the tolerance, of clerics and popular affection.

When at the end of the thirteenth century the Spirituals

[1] St. Bonaventure, *Legenda Major*, in *St. Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1972), XII, 1-2 (pp. 720-22); *Little Flowers of St. Francis*, ibid., ch. 16 (pp. 1334-35).

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[2] 2 Celano 178; Legend of Perugia, 71 (*Omnibus*, pp. 504-05, 1047).

[3] *Omnibus*, pp. 440-43, 705-06.

raised the cry that the Order had undergone a sea change, they meant primarily that it had abandoned poverty and solitude. The Community's attempt to answer their charge by tricking out legal arguments left them cold. Neither charge was without foundation. Forty years earlier Thomas of Eccleston, writing nostalgic history to shame his contemporary English friars, said much the same thing in softer tones.[4] In the first balmy days of the province one could not visit the chapel without finding one or two friars in prayer at any hour of the day or night. Many of his heroes were prominent men of the province, who, after years of office-holding or reading theology, either volunteered for the mission to the East or gave themselves to a life of contemplation: men like Stephen of Belase, William Coche, and Warin of Orwell. Good patriot that he was, Eccleston makes part of his account John of Parma's eulogy of the English province as the best in the Order. But most significant is the absence of any mention of hermitages. The English province was contemplative but not eremitical.

Eccleston wrote before the friars had general constitutions. When Saint Bonaventure codified the medley of the friars' laws in 1260, he fell back on the chief model to hand, the monastic. Henceforth friars were to live in houses laid out on monastic lines and each house was to be, as far as possible, self-sustaining. Bringing the friars off the roads and attaching them to a fixed abode allowed the Order to emphasize vocal, fraternal prayer. Liturgical prayer, both the Mass and the sung Office (much longer than today's), took center stage and absorbed much of the friars' attention and time.[5]

Bonaventure has been praised and damned for what he did. Without entering into the question of how great the monastic influence was and whether he deformed the Order, we should note that the monastic influence would not make the Order more contemplative because monastic life, especially its Benedictine form, was more liturgical than contemplative, as any medieval monastic *horarium* will readily show.[6]

[4]*De Adventu Fratrum Minorum in Angliam*, ed. A.G. Little (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1951), ch. 15, pp. 88-104.

[5]On the Liturgh, see Stephen Van Dijk, "The Liturgical Legislation of the Franciscan Rules," *Franciscan Studies* 12 (1952), 176-95; 241-62.

[6]David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 448-52; 639-30; and L. J. Lekai, *The Cistercians, Ideals and Reality* (Kent State University Press, 1977), 248-49; 255-56.

But the contemplative tradition, in spite of the receding of the hermitages from view, has been stronger than we think. The writing of the Order's history has given pride of place to the pastoral work of the friars and the internal struggles, usually but not always over poverty, that evantually divided it. It becomes too easy to forget that the Order has a distinguished traditon of writing on prayer that begins with Bonaventure himself and reached a peak in sixteenth-century Spain and seventeenth-century France and that prayer, as much as poverty, has been the catalyst of every enduring reform of the Order.

The successful reforms share common characteristics so that one can construct a paradigm which, *mutatis mutandis*, can be legitimately applied to all. All avoided the mistakes, especially the rigidity and pride, of the Spirituals. They went about reform in the same way. They simplified their lives so that they could retire to prayer and solitude; both fructified their subsequent pastoral activity. Prayer was their goal, poverty the means, and a heightened pastoral effectiveness the result.

Example is the best way to show what this meant practically. Both the Observants and the Capuchins took their origins in solitude and made prayer the cornerstone of their reforms.[7] For the Observants prayer was "the key of all our observance"; for the Capuchins it was "the mother and nurse of every true virtue." Circumstances affected how each put its program into practice.

Observant legislation in their Barcelona Constitutions of 1451[8] is based on previous legislation of the Order (the Constitutions of (Narbonne and Perpignan) and the writings of friars on prayer (Bonaventure and Bernard of Besse). The Constitutions gave the friars the opportunity to simplify the Office; chanting it was left to the discretion of the superiors. They also urged the friars to set apart time for devotion and private prayer, i.e., meditation, and, as a corollary to this, require the "great silence" to be observed in specified places within the friary from after compline until prime. Hermitages are not mentioned since the intent of the legislation was to create an atmosphere favorable to each friary.

The attitude of the Observants toward prayer and solitude was one of the ways in which they

[7]See Ignatius Brady, "The History of Mental Prayer in the Order of Friars Minor," *Franciscan Studies 11 (1951), 317-45.*

[8]Edited by Michael Bihl in *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum 38 (1945), 3-39; 106-97.*

differed from the Conventuals and contributed to their popularity and success. Since they wanted both to reform the Order and to preserve its unity if possible, they repudiated separatism and made it their aim to get control of Conventual houses, many of which were in the heart of the cities and towns. They preferred not to build their own friaries if they could avoid it.

With the Capuchins the central role of prayer in the life of the Order comes into sharper focus. Their emphasis on contemplation is the distinguishing characteristic of their reform, and much of their legislation was framed to protect the contemplative character of the Order. Their aims are summarized in their constitutions of 1529 and 1536.[9] Those of 1529, short-lived, called them Friars Minor of the Eremitical Life, a title that can be used to prove their promotion of contemplation but is also open to misinterpretation. The constitutions of 1536 dropped the name and introduced the name that stuck: Capuchin.

The legislation in favor of prayer restricted vocal prayer, and that which was protective of prayer restricted the friars' pastoral activity. Their legislation was also the first to use the phrase "mental prayer," and, what may be surprising, to prefer mental prayer to vocal prayer.

> 41. Since holy prayer is the spiritual mistress of the Friars, in order that the spirit of devotion may not decrease in the Friars, but continually burning on the sacred altar of our heart, may be enkindled more and more, as our Seraphic Father wished, we ordain that, although the true spiritual Friar Minor should always pray, two special hours shall be appointed for the tepid Friars. . . .
>
> 42. Let the Friars remember that prayer is nothing else than speaking to God with the heart. Consequently, he does not pray who speaks to God with the lips. Each one, therefore, should endeavour to pray mentally, and according to the teaching of Christ, taking diligent care to enlighten the mind and enkindle the affections far more than to frame words. Before the morning meditation . . . they shall recite the Litanies. . . . And no other offices shall be said in choir except that of the Blessed Virgin, so that the Friars may have more time to devote to private and mental prayer which is far more fruitful than vocal prayer.

Silence was to be observed in the friaries, and so that the friars would not be distracted by outside noise the friaries were to be located at some distance from the cities and towns, but not so far removed as to hinder their work as popular evangelists or to put them out of touch with the sources of charity on which they lived. They were to be small, to accommodate seven or eight friars, and each friary was to have one or two hermitages attached to it for those friars who were called to the solitary life. Superiors were never to deny a friar solitude if he was judged suited for it.

In addition, the friars' pastoral activity was severely restricted. Preaching was to be the only outlet for their pastoral zeal. They had no schools, and their priests were not to hear confessions. Prayer was usually the theme of their popular missions, and it was largely to promote the practice of prayer that they wrote their treatises on prayer.

Writings about the first days of the reform resonate the chronicle of Eccleston. Francis of Iesi went so far as to describe the Rule in terms of prayer, saying that it was accommodated to achieving contemplation. Chroniclers like Mario a Mercato Saraceno and Bernardino of Colpetrazzo described the life of the friars in terms of prayer: the friars often stayed in choir after the midnight office or went to one of the hermitages; by day and by night friars were to be found in the chapel praying.[10]

Contemplative deviationism, so graphically described by Celano,[11] never took hold among them because apostolic activity was amply safeguarded. Theirs was not a futitive and cloistered virtue," but one geared to preaching and the care of the poor and the sick.

Two things contributed heavily to their success. By locating their friaries on the outskirts of the cities they guaranteed to themselves the quiet necessary for

[9]Found in *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 7 and 8 (reissued in 1949), 110-42; 116-26.

[10]Handy references to these and other works will be found in Vitus a Bussum, *De spiritualitate franciscana* (Rome, 1949), 221-36; 263-77; and in Melchior a Pobladura, *Historia Generalis Ordinis Fratrum Minorum, pars prima 1525-1619* (Rome, 1947).

[11]*Omnibus*, p. 505.

prayer. By making a complete break from the start they avoided many of the entangling relationships and distracting struggles that the Observants had to work through in order to make their reform effective.

At the same time that the Observants and Capuchins were flourishing, there were other movements of reform that emphasized prayer and solitude, movements that gave rise, either immediately or eventually, to the Discalced Friars, the Reformed Friars, and the Recollect Friars, each of whom had their hermitages, houses of recollection, or *retiri*. By 1650 there were distinguishable within the Franciscan family five separate reform movements, all of which had taken their origin in solitude and made prayer the cornerstone of their live.

Rather than describe the decline of the Order in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries —the one spiritual, the other numerical—it may be better to jump to the twentieth century to see what this contemplative tradition means in terms of the second Vatican Council's call to religious to renew their life.

It is because of the Council that members of the Order have had their interest in contemplation awakened or renewed. Going back to the sources has made us aware that contemplation is an integral part of Franciscan life.

In the first place, it should be evident that the Order is radically contemplative. Contrast may put this into sharper focus. To see what it means for an order to be radically apostolic one has only to look at the Dominicans. Their first constitutions released their friars from fasting and from choir if either interfered with study.[12] The Friar Minor, on the other hand, starts with prayer and then combines it with study, if he is ordained, to enhance his apostolate. In the Franciscan scheme of things prayer is the indispensable agent of effective pastoral activity.

The revised Constitutions of the three branches seem to have tried to combine the recent practice of the Order on prayer with the primitive tradition. Each requires a set time—or times—each day, with the understanding and the hope that the friars will spontaneously go beyond this minimal requirement to foster an intense, personal prayer life.

Certain conditions, either peculiar or common to the American scene, will shape and affect any attempt to reinvigorate the contemplative side of Franciscan life. Most provinces in the United States were founded, or soon made it part of their ministry, to care for the immigrant

[12]See *Acta capitulorum generalium ordinis Praedicatorum*, ed. B.M. Reichert (Rome, 1898), I, 11, 13, 105.

through parishes. Thus parish ministry, with all that it implies by way of year-round activity and residence, became and remains a substantial part of many provinces' activity.

Another factor is what we may call, for want of a more precise term, the American character. A remark like Werner Stark's, that there is no such thing as a contemplative American is obviously an exaggeration. But there is no denying that ours is the fastest-paced society in history and that American friars, like Americans in general, are caught up in a round of activities and take pride in their pragmatism, their ability to make things work.

Then there is the camera. No society has yet come to grips with or brought the invention under control. Some believe that TV is the greatest obstacle to contemplation in today's world.

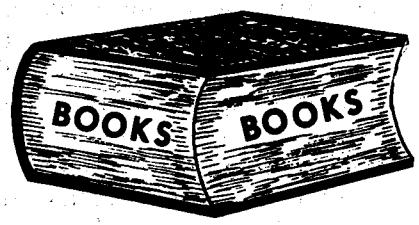
Among conditions that may make it difficult to achieve a contemplative spirit the following may be noted.

Our increasingly noisy world. We speak today of noise pollution. The location of the friaries is critical. The days are gone when the principle can be not to place them too close to or too far from the cities, but it seems essential that some friars be away from the city's noise so that they may have an atmosphere conducive to thought and to prayer.

Our increasingly pagan world. Efforts to halt the drift toward paganism can be made a reason for avoiding contempation. Such arguing misses the point. The pastoral needs of the Church have always been demanding and insistent. Sometimes superiors have not been helpful or have forgotten that Saint Francis considered the friars' life of prayer and penance part of their apostolate for the Church.

Our increasingly pastoral programs of formation. From the start we ask the new member to do three things: to study, to pray, and to minister. It is not a question of whether the goals are good but whether all threee can be done at once. As one friar put it, the way to build inner conviction is not through activity. Perhaps the question is, how are we helping the new member achieve the serenity necessary for prayer? Can the programs, as they are now structured, truly foster the contemplative spirit?

Any discussion of the contemplative tradition of the Order has to end where it began, with the person of Saint Francis. Times and circumstances change. In the changed times and circumstances men have called themselves sons of Francis and given his message to the men and women of their times. We are truly and fully his sons when we imitate his life and example. Francis is a contemplative.



Studies Honoring Ignatius Charles Brady, Friar Minor. Edited by Romano Stephen Almagno, O.F.M., and Conrad L. Harkins, O.F.M. St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1976. Pp. 496. Cloth, $25.00 plus postage and handling.

Reviewed by Father Earl A. Weis, S.J., Ph.L., S.T.D., Staff Editor for Dogmatic Theology of the New Catholic Encyclopedia *and Chairman of the Department of Theology at Loyola University of Chicago.*

The idea to honor Ignatius Charles Brady, O.F.M., in a *Festschrift* was well conceived in the summer of 1974, and the plan to carry it out was elaborated with a seriousness worthy of the project. That was the summer in which Father Brady received from St. Bonaventure University the degree Doctor of Letters *honoris causa*. An appropriate follow-up to the recognition of the value of a scholar's contribution is some plan to continue his work, and to stimulate further continuance. This volume of studies does both of these things.

Father Brady was born in Detroit, Michigan, May 9, 1911. He entered the Order of Friars Minor on August 15, 1929. His graduate work was done at the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, Canada. After a teaching career in a number of institutions of higher learning in the United States, Father Brady was assigned by the then Minister General to the Collegio San Bonaventura, Quaracchi, Italy, and appointed Prefect of the Theology Section.

Beginning in 1937 with a book review in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, Father Brady began a writing career that had by 1974 already included 162 items on Franciscan topics strictly so called and on topics of special interest to a Franciscan. He did scholarly work (e.g., "The Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in the Fourteenth Century," *Studia Mariana*, 1954), but did not proudly scorn writing for more popular periodicals, too (e.g., "Our Monthly Conference," THE CORD, 1953), or doing the English translations of works that he admired (e.g., *St. Anthony, Doctor of the Gospel*, by Sophronius Clasen). Editing scholarly editions was a great part of his contribution (e.g., Matthew of Aquasparta's *Quaestiones disputatae de ieiunio*), as was reviewing scholarly works written by others, to which last occupation he brought all the resources of his considerable learning (e.g., his review of *The Discursive Power*, by George P. Klubertanz, S.J., in *Franciscan Studies*, 1953).

One of the ways that Father Brady put his learning at the services of a public larger than that of an enclosed scholarly world was by writing for widely useed reference works, those volumes on the library shelf that so beautifully bridge the gap between a specialized world of higher learning and the scholar from other fields or the intelligent inquirer seeking authoritative answers to his request for information and understanding. Thus we find 33 articles of his in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Encyclopedia Britannica, Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, Dictionnaire de spiritualité d'ascetique, et de mystique*, as well as *New Catholic Encyclopedia*—22 articles for this last, on Franciscan topics, naturally, including the one on St. Bonaventure.

What we have indicated about his generosity in sharing his learning through his writings for reference works relates not merely to the readership of these works but also to their editors, who were glad to have such cooperation, without which such great projects perish. There are prominent scholars whose bibliographies exhibit no such magnanimous spirit of cooperation as almost calls out from the list of Father Brady's works, and not merely from those items relating to reference works, but also from his contributions to periodicals, projects, and *Festschriften*, as well as his translations, already mentioned.

This volume of studies, with a Foreword by the eminent Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, Cardinal John Wright, with its main topics numbering 15 and its authors more than twenty, reflects the broad range of Father Brady's interests, as well as the focuses of his concentration. The first essay is on Scotus and the history of the editing of the critical edition of Scotus's works, an extremely interesting account (in Italian) of the editing project within its historical context of politics and personalities. The author, Carolo Balic, is well known to all the scholars in the field of Mariology. The last essay is on the priest and scholarly witness, by Father Donald W. Wuerl, whose Catholic writings so frequently grace the pages of *L'Osservatore Romano*.

In between is a broad spectrum of scholars—ranging over a wide variety of specializations as well as geographical locations and languages: Peter John Olivi to Mary of the Passion; Rome, Italy to Sewanee, Tennessee; English through Italian, French, German, and Spanish. The frontpiece is a good character study of Father Brady, photographed by the Dominican B. Berthelot, and the epilogue is a brief encomium of scholarship by the Jesuit Pierre Teilhard de Chardin—fraternal salutes coming and going from religious scholars. This work, Theology Series No. 6, is a fine addition to the Franciscan Institute Publications.

The Gospel according to John: A Theological Commentary. By Pheme Perkins. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978. Pp. xvi-251, incl. bibliography. Cloth, $7.95.

Reviewed by Father Cassian F. Corcoran, O.F.M., L.S.S., S.T.D., Assistant Director of Formation at Holy Name College, Washington, DC, and

Professor of Sacred Scripture at the Washington Theological Union.

This is a fascinating commentary on the Fourth Gospel. Its style is clear and engaging. Its "aim is to help Christians of today appreciate the exciting and creative dimensions of the Evangelist as theologian by showing how he worked with his tradition" (p. xi). Each chapter scrutinizes Johannine concepts as they may have been understood by a Hellenistic, a Jewish, and a Christian mind. To come to an understanding and a theological appreciation of John's use of the concept *Word (Logos)*, to cite an example, readers are brought into contact with such documents as the *Corpus Hermeticum*, the Old Testament, and current scholarship. The authoress illustrates how John grappled with theological as well as philosophical sources in his effort to articulate the revelation of God through the person of Jesus. Anyone interested in Scripture and unfamiliar with the literary activity of the early Church should find the lucid insights of this book intriguing. The impressive references to non-biblical ancient writings (p. vii) as well as the many references to early Christian writings (p. viii) add to the quality of scholarship. The study of the twelfth chapter of John swarms with comments on parallel references in the Synoptic tradition. In this way, one sees how John, although he is aware of other traditions in the early Church, takes his own position and proves himself to be a theologian in his own right and presents his personal theological understanding of the person and revelation of Jesus.

I would recommend this book very highly to anyone who is looking for an enrichment of his insight into the Fourth Gospel in the light of contemporary scholarship. There are sections, such as the treatment on the Bread of Life discourse, where the theme of wisdom could have been incorporated into the discussion. A consideration of bread as a symbol, moreover, would have enhanced this chapter. The author, however, has a control and excellent insight into current Johannine scholarship. She presents the fruit of her studies in a well balanced, appealing, and clear manner for any interested serious reader. The annotated bibliography at the conclusion to this commentary suggests several books for anyone who may be interested in studying the Fourth Gospel at a more scientific level.

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Carrol, Eamon R., O. Carm., *Understanding the Mother of Jesus*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1979. Pp. 159, including bibliography. Paper, $2.95.

Conner, Paul M., O.P., *Celibate Love*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 208, including bibliography & index. Cloth, $9.95.

Fox, Robert J., *A World at Prayer*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 224. Paper, $3.95.

Hammes, John A., *The Way of the Cross in Scripture and Meditation*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 136. Paper, $1.95.

Hertz, Geraldine, *Following Mary Today*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 144. Paper, $2.95.

Manton, Joseph E., C.Ss.R., *Stumbling toward Heaven*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979, Pp. 192. Paper, $3.95.

Nixon, Joan Lowery, *The Butterfly Tree*. Childrn's book, illus. in color by James McIlrath. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 32. Cloth, n.p.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our June issue have been drawn by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, F.F.S.C., of St. Anthony's Novitiate, Riverton, Illinois.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our July-August issue have been drawn by Father Joseph Dorniak, O.F.M.Conv. As we went to press, Father Joseph was awaiting assignment after his ordination May 5 and reception of the Master of Divinity Degree from St. Anthony-on-Hudson, Rensselaer, New York.

The CORD

July-August, 1979 Vol. 29. No. 7

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THE CORD (ISSN 0010-8685) (USPS 563-640) 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. 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.

Toward 1982

DEAREST Brothers and Sisters in Saint Francis,

As the eight-hundredth anniversary of Saint Francis's birth approaches, we, the four Ministers General, gave serious consideration to the matter at a meeting held on March 19, 1979. and deliberated about what we deem required to celebrate the event properly. This letter is to tell you of the decisions we reached.

—The commemoration of our Seraphic Father's birth will begin October 3, 1981, and end October 4, 1982; this will be the duration of the official celebration of the eighth centennial of Saint Francis's birth.

—Somewhat later on, probably during 1980, we shall issue an encyclical letter to the entire Franciscan order on the spiritual meaning of this historic event.

—We have set up an inter-Franciscan Commission of friars, sisters, and laymen to prepare an international Convention, both scientific and cultural in nature, to study "the vision and influence of Saint Francis down through the ages." Further details will be given you at a later date regarding this Convention.

—Here at the outset we want to urge the cooperation of Franciscans everywhere in the world in preparing for the celebration. We would, moreover, like all members of the Franciscan Families: friars, sisters, and seculars, to join their efforts both within each country and, to the extent possible, internationally.

Let us, then, not squander our physical or spiritual energies, but rather, as each of us devotes those energies assiduously to this project, let us bear strong witness to the unity of purpose that we all share.

We pray that the Lord will bless our serious efforts to discern more deeply the spirit of Saint Francis for our times. for he is indeed the thoroughly evangelical man.

Remaining always in the brotherhood of the Seraphic Father,

Fr. Constantine Koser
Minister General, O.F.M.

Fr. Vitalis Bommarco
Minister General, O.F.M.Conv.

Fr. Paschal Rywalski
Minister General, O.F.M.Cap.

Fr. Roland Faley
Minister General, T.O.R.

Rome, 23 March, 1979

Our Meditation

DACIAN BLUMA, O.F.M.

THIS PRESENTATION is intended to be brief and simple. Its purpose is to describe prayer as a growing experience in a relationship, a friendship with God. Within this broad understanding of prayer (meditation, mental prayer, etc.), and following the points taken up in Chapter 2 of our General Constitutions, the following areas are developed: (A) Prayer and Life, (B) Rhythm of Prayer, (C) Spirit of Prayer, (D) Franciscan Hermitage, and (E) Support for Prayer.

A. Prayer and Life.

The most basic purpose of prayer is to recognize God as my Lord and Redeemer and to give him worship by adoration, thanksgiving, contrition, and petition. To love him with all my mind, heart, and strength is the first commandment. To put him first in my life is to pray with a pure heart and mind.

This is a growing experience: to come to know him more intimately and understand his meaning (revelation) for me. Prayer calls me to discover who I am and what I can become by relating his words and presence to my life and spirit.

This implies exclusive periods of time for me to stand apart from the occupations and pressures of my immediate environment in order to arrive at an honest image of myself and my God.

As a growing process through the years, such meditation deals with my life and experiences: where I am and what my circumstances, needs, and challenges are, the sum of my experiences. All this I bring under the influence of my relationship with God to be examined in the light of his word and put under his redeeming grace.

More than self-reflection, prayer makes me aware of the quality of my relationship with God. When I always have before me the assurance of his love, I am encouraged to respond to him by listening to his Word made flesh and discovering his way of seeing and acting, so that I come to understand his call in my life (discursive). It is a call to friendship, appealing to my will and desire, my feelings and emotions,

Father Dacian Bluma, O.F.M., S.T.D. (Pontifical University of St. Anthony, 1957), has served as lector. retreat director, provincial minister of the Assumption Province. In the past six years he resides in the Franciscan Ritiro in Cedar Lake, Indiana.

and inviting me to a growing confidence in faith (affective). It is a dedication of my whole being, by which I literally give away my life, wasting time in the holy leisure of enjoying his presence, his goodness, and his love (contemplative).

To enter into this world of faith, I look for spiritual reading to acquire a taste for prayer, a growing conviction of the reality of his love for me, and his constant presence in me. Under the guidance of spiritual masters and saints, I recognize the validity of my approach and find light for my own experience.

B. Rhythm of Prayer.

A friendship, to be living and dynamic, calls for frequent communication. Such contacts include a substantial amount of time during which, instead of imposing my own ideas on God, I assume the role of a listener (disciple) at the feet of the Master. It must be long enough so that I recognize his love in my life, experience his presence and acquire a taste for prayer, rather than merely fulfill my time as a duty to be done. And it will be frequent enough so that my awareness in this relationship and the fruits of my experience can be continued in a growing way.

Our General Constitutions present a basic rhythm of prayer: a period of personal prayer each day, a day of recollection each month, and several days of retreat each year (19:2). The regularity of my prayer is basic to the honesty I have about my growth. Without it, I lose the vitality of my relationship with God, easily forgetting who I am before him (James 1:24) and assuming illusions of myself from what I think others expect or think of me.

This rhythm calls for a discipline of regularity in my contact with God, a constancy or faithfulness in attending to his will, and a gentleness of disposition. Such a rhythm influences the body as well as the spirit and helps me to cope with the violence, haste, and anxieties that arise from my own selfishness.

I stand naked and alone before God. I need courage to accept myself as God sees me. The support of my brothers is vital, then, to my perseverance in prayer. Francis asked a friend to stand by the cave where he prayed in his early years and had brothers for support throughout his life. The intensity of his exhortation to give God the highest place in our consciousness is clear in chapters 22-23 of the Rule of 1221. And when we are unable to maintain this priority and rhythm of prayer, Francis insists that we appeal to our minister (Rule of 1223, ch. 10).

C. The Spirit of Prayer.

The awareness of myself as God's disciple carries over beyond the time of prayer into my daily life and activities. It is here that I am challenged to adjust my attitudes and responses according to the Master's words and spirit (Rule of 1223, ch. 5). To be recollected means to maintain a wholeness, a consistency, and a faithfulness to this relationship. There is this dialogue: my prayer influences my life's attitudes and actions, my attitudes and actions provide my prayer with material for discernment — i.e., where I clarify what is of the Spirit of the Lord and what is of my own selfishness (Rule of 1221, ch. 17).

The spirit of prayer consists primarily in an attitude of a listener. It is the fruit of contemplative prayer where, in the leisure of longer periods of prayer, I have learned to wonder, to be in awe of God and his love. It is a receptive stance, rather than an aggressive action. I become cautious about imposing my views, judgments, and responses on others. I come to realize how selfish such instinctive reactions are, and in the asceticism of waiting on the Lord, I learn to reverence his Spirit above my own impulses (Rule of 1223, ch. 10). The spirit of prayer helps me to see things differently, with a pure heart, i.e., according to his purpose (Admonition 16).

It is especially within my own brotherhood and in daily life that I will be conscious of the presence of the Spirit; and, in contrast, it is here that I will recognize my own selfishness that easily shows itself in the environment of familiarity, where my carelessness is revealed. I can expect that my weaknesses will betray me most often here, and that is why Francis calls us to quick reconciliation, not only for the sake of charity, but also to witness to one another to the primacy of the Spirit in our fraternity (Rule of 1223, ch. 10; Rule of 1221, ch. 11).

D. Franciscan Hermitage (Ritiro, House of Prayer).

It was Francis's practice to set aside longer periods of time for prayer in solitude (1 Celano 71, 91, 103). This was a deliberate plan (rhythm) he formed after having solved his question about living an exclusively contemplative life (1 Celano 34-35, St. Bonaventure, *Leg. Maj.*, 12:1-2). The qualifications of this practice were these: he insisted on getting away periodically beyond the reach of contact with people, he chose companions (friars) to be with him, he spent a considerable amount of time at such solitary places, as he followed there a pattern of solitary prayer and fellowship with his brothers (Religious Life in Hermitages).

The hermitage offers the opportunity to break away from the tight schedule of activities, to experience time in a new way, to

discover leisure for freedom of spirit, to bring myself out of fragmentation into a wholeness of being, to heal wounds of the past, and to reflect on life in the presence of a God who calls in love. At the same time it is a purifying experience, because in solitude I stand alone before God, where in awe and wonder, as in a holy place, I recognize him as a "consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29).

Our General Constitutions provide for such hermitages, based on Francis's simple rule and adapted to the needs of our time (28-30).

E. Support for Prayer.

Credibility in the importance of prayer depends in great part on our Ministers. The theory must be made to apply in practice: that prayer holds top priority in our lives. Ministers hold the best position for expressing this, and they can do so most tellingly by their own practice, their attitudes and decisions, and the willingness they show in responding to their friars' needs in this area (CG, 20).

Two other means of support for prayer that deserve our special attention today are the House Chapter and the Confessor.

The House Chapter holds a major influence on the climate for prayer. It is at the level of our daily lives that prayer is practiced and tested. Thus the local fraternity can gather in Chapter to speak about prayer to one another, arrange times of silence in respect for prayer (CG, 44:2), share experiences in spiritual growth, and discern together how as a fraternity it reflects gospel values (CG, 22). It becomes easier, then, to speak of penance as a means of simplifying personal needs and subjecting various forms of selfishness to the life and work of the Spirit within the fraternity (CG, 25:2).

The position of Confessor, or spiritual director, has always been a vital means of growth in prayer (CG, 26). Today this takes on more significance as a means for discernment because we have opened up our structure in the community and have given the individual friar more freedom to make personal choices. The risk of being misled by one's own prejudices and narrow judgments is that much greater.

The Confessor's role is to guide the individual in prayer, suggest means, point out difficulties, offer encouragement, help in discernment. He is available to review the condition of the friar's soul and his relationship with God. He may be the only person the individual friar can find to speak with openly and frankly about his most basic needs for growth.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation has lost its meaning and value for many today. A valuable means of developing their conscience is lost to them at a time when it is most critical. And not having the courage to speak to a spiritual director, they are left in the apathy and helplessness of their state. The new rite offers an opportunity to reintroduce this vital means with new possibilities for the growth of friars in prayer.

THE AIM OF the foregoing paragraphs has been to show that prayer is a relationship with God, that it is dynamic (i.e., we are called to grow and mature in this relationship), and that it is a growing experience which leads to a contemplative attitude, whereby we become listeners, more sensitive to the Spirit and more alert to his presence and work in us.

In what follows, we seek not so much to describe prayer as to speak to the needs of our friars regarding prayer. The question before us is this: What can we do to encourage and support the practice of mental prayer—i.e., of reflective or contemplative prayer?

We know that relying on legislation is not enough. When we write laws or documentation, we sometimes feel excused from something that is far more important: an on-going vigilance, a personal concern for the spirit of prayer. The grace of prayer is a gift of God that must be treasured. The need today is to create a climate of interest in prayer, an enthusiasm that flows from a personal involvement and dedication.

The strongest, most compelling inspiration and incentive for prayer comes not from documentation, but from contact with persons who pray, who spend much time in prayer every day, who govern their lives by the spirit of prayer.

As the Word became flesh, so example is more powerful than words. We must, then, seek out and encourage men of prayer. For it is in this way that God will speak to us, that the Spirit will enlighten, guide, and strengthen us in our life and work. And we believe that it is in prayer that we arrive at our deepest convictions, discover our mission and calling, offer the most fruitful kind of service and direction for the community. We believe that!

Vigilance, then, is the first duty of Ministers and of all friars. What is the Spirit saying to us today? is the question before us. To be alert to his presence so that we may minister according to his direction is the most positive way for us to view our responsibility of leadership.

To clarify our thinking, we must face such questions as these. Do we really want our friars to be men of prayer? Will we support

them in their desire to grow in prayer? Does prayer have a high priority in our policies and programs in the community? Am I willing to schedule into my life serious periods of prayer, to stand behind what I say?

The following reflections are placed under headings that suggest responsibility.

A. In Each Conference (Language Group).

We are in need of material on prayer drawn from Franciscan sources (see CG, 20). We know that growth in prayer depends on spiritual reading to expand the mind and motivate the heart. Spiritual reading has a powerful influence on prayer: it encourages us, it broadens our understanding of God, and it deepens our knowledge of ourselves.

Specifically, we need to know how the Franciscan saints have prayed, what they said about prayer, how Franciscan authors have interpreted and explained Francis at prayer. We need examples, approaches, and methods of prayer according to Franciscan tradition. After Vatican II, a new interest in prayer has sprung up, as we know. Our young and not-so-young people are searching for methods of prayer even among non-Christian traditions. Our need is to search out, bring together, and publish in readable style the experience and wisdom of the saints of our Order.

This is an excellent way to stimulate new interest and offer our directors and teachers guidelines on which to build in the present.

B. Within Each Province.

1. Retreats (CG 19:1). To avoid letting the annual retreat become a routine, we must give it special importance. In fact, the annual retreat is intended to call us out of the routine and enable us to stand aside and above, to evaluate our life and rededicate ourselves.

Retreat is as sacred as the Sabbath, as wholly apart from everything else as the Lord Jesus in solitude on the mountain. Leisure, freedom of spirit, and a whole new way of seeing things should be some of what we experience. Most of all, retreat is a longer and uninterrupted time for prayer, where the dispositions Francis asks of us can be experienced (Rule of 1221, ch. 22, 23).

To make this possible, the province community and the local fraternity must cooperate in helping and supporting the individual friar in planning his retreat, away from his usual duties and apart from his own friary. Discussions among all the friars on this important topic can offer new possibilities for a good variety of forms, programs, and places that will meet the real need of the friars, and which can be supported by the province (CG, 19:2).

The value of the monthly day of prayer and renewal is to break the rhythm and pace of work, to remind us of our own rhythm of prayer. It is an occasion for the local community to reflect together on mutual needs as well as common spiritual goals (CG, 20). To allow for habitual neglect is to fail our friars and to lose ground in the struggle for a spirit of prayer (Rule of 1223, ch. 5).

2. The Franciscan Hermitage (Ritiro, House of Prayer (CG, 28-30). The Franciscan Hermitage is a contemplative program in our apostolic Order. It includes fraternity even in solitude. It consists of a withdrawal from activities for a longer period of time for prayer in leisure, silence,and solitude. Francis found this necessary from his own experience and drew up a plan for his brothers where, in fraternity, they could support and protect one another's privacy for prayer in the interchange of roles of Martha and Mary (Religious Life in Hermitages).

Throughout the history of the Order, adaptations of this plan have been made and have given fresh inspiration to growth in prayer both for the individuals and for the community as a whole.

Today, for example, it might be conceived as a form of apostolate of prayer in itself, where individual friars dedicate themselves to prayer and penance for a longer or shorter period of time (CG, 94).

It can also be a fraternity formed by a group of friars who constitute a nucleus (core members) for friars who come for such special retreats. Such a core group provides the environment for prayer, protecting one another's solitude and silence and sharing the facilities and services of a library and spiritual direction. It answers many of today's needs because

a. it is primarily for professed friars, who have spent some years in the ministry and are looking for the opportunity to build up their spiritual growth;

b. it offers the opportunity for those who sense a calling for the contemplative life, to dedicate several years or a lifetime to prayer and the ministry of prayer for the friars; and

c. it is more than a place; it is a fraternity of friars, who give

living witness to the reality of a faith community. Its very existence makes the primacy of prayer in our Franciscan life credible today.

3. *Training Program for Spiritual Directors* (Medellin Documents, 69-70; C. Koser, *As I See the Order,* 148-50). Who are the spiritual leaders in our community? To appoint directors and guardians is to accept the responsibility for such leadership. It means that we believe they can communicate the value and importance of prayer and themselves pray and spend time in prayer.

Support for them and contact with them is more important today, when pluralism of thought and attitude tends to cause division and marked differences in our communities. We must be accountable to one another and give reasons for the faith we hold and the teaching we give (1 Pt. 3:15-16).

Such support includes the opportunity for such directors to receive special training and schooling to strengthen their influence and equip them to fulfill their most important responsibilities.

By the quality of these appointments and the attention we give them on an on-going basis, we show this to be our highest priority and our most personal concern. For indeed, such directors represent the Ministers in their highest duty.

C. Within Each Fraternity.

The daily rhythm of life in fraternity is the most influential and constant motivation for the individual friar's life of prayer. This is home, where life is lived in the reality of day to day.

The House Chapter is brotherhood in action. The voice, mood, and will of the fraternity is spoken here. In Chapter, under the guidance of the superior, we call one another to prayer and set up goals and schedules that will make the spirit of prayer evident as our first concern (CG, 96:2). Guidelines are formed to have fixed times for silence (CG, 44:2); plans are discussed for annual retreats and for monthly days of prayer and renewal (CG, 19:2). At such special times, Franciscan documents are read and discussed (CG, 3), and the opportunity for evaluating one's personal spiritual growth is shared with the fraternity (CG, 22).

It is through the House Chapter that the superior becomes alerted to providing more practical means of introducing friars to the theory and practice of mental prayer, and to taking care that more time, good reading material, and better facilities are available (CG, 20).

The voice of the Chapter must be heard today. Friars must be encouraged to speak out their needs to one another (Rule of 1223, ch. 6), and we all must learn

the asceticism of listening patiently to one another as a sign of our love. This includes the Provincial Minister as well, whose presence at such local fraternity chapters from time to time can lend support to its importance and give him the chance to listen in dialogue to what the friars are saying.

To grow in prayer we must incline ourselves toward it: form a mentality, an attitude toward this communion with God. We need to build up aids that will dispose us to God. This way of living, seeing, and thinking is what we mean by penance. It must be understood as our desire to acquire the Spirit of the Lord, as opposed to the spirit of selfishness. This is how Francis speaks of it (Rule of 1223, ch. 10; Rule of 1221, ch. 17).

Faced as we are with the spirit of self-indulgence, this attitude and this way of thinking are challenged not only by our own inclinations but also by the ways and attitudes of modern man. We are in need of one another to uphold a strong and open desire for the Spirit of the Lord. This is why the General Constitutions call for the topic to be brought up from time to time in friary chapters (25:2).

Specifically, this calls us to simplify our needs which our society constantly increases. Such needs absorb our attention, keep us forever restless, and direct our minds and hearts off the central point of our most genuine concern. As Francis puts it, the deception lies hidden even behind the guise of some good, which we think justifies our many concerns (Rule of 1221, ch. 22). In such a mood and climate it becomes increasingly difficult to spend longer periods of time in solitude, silence, and prayer.

What we are looking for in "signs of penance," then, is a way to identify those needs which merely cater to our selfishness, to be suspicious of them, deliberately to take a stand in the simplicity of our life-style, to live according to the Spirit of the Lord.

D. For Each Friar.

Mental prayer is our most personal duty and privilege. So personal is it, in fact, that no one can substitute for us (Medellin Documents, 44). And precisely because it is so personal, it is subject to neglect. The reasons are many, as we know: fear of the demands it makes on our time, of the changes called for in the comforts of our life, etc. The consequences are even more painful: the experience of emptiness and loneliness within, which are compensated for by further distractions and activities. Yet there are many friars today who are too ashamed or too fearful to reveal their needs and reach out

for help.

When a friar feels that he is growing in his relationship with God, he discovers the most personal and compelling reason to persevere in prayer. Everyone wants to grow! It is the law of life. To grow means that one is coming to a better understanding of God's goodness and mercy. He experiences the greatness of God's forgiveness and love through the sinfulness and helplessness of his own life. To grow in intimacy with the Lord is to recognize in the depth and secrecy of his own being, his need and complete dependence on Him.

The need today is for encouragement: the encouragement of friars who themselves spend time in prayer, who make it clear that they spend an hour or more each day in mental prayer, who freely discuss and encourage others to good spiritual reading as support for prayer.

There is, above all, a need for spiritual directors who in a warm and encouraging way offer serious guidance, who make themselves readily available to their brothers, and who are willing to give continuing direction through times of trial and discouragement. As friars gain courage to speak of and share their needs and hunger, they will gradually learn to make themselves accountable for their spiritual progress and find hope to build on it.

Opportunist

Rabboni,
the Magdalene goes, swift, fleet,
with all of spring upon her tongue.

Sudden, from seven deaths sprung,
I come, with kisses
to stay Your sacred feet.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

Aqua Lateris Christi, Lava Me

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

ALTHOUGH WE no longer have a special feast of the Precious Blood of Jesus, it is still a dedication in the Church. And in our last conference on the unfolding petitions of the ageless prayer, "Anima Christi," we reflected about that precious blood, asking that it would indeed "inebria nos"—make us drunk with its giving so that we may excel and surpass ourselves in our own giving.

Now we come to the next petition, which we might perhaps call the most mystic of them all. We pray, "Aqua lateris Christi, lava me": "Water from the side of Christ, wash me." And we shall see that there is a very intimate connection between that shed blood and that water from Christ's side. When we were recently assembled in the community room, remarking together at the beauty of the altar décor created by one of our sisters, we reflected on the theme in the words of Holy Scripture, that from His side shall flow streams of living water. And indeed it was a most charming décor created by one of our sisters, with the light and gauzied cloth signifying the flowing water, and the "water" caught below in the pure white bowl with its floating mimosa blossoms and its lovely rocks. A true presentation. And the mystics through the centuries have made such presentations in their words, their songs, their dance, whatever creative outlets they chose for sharing with us their understanding of what was flowing from the side of Christ. But, dear sisters, let us not forget that these lovely mystic representations, as any true mystic representation, express a very solid reality, a reality so overwhelmingly strong that it can perhaps only be appropriately expressed in mystic form.

What, really, was that water that came from the side of Christ

Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico, is the author of numerous books of spiritual conferences and poetry. This is the fourth in a series of twelve conferences on the prayer, Anima Christi, *originally given at chapter to the Poor Clare Nuns in Roswell. To preserve the spontaneity of the spoken conferences, the barest minimum of editing has been done on the transcriptions.*

after all the bitter sufferings, the agony of the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the painful and arduous way of the Cross, the anguished affixing to the Cross, the three terrible hours of agony of body and soul and mind and heart? What was this that happened when all of the other was done and Jesus had said, "It is finished!" (Jn. 19:30) because it really was finished? What happened after his "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Lk. 23:46) was spoken, and his spirit, commended, had gone into the hands of his Father? What was this strange flow of water from his side?

Well, dear sisters, we know that the human heart is enclosed in a conical sac of liquid, and that the sac is called the pericardium. This serus, this liquid which surrounds the heart is, in a sense, one might say, the heart's last protection. When that soldier took that spear and plunged it into the side of Christ, into his blessed Heart, he pierced that pericardium. And so, along with the blood, the last blood of that most Sacred Heart, came its support—that clear liquid from the pericardium. It was the sign of death.

The support was gone, the pericardium pierced, so that its water flowed out and proclaimed death. That water which came form the side of Christ was indeed the proclamation of his redemptive death. The water flowing out reiterated in its own way the proclamation of what his blessed lips had uttered only a few moments before. The water repeated, "It is finished." There is nothing more to give. The name of the water from the side of Christ is: totality. All support is gone, all protection is taken away. The sheltering sac around the heart has been pierced and the heart itself rent. The water and the blood together say: "All is given."

And so, when the Scriptures tell us that "out of his side shall flow streams of living water" (Jn. 7:38), they are asking us to remember that the living waters we receive from that sacred side are the waters proclaiming Christ's death. And they are living waters for us, refreshing for us, the baptizing of the new Church born from that side of his, just because they are his *all*. Strength is always received from one who gives all.

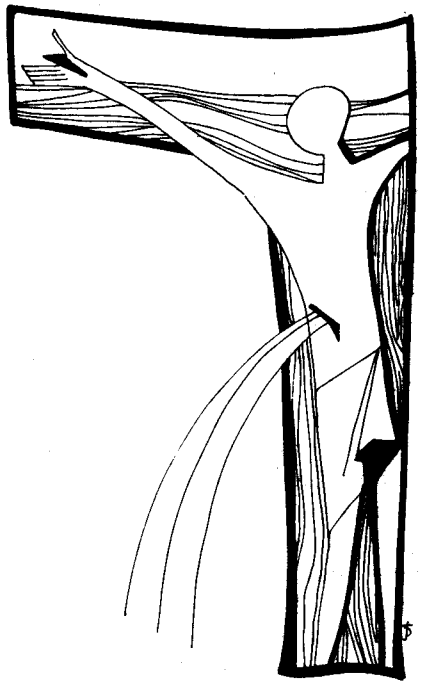
In every reference to this water from the side of Christ we see in the Scriptures as well as in the writings of the mystics through the centuries the expression of totality. In the first Vespers hymn of the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, we have these words: "For this You bore the lance's thrust and scourge and thorns and pain, / that blood and water from Your Heart might wash away our stain." The water

was there with the blood to say: All is given. And everything that led up to this, as that Vespers hymn teaches us, says that all which Christ bore was ordered toward this totality of giving, the flowing of water and blood from his stricken side.

Again, in one of the responsories in the Office of the Most Sacred Heart from which this water as well as the blood flowed, the running water, the water of the pericardium, we have these words: "Christ loved us, and in his blood he washed away our sins." And once more, "From whose Heart, when pierced, we saw blood and water giving birth to the Church." Was the blood not enough, the life-blood of his that gave life to the Church? Yes, it was. But let us say it again, and let us think of it again and again: The water from his side is the sign of *all*. The Church is born from his sacred side out of his total giving. We are born and we are baptized and we are professed out of his total giving, without which neither birth nor baptism nor profession could be possible. It is the sign of his death which is the sign of our life. And from his side indeed flow streams of living water that wash away our stains. They have power to wash away our stains because they are the waters of his total giving, the giving of the God-man.

As contemplative daughters of the Church, we have a specific mission, a special expression of the total Christian mission: to wash away the sins of the world and to send out streams of living water upon a continually dying, agonizing, anguished world. We shall not do this unless our spiritual pericardium is broken and all is given, so that from us, too, flow out in union with his infinite giving, the blood and water, the sign of death. We shall give life to no one except at cost of some dying of ours. Dear sisters, I ask you, as I ask myself, to remember that no one ever gives new life, renewed life, a new reason to live, a will to live, or is a channel of eternal life, except at the cost of dying. And if the Church was born from the side of Christ at that moment when the blood and the water flowed forth in sign of totality, and if we were indeed cleansed from our stains in that moment and in that sign of his total giving, and if we draw strength from that stream of water which is living water for us because it is the water of death for him, it shall never be otherwise with our own giving.

If we do not wish to die, then let us never delude ourselves that we can be purveyors of life. The water from Christ's side was the sign of death. Any medical man knows that. And if our spiritual pericardia are not willing to be pierced and torn in labor, fatigue,



suffering, misunderstanding, frustration, and whatever the lances or cudgels may be, we cannot be what Jesus wants us to be:finite channels of living water out of our many dyings.

We read in Romans that "for your sake we are being slain all the day long" (8:36). This is an expression that any lover would be able to understand. When we love totally, dear sisters—dare I say it?—it is a happy thing to be slain. Do we not see this in all profound human love? A mother would rejoice to give her life for her child. And a very terrible marginal note on our times tells of mothers who destroy the life of their child and thus pervert the whole concept and the whole reality of motherhood. For it is of the essence of motherhood that the mother should love to die for her child. Nature herself will rise up in revenge on the mother content to have the child die that she may live as she darkly chooses. Love always seeks to give at expense to itself. Real love gives truly always at sacrifice of itself.

In our own little way we have surely all experienced something of this: the joy of being worn out in doing something for one we love, the joy of exhaustion in serving those we esteem. Far from its being sadistic or masochistic that we should find happiness in dying that we may give, this is at the very healthy and very happy heart of love itself. Sometimes we witness this rather dramatically in ourselves. We are conscious of being tempted not to give, but rather to sit down and enjoy our self-pity or our fatigue or our disappointment or our hurt. And then, by God's grace, we make a great effort to rise out of that and to die to it. We decide not to live to self-pity or disappointment or hurt, but to die to all that so that we may give, through Christ, understanding or strength or new clarity of mind or any such form of life to another. There are many ways to die in order that others may live. We shall know much more about this in eternity.

The Scriptures tell us again that in Jesus "is the fountain of life" (Ps. 36:9), and the Office of the Most Sacred Heart tells us in another antiphon that "We drink from the streams of his goodness." We drink from the stream of dying flowing from his side. And we live. This is the kind of stream that must flow out from us, too, upon the world. It must not be a death-giving stream of self-involvement, a bitter stream of acrimony or aggressiveness, it must not be a turgid stream of self-pity and selfishness and sloth, but a life-giving stream of goodness.

Goodness, the philosophers tell us, is diffusive of itself. Now, dear sisters, Jesus has implanted his goodness in us. We are made in the image of God. And so we are made in the image of goodness. But that goodness has been bruised and hurt by original sin. It has been enfeebled by our many actual sins. But by total giving, by Christ's dear grace, that goodness is reunited with the goodness of the Father and flows out in streams of living water. It ought to be possible for the world to say of us that same antiphon: "We drink from the streams of your goodness." Let us never offer poisoned waters, tainted waters, turgid waters to a world that has a right to come to contemplatives and say: "All right, you are there to live a penitential life of prayer and of dying. We have come to drink the living waters that flow from dying." Why not? The world has a right, I say.

Water is so beautiful, is it not? No wonder our Father Saint Francis sang of it with particular tenderness in his Canticle of the Creatures. "Be praised, my Lord, for our sister water, so great is she and yet remains so humble, shining in her crystal chastity." There is a clear, a shining water in the pericardium, the supporting sac of the heart. And it was a beautiful sister water indeed that flowed from the side of Christ as the sign of his death, clear water from his human pericardium and mystic water from his Godhead. The water of dying is always clear, always life-giving. It is the water of selfishness that is tainted, discolored, disease-bringing. We want to bring life to the world, life to the Church; and we shall do this only as Jesus did it, by dying. The clear water that flows out from each of our little dyings will be made by Christ a new stream of living water.

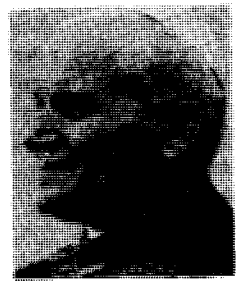
Returning to that familiar quotation from Romans, that "for your sake we are being slain all the day long," let us remember that this is not a groan, a lament, a jeremiad. This is a proclamation! It is like the clear water from the pierced pericardium, the water of total giving, it is a cry of joy! "For *your* sake we are being

slain all the day long." The little dyings in our lives *are* for His sake; they are not for no reason. The sacrifices to which Christ's graces and inspirations invite us, to which the needs of our sisters summon us, to which the anguish of the world beckons us are not meaningless dyings, not bitter things. And so the apostle Saint Paul was not muttering or groaning when he said that we are killed all the day long. No, he was making a joyous proclamation. "It's wonderful!"—that is what he was saying.

And so it was when the water came from the side of Christ, flowing out as a sign of his total giving. Now all was indeed consummated. Now we had the sign that all was given, all was over, the dying complete. And we were saved. All of this we confess when we pray, "Water from the side of Christ, wash me." It has cleansing, laving powers because it is the sign of totality, pouring out at the lance-thrust that tells his death. We are washed by that water, the Church is born of that water and baptized in that water because it is the water of consummation. The sign of his death is the sign of our life. And in the same manner if not degree, we shall wash one another to new life out of our willing dyings.

In all of our lives there come times when we think we cannot do anything about this untoward situation, or that we cannot help this person. We feel that we have exhausted all our efforts, all our devices. Everything seems in vain. But this is not so. It is only that we have not died enough deaths or not died totally in this situation or for this person. And so for her son, Augustine, Monica died on and on and on. And Saint Augustine was washed by the total giving of Christ flowing out upon him through Saint Monica's dying.

Yes, it is a beautiful mystic reflection, dear sisters, that from Christ's side flow streams of living water; but let us be careful to remember that it is the stream of his dying which is our living water. And our living water to one another and to the world, to the agonizing, to the dying sinner, to the hardened in heart, must always flow at the cost of some dying of our own. When we pray, "Aqua lateris Christi, lava me," it is not a true prayer unless we are including in it the desire for our own dying out of Christ's dying. It has got to be a sincere prayer that our spiritual pericardia may be pierced and ourselves left without support or mainstay save in God, so that others may live. It is a very bold prayer, a very dangerous prayer. It is a petition that we may be given the strength ourselves to die totally so that others may live.



On February 25 of this year the Holy Father received in an Audience the members of the Council of the International Federation of Catholic Universities and the Rectors of the Catholic Universities of Europe, who had gathered together on that day in Rome. The following free translation, by the Editor, has been done from the text printed in L'Osservatore Romano *on the day of the Audience.*

The Catholic University: Towards an Apostolate of Culture

YOUR EMINENCE, Dear Brothers and Sons:

Is there any need to tell you how happy I am to spend a while with you, the members of the International Federation of Catholic Universities and Rectors of the Catholic Universities of Europe? The *Pontifical Yearbook* for 1978 lists me among the members of the Congregation for Catholic Education, where I became familiar with your problems. I also have fond memories of my participation in the Lublin Convention, which you just recalled so pleasantly. As for the task of the university professor, I quite naturally have an accurate idea of its value and importance after the years I myself spent teaching at the University of Lublin.

1. You are surely quite convinced of this, but I insist on re-emphasizing it: Catholic universities have a privileged place in the Pope's affection, as they should have in the whole Church and in the concern of its pastors amid the many activities of their ministry. Dedicated to research and teaching, they have on that account also a role of witness and apostolate, without which the Church would be unable fully and lastingly to evangelize the vast world of culture or, indeed, whole successive generations of people who are increasingly well educated and will need more and more to bring their faith to bear on the many questions posed by the sciences and the various systems of thought. Since the first centuries the Church has felt the importance of the intellectual apostolate —one need only think of St. Justin or St. Augustine—and its initiatives in this area have been countless.

There is no need for me to cite the texts of the recent Council, which you know by heart. For some time the attention of ecclesiastical authorities has rightly been drawn to the spiritual needs of whole segments of society which are either quite de-Christianized or little Christianized: workers, peasants, migrants—the poor of every sort. This is a real necessity—a duty imposed upon us by the gospel. But the world of the university too needs the Church's presence more than ever before, and this is a need that you, in your own specific role, help to meet.

2. When I spoke recently to the professors and students of Mexico, I pointed out three objectives for Catholic universities: (1) to bring a specific contribution to the Church and to society by a really thorough study of various problems, taking care to set forth man's true meaning as reborn in Christ and thus to facilitate his integral development; (2) to form, in their teaching, men who have themselves achieved a personal synthesis of faith and culture and are therefore able both to take their own place in society and to bear witness there to their faith; and (3) to establish a true community of professors and students which will itself bear witness to a living Christianity.

3. I want to dwell here on some basic points. Research at the university level presupposes complete loyalty, seriousness, and (by that very fact) freedom of scientific investigation. It is at that price that you bear witness to the truth, that you serve the Church and society, that you deserve the respect of every academic branch of the university.

But I must add this where man is involved — i.e., as regards the human sciences; although it is right to profit from the contribution of various methodologies, it by no means suffices to choose one, or even to combine several, to determine what man is in his depths. The Christian cannot allow himself to be confined to these limits, all the more so since he is not, in the long run, taken in by their presuppositions. He knows that he must transcend the purely natural outlook. His faith demands that he approach anthropology in the perspective of man's full vocation and salvation. Faith is the light in which he works, the principle that guides his research. In other words, a Catholic university is not only a setting for religious study, open-ended in every sense of the term. It presupposes, in its professors, an anthropology enlightened by faith, consistent with faith, especially with faith in creation and Christ's redemption. As methodologies continue to proliferate today and too often end up with a reductionist view of man, Christians have a fundamental role to play right in the arena of research and teaching precisely because they refuse to accept this truncated vision of man.

As for theological research properly so called, it cannot by definition exist without being based on and regulated by Scripture and Tradition, by experience, and by the decisions of the church handed down by the Magisterium in the course of the centuries. These brief reminders set forth the specific responsibilities of those teaching on Catholic faculties and the sense in which Catholic universities must safeguard their unique character. This is the framework in which they bear witness not only before their own students but also before other universities, to the seriousness with which the Church approaches the world of thought, and at the same time to a genuine understanding of the faith.

4. In the face of this great and difficult mission, cooperation among the Catholic universities of the whole world is highly desirable, for their own sake as well as for the suitable development of their relationships with educated society as a whole. This is what makes your Federation so important. I wholeheartedly encourage its intiatives, especially the study of the theme chosen for your next Convention: ethical problems of modern technological society. This is is a subject of fundamental importance—one of which I myself am very much aware and to which I hope to be able to return. May the Holy Spirit guide you with His light and give you the strength you need. May Mary's intercession keep you open to His action, to God's will! You know that I remain very close to your concerns and to your work. With all my heart, I give you my Apostolic Blessing.

Heart of Jesus

The Listening Heart hears every
word, the tear-filled sigh
the angry word, the curse, the blessing
the grief-stricken cry.

The Praying Heart calls out
to the Father for mercy and pleads
for those of His flock shorn
bare by life's struggles.

The Bleeding Heart stands mute
dropping healing balm to lepers
of spiritual degradation
baptizing them into HOPE

The Loving Heart palpitates madly
to a joyous "I care!" "I care!"
runs to assist the stumbling feet
the broken, mumbled prayer.

Sister Marie Carmel, O.S.C.

Bonaventure and Higher Education

RAPHAEL D. BONANNO, O.F.M.

IN THIS paper I would like to put forth some ideas of Saint Bonaventure as a modest contribution to the IV International Week of Philosophy, with the expectation of a good dialogue, criticism, and greater understanding of those ideas with my esteemed colleagues. In the first section of the paper, I treat of Bonaventure's philosophy of education, and in the second section, I offer a theme, much in line with the topic of this Congress, i.e., the use of the "reductio" of Bonaventure as a tool for relating philosophy and the sciences.

I

IT IS VERY true that Saint Bonaventure never wrote a treatise on his philosophy of education, as we have today in our manuals. But it is equally true that he was an excellent educator and dedicated five years of his life to teaching at the University of Paris before his election at age 40 as Minister Genral of the Franciscan Order. His ideas are spread out among his Commentaries on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, his famous sermon "Christ, the One Teacher of All," his work "The Excellence of Christ's Teaching," his book "The Retracing of the Arts to Theology," and other works.

We can better analyze the topic at hand by endeavoring to answer three important questions. What is man? What is the world? What is the purpose of education?

St. Bonaventure investigates the first question in terms of the ideal man and man as he is today. He starts with Sacred Scripture (Qoheleth 7:30): "God made mankind straight, but men have had recourse to many calculations."[1] The man to be educated is God's image, has his human dignity, intelligence, free will, and the power to dominate things. By means of his intelligence, the student seeks the truth in order to be erect, straight, and simple and not bent over and twisted by error. By means of his free will, man embraces the supreme goodness of his rectitude, integrity or moral uplifting. By means of his power to dominate, he exercises control of things according to the will of God; and thus he becomes straight, simple, erect, correct: a regent and king of creation. Man becomes lord of the universe and continuator of the divine activity.

Nevertheless, for Bonaventure, man in his current state is quite distant from this ideal. He is curved and twisted, not straight nor erect; a sinner, avaricious, finite, sick, unstable, and full of doubts. Bonaventure's view of man in his current state therefore seems comparable to the tragic figure of twentieth-century existentialism. Again, Bonaventure's thought on man as image of God coincides with much contemporary theology written on the same topic and for this reason too seems to be of value for philosophy and theology in our day.

The second question is: What world does man live in? For Bonaventure as for Francis before him, the world is filled with creatures that are good because they come from God and are meant to help us return to him. We should use material things as a ladder to attain the Lover who created everything.[2] The world is likened to a river, full of different currents and depths with varied levels of meaning. The divine Word is the center of this world which expresses in a finite manner the power, love, and beauty of God himself. The world of things is a world of symbols of God; things are what they are, but they are more than what they are. Bonaventure respects the sciences but links everything to theology.

Today many people do not accept any longer the recent scientistic restriction of reality to the empirical or material; such people, in search of a fuller framework or perspective, can find in Bonaventure's sapiential ideal a good deal of food for thought.

The third question is: what after all is the purpose of education? Bonaventure answers by distinguishing four uses of knowledge. First, there is knowledge as an end in itself, that is, vain curiosity or knowl-

[1] Thus the New American Bible; the Jerusalem Bible has "I find that God made man simple; man's complex problems are of his own devising."

[2] *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 1, dub. 3.

Father Raphael D. Bonanno, O.F.M., for several years a pastor and a member of a parish team ministry in Goias, Brazil, has recently been appointed to serve full-time in vocation work there.

edge closed in on itself. Secondly, there is knowledge for the sake of fame, which is a disgraceful vanity and egoism. Thirdly, there is knowledge for the sake of money, which truly dehumanizes a man. Finally, there is the best form of all: knowledge which edifies—literally, builds up—others.

Love + knowledge = holiness (Eph. 3:17-19). According to Bonaventure, then, education is meant to orient everything and everyone toward God; it is a love-process that seeks to see and understand the Lover and everything that he has made. This is the famous "reductio," "leading back," of Bonaventure, which is a method of instruction designed to direct all knowledge in one way or another toward God, the primordial Source of all.

II

HERE I WOULD like to consider the nature of the "reductio," its areas of application, and, finally, a possible use for it today in seeking to understand the relationship between philosophy and the modern sciences.

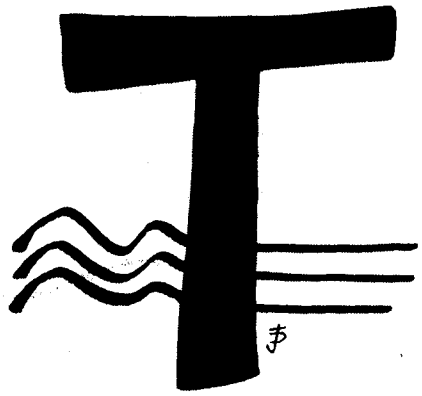
In Bonaventure, the word "reductio" appears 95 times. It signifies one of the four great operations of the human spirit, together with "divisio," "definitio," and "demonstratio." "Reductio" means the rising movement of the intelligence which passes from individuals to species, from species to genera, from genera to essences, and from essences to wisdom and prudence. The progress is one of unification, that is, a movement toward (1) generic unity of a multiplicity of individuals (point of view of extension), (2) generic unity of a plurality of notions in a genus (point of view of comprehension), (3) generic unity of a multiplicity of inferior totalities (point of view of subordination), and (4) pluralities of ideal totalities conceived as generic individualities (point of view of coordination).

Thus the "reductio" is connected not only to wisdom in the area of intelligibility and thought, but also to prudence in the area of life and action. As Bonaventure says, the "divisio" proceeds from the abstract to the concrete; the "reductio" proceeds from the concrete to the abstract. The "divisio" functions in a progressive descent, a type of analysis, which is the basis for the scientific method. The "reductio," on the other hand, ascends from the imperfect to the perfect, from the incomplete to the complete: the *unum primum*, God. The movement of the "reductio" is not merely logical but real, in the same sense as that of Teilhard's teaching that the entire universe rises and converges in Christ, the Omega Point, the beginning and the end.

The areas of application of the "reductio" are in metaphysics and theology, in ethics, in some problems of physics, and in the classification of the sciences. The last of these is our present specific interest, and the Bonaventurian treatise most relevant to its elucidation is his "Retracing of the Arts to Theology," a synthesis of knowledge in which all the sciences help man return to God, the point of origin of the universe.

Bonaventure begins with James 1:17: "Every worthwhile gift, every genuine benefit, comes from above, descending from the Father of the heavenly luminaries. . . ." From this text Bonaventure goes on to speak of six "lights" of human knowledge. Subdividing these, he subordinates all the profane sciences to theology, theology to Sacred Scripture, and Scripture to the treasures of divine Wisdom.[3]

Bonaventure talks of the sciences of his day (the thirteenth century), mentioning, e.g., navigation, mechanical and manual arts, etc. But the principle of his synthesis, of the "reductio," is Christ, the incarnate Wisdom of God, the Master of all the sciences, he who said: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."



In this Congress we are studying the relation between philosophy and the sciences. Perhaps the "reductio" of Bonaventure can serve as a bridge between the two. If the philosophers offer the "reductio" and the scientists work with the "divisio," the two together complete perfectly the circle of human knowledge. Philosophers need contact with the concrete so as not to lose themselves in sterile generalities. Some scientists recognize the need of a unifying principle beyond the material—something stable and fixed. The two sides thus seek by different roads the same reality, the same truth, the *unum primum*. Can Christian philosophers leave aside the "reductio" under the pretense that it is not pure philosophy but has the incense-smell of mysticism? The best philosophers were also great theologians; Augustine, e.g., Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure

[3] "Omnes cognitiones famulantur theologiae" (*De reductione . . .*, §26).

himself. Was it not exactly the separation between philosophy and theology on one side and the sciences on the other that brought us to the unhappy present situation where we have to try to communicate with one another once again? After all, we all seek the First Reality, and the "reductio" can be the instrument that carries us together into his presence.

Riposte

The following letter, received on May 16th, is in reply to our Review Editorial of this past April (pp. 98-103). The writer has been affiliated with the U.S. Mission Council in Washington for the past three years, and he contributed an essay on "The Spirituality of Justice" to our May and June issues of last year. We agree with him, obviously, on the importance of this subject and welcome further comments.

UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE
Department of Social Development and World Peace
1312 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

To the Editor:

The all-important subject of your excellent Review Editorial in the April 1979 number of *The Cord* impels me to accept your invitation to respond. At the same time I find myself hard-pressed to address the three or four central issues you surfaced. Each of them deserves much more time and space than this letter can afford.

Let me, then, speak to the question you raise which I consider the essential one for Religious Life today: is that life primarily a community of being (becoming) or one of action? I offer what insights I have on this crucial question for U.S. religious from the "praxis model," so well employed by the Liberation Theologians and especially by my friend and former co-worker Alejandro Cussiánovich, whose book gave rise to your Editorial.

While working in Peru as pastor of a parish dedicated to the cause of human liberation, I formed community with one other Franciscan with whom I had very little in common. Had either of us stopped to analyze it we would have concluded that we were not compatible, that we should not try to form community, that we might well be running the risk of being an anti-sign. Remarkably, however, we did manage to live, pray, eat, recreate, dialog, and work together for seven

years in harmony. Our Religious Life was built on the common purpose we held: the good of the poor with whom we worked.

The conclusion I have drawn from this intense experience is that the essence of Religious Life lies in a synthesis of your Editorial's being-action alternatives, not in one or the other of them. What Religious Life *is* (being) flows from what it *does* (action), although I would change the latter and replace it with "what it stands for in practice." And what Religious Life stands for in practice has to be somehow connected with overcoming oppression, working on behalf of justice, promoting the Kingdom values of freedom, dignity, peace for all human beings. Thus the true Religious Life narrows the dichotomy between being and acting, and produces the synthesis of *witnessing in and through practice* to Christ's liberating action for all.

Working closely with Fr. Cussiánovich in that parish helped us to see all of this clearly. His own commitment to Religious Life derived from his concern for and work with the subjugated domestic servant girls who attended the middle class families of Lima. No theoretician he, that which he insists on in his books is what he gently lives every day. His vowed life manifested itself to us through his becoming one with the oppressed. Alejandro proved for us that while there are admittedly many ways of becoming one with the oppressed, and engaging in their struggle for "life ever more abundantly," Religious Life is one of the best.

I said above that this question is crucial for Religious of the U.S. If we are not about something beyond ourselves--or in other words, if we see Religious Life as having ultimate value in itself as the witness to our final destiny as humans--then the all-embracing love which we say the vows impel us towards becomes love of one another and not love for those most in need of it. Again, in the praxis methodology, given a world where two-thirds or three-fourths of the brothers and sisters suffer all sorts of indignities, can we ever justify defining ourselves in terms of ourselves, or even in terms only of transcendence?

On the consequent matter of Religious Poverty spoken about in your Review, let me offer a thought, again using the example of Fr. Cussiánovich. He comes from an upper middle class family of Lima; yet he has seen the utter necessity of joining with the poor in a country where such a determination connotes a life-style much, much lower than the accustomed. While a similar conversion might be equally difficult in our milieu, where middle and upper middle class values prevail, I believe that the active seeking of material poverty is absolutely necessary for Religious. Otherwise we shall play somewhat at the essence of Religious Life--becoming that which we stand for in practice (one with the Poor in their Exodus from slavery)--but we will never really come close to living that authentically.

I trust that these thoughts of mine are not overly complicated and that they contribute to a much-needed debate on the subject of your Review Editorial. The Religious of affluent countries are dismissed by those engaged in the struggle of the poor in our world, but that dismissal is justified and remediable. It is justified because our affluent agenda is a caricature to those who see Religious Life in function of here and now Kingdom building; it is remediable if we can shake ourselves out for a look at the real world in which we live, and react vitally to its pressing problems--racism, sexism, and classism.

Sincerely and fraternally,
Joseph Nangle, O.F.M.

May 11, 1979

Clare's Testament

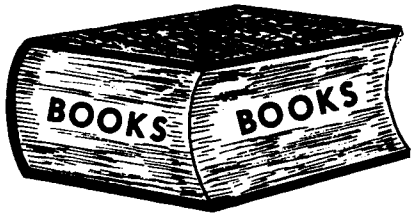
Poor little plant of Francis
Joy is in your heart
    The grace of the Lord surrounds you
    For all ages hence you shall be rich
    For your treasure in heaven abounds.

You desire to be holy
As your father Francis taught you
    Living humbly and simply in the Lord
    For all ages hence you shall be rich
    You are the precious servant of the Lord.

Prudent mother, gentle sister
The least among them all
    You care for each one in her need
    For all ages hence you shall be rich
    Known for your wisdom and holy deeds.

The narrow gate of heaven
Not an easy one to pass through
    But you found the key in Charity
    For all ages hence you shall be rich
    To see the Lord in brilliant clarity.

Sister Anne of the Heart
of Jesus and Mary, O.S.C.



I Live on an Island. By Catherine de Hueck Doherty. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 126. Paper, $2.75.

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

Thomas Merton wrote, "No man is an island." Catherine Doherty writes in her latest book, "I live on an island, but I am not an island." Both authors journey to God on different highways, but neither was ever alone or lonely, for they live in and with the presence of God. As in her other books, so in this one Catherine Doherty is more direct and more simple, for she is thoroughly convinced that she is merely an instrument in the hands of God and she firmly believes his Son when he says: "Without me you can do nothing."

From the vantage point of a cabin on a small piece of land that juts out into the Madawaska River near Combermere, Ontario, Catherine writes of some of her experiences and meditations during the four seasons of the year. For some of her readers this book will create a nostalgia for experiences of nature which she describes so vividly and applies so spiritually to the journey toward God; for others it will be an enticement to commune with nature so as to share her insights on the God of nature, whom she knows so intimately.

The book is divided into four parts: Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. With poetic appreciation of nature and animals her Franciscan heart heralds each season as a mirror of God and things pertaining to him. She writes, "I think of the millions of people on this continent who do not see the beauty in a tree, the beauty in the tracks of animals on the soft earth, the beauty in the opening of a wildflower in the woods . . . the sound of the birds, the melody of a brook, the musical whisper of trees discussing the wonders of God" and "this divorce between man and nature frightens me" (p. 23).

But in the section on Spring,

Catherine speaks of the new hope, new life, especially in the hearts of those who live in the midst of nature. With true Christian discernment she sees the bitter winter storms that followed Vatican II are over. Her hope is like the sap rising in the trees in Springtime. In spite of her sadness over the statistics concerning the number of priests willing to leave, she pays a beautiful tribute to their Catholic priesthood. Any priest beset by doubt, bewilderment, or anger concerning his vocation could read this section with profit. Here, too, she speaks of the difficulties of the nuns and sees the greatest need today to be communities of love, "little islands flung everywhere by the hand of God so that men may, like St. Thomas, touch the wounds love always makes" (p. 27). Next she uses her story-telling ability to relate a touching tale about our Lady's anger. Her relationship with Mary is more than devotion, for she has an unshakable faith in the Mother of God. Finally, she speaks of silence and poustinia, that brought a thousand visitors to Madonna House in this one summer.

In each of the seasons, Catherine finds something to reflect upon in nature, in animals, and in the Madonna House experience. In the section on Summer, the one word that might sum it up is "peace." She says: "Like St. Francis of Assisi, you will find many little animals and birds to talk to, right where you live." But she warns us: "Don't try to approach animals when you are unpeaceful, angry, or disturbed."

The section titled "Fall" (the shortest, at 15 pages) is characterized by the word "Faith." Whether she is writing about her beloved Russian shrine, erected before Vatican II as a symbol of unity between East and West, or vocations, or November (the month of the souls in Purgatory), her faith shines forth. As one would expect, anticipation and fulfillment come across as Catherine celebrates the Incarnation of the God-man, Jesus Christ, in the section labeled "Winter." Christmastime finds her on her island, but connected by the bridge of love with every other human being.

For those of us living in the city and aware of the social evils of our times and the need for their correction, there is the danger of getting involved in a spiritual rat-race of activity, even as the secular world is involved in the rat-race of frantic activity. We might even get to think of, and treat, the Church as if it were another business venture like General Motors or the Bell Telephone Company and forget that it is primarily a mystery. To avoid this pitfall, we need books like *I Live on an Island*, which bring us back to nature and to the God of nature.

Sent from the Father: Meditations on the Fourth Gospel. By José Comblin. Translated by Carl Kabat. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979. Paper, $3.95.

Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Editor of this Review.

Precisely because of the profound simplicity so well brought out by Father Comblin, John has always been my favorite Evangelist. Simplicity can be deceptive, however—mistaken for parvity of content or even superficiality. True simplicity means just the opposite, as the scholastics well knew in insisting on God's own absolute simplicity.

Just as the divine simplicity embraces infinite richness of content, so John's Gospel yields overwhelming, enthralling cascades of insight to those who bring to its reading a docile spirit open to its simple message that in Jesus the uncreated Light, Life, and Truth has once-for-all been made manifest.

The trouble is, many of us do not have the single-minded openness and docility needed to drink in the full riches of John's eloquent testimony, and that is why meditative commentaries like this one are always so welcome, so necessary. Each commentator, of course, brings to the Gospel his own unique viewpoint, a fact that is perhaps more to the point in this case than in some others. Father Comblin is a competent theologian, of course, but is much better known for his missionary work in Latin America and for the writings embodying liberation theology which have issued from that work.

In six short chapters, the author consistently holds up as model for the missionary the Johannine Jesus whose whole mission, as the One sent by the Father, was to unite the world to the Father through complete openness in both directions—to the Father and to the world. There are some graphic and illuminating reflections on the world's darkness, on the need for mission to be rejected if it is to bear fruit, and on countless other uniquely Johannine themes.

Without implying that the faults come close to canceling out the book's evident virtues, attractiveness, and usefulness, I would, nonetheless, like to call attention to some problems, I had with it. I doubt that the recondite sense, e.g., in which it is true (if it is true in any sense) that "Jesus did not know the Father as the Father knows himself" would be evident to the average reader (p. 11). The effect of such a statement is, unhappily, to imply approbation of the currently prevalent tendency toward subordinationism and adoptionism.

Nor will it do to say that Jesus's revelation involves "no concepts or doctrines or methodology or training" (p. 91), a position that implicitly contradicts the author's earlier criticism of the Pharisees, who could not understand Jesus precisely because "their culture and personalities contained no *category* for Jesus' way of being" (p. 28, emphasis added). The point is more important than it may seem; the minimizing of precise doctrine is a recurrent theme in the book and is the conceptual side of the author's constant polemic against the institutional Church. Its ministers, e.g., are criticized for not remaining fishers of men but instead becoming "administrators of a cult, performers of rites, perpetuators of tradition, teachers of doctrines about an invisible world, magistrates of social deportment" (p. 53). Again, "Institutional Christianity has betrayed [Jesus], making his teaching the cornerstone of yet another ideology that estranges people from God . . ." (p. 80); and "faith is of little use to institutions, but orthodoxy is all-important: the members' understanding is dispensable, but their assent to the insti-

tution's orthodoxy is imperative for the institution's survival" (p. 87). The Second Vatican Council as a whole would be an absolute impossibility were any of these contentions true, and so we must suppose that they are deliberate exaggerations, attributable to an unfortunate rhetoric that we North Americans might perhaps better understand—not, surely, accept without reservation—if we had undergone the author's pastoral experiences in Latin America.

In sum, if you can discount this sort of belligerent rhetoric and are seeking some real insight into the Johannine message for missionaries, you will find this otherwise attractively written book both enlightening and inspiring.

In Praise of Light

All praise be yours, my Lord,
for every kind of light.
For the sun, which lights our days
all warm and nourishing.
And for electric light, which lights our darkness,
bright and colorful.
For the light of a beacon, which guides us to safety
even in the darkest night,
patient and trusted.
And for the light of a candle, the lover's light,
delicate and soft.
But most especially for the light of the world,
nourishing, patient, and trusted,
soft and loving;
Our beacon, the light of our darkness,
the warmth of your love,
Your Son, Our Light, Jesus Christ.

John Lynch, O.F.M.

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COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The map of Japan on page 238 was drawn by Brother Michael Gerenczer, O.F.M. The cover and other illustrations are by Sister Marie Monica, O.S.F., Sacred Heart Academy, Klamath Falls, Oregon.

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GUEST EDITORIAL—DOCUMENTATION

When the Lord Gave Me Brothers . . .[1]

Minister General
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00187 Rome

"Peace and All Good Things"

TO PRESENT the problem of vocations to you fully, it seems to me worthwhile to build upon that fundamental foundation which our Seraphic Father himself in his concise and basic style gave in Chapter II of the Rule of 1221:

> If anyone, through divine inspiration. . . .
> Wishing to choose this life comes to our friars,
> Let him be received by them kindly.

I. "Anyone, through Divine Inspiration . . ."

EVERYONE IS convinced that all vocations, just as all gifts and charisms, "come from Christ and lead to him," as the Second Vatican Council clearly reaffirms (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, n. 3, 504).

The source of every vocation is Christ; but every call, when it develops into "mission," is mediated to each individual through the Church.

The foundation of every vocation is Baptism, which also underlies particular vocations.

These simple doctrinal truths about a vocation constitute the divine element of a vocation and are not denied today, but they often fall into second place in favor of the human element. Perhaps it is also true that in the past we tended to develop only the theological basis of a vocation, giving more weight to the divine element, to the detriment of the human element. But today we run the risk of accentuating the human element at the expense of the divine.

To speak only and continually of human maturity, of perfect psychological conditions, of special physical, psychic, moral, and spiritual qualities, in order to be able to make an authentic choice automatically places the reality of grace and of the divine call in second place. Undoubtedly the psychological sciences can be useful for the development of a vocation, but they ought only be an aid in a field in which, from the beginning and in its development, the action is principally divine. Such divine action must not be understood in a static way as an already complete gift given by God to certain privileged persons, only to be answered and protected, but in a dynamic way because "it underlies the very becoming of a man and guides him to finding himself and in growing up, by realizing the plan of life which appears to him as a faithful response to the continual call of God."[2]

There is so much creativity in the plans of God and in the Bible. Both in the Old and in the New Testament we find the most disparate experiences concerning the ways of the calling, its preparation, and the sending of the Prophets and the Apostles.

For every man, and with greater reason for one called to a special vocation, the problem arises: how does one know his own vocation with certitude? The Second Vatican Council helps us to give an answer to this fundamental question: "This voice of the Lord in summons, however, is never to be looked for as something which will be heard by the ears of future priests in any extraordinary manner. It is rather to be detected and weighed in the signs by which the will of God is customarily made known to prudent Christians. These indications should be carefully noted by priests" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 11, 1280).

Moreover, it is to be remembered that God does not speak only through external events, but he speaks also and above all in the inmost depths of a Christian. "That hearing in the depths of one's own soul of a singular and unmistakable voice inviting: come!" (Paul VI, Discourse to the Conventuals, July 12, 1968).

Through the intimate voice of God in the conscience and in so many external signs of its action, an initiative on the part of God develops which establishes a dialogue between the Creator and man. "In other words, we can conceive of a vocation as a history: a history in miniature of one individual, an integral part, however, of the history of salvation which is planned by God" (M. Panciera, p. 20).

To know the history of one's own vocation, to study the ways by which God makes himself heard is an important task to strengthen the bonds of this

[1] Introductory and concluding material has been omitted from this version of the Circular Letter of Father Vitale M. Bommarco, Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, dated September 17, 1978.

[2] M. Panciera, *Le Vocazioni nella Comunità Cristiana*, p. 24.

privileged divine human relationship and to contribute to the full realization of one's plan of life.

I am convinced that many vocational crises could be overcome if, in the midst of storms, one could anchor one's self to this one certain truth: God has called me! In our lives, we men often tend to change plans, opinions, and attitudes, while God does not change, even if he is disposed to accept human inconstancy.

At every age, after giving one's full consent, it is useful and good often to go back again in thought and memory to reconstruct the small and great stages of the history of one's own vocation and to regain the strength to continue. It can also be very useful, in fraternal gatherings, to be disposed to reveal to others how God worked out our choice from its beginnings to our complete commitment to his plan by solemn profession. All of this can be a valid help to regain or to consolidate the conviction of having been called. Numerous vocation crises of our time arise when we begin to doubt that we have been "called."

Today's world is in full crisis because we lack certitudes, because it is as if we do not want to cling to certain truth, because we seem always to want to throw everything into discussion and live in a perpetual state of problems. When insecurity touches our very personality, then it becomes difficult to to a clear course, while, mo easily, through the so-called new experiences, we veer off our course.

In the various phases of personal crisis, we tend much more to consider our own change of heart to continue on the path formerly undertaken, rather than to meditate on the original invitation and divine stimuli to accept and realize the plan of life proposed by Christ. Saint Paul, who lived this experience, synthesizes it this way: "And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom. 8:30-31).

To know well, to meditate often upon, and to live the history of one's own vocation constitutes a most valid element for the full development of one's own personality.

Many souls have written the story of their own vocation to profess their gratitude and joy and to help their brothers. For us Franciscans the story of the conversion of our Seraphic Father and of his first relationships with God left to us by him in his Testament is of unsurpassable depth and beauty. And these continual and precise statements: "The Lord granted to me

. . . led me . . . said to me . . . gave me . . . revealed to me . . . told me to say and to write" are none other than the most profound expression of the soul of Francis, of his radical conviction that his marvelous story was begun, developed, and completed by God.

II. "Wishing to Choose This Life Comes to Our Friars . . ."

A VOCATION is the result of a divine and human action which must unite together in the reality of a person. The action of God proceeds surely, even if it shows itself gradually and through many signs. The action of man recognizes an evolution in various phases through successive ages, characterized by positive and negative dispositions: readiness, courage, insecurity, enthusiasm, and confusion. If this human evolution throuth the mediation of the Church strives to know and join itself to the divine action, then we have an apostle, a consecrated person. The vigorous cry of Jeremiah is always real: "O Lord, you have deceived me, and I was deceived; you are stronger than I, and you have prevailed" (Jer. 20:7).

The authors who treat of the evolution of a vocation distinguish different phases on the psychological level.

> At the foundation, we should place a spirit of openness to the will of the Father: a disposition not understood in a passive sense, but active, dynamic, prompt. At the same time, because there is an instinctive tendency in each person to realize himself, the individual places himself in a state of search: the knowledge of self, attention to "signs," reflection on the whole range of possible choices. The state of search implies also an attitude of promptness to commit oneself there where the Lord calls. This attachment is called "a state of offering" which, among all the attitudes sought in a vocation, is the most paradoxical because it is at the same time certainty and expectation, possession and more search. After the phases of search and self-offering, there follows that of realization, a fulfillment which is a continual process and which is never finished. Indeed, these phases: disposition, search, self-offering, fulfillment, are not chronological, one following the other, but simultaneous and distinct [M. Panciera, p. 26].

The individual disposed to listen to the voice of the Father places himself in a state of search to learn his life project, the surroundings, the place, and the way in which he will be able to realize it.

Our Seraphic Father, respecting the gradual development of a vocation after divine inspiration, recognizes the value of the human will in the moment of the determination: *"to leave the world,"* and the choice of the kind of

life: *"this life."*

A life project must be presented to the candidate, which he must know, choose, and embrace.

We know with what insistence Saint Francis repeats in his writings the words: *to observe this life and this Rule* . . . as the Lord told me to speak and to write" (Testament).

The concern to present a life project was joined in Saint Francis with that of conserving in this model the purity, originality, and integrity with which he had received it from the Lord.

Those who are moved "by divine inspiration" to consecrate themselves to God look for and choose even today a very clear Rule of life which demands sacrifice and gives witness.

Analyzing today's vocational scarcity, one can too easily ascribe the fault only to the change in the structures of secular society with the process of secularization and materialization of life, forgetting, unfortunately, that many times we insert into our lifestyle those values of modern society so far from and contrary to "this life and this Rule."

The reflection which Pope Paul VI of revered memory made in his testament is profoundly true today: "Concerning this world: do not think you can help it by assuming its customs and its tastes, but by studying it, loving it, and serving it."

From the honest verification of the excessive adaptation of our life and Rule to the changing standards of modern society, there arises the conviction that vocations are lacking today, not because the "divine inspiration" is less frequent, but because we do not witness to a life and rule which conserve the fundamental values of its origins.

In examining, in 1973, the actuality of the Franciscan Rule, I wrote: "After 750 years, we want to accept from the hands of our Father a Rule ever new, alive, and original, to rediscover that above all else it is a spiritual document. The former prevailing juridical mentality might for some have been able to impede the joy of following the Rule, while with the rediscovery of its gospel reality, everyone can with great joy accept and live it fully" (Circular Letter, October 4, 1973).

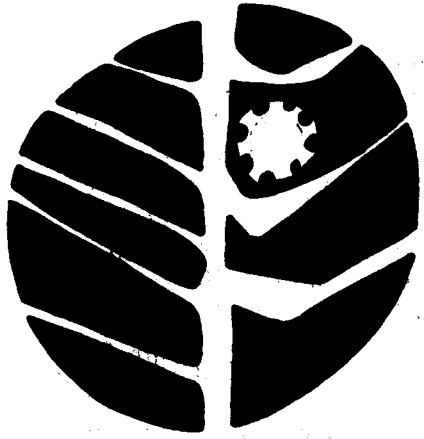
In the discussions and reports on this point by the various language groups at the General Chapter there was a unanimous feeling of urgency to examine the way in which we live our Rule and the influence of our witness on new vocations.

It is beyond discussion that only zealous, happy friars, completely dedicated to Christ and their brothers, can attract the youth of today. Only he who proclaims Christ through the way he lives can merit the others

"wishing to chose this life and come to our friars."

We are often under the illusion that the problem of new vocations is a problem of organization, of publicity, and of undertakings of which we will speak in the third part of this letter. In these first two parts we have paused to meditate and reflect on the value of our vocation and our witness, convinced that the first and most effective promoters of vocations are we ourselves when we are convinced, certain, and happy about our call and when we constantly strive to live "this life and this Rule."

Even in the adaptation to the changed needs of our times, the form of life to which we witness and which we propose must give evidence to certain inspirational principles emerging in the religious life of today, and we must permeate these with our Franciscan charism. We indicate three of these: (a) the rediscovery of the value of ***prayer***, as a personal and irreplaceable encounter with Christ; (b) the urgency of creating authentic ***communities***, and consequently of rediscovering the communitarian value of obedience, and (c) a more adequate explanation of the friar's ***social obligation***. Here we ought to study more deeply the vow of poverty, even on the institutional level (our activity) and the significance of witness which our work (profession), understood as



service, assumes in such a context.

Our Seraphic Father insists in his writings on, and proposes his Rule and his words with, "simplicity and purity; and so you must understand them with simplicity and without comment and observe them in a holy manner until the end" (Testament).

Today's climate leads us to neglect the knowledge and the study of the Rule and the Constitutions, whereas, amid today's abundance of printed words and new theories on the religious life, these texts of ours can give us a secure and open plan for the many qualities and dispositions of every individual.

Just as the Rule is for us today a profound spiritual path, so moreover do the Constitutions give ample space to personal qualities; but, to be able to use these means for the formation of a Franciscan religious personality, it is necessary that the Rule and Constitutions be better

known, studied, and loved.

It is evident that the values proposed in the period of initial formation of the friar must necessarily be continually interiorized, giving attention to the exigencies and the difficulties which the various age groups present. Only with a constant stimulus to rediscover the certainty of one's own vocation and with an effort to give witness to it in an ever better way will we be able to communicate this privilege of God to many more of our fellow men.

III. "Let Him Be Received by Them Kindly."

THE COUNCIL of Trent, with its wise norms for seminaries, wished "to place a check on the unrestrained multitude of clerics." Today we find ourselves in an opposite situation in which we may more easily "receive kindly" those who desire to enter. Let us always remember, however, that the "kindly" of Saint Francis is bound up with the preceding precise dispositions: "divine inspiration" and "the will to choose this life."

In the first two parts of this letter we tried to see the vocational problem primarily in reference to our call, while now we wish to look at the means necessary to aid and develop the growth of the religious and priestly vocation among the men of our time.

The pressing gospel command, "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Mt. 9:38) is not to be understoood in the restricted sense of simply offering a prayer, but in its wider meaning of feeling co-responsible and dedicated to the support of the divine action of choice and formation of vocation with all our human means. The preoccupation of having candidates to the priestly and religious life has always existed in the Church and has been expressed in different forms through the ages, adapting itself from time to time to the exigencies of times and places.

"From the simple acceptance of candidates, to the various forms of recruitment, until the final awareness of an organic and scientific approach to the apostolate of vocations, the way is long and troubled" (M. Panciera, p. 7).

It will be useful and interesting to fix our attention for a moment on the evolution of the vocational apostolate. From the "kind reception" of those who presented themselves spontaneously at the time of Saint Francis and of the entire Middle Ages, there was a move in the past century to the founding of various groups and confraternities which had as their primary purpose "to pray for vocations" according to the command of the Lord. At the beginning of our present century, action began to be joined to prayer with the diffusion of leaflets and pamphlets of information and promotion. In our days, there is a felt need to organize programs of all the initiatives on behalf of vocations. The Second Vatican Council, with the foundation of a clear and coherent ecclesiological doctrine, also makes a great contribution to a new doctrinal and organizational foundation for the vocational problem.

A good twelve passages in the conciliar documents treat directly of the vocation of consecration, the principal references of which can be found in the conciliar decrees *Christus Dominus* (n. 15), *Perfectae Caritatis* (n. 24), *Optatam Totius* (n. 2), *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (n. 11), *Ad Gentes* (nn.16,18,19,38,39,41), and *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (n. 6, 11).

The Second Vatican Council insists on the function and obligation of the Christian community in the apostolate of vocations: "The task of fostering vocations devolves on the whole Christian community" (*Optatam Totius* n. 2).

Reminded of this co-responsibility of the whole people of God about so grave and urgent a problem, how do we friars, individually and as a community, conduct ourselves?

I think that before speaking of action and organization it is necessary to heighten and increase in each friar the joy of his vocation, the desire for the salvation of his brothers, and the zeal for his own perfection.

Celano, in relating the vision of our blessed Father Francis on the future of the Order—"I saw a large number of men coming to us"—describes the dispositions of that first Franciscan community in this way: "The brothers were filled with a salutary joy . . . because they were ardently thirsting for the advantage to be gained by their neighbors whom they wished to grow daily in numbers and to be saved thereby" (1 Celano, 27).

The General Chapter has examined and discussed, and urges research and discussion on, the following points:

- We need to conquer discouragement and indifference by an effort to live our Franciscan vocation ever more authentically. From a renewed zeal for our life, there will arise a greater availability on the part of all for the work of vocations, a work which should have priority and which requires study and effective programs on the provincial and national levels.
- Vocational animation and promotion, developed in different ways, should not be the duty of only one or more assigned friars or of a commission for vocations,

but also the concern and obligation of the entire Province.

• According to the possibilities and the different situations, vocational promotion is directed to boys, adolescents, and young men. The General Chapter insists that pastoral work among the young should have priority as compared with other duties of the apostolate, with the willingness, if necessary, to close houses and works in order to develop the vocational apostolate.

• Title I of chapter II of the Constitutions is dedicated to "Fostering Vocations" with a call for prayer and action. There is the explicit request for a "vocation program" in each Province which should organize days of prayer and prayer experiences, doctrinal and methodological renewal, and the preparation of teaching methods for vocational promotion.

• Provinces which work in the same country should also recognize the need to coordinate their efforts by means of a Secretariat for Vocations on the national level.

• Vocation promoters should be free from other duties, collaborate with diocesan vocation centers, and possibly give impetus to "vocational communities" in which vocations can more easily make first contact with our family. All initiatives at this level are destined to increase and have greater binding force as long as the problem of vocations continues to be one of the pressing problems of the Christian community.

• In many Provinces the first contact with candidates occurs in the minor seminary. There are today many objections and difficulties concerning the minor seminary, but various psychopedagogical studies have ascertained the existence and the validity of a vocation from childhood. "An inquiry made in France among some thousands of seminarians, young priests, and adult vocations had this result: 63.8% thought about becoming priests before the age of twelve" (M. Panciera, p. 25).

Because the dynamism of vocations can be present at different ages, even in the early years, it is necessary to use all means, even the minor seminary in countries where it has been tried, in order that, under the influence of grace, the seed of a vocation can grow and mature until the definitive choice of a state of life.

Besides the care of minor seminaries, the Provinces should give special attention to the search for the formation of adult vocations; they should work out a program for admission and discernment and give new value to the vocational promotion for religious brothers, their formation, and their role in the community.

Your Minister, most affectionately
in our Seraphic Father,

Fr. Vitale M. Bommarco

Rome, September 17, 1978
Feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis

▲

Dialogue with "the Little Man"

Me: You, little man of Assisi, are
little in every tangible quality of human living—
Little you are in stature, little in a little town in a
little shop in a little room.
Little you are in learning, known to make grammatical errors
in your little instructions for your friars minor.
Little you have of possessions: one tunic, a cord, a pair
of sandals, and a staff. An inspiration from the Gospel.
Little understanding do people have of you. You left your
father's big business; you laughed and drank in taverns
no more; you disowned your horse, armour, and sword,
and became a little little.
Why? You, little man of Assisi, why?

Francis: A little sharing, my dear son.
It is when you become little in yourself
that He becomes big in you.

Frank Chooi, O.F.M.

The Martyrdom of Saint Peter Baptist

DIDACUS CASANAVE, O.F.M.

FRAY MARCELO DE Ribadeneyra was Saint Peter Baptist's companion and confidant during the two years in which he was stationed at the Franciscan mission at Miaco (Kyoto, the then capital of Japan). He remained the Saint's subject for another year, while stationed at Usaca (Osaka) and Nangasaqui (Nagasaki). Fray Marcelo and the three other friars stationed at Nagasaki were ordered expelled from the country by a local magistrate. They were placed in a Macao bound Portuguese ship, and since the ship was not yet ready to depart guards were posted to prevent their debarking.

When the edict condemning all those who tried to proselytize Japanese citizens was promulgated, the six friars stationed at Kyoto and Osaka were imprisoned and then brought to Nagasaki for their execution. The Portuguese ship, however, was so slow in transacting its business that the Nagasaki friars were still detained at the harbor when the friars from the north were crucified. The guards could keep the friars from debarking, but they could not hold them incommunicado. With so many merchants and stevedores coming and going, the friars knew everything that was going on in the city.

The persecution of 1597 was directed only against those who were very actively engaged in the work of Christianization. Many Christians, including several Portuguese merchants, witnessed the crucifixion of the protomartyrs. Fray Marcelo received his information from firsthand sources.

Brother Didacus Casanave plans to publish a complete biography of St. Peter Baptist in translation from Fray Marcelo de Ribadeneyro's book, as well as a paper based on another section of the same book, written to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first Franciscans' arrival in the Philippines. Brother Didacus, a member of the Province of St. John the Baptist, who holds a degree in civil engineering, is now semi-retired and serving as refectorian at Duns Scotus College, Southfield, MI.

Few men could have written as accurate an account of Saint Peter's martyrdom as he, therefore; and no one could have written a more accurate biography.

AS FRAY PEDRO Bautista approached Calvary, he asked which of the crosses was his, and when it was pointed out to him he ran to embrace it and woo it with sweet words. When they tied him to the cross, he asked his executioners to nail him to it so that his death might be as close to that of Christ as possible. Then, with his eyes directed toward heaven, he became so enraptured in his approaching glory that he could not listen to any of the inopportune voices pleading for his blessings and prayers. After a while, he sang the psalm *Laudate Pueri Dominum*, and as he finished he heard the voice of a child asking, "What are you singing, Father?" Though the least movement of his head was extremely painful—because of the iron collar, a feature peculiar to the Japanese method of crucifixion—he looked down beneath his left arm where he saw the holy child Antonio. In spite of the excruciating pain, he managed to smile lovingly at the young boy who had actually been his teacher.

As he hung on the cross, Fray Pedro Bautista reminisced about his earliest days and months in Japan. He was forty-eight years old when he arrived, and what seemed relatively easy to the younger friars, he found extremely hard to learn. The fear crossed his mind that he could be the Commissary of the Franciscan Order in Japan, the prelate of the friars and their spiritual director, but . . . never a real missionary unless . . . . For, how could he be a missionary to the Japanese when he could not communicate with them? And how could he communicate with them when he found it impossible to learn their language?

This was the situation at the Franciscan mission in Miaco (Kyoto) until two little acolytes, aged eight or nine, took the commissary under their tutelage. Antonio and Luis, the youngest acolytes in the mission, taught him how to pronounce the Japanese syllables the way little children are taught to pronounce them. It was thus that our holy martyr became so proficient that he developed into a great missionary, in a language learned from the mouths of little children.

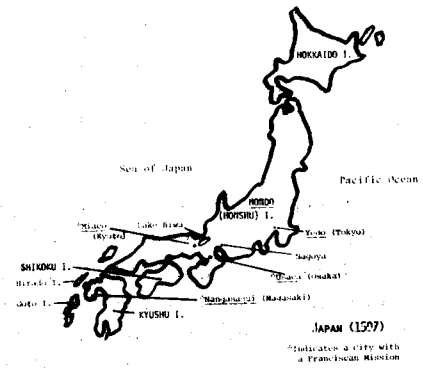
Little Antonio and little Luis had grown very much in the four years that had passed. They had grown into very mature twelve-year-olds who took their Faith so

seriously that when given a chance to free themselves, they chose martyrdom with the friars.

But tied there to his little cross, Antonio still looked like a child, at least to this middle-aged friar who had been his student. At this moment in his recollections, one of the executioners approached the boy and plunged a spear through his heart!

Fray Pedro Bautista returned to earth in an instant. Any selfish idea that he had harbored of dying alone with his God, disappeared with the execution of the child. It was only then that he looked around him and realized that he was in the middle of all the crosses. Since our Lord had chosen him to be the valiant captain of such an illustrious company of soldiers of the Cross, He ordered that he should be crucified in their midst. His five sons and subjects were stretched out to his right. They were Fray Martin de la Ascensión and Fray Francisco Blanco, priests; Fray Felipe de Jesús, an ordained deacon; and Fray Francisco de San Miguel and Fray Gonzalo García, lay brothers.

One row of ten crucified Japanese stretched out to the left and another of the same number to the right of this group of six friars. These twenty Japanese included three Jesuits, Brothers Paul Miqui, João Goto, and Diego Quisay, the last two invested with the habit in prison



just a few days before their martyrdom. The other Japanese included, besides the holy children mentioned earlier, fifteen heroic laymen, some of them almost as young as the holy children. They ranged from a thirteen-year-old to a grandfather, from middle-class professional men to ordinary laborers. All of them were Franciscan tertiaries, and all of them very active in catechetical work.

To adorn his crown with still another merit, our Lord allowed Fray Pedro Bautista to be the last one to die. He had to die for each and every one of them and felt a lance pierce his heart every time a spear penetrated the heart of one of his beloved children. He blessed each and every one of them as he breathed his last. Then, as he saw two of the executioners approaching him, he intoned Christ's last words: "In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum." Two lances pierced his heart simultaneously, as the last word left his lips. As his soul departed to rejoice in its eternal inheritance, the blood flowed from his sides as from a forge of divine Love. His blood, like flaming metal, ignited the hearts of those who were present in a great love and devotion toward our Lord. At the sight of the glory of God shining so brightly in the triumph of his glorious Saint, those who were present praised him and his works.

The events described in this account took place on a hill overlooking the city of Nagasaki, on a Friday, February 5, 1597.[1]

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[1](Trans. note) St. Peter Baptist and his companions, the witnesses of Christ, the Twenty-Six Protomartyrs of Japan, were beatified September 14, 1627, by Pope Urban II. They were canonized by Pope Pius IX, on June 8, 1862.

The main theme of the episode that appears here, the crucifixion of St. Peter Baptist, is an almost literal translation of pp. 549-50 of Fray Marcelo de Ribadeneyra's *Historia* of the Franciscan Order in the Far East, the first edition of which was printed in Barcelona in 1601. Adaptation for this version includes a flash-back and a few explanations taken from elsewhere in the 650-page book.

Only the effects of the iron collar are described in the crucifixion of St. Peter Baptist. For a more detailed explanation of its use, see the account of St. Philip of Jesus's crucifixion, p. 571. For a complete description of the causes of the persecution and the manner in which it was carried out, cf. pp. 321-537. For the names of the protomartyrs and their individual biographies, cf. pp. 539-650. Finally, for a biography of Fray Marcelo, cf. pp. xii-xxviii, xxviii, 343-44, 434, and 454. The dates of beatification and canonization come from the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967 edition, vol. 7, p. 835.

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Congratulations to Father John Vaughn

Elected Minister General June 1979

We would like to extend our heartiest congratulations to Father John Vaughn, O.F.M., upon his recent election to the post of Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor. Before becoming Minister Provincial of the Santa Barbara (California) Province, Father John had served in Guadalajara, Mexico, taught at St. Anthony's Seminary, Santa Barbara, and been Assistant Novice Master and Novice Master for his Province. He studied at the Gregorian University in Rome, where he received a Licentiate degree. He is the second American to be elected to the office of Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor.

Sharing Franciscan Life

CONSTANTINE POHLMANN, O.F.M.

FRANCIS LEFT the attractive inclination to withdraw completely into solitude to lead a contemplative life. The Spirit of God revealed to him through Sister Clare and Brother Sylvester: "I want you to go out and preach, because God has not called you to live for your own sake alone, but also for the salvation of your fellowmen." And the Saint's answer to this message was: "Let us go in the name of the Lord."

Thus it happened that he created something wholly new, and in fact not so much according to a well laid plan, but in answer to a charismatic impulse. His was a community which distinguished itself from the customary monastic communities of the day in practically every direction. Thereby it also pointed the way for future communities. This religious brotherhood, according to the standards of its day, introduced something new and revolutionary, because whatever had been linked with the notion of an Order was now turned upside down.

- The religious communities of the day had stability. The Franciscans were mobile, and not attached to just one convent.
- The former communities had the principle of hierarchy, with the abbot at the top for life. This group was supposed to be a community of brothers, conscious indeed of the office of superior, but an office limited to short terms.
- The old orders had common property and were completely self-supporting. These brethren wanted to own nothing and lived from hand to mouth, depending on the kind gifts of others.
- The former sealed themselves off from the world with high walls and almost absolute enclosure. This new community wanted to open itself to the world.

We see the direction expressed in the early writings of some strong allegorical stories under the title of "The Pact of Francis with Lady Poverty." The brethren lead poverty personified up a hill, show her the whole world, and say: "That is our convent." The whole wide world becomes the stage of the brothers: they do not bind themselves to one place, but conceive of their role in life as that of wandering pilgrims and guests. Thus as they pass through new regions, they gain new horizons. Accordingly, their grasp of newness and of being on the way, as found in the writings of the New Testament and early Christendom, are likewise central for Saint Francis. For him and his brothers, a life of cramped and stuck-in-the-mud regimented order is an impossible task.

Thus Saint Francis and his brothers reach out to the people, in city and village, in the squares and on the streets. They work with the farmers to earn their bread. Or they preach the word of God, encourage, admonish, comfort, and help the sick and the poor, who are their favorite people—the object of their special care and solicitude. Francis entered into solidarity particularly with these. The kiss of the leper is a sign, which goes much deeper than a fleeting kiss would let you surmise. In his meeting with men in need, Francis meets God. This was his basic experience in the beginning. It brought about the result that from then on Francis saw his vocation, for the sake of God, in being close to men, helping them. He became an instrument of peace for the world because he stood in the midst of the world, even though his life was not of this world.

As regards to means of serving the world by being in the world, Francis did not engage in any theological or pastoral considerations. A minimum of laws and "institutionalization" was to leave room for a maximum of Gospel and spirituality. Francis hardly thought of the what; his great concern was the *how* of his way of life. He knew how to animate himself and his brothers, by the example of his totally Christian life to help build the kingdom of God. Through the witness of their lives, they were to serve the Church and the world. For his reason he wrote to the Chapter: "Honor and praise him with your works. For he has sent you into the world to bear witness to his voice by your word and work."

There existed among the brethren a type of human solidarity that the Second Vatican Council later described in these words: "*Gaudium et spes*. the joy and hope, the sadness and anxiety of people today, especially of the poor and distressed, are also the joy and hope, the sadness and anxiety of the followers of Christ. And there is nothing truly human which does not find an echo in their hearts." Our General Constitutions say:

> Wherever they are and whatever they do, the friars minor are to be a sign pointing to the coming of the kingdom of God. They should proclaim it, as they call men to

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Father Constantine Pohlmann, O.F.M., is a member of the Saxony Province ordained in 1949. He delivered this paper at the Assisi Chapter of the Order of Friars Minor in October of 1976. The present translation is reprinted with permission from the PFL Resource *for October-November, 1977.*

conversion by their example and their words, as they invite them to love God and their fellow man. In this way they contribute to the growing transformation of human society into one family, bound together by brotherly love [Spiritual document, Art. 61].

This is a hazardous goal for which the lesser brothers of all the centuries have worked in their own unique way. They preach at home and in the mission and administer the sacraments. They found hospitals, homes for the aged and for orphans, boarding schools, universities, language institutes, and even banks like the "montes pietatis" to help financially poor people to escape usury and get short term interest free loans. They mediate between warring parties and cities. They have been a living example of brotherly communion among men. We can't omit, either, the warehouses of foodstuffs friars have established in areas of hunger and drought, aid for moral outcasts, aid for development coupled with missionary presence, homes for students, schools for the poor, adult education centers. Over and above all this come the many visits and conversations which serve as a chance to listen to people, to make them happy, to give them solace and encouragement, to help them become more human. In many countries this is done by small communities of the brethren plainly and simply living and working with the people. If these communities are inwardly strong, such an apostolate can have a real witness value.

This turning to the world and to men should be carried on with imagination today and guided into new paths. We must often go further and make these social outcasts our primary concern. A one-sided hobnobbing with the rich and the learned, with the rulers and the powerful, is not Franciscan, even though these groups should not be excluded from our care, and not just because we need them to help us help the poor.

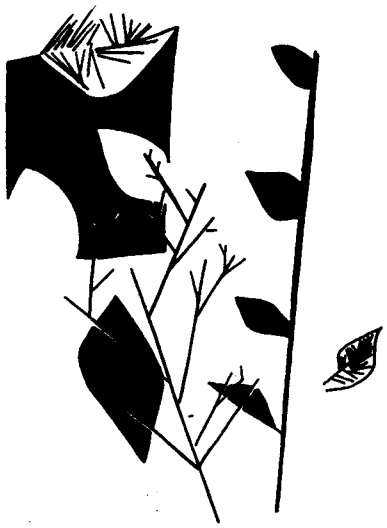
Francis looks upon himself in the perspective of Jesus, who gave his life for men, living completely for the Father and completely for men. "He hung on the cross for souls." This little word, *for*, is crucial. We speak of Jesus as "the man for others," as "being for others." Well, Francis adopted this ideal of "being for others" as his own identifying hallmark in living according to the Gospel.

But here comes the big problem: How is this "being for others" going to happen in us? From the beginning until today, the Franciscan religious community has lived more orr less in a state of tension between community and mission, between living in their own convent

groups and turning toward other people in a caring and brotherly fashion. In the earliest days, however, there were no convents. The brothers lived and worked together wherever they happened to be, whether in a shed or a church. Soon there developed at least some rudiments of stable convents: Rivo Torto and the early Portiuncula, even if these were still so primitive that they had to mark off their sleeping areas on the floor with chalk. Still, with the growing number of the brothers, it became necessary to have communities bound to a certain place. This was so already in the last years of Francis's life, so that we can say community living played an important role from the Order's very beginning. Francis, moreover, sent his followers out two by two, never alone. Even the hermitages provided a minimum of communal living: a common place of habitation, obedience to superior, common praying of the hours. Above all this, however, there is something which cannot be contained in the statutes but is still most meaningful: brotherly love. The First Rule says, simply and forcefully: "Let each one love and care for his brother, as a mother loves and nourishes her child: for this is how the Lord will show him his favor [grace]."

In the course of the centuries, convent life developed many monastic features: high walls, very strict enclosure, detailed order of the day. Now we sense that much of this contradicts the earliest ideals of Saint Francis, and we are trying to dig out the things of timeless value from under the crust that circumstances have accumulated. We are trying to restore the original picture of Franciscan living. On the one hand, we realize that we cannot start over from scratch, just as we know that Christian life today cannot simply impose on everyone the ideal of common life depicted in Acts 2. Still, this somehow remains our ideal. Whatever name we give it, we feel a nostalgia for the primitive Franciscan life, which was led more by charismatic impulse than by rules, more by creativity than by statues, more by fraternal deeds than by words, more by openness than by cloisters, more by Gospel simplicity than by planned strategy, more by imaginative action than by foot-dragging reaction. We know that precisely this Franciscan way of life so fascinated and attracted the men of that time that whole crowds of followers entered the Order. People looked less to the individual works and activities of the friars than to this wholly new model of brotherly living that they manifested.

What does this model look like? One of its facets looks to men in the world, while the other is turned toward the community



within the convent. Francis compares this community to a family: the brothers, he says, should show one another that they are members of the same family (2 Rule, 6). Here again Francis reads something from the Gospel and lives it. He observes how Jesus is present for men and how he motivates his disciples to live in the same fashion. At the same time he observes how Jesus ever and again gathers his little family of Apostles, how they live together, pray with one another, have a common fund, and how he occasionally leads them to a "solitary place" so that they can be with each other to rest and gather new strength.

Franciscan community embraces the following: looking after the young and the old in a brotherly manner; love, understanding, and careful attention to the "otherness" of others; sharing of meals and domestic duties; conversation which aids not only in work but also in recreation, resolution of conflicts, and common prayer. Above all this, there has to be brotherly sharing. And only a true sense of poverty makes a real brotherly community possible.

Life in community provides us lesser brothers with new strength, encouragement, and an on-going opportunity for refining our motives. It is indispensable, therefore, that we live and work in community, even though the very best community will harbor problems and tensions arising from the differences of its individual members.

Our apostolate has a certain priority in that we live not for ourselves but for others. But we can sustain this presence for others only if we carry out a constant renewal of our motives through our common conversation, prayer, meditation, and recreation with our brothers in the community. Otherwise we get deflated, lose our inspiration, and allow our spirituality to atrophy.

So there will always remain the tension between outwardness and inwardness, between life in Franciscan brotherhood and its radiation outward. This is only to be expected; we just have to recognize this tension, bear with

it, and work through it, keeping in mind our life together as brothers and our fraternity with others. We become more conscious of the tension when we note that objectively the communication with others has priority, while subjectively the fraternal life within holds first place. But perhaps the question of "priority" between the two is just as futile as the question, "Which is more important: breathing in, or breathing out?" The main thing is that we look at these two sides of our life, not as mutually exclusive, but rather as two sides of the same coin.

We are not free to question whether our communities have to be open to the outside. On the contrary, we must nowadays look for new directions in our apostolates and in our openness to the outside. Questions arise about the *what* and the *when*, about the *how much* and the *how*. And we should be constantly able to render a responsible account of ourselves. To facilitate this process, I would like to offer a few suggestions and stimulating passages from the Gospel, the Rule, and the General Constitutions.

1. Apostolic work in and for the world is our task; i.e., we should live, not for ourselves, but for others. We must find new ways to do this today, new ways to attain new goals, but without neglecting yesterday's proven forms (CCGG, Art. 8, 100, 1).

2. If our work toward the outside is to have a real power to radiate into the world, it demands real fraternal, communal living. Otherwise it isn't genuine. The ideal of our own community could well be that of the primitive Christian community of Jerusalem as portrayed in Acts 2:44-47:

> Those who believed, shared all things in common; they would sell their property and goods, dividing everything on the basis of each one's need. They went to the temple area together every day, while in their homes they broke bread. With exultant and sincere hearts they took their meals in common, praising God and winning the approval of all the people.

3. Only if we have become "men of God" can we be wholly and entirely "men for others." Our personal prayer and common prayer, meditation and worship, are the sources of our apostolate. These sources are particularly fruitful when the whole community is nourished by them and renews them through new forms and frequent participation. In this fashion, common prayer can become the expression of common belief and of life in common.

4. Franciscan brotherly communal life has to keep its priority. It must not be weakened or called into question because of our

interaction with others. Burdened as we may be with work outside our convents (in parish, school, research center, hospital, etc.), we dare not neglect our primary commitment to our community. Whoever fails to heed this caution and lets a task on the outside take priority over his community duties, is going the wrong way and is actually endangering the community. He should have his motives renewed in a friendly but emphatic way.

Communal living consists of a community house and table, common goals of life and human interaction/exchange, and communal prayer. Only if these factors are solicitously provided for can the brothers "build the common life as a family united in Christ" (CCGG, Art. 40).

If a certain good work is hard to reconcile with the practice of common life, this is not sufficient reason to exclude it completely on a short-term basis. But the major condition for taking on such a mission remains that it cannot last too long—or at least, that the possibility of participating in communal life still exist (CCGG, Art. 97, 2). "Superiors should be watchful that the brothers not be bound to commitments that are incompatible with their life according to the Rule" (CCGG, Art. 91, 1).

The enclosure receives new motivation in the General Constitutions. Its role is not so much to ward off danger, as to safeguard solitude and privacy. Each community with all its freedom and openness to the world needs an area of privacy, which should normally not be disturbed. Otherwise we become physically and psychologically overtaxed. And this should hold for all convents without exception.

According to the freedom our Rule gives us in the choice of work, our Order is very adaptable and allows room for charismatic impulses and for new movements. Our fraternal community with others will develop different characteristics in various countries. Eventually the local statutes should contain different expressions of this variety.

Very often the brothers in one convent carry on various labors within or outside the convent, while for the rest they live their life in common. An ideal situation seems to be that found in team ministry, which has special sign value for human integration as well as for the union of all men among one another and with God.

The Nicaraguan poet Ernest Cardenal wrote a volume called the "Book of Love," a book worth reading despite its independent tone. In it he says, "All religious living is simply a question of love." So our living for others, flowing from the spirit and power of Jesus's "existence for others," has love as its essence—love with

two dimensions: one toward people in the world, the other toward the brothers in the community. And these two dimensions create a fruitful tension. Although such tension can, if misunderstood, cause great difficulties (to which each of us can witness), it can also be seen as a dynamism reinforcing both dimensions—facilitating mutual support of the two.

It may be that an "absolute" balance between the dimensions is not the ideal, not even desirable; for each of us lives in a world of his own to some extent, with his own patterns and laws. One leans more toward the outside, while the other favors the inside; and each one bears a wound here and there. But I am convinced that if we just make the initial effort to live both dimensions and to unite them in the one universal dimension of love, the weaknesses of one will be healed again and again by the strength of the other.

We should let ourselves be spurred on by outstanding example:

- The community of the Apostles, who lived with the Lord and became his messengers to the world;
- The primitive community of Jerusalem, who were "one heart and one soul," and who shone so brightly that they were beloved of all and won many new disciples for the Lord;
- The first Franciscan communities, whose members lived with one another and for one another, and who carried the Gospel from the Portiuncula into the world, making their lives an unmistakable witness to the love of Jesus Christ.

The love of the Lord will also strengthen us to give this witness. To paraphrase Cardenal: Just as all religious living, so also is the brotherly sharing with others "simply a question of love."

God's Will

Better
to sing
The harmony scored
Than
To be sharp or flat
But
Who can really
Read

Susan Saint Sing

Infirmary Escort

Dedicated to the memory of Reverend Mother Mary Immaculata, P.C.C., Foundress of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Roswell, New Mexico

i

The Mass is ended.
We take up bell, candles, and psalm
to meet the priest
bringing the King to the one
who cannot come to Him.

The tinkling sound is more music
than alert
as the small procession moves
through hushed hosannas—
bell-chime, candle-flame, praise
to the Lord of heaven and earth—
down the cloisters, up the stairs,
past cells that stage the lonely
drama of sacrifice,
to the immaculate room,
the sick-bed
where our worn Mother
barely stirs, but waits.

We find our knees in the bright silence.

ii

Her eyes open to the lifted Lamb,
in that sea of whiteness—
sudden pools of blue,
deep with memories,
where welcome gleams like sunrise
in vast Southwestern skies.
One thinks of fountains
springing up to eternal life.

Body of Christ.
Amen.
Lids close over the waters.
There is no need of prayer;
One greater than our hearts is there.

iii

The air is charged with mystery of faith
as we retrace the hallowed path
through rows of nuns
leaning on edge of worship.

The enclosure lock clicks.
Candle-flame catches breath still fragrant
with the kiss of Christ
and dies of it.
The silver tongue falls mute until—tomorrow.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

A REVIEW ARTICLE

Faith of Our Fathers:

Religion in American History

JAMES S. DALTON, PH.D.

The Faith of Our Fathers series of books reviewed in this article was published in 1977 by Consortium Books (Box 9001, Wilmington, NC) and includes the following volumes (cloth, $9.50; paper, $5.95):

1. *Jesus Christ*, by E. Glenn Hinson. Pp. xvi-187.
2. *Reform and Renewal*, by John P. Donnelly, S.J. — Pp. viii-177.
3. *The Pilgrims*, by Dewey D. Wallace, Jr. Pp. xviii-240.
4. *Religion, Awakening, and Revolution*, by Martin E. Marty. Pp. xiii-178.
5. *A New Christian Nation*, by Louis B. Weeks. Pp. vi-134.
6. *The Church Goes West*, by Myron J. Fogde. Pp. viii-231.
7. *Destiny and Disappointment*, by Raymond H. Bailey. Pp. x-140.
8. *Change and Challenge*, by Jonathan A. Lindsey. Pp. viii-144.

Over the past fifteen or twenty years a virtual explosion of new knowledge about the history of religion in the United States of America has occurred. Spurred on by the celebration of the bicentennial this explosion brought with it a number of new approaches to the study of this religious history based on the methods of social sciences such as sociology, anthropology and computerized quantitative studies. Disciplines such as the History of Religions and Literary Criticism have also contributed to new and exciting insights into the story of American religion and religions. This situation has created a dilemma for the non-specialist reader of American history facing a maze of new scholarly studies appearing on the current market. The time has come for a thorough review of the large body of literature in American religious history to make it accessible to the ordinary reader.

James S. Dalton, Ph.D. (University of Chicago), is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Siena College.

In response to this situation Consortium Books has come up with an excellent set of eight books under the general title of *Faith Of Our Fathers*. This new series begins to fill the gap between the specialist in American religious history and the interested general reader. Taking into account the most recent research and methodologies, *Faith Of Our Fathers* is written for a public not acquainted with the technical problems and sometimes impenetrable jargon of the specialist. This should not be taken to mean that specialists in religious history would not also benefit from a reading of those volumes exhibiting as they do a good deal of careful research and some penetrating insights. However, this series is primarily intended to aid the non-specialist in developing a basic knowledge of recent developments in the study of religion in American history.

Faith Of Our Fathers would also be useful for the classroom on the advanced high school or introductory college level. Several of the volumes could be utilized as well in short courses for adult education programs.

Perhaps the most efficient way to introduce the present reader to *Faith Of Our Fathers* is by briefly surveying the eight individual volumes. In this way one could select the particular volumes of special interest or commence a systematic reading of the entire series.

The first volume *Jesus Christ* does not begin with the American religious situation. Concerned rather with the development of the early Christian community, it seeks to examine the origins of that religious tradition which has most profoundly shaped the American scene. Although written by a Southern Baptist, religious faith enriches rather than detracts from historical scholarship. Professor E. Glenn Hinson (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky) exhibits a firm grasp on important recent developments in biblical scholarship and how these have affected the understanding of early Christianity. He provides an excellent summary for anyone who does not have the time or technical expertise to wade through contemporary scholarly and methodological disputes. A rather sketchy survey of the period from 200-400 A.D. appears to be the single flaw in the volume. The sections analyzing development of the New Testament are excellent.

The second volume *Reform and Renewal* by John Patrick Donnelly, S.J. (associate professor of History at Marquette University), concerns itself with the Middle Ages and Reformation. Although not as strong as the first volume, it is nonetheless a clearly presented summary of the period with careful attention paid to the social, economic and political contexts of religious events. A rare treat for the reader is provided by the attention which this study pays to the literary side of the Middle Ages. Professor Donnelly draws a surprising number of insights from medieval poets such as Sidney and Spencer. In addition, a clearly writ-

ten exposition of the Reformation period is without polemical biases. This section, however, suffers from a lack of attention to Catholic reform in Spain and a sketchy analysis of the role of the Jesuits in the Catholic Counterreformation.

Volume three is entitled *The Pilgrims* and begins the series' treatment of American religious history. In his contribution Professor Dewey D. Wallace, Jr. (George Washington University), attempts to argue a two-pronged thesis: 1) settlement of New England was intended to duplicate the religious forms of the old world, e.g., religious uniformity and 2) the experience of the Puritans in their new American environment made this impossible and necessitated new religious patterns, e.g., religious pluralism. The Puritan attempt to continue the ways of the old world and the breakdown of this attempt followed by creation of new religious, social and political forms are closely examined. Puritan theology is placed firmly in its historical setting. Many readers will also be interested in Professor Wallace's excellent summary of recent studies of the Salem Witchcraft trials. Although the final chapter concerning Indians and slavery appears to be an afterthought it does take seriously the dilemma which their tragic history raises for the history of religion in America.

Religion, Awakening and Revolution, the fourth volume of the series, is another careful and readable study from the pen of one of the most prolific scholars of American religion, Professor Martin E. Marty of the University of Chicago. Intriguingly, he *begins* with a historical sketch of Indians and Blacks and the challenge which they present to the theme of "equality" in American religious history, a theme he previously emphasized in his National-Book-Award winning *Righteous Empire*. The major concern of the present volume is the period spanning the First Great Awakening of 1735-1750 to the American Revolution of a generation later. Professor Marty analyzes the First Great Awakening as what one social anthropologist, Ernest Gellner, has called a "hump of transition," Here the old symbols of Puritan America were transformed by a new set of American institutions and values. This transformation is then linked into the political transformation of the American Revolution. These two events of revival and revolution in the eighteenth century decisively shaped the new American nation which emerged at the end of this period.

The next volume of the series, entitled *A New Christian Nation* is, perhaps, the weakest volume of *Faith Of Our Fathers*. Although adequate, the treatment appears overly textbookish. Simply retelling the familiar story of the early nineteenth century, Professor Louis B. Weeks does not attempt any significant analysis of the importance of interrelationships of these events. In chapter six, for example, the topics of temperance, women and slavery are not related to the revivalism, theology or social changes occurring at the same time.

The Church Goes West by Professor Myron J. Fogde (Augustana College) is a striking analysis of the period of American history referred to as the "Gilded Age" extending from after the Civil War until the opening of the twentieth century. Although the title is slightly deceptive (one chapter deals with the mid- and far West only briefly), the book delves deeply into the religiously earthshaking changes of a catastrophic civil war, rapidly developing urban industrial centers, Catholic and Jewish immigration, the rise of evolutionary science and biblical criticism, and the appearance of new religious movements. Religious responses to Reconstruction, the Spanish-American War are also included in Professor Fogde's analysis. Liberalism and the Fundamentalist movement, missionary enterprises, Sunday School and Temperance, and the new Holiness movement are seen as only a few of the Protestant responses to a rapidly changing American society. This was a crucial period for the shaping of many of the religious patterns of twentieth century America.

Volume seven, *Destiny and Disappointment*, by Reverend Raymond H. Bailey (pastor of the First Baptist Church in Newport, Kentucky), draws its inspiration from a recently popular "civil religion" theory which, in the author's own words, asserts that "The history of Christianity in the United States can't be found in denominational statistics and creeds; it is revealed in the foreign policy, economic structures, social relations and moral values of the society." (p. 11) In this volume Reverend Bailey ranges widely in these areas covering the period from the First World War, through the Depression of the 1930's and the years of World War II, up to the early 1950's Touching on various aspects of American life and letters (his analysis of the 1920's and 1930's is especially enlivened with literary allusions), he examines liberal and fundamentalist responses to the "roaring twenties" and the depression; the role of religion in the "just war" against Hitler; the "coming of age" of the American Catholic Church after the second war; and the significance of post-war Catholic figures such as John Courtney Murray, Cardinal Francis Spellman, Dorothy Day and Bishop Fulton J. Sheen.

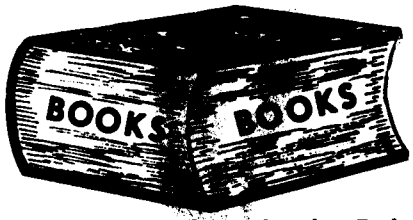
The final volume of the series is entitled *Change and Challenge*. Jonathan A. Lindsey, a professional librarian (Meredith College, Raleigh, North Carolina), concerns himself with an overview of the confusing and complex religious developments from 1950 until 1975. Most intriguing about Mr. Lindsey's treatment is the way in which he organizes his rather diffuse materials. After an initial general chapter he divides the book into units on theology (especially that

of Paul Tillich and Reinhold Neibuhr), ritual, social action, religious movements and the responses of established churches to the changing situation. One feels a need for more extensive interpretation but, perhaps, the events described in this volume are too close to us for such in depth analysis. Mr. Lindsey's study will be especially valuable to those seeking a way to organize the confusing religious situation in America over the last twenty-five years.

In conclusion, the *Faith Of Our Fathers* series is an excellent way of reading oneself through the history of religion in America, although those who wish to pursue this reading further will not find too much help in most of the volumes (only five have lists of suggested readings or footnotes; none include indices). Volumes one, three, four and six are excellent while two, seven and eight are very good. Only volume five can be classified as weak.

Faith Of Our Fathers is not only a set worth reading for the information and approaches which the series represents. It is also a sign that the age of denominational polemics and providential history in descriptions of American religion are drawing to a close. Scholars from various religious communities have succeeded here in giving balanced and fair assessments of the impact of religion on the United States. It can be recommended for believing Christians and Jews seeking to examine their religious roots. It would also satisfy the critical non-believer who seeks to understand the enormous impact that religion has had on the development of American history and culture. Consortium Books is to be congratulated for this impressive contribution to the spread of the knowledge of religion in America.

★



Communion with God: The Pathways of Prayer. By Sister Immaculata, O.C.D. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. xii-147. Paper, $2.50.

Reviewed by Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., well known author and Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Roswell, NM.

Communion with God is rather a large treasure for so small a chest. This unpretentious looking little paperback would have value if only for its gentle refutation of the all too widely accepted premise that prayer is extremely difficult—an abstruse art for the spiritual elite and sheer rock-splitting for the rest of mankind.

Sister Immaculata, O.C.D., a Carmelite nun from a monastery unidentified here, gently slips this premise away like a rug from under one's feet and leaves her readers very happily on their backs looking up at a new sun of warming simplicity and engaging light.

So many dour treatises have been written on the difficulties of prayer. Without denying that prayer calls for effort, for self-discipline, for the perseverance which comes hard to a fallen and fickle race, the author presents prayer as the natural idiom of man. If it is difficult, it is usually we who make it so. It cannot be all that agonizing to communicate with a dearly loved Person.

Much of this small volume is the author's commentary on the works of Saint Teresa of Avila, notably her *Way of Perfection*, and gives a good sampling of the teaching of St. John of the Cross, quite a number of excerpts from the writings of Father Garrigou-Lagrange, Brother Lawrence, *The Imitation of Christ*, and the *Spiritual Legacy* of Sister Mary of the Trinity, a Poor Clare nun of modern times. It is a lively commentary with its own witness of experience to add to the classics. Sister Immaculata's insights on the subject of faith with which she begins her work are fresh and penetrating. "The man who believes sees; and the more he believes the more he sees" (p. 8). This cuts straight across both languor and the aggressiveness of some modern approaches which agree to believe when they have seen.

The same straightforwardness prevails throughout. Witness this incisive comment: " . . .we see that in our prosperity we were walking in darkness, and if not in serious sin, at least we were living for ourselves, with that dullness to Divine realities which can never be cleared away without the cleansing power of suffering" (p. 17).

Sister Immaculata is not afraid to offer some signposts with the surety of one who knows where she is going because she has already often been there. "God is very disappointed if we do not want what he wants to give" (p. 23). Nor to declare that "Perhaps not all at once, but sooner or later all the personal disorders will appear and have to be removed before there can be any progress" (p. 38).

There is a simplicity about this whole book which gives unmistakable evidence that the author is herself a woman of prayer. She does not need to be clever. There is no ostentatiousness of style. Only, throughout, the ring of simple truth. Directors of novices should find this little volume very helpful in outlining their own instructions on prayer to beginners. Then the directors could use it themselves. As could all of us who sincerely wish to grow in a life of prayer.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Make Space, Make Symbols: A Personal Journey into Prayer. By Keith Clark, O.F.M.Cap. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 112. Paper, $2.45.

This eminently readable book is a theological and experiential treatise on the perennial problem of the serious Christian and/or religious: prayer. Well aware that prayer

consists in making us available to answer the knock of the Lord (Rev. 3:20), Father Clark highlights the import and illustrates ways of creating opportunities for prayer. Included in his approach is the selection of *your* places for prayer, *your* times for prayer, *your* words (or lack of words) for prayer. Brief chapters on faithfulness in prayer, return to prayer, self-knowledge in prayer complete a personal account of life with God that many people of prayer will be able to identify with.

Separated Brethren: A Survey of Protestant, Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, and Other Denominations in the United States. By William J. Whalen. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. 3rd rev. ed. Pp. 252, including bibliography and index. Paper, $5.95.

After an introductory essay on the American religious scene and a chapter delineating the major differences between Protestantism and Catholicism, the author proceeds to give historical and doctrinal accounts of the major world religions with adherents in the United States. Not only are main-line Protestants like Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians surveyed, but also smaller groups like Mennonites, Moravians, and Coventers. Unitarian-universalists, Eastern Orthodox, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Christian Scientists are described. A section on cults gives background on Hare Krishna, Moonies, and Scientology. Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism are also treated, in so far as they are found in the United States. Popularly and interestingly written, *Separated Brethren* is a valuable reference book for any library, public or private.

The Purpose of Authority? A Recent Emphasis. By Lucius Annese. Andover, MA: Charisma Press (459 River Road, 01810), 1978. Pp. vi-120, including index and bibliography. Paper, no price given.

This book has as its goal the analysis of thinking on authority in both Church and state, during the sixties. It begins with a definition of authority and goes on to examine its threefold purposes: existential (why it exists and where it is located), instrumental (means and manner of its exercise), and terminal (its goal, bases of legitimacy and underpinning in values). Chapters three and four respectively examine political and religious thought on authority from a broad historical perspective that furnishes background to the description of it in the sixties. Chapter five is a concluding summary.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Champlin, Joseph M., *Together by Your Side: A Book for Comforting the Sick and dying.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979, Pp. 80. *Paper, $1.50.*

Holmgren, Virginia C., *The Adventures of Brother Cat.* Illustrated by James McIlrath. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 48. Cloth, $3.95. (A Children's Book)

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our October issue were drawn by Brother Gregory Zoltowski, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province currently pursuing a Master's degree in Fine Arts at the Catholic University of America.

the CORD

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Mariology Update

ECUMENISM SEEMS to be the overriding concern in this interesting and unpretentious, up-to-date treatise on Mariology. Actually, the book is divided into three main parts: "Significant New Developments in the Study of the Blessed Virgin," "Questions on Mary," and "A Selective List of Recommended Readings on the Blessed Virgin Mary." And only the third chapter of Part I is explicitly devoted to "The Blessed Virgin and ecumenism." But the author's concern for the impact of Marian doctrine in Protestant circles pervades the entire book and colors most of what he has to say throughout his exposition.

The other chapters of Part One deal with the Blessed Virgin in Scripture, the liturgical use of "Mary, Model of the Church," and the bond between Mary and the Holy Spirit. Part II is in question-and-answer format, as Father Eamon replies at great length in most cases, briefly in others, to questions posed by Alan Gill, religious editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald:* questions centering around (1) Ecumenical difficulties and hopes, (2) The Immaculate Conception and Assumption as defined dogmas, (3) Our Lady's Role as Coredemptrix and Mediatrix of All Graces, and (4) Devotional practices, Apparitions, etc. And Part III is a 49-page, helpfully classified reading list on Mary.

Father Eamon has long been furnishing a superb chronicle of Marian developments for the prestigious journal *Marian Studies,* and the style of the chronist marks most of this book in that, instead of systematic development, most of the exposition consists of "announcements," or "reporting" of what is going on today in doctrinal discussions on our Lady and her role. This "chronicle" style accounts for the very professional, almost journalistic way the author has of citing various theologians with nationality and religious affiliation (and only first initial) in rapid succession. Although this style tends, on occasion, to leave the reader rather breathless, it is a way of conveying a lot of information in a little space.

Father Eamon's obvious ecumenical concern is surely praiseworthy

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Understanding the Mother of Jesus. By Eamon R. Carroll, O. Carm. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1979. Pp. 159, including bibliography. Paper, $2.95.

(and we hope it will bear rich fruit); but it may have led him into a slightly less than ideal approach for some Catholic readers, as when he says (p. 55) that the precise language of Pius IX in defining the Immaculate Conception is not "fundamental," and when he evinces what I would consider a quite unnecessary embarrassment in the question-answer section on the Co-redemption and Mediation of our Lady. Others may be less than delighted with his references to "right-wing" organizations within the Catholic Church; but here I think he is right on target.

All in all, this is a quite attractive, gratifyingly inexpensive little book which will be of great help in any reader's endeavor to keep abreast of developments in Mariology. There are only a few noticeable mechanical lapses—e.g., "counted" for "countered" (p. 99), "Isaias" and "Isaiah" (pp. 66-67), and a grammatical flaw (p. 96): "It would be naive to suggest that simply because of a new statement has been made by Rome, it is going to be acceptable to a Reformed Christian." If you are sensitive to the ecumenical dimensions of contemporary Mariology, you can't afford to miss what Father Eamon Carroll has to say in *Understanding the Mother of Jesus.*

Fr. Michael D. Maloney, ofm

Who Are You, Francis?

LEANDER BLUMLEIN, O.F.M.

WHO ARE YOU, Francis? We look at the "true portrait" of Francis at Greccio, at the oldest portrait of Francis at Subiaco, or into the eyes of the famous Ciambue fresco at Assisi as we search for an answer. All we find is the question echoed, the mystery deepened. What so moved that man of business, Bernard of Quintavalle, to give up everything and become one of the first to walk so close beside this young upstart of Assisi? Or, for that matter, what so fascinated Giles, Angelo, Masseo, Rufino—that they too joined the small band? Or years later, what made Leo long so intensely for a special sign of Francis's favor, yet forbade him to ask? Surely there is more to the mystery we face today than simply the distance of time. We recall from Celano's account how the doctor from Rieti came to treat Francis's eyes, and how Francis insisted he be invited to dinner. The brothers blushed at the frugality of their table—some bread, wine, and vegetables—when suddenly a woman knocked at the door carrying a basketful of supplies. Amazed at this miracle of abundance, the doctor said, "Brothers, neither you nor we of the world know this man's sanctity as we should."[1] We find ourselves nodding agreement, "Neither you nor we know this man as we should"—to know him would be to know his sanctity. Who are you, Francis of Assisi, we ask again.

Any wedge that might open even a crack more the door to Francis deserves our consideration. Perhaps we can move a step in that direction through another incident recorded by Celano. Francis, speaking before Pope Honorius and the cardinals at the instigation of his friend Cardinal Hugolino, "spoke with such great fervor of spirit, that, not being able to contain himself for joy, when he spoke the words with his mouth, he moved his feet as though he were dancing" (1 Celano, 73; p. 290). Of what import to us is Celano's description? Very simply, we see here Francis the poet, and that may tell us something about Francis the man.

A poet, we say, and we think immediately of a writer of words arranged into patterns of rhythm and rhyme. No doubt the "Canticle of the Sun" comes to mind, and well it might, for it has deserved its place in early Italian literature. But the language of poetry is not so simple. A poet must use language in a poetically proper way. He does not deal primarily with concepts, and he is not led by logic to conclusions. A poet is rather possessed of and by a vision, an experience, which clarifies itself as he fleshes it out into a form. In poetry taken in a strict sense that form will consist of words. But even words must communicate more than concepts; they must convey also the feelings, the attitudes, the tones, the warmth and cold, even the gestures somehow which constitute that basic experience. Poetry must bring all such elements together into harmonious unity.

Even in daily life words are tricky things. With a pat on my shoulder, someone says to me, "You are really something!" I catch the twinkle in his eye, the smile on his lips, the warmth of his tone, and I know I have received a compliment. Another comes shaking his fist in my face and through clenched teeth snarls, "You are really something!" I feel the chill in his tone, the ice in his stare, and I know I am not in for a friendly chat. The words were the same, but they derived their impact, even their meaning, from tone, gesture, and setting.

But poetry can be understood in a still broader, though just as real, sense, sometimes without words at all. It is not unusual to speak of the poetry in a piece of music—Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, for example; in a dance—the Nutcracker Suite ballet; in a landscape painting—A Gainsborough or a Constable canvas; or even in a landscape itself, in a person, in a beautiful human action. Perhaps we have spoken of such "poetry" ourselves as we sensed harmonious unity. How appropriate it all appeared, as we saw each part fit snugly into the whole!

Drama provides a striking example of such poetry, especially on the contemporary stage, where even the problem of lan-

[1] 2 Celano 44, p. 401. Pagination for Celano's Lives, the Legend of Perugia (LP), the Minor Life by St. Bonaventure (LM) given henceforth in text, is taken from Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies: English Omnibus of the Sources for the life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975).

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guage itself often becomes the theme. Here we see language as something certainly more than, and beyond, the meaning of the written word. For here communication of meaning, of experience, involves also sound, tone, inflection, pace, and especially all of what we might broadly call "gesture": a smile or a frown, a hurried step, a sudden stop, a finger twitch, the silence of a well placed pause. Context, too, is important, with one scene paralleling another in similarity or contrast, and so suggesting rich ironies to a perceptive audience. What is actually communicated may indeed be quite contrary to the face-meaning of the written word. Yet all are elements of the poetry of the drama which produce a unified whole, completed only as the curtain falls or the stage is plunged into darkness. Surely only one who recognizes *all* such elements as components of the language of drama can be an effective actor, for only such a one can become eloquent in his total person.

To return now to Francis. He was a poet, but, while certainly granting his Sun Song, we must say not often a poet in words. Francis was not really a man of words; he was a man of poetic action, exceedingly eloquent in gesture, sometimes with no words at all. What need for words as he embraced and kissed the leper? or as, even before his conversion, he exchanged clothes with one of the beggars on the steps of St. Peter's in Rome, then took his place among them? Or as on that same occasion, seeing the niggardliness of some of the pilgrims, he hurled a handful of coins near the altar of the prince of the Apostles (2 Celano, 8; p. 368)?

Memorable, too, through the centuries has been the picture of the young Francis as he was hailed before the Bishop of Assisi by his father. Francis had sold bolts of his father's cloth to finance rebuilding the church of San Damiano. After all, "Rebuild my house" had been the summons of the Lord. Now, irked by his son's behavior and desiring a return of that money, Pietro Bernardone summoned him to justice. Bernardone had prepared his little drama well, and his purpose was clear. He would impoverish his son, or, as Celano has it, "so that renouncing all his possessions into his father's hands, Francis might give up everything he had." But Francis upstaged him!

> When he was brought before the bishop, he would suffer no delay or hesitation in anything; indeed, he did not wait for any words nor did he speak any, but immediately putting off his clothes and casting them aside, he gave them back to his father. Nor did he even retain his trousers, but stripped himself naked before all [1 Celano, 15; p. 241].

Francis never lost his flair for the poetic and dramatic. We are told that he would but seldom preach to saint Clare and the holy ladies at San Damiano. On one particular occasion, persuaded by his vicar, he consented to do so. The nuns gathered in their choir, eager to hear their father. After a silent prayer, Francis asked that "ashes be brought to him and he made a circle with them around himself on the pavement and sprinkled the rest of them on his head." Anticipation must have risen high as the nuns watched this striking prelude to the precious sermon they had come to hear. But what was happening? Francis "remained standing in the circle in silence . . . then suddenly arose and . . . recited the *Miserere mei Deus* in place of a sermon. When he had finished, he quietly left." Almost unnecessarily Celano adds, "By his actions he taught them that they should regard themselves as ashes and that there was nothing in his heart concerning them but what was fitting this consideration" (2 Celano, 207; pp. 527-28).

How important were the words themselves, what we might call the "written word" or "script," coming from the mouth of a man like Francis? Was it not rather his presence, his total being, himself in action, which so moved his listeners, as when, for example, before the Pope and cardinals he spoke with such fervor of spirit that "'he moved his feet as though he were dancing"? We have explicit testimony of at least one learned doctor that it was so indeed:

> While I retain the preaching of others word for word, only the things that Saint Francis speaks elude me. If I commit any of them to memory they do not seem to be the same that dropped from his lips before [2 Celano, 107; p. 450]

With or without words, Francis had always the instinct of poetry, of dramatic and holy gesture, about him. Those close to him recalled how he "would at times pick up a stick from the ground and putting it over his left arm, would draw across it, as across a violin, a little bow bent by means of a string: and going through the motions of playing, he would

sing in French about his Lord" (2 Celano, 127; p. 467). When Bernard of Quintavalle told Francis he wished to follow his example in serving God, Francis sought counsel from the Lord. But he would not be satisfied with prayerful words alone. Early the next morning he and Bernard entered the church of St. Nicholas in Assisi, offered a prayer, and then "opened the book of the Gospel proposing to follow what counsel should first appear." What appeared were Christ's words to the rich young man: "If you will be perfect, go, sell what you have, and give to the poor." A second and third opening of the Gospel revealed a like message, and Francis had a follower, Brother Bernard (2 Celano, 15; p. 375). Francis taught his brothers that, were they to come within sight of a church even at a distance, they were to prostrate themselves upon the ground and pray: "We adore thee, Christ, here and in all thy churches." Further, Celano tells us, "whenever they saw a crucifix or the mark of a cross, whether upon the ground, or upon a wall, or in trees, or in the hedges along the way, they were to do the same thing" (1 Celano, 45; pp. 265-66).

During one of the frequent periods of sickness in Francis's life he had eaten a bit of chicken. Shortly afterwards, when he had regained his strength, he commanded a brother to tie a rope around his (Francis's) neck and lead him into town like a robber, saying before him: "Behold the glutton who has grown fat on the meat of chicken which he ate without you knowing about it" (1 Celano, 52; p. 273).

At times, as was to be expected, Francis was invited to stay at the home of friends, with the Bishop of Assisi, for example, or with Cardinal Hugolino. On one such occasion as the hour of dinner approached, Francis slipped out to beg scraps of the black bread of the poor, and returning placed them on the bishop's table. Not only that, "he began joyfully to distribute his alms to the bishop's guests." Some ate the black bread, others kept the scraps out of reverence. After the guests had gone Francis assured his friend Hugolino that he had done him an honor, "for I have honored a greater Lord." Hugolino was won over by the gesture. "Son, do whatever seems good in your eyes, for the Lord is with you" (2 Celano, 73; pp. 424-25).

The Greccio hermitage on its stark cliff of rock at a distance from the town was a favorite haunt of Francis and became the scene of several little dramas. Immediately one thinks of the crib, of how Francis invited the townsfolk to the cliffside on Christmas night where he had had prepared for them what we

like to think of as the first Christmas crib. It was a graphic presentation by Francis of the extent of God's love for man, of how God became a helpless infant, one of us, for our salvation. As deacon Francis preached at the Mass that night, and "his mouth was filled more with sweet affection than with words." When he spoke the name of Jesus, "he licked his lips," savoring the sweetness of the word! Words joined with his actions, with his presence, with the setting he had created, so that by the workings of God's grace the Child Jesus, forgotten in the hearts of many, "was brought to life again . . . and stamped upon the fervent memory of the people" (1 Celano, 86; p. 301).

But Greccio saw also another memorable little drama of Francis, perhaps on Easter day. It seems the friars had prepared a special meal and had spread the table with linen cloth and furnished it with glassware. But Francis, in Celano's beautiful phrase, "did not smile at the smiling table." Quietly he slipped away, donned the hat and staff of a pilgrim, and knocked at the friary door. "For the love of God, give an alms to this poor wanderer," he called. Astonished as they were, the friars gave him a dish as he had requested. Francis took it and sat alone in the ashes. "Now I am sitting as a Friar Minor should sit" (2 Celano, 61;

p. 414). Are we not witnessing what might well be a scene from a medieval morality play?

In these as in so many other actions of Francis we sense the soul of the poet expressing itself in total language, heavy with gesture. So thrilled was he with Christmas, that he wished even the walls smeared with meat on that day. Seeing a worm along a path he was reminded of Christ, of whom the psalmist had said, "I am a worm and no man." Therefore Francis removed the worm to the bordering grass. On an occasion Francis was informed that a band of robbers was nearby. Now, one might threaten robbers with the law, and so hope to deter them from their evil ways by fear; or one might talk to them and hope to win them by reason. Francis chose rather a gesture. "Call them, and bring them food," he told his brothers; and then, he went on, ask them only a small favor, "that they will not attack people or do them bodily harm" (LP, 90; pp. 1063-64). Next day, invite them again to eat and drink, and make then a further request. In this way Francis won them by a kind gesture, so that several even joined the Order!

What more fitting conclusion to the life of this poet of action than that, in a final gesture, he asks to be laid on the bare ground and to die naked upon the ashes! Only in obedience to his superior did he permit himself to be clothed again in sackcloth, and then only because it became clear that the garments had been but lent him to die in. Indeed, "he had kept faith with Lady Poverty to the end" (2 Celano, 215; pp. 534-35).

Unfortunately terms like dramatic gesture and poetic flair too readily suggest a tinge of insincerity to us, at least an overtone of superficiality. But not as we use them here of Francis. We remember the day that the young Francis in the church of San Damiano heard read the Gospel passage describing how the Lord sent his disciples out to preach without gold or silver or money or scrip or wallet or bread or staff. Immediately Francis cried out, "This is what I long for with all my heart" (1 Celano, 22; p. 247). To serve the Lord with all his heart became the mark of his life, to serve him with all his being, with all of himself. Because of that total genuineness, this man of poetic action was so very effective in his total expression. How well Celano, who knew him and had been received into the Order by him, wrote that,

> edifying his hearers not less by example than by his word, he made a tongue out of his whole body. For so great was the harmony of his body toward his spirit, so great its obedience, that while his spirit tried to lay hold of all sanctity, his body did not resist, but tried to outrun his spirit . . . [1 Celano, 97; p. 312].

Was it not that very harmony of body and spirit which underlay the gesture of Francis preaching before the Roman Curia, when as "he spoke the words with his mouth, he moved his feet as though he were dancing"? Again Celano says so aptly, "By actions, Father, you spoke more sweetly, you persuaded more easily, and you showed the way more certainly" (1 Celano, 173; p. 501).

Closer to our own day, G. K. Chesterton, too, was taken by the poetic and dramatic character he saw in Francis.

> There is something about the description of all he said and did which suggests that, even more than most Italians, he turned naturally to a passionate pantomime of gestures. . . . It is truly said that Francis of Assisi was one of the founders of the medieval drama, and therefore of the modern drama. He was the very reverse of a theatrical person in the selfish sense; but for all that he was pre-eminently a dramatic person.[2]

[2]G. K. Chesterton, *St. Francis of Assisi* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, n.d.), pp. 97-98.

Later, as Chesterton speaks of what he calls Francis's instinct for imaginative gesture, he declares, "He taught the world a large part of its lesson by a sort of divine dumb alphabet."[3]

Now to return again to Francis's "Canticle of the Sun," his great poem in words. Even in this written poem we recall the stanza on peace and forgiveness, and how Francis, in a grand gesture of peacemaking, sent Leo and Angelo to sing the new stanza before the quarreling bishop and podestà of Assisi, and so won peace *in fact*. The last stanza, too, in praise of Sister Bodily Death, was itself a gesture of the dying Francis. If we see the Canticle as a song praising God *through* his creatures in which each element of nature praises God by being itself—the sun by shining, the wind by blowing—then we can also see the singer in singing becoming part of his song. For surely, as has so often been observed, here Francis takes his place in the choir of God's creatures, but *in his own way:* Francis, the man of poetic action, offers his gesture of praise to his Creator. It is indeed fitting for one who made his whole life a poem, its predominant and ruling image Christ, its paradoxes and ironies echoing the Gospel paradoxes and ironies, and all elements brought into the harmonious unity of Christ's Gospel and Cross.

Might we go one step further and say that Francis *himself* was made into a poem? On La Verna, Christ touched Francis and formed him into a living image of himself crucified, marked with the five wounds of his redemptive death. Francis became, as Gerard Manley Hopkins put it, "his lovescape crucified."[4] Saint Bonaventure observes so beautifully:

> It was only right that St. Francis should be decorated with this extraordinary privilege; all his efforts, whether they were known to others or made in secret, were directed towards our Lord's Cross . . . What were all the outstanding virtues which made him so like Christ, if not the signs of an ever-increasing likeness to him and a preparation for the reception of the stigmata? . . . At the sight of the majestic Seraph and of the abjection of Christ crucified, he was completely changed into the likeness of what he saw . . . [LM VI, 9; pp. 825-26].

In that supreme moment, does not Jesus Christ himself become the poet and with his own holy gesture sign Francis into the perfect poem?

Who are you, Francis, we ask again. We find ourselves still plunged deep into mystery, and

[3]Ibid., pp. 109-10.

[4] Gerard Manley Hopkins, "The Wreck of the Deutschland."

we know that we shall never answer that question completely this side of eternity. But we know that part of the final answer will involve Francis as the poet of gesture and action, one who speaks to us in the most human language of all.

Standing

Tall and alone, this tree stands.
Through winters killing and springs bringing to life:
This tree stands.

Plunging its roots like gnarled hands;
clawing and grasping at the earth:
This tree stands.

It bears the scars of initials that loved,
and lightning that struck;
but still this tree stands.

A home for winged things, little boys,
and momories,
This tree stands.

Marking the seasons,
counting the years,
This tree stands,

Bearing witness to the good
that can be done
when in peace and silence,
we simply
stand.

John Lynch, O.F.M.

Passio Christi, Conforta Me

MOTHER MARY FFRANCIS, P.C.C.

WE HAVE BEEN reflecting upon consecutive petitions in the time-honored prayer, "Anima Christi"; and we come now to the one of which all the others are part. We pray: "Passio Christi, conforta me," "Passion of Christ, comfort me." Comfort me—yes, but in the very literal etymological sense of that word: "Make me strong." "Passion of Christ, make me strong."

Surely that is a prayer we should like to make our own, for we would rejoice to be very strong in our sufferings out of the strength of the passion of Christ. But often this does not seem to happen. We see all too manifestly that it does not happen. We seem, instead, very weak. Where is that strength from the passion of Christ? Perhaps we need to recall that it is not effected *ex opere operato*. Our Lord suffered, endured, willingly accepted his passion and death; therefore, we are strong. Strength flows out of him. Well, indeed it does, but not without our effort to receive it. I would like to enter with you into three considerations about making effective the strength which is indeed there for us in the passion of Christ. The first is, that it is necessary for us to remember the passion of Christ, to focus upon it. The second is, that it is required that we identify with the passion of Christ. And the third consideration is that we must accept the responsibility for the strength with which the passion of Christ empowers us.

SO NOW, THE initial consideration. We need to remember. At first blush, we might avow that this is something we certainly never forget: the passion of Christ. Yet, in effect, we know that we forget it quite easily. We forget it in the way that we tend to forget all things that are familiar to us. We have seen the crucifix all our lives. It hangs in every room of our monastery. It is so familiar that we can all too readily forget what it means. We need effort to remember, to focus. We see this exemplified in other areas of our life as regards the dear familiars. We could recall, for instance, how we know and cherish all that the Mother foundress of our monastery and her companion did for us, all that

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they suffered, all their labors as they strove to provide for us in those poverty-stricken beginning years. But to remember this effectively when we have some hardship set before ourselves, to focus upon this when something difficult is asked of us—ah, that's a different matter. I would like to offer you two examples of remembering. One is Dismas, the good thief. The other is our Sister Aloysia, now gone into eternity.

Let us look at Dismas first. We go back in time two thousand years, and we find this thief whom tradition has immortalized as "Saint Dismas, the good thief." We find him there on his cross, sharing the ignominious death of our Lord, and asking Jesus to remember him. We love those words of his: "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Lk. 23:42). But, dear sisters, before Dismas could make that prayer to be remembered, he had himself first to remember.

Dismas was hearing some strange words from this Person in that center cross, and he was seeing some very unusual features of this Person there dying. The thief on the third cross heard the same words, saw the same phenomena. Tradition has called him "the bad thief." Certainly he made a bad choice. He chose not to remember. This man, too, heard words such as undoubtedly he had never heard before, heard

things that went far, far beyond the possibility of mere human nobility. He heard that dying Person on the center cross say, for instance: "Father, forgive them. They do not know what they are doing" (Lk. 23:34). And then he forgot what he had heard. The dying Christ was not only uttering the immortal plea for mercy on one's persecutors which saints and martyrs have echoed all the centuries after him, but Christ was also really proclaiming his divinity. He was turning to his Father with assurance, and telling the Father what to do as only an equal could.

The martyrs who through the ages have uttered forgiving words like those of Jesus could not speak them as he did. Christ could say: "They do not know what they are doing," for he really did know what they knew. He knew who he was, and that they did not. He had no such plea for Caiaphas because Caiaphas did know. And so to Caiaphas, Jesus only replied: "You have said it. I am" (Lk. 22:70). What a different course Caiaphas would have taken if he had chosen to remember the truth he heard instead of theatrically and deceitfully rending his garments. And there is Pilate, poor, craven Pilate, not with Caiaphas's knowledge but with a fearsome glimmering of the truth. "From that moment he sought to release him" (Jn. 19:12). But Pilate as we well know succumbed to his fear of the mob and his fear for his paltry position, and chose not to remember what had struck his soul. Dismas, though, heard and remembered.

Dismas heard the grandeur with which the dying Man delivered his Mother over as a heritage to his beloved disciple, heard the agonizing Person on the center cross giving clear directions about what was to be done and identifying the roles of other persons. This is your son now, go with him. This is your Mother, take her. Father, forgive these people. And Dismas did not turn back upon himself as did the other thief, nor did he cry out as his companion did and as so many others have done in the extreme of human agony in vituperative rage at those who suffer nobly and well—as though that were the final outrage. The other thief turned in upon himself, forgot what he saw, forgot what he heard, and so jeered at our Lord. But Dismas remembered and gave his own marvelous cry for remembrance.

And so it is with us. We can truly pray, "Passion of Christ, make me strong," only when we have started remembering the passion of Christ. It is not a magic formula, this prayer. I utter it, and something happens. You know, it always annoys me more than a little when well intentioned "devotional writers" say something to the effect that just this little statement of Dismas gained him paradise. Little statement! It was a tremendous response! Dismas allowed God to lift him out of himself into the realms of pure faith. He begins his response to remembering by saying, "Lord!" No one who had not been lifted by God into the realm of faith could possibly have said this. Christ just did not much look like "Lord" then. The messianic psalms come crowding in upon us: "The Lord said to my Lord . . ." (ps. 110:1). The grandeur! But this bruised, bleeding, spent, helpless Person —to recognize him as "Lord!" This is magnificent. Dismas does not say, "Sir" or "Friend," or "We are in this together." "Lord!" "Lord, remember me." And Jesus knew that Dismas had remembered him "Remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Lk. 23 42). With that plea, dear sisters Dismas reached the heights o

mysticism. Could it look to any other's gaze that this battered Person had a kingdom? That he even belonged in a kingdom? That he could make his way into a kingdom? But Dismas is saying: "It's all yours! It is your kingdom. And when you take over your kingdom, remember me." Marvelous!

Through all the centuries we have had a plethora of exquisite poetry and a plenitude of mystical effusions from chosen souls of whom Dismas was the prototype. All the glorious poetry about Christ robed in royal robes of his blood, Christ triumphant upon the Cross—was not Dismas the first one to say all these things? Dismas spoke of royalty. He is the prototype of all Christian poets of the Cross. His is the first mystic vision of what was happening on the Cross. This is a King. This is the Lord. He is in royal splendor, and when he comes to take over his kingdom, I hope to be remembered. So we, too, have to remember in everyday life. To remember when it is difficult to remember. Dismas could have remembered only his own misery, as did his fellow thief; and he could have sunk to the same despairing depths. But he allowed the strength of what he remembered to let him become, among other things, the poet laureate of all those who have sung of the Royal One dying upon the Cross.

The other incident is much nearer in time to us than Dismas is. It relates to our own Sister Aloysia. We were having a federation chapter, and I was conducting our religious assistant back to the enclosure doors. Sister, of course, being completely deaf, did not hear us coming down the hall. So she appeared in her little work attire, with the famous multi-patched apron, the inevitable gallon can of something or other, and those renowned pink rubber gloves. She took her place just in front of us, and proceeded slowly down the hall. What do you do in a situation like that? Well, I think you just stay in it. So I turned to Father and smiled and said, "She has no idea that we are behind her." We adjusted ourselves to her pace, walked down the hall behind her. And she, totally oblivious that anyone was in her vicinity, much less in her close company, stopped at that crucifix by the liturgical board and made

one of the most beautiful bows I have ever seen. She inclined profoundly to the crucifix, all nobility and grace. She was remembering what she was passing. She was remembering the passion of Christ. And I thought: "Oh, I am so glad that Father saw this." For we had both seen something very beautiful.

SO MUCH THEN for remembering the passion of Christ, focusing upon it. We also have to identify with it. Let me give you an intimate example from my own life. When we made our foundation in Alexandria, there was so much to be done in converting the little convent loaned to us into a temporary monastery. We needed to revamp the place, to convert it into a monastic dwelling. And we needed to do this in the brief two weeks I had with our founding sisters. So we moved very fast to many corners in a strange dwelling. Inevitably there were many bumps and jars. I remembered bumping an arm here, a leg there, something hurting where I had overstretched in reaching. But we were too eagerly busy to stop to investigate the battle scars. It was only when I returned home to Roswell that I found that my lower limbs were covered with bruises. There they were: bruises and bruises, on my arms, my lower limbs. And one most marvelous bruise! I think it was about four inches long and three inches wide, and in colors gorgeous to behold.

What I wanted to share with you is the joy which I had in seeing those bruises. They reminded me of all I had wanted to do for our sisters, of all that we had done together. They were such beautiful little emblems of our earnest desire to do something beautiful for God. It was only in the past week that the last bruise began to fade, and I felt a real sorrow to see it disappearing. And, of course, that is the way that anyone would react—so glad to have been bruised in trying to work with and help those one so dearly loves. But I went on to reflect that we can never help one another spiritually, either, if we do not wish to be bruised. With an unbruised heart we shall never love.

Yes, dear sisters, it is inevitable that when we really love, we shall get bruised. And while we are often reminded that our Lord has his glorified wounds in heaven and that he shows them to the Father as pleading on our behalf "(Ostende vulnera tua ad Patrem, we sing), I think it is a matter not only of the offering of those wounds on our behalf, but also—I dare to say it—our Lord rejoicing in his own glorified wounds. This is not fantasy, for do we not have the Scriptures telling us in one of my own most favorite lines from all of Holy

Writ, "Oh, should not Christ have suffered all this, and *so* enter into his glory?" (Lk. 24:26). It is as though Christ brushes aside all of his passion and says, "Oh, a mere nothing! I love these people. I wanted to save them. It was nothing at all. Ought not Christ to have suffered this . . . ." Well, then, does he not rejoice in his glorified wounds? Are they not a continual reminder to him, those emblems, of how much he loved us? It is part of our Franciscan Scotistic theology that Christ came not only because of our need as a fallen race to be redeemed, but as the Firstborn of of all creation to teach us how to live. And one cannot teach life except by getting a wounded heart, a wounded spirit, not without being bruised.

We see the parable of the bruises, if I may call it that, readily enough on the physical plane. Surely no one would say: "Look at all those bruises I got helping those people. Someone had the nerve!" No, one is just so happy that one served and has memorials of the service. But it is not quite so obvious to us on the emotional level and still less on the spiritual plane—upon the skin of the heart and the spirit. We must study to learn how to identify the bruises of the heart and the spirit as well with the passion of Christ who did not love us without getting bruised in the process. We have those soul-shaking lines from Holy Scripture which are almost too exquisitely acute to bear: "By his wounds we are healed" (Is. 53:5). His wounds have not healed us of our need of being wounded but of the wound of our self-centeredness. His wounds have called us to come out of self, to be made strong in suffering. This is to identify with the passion of Christ.

THE THIRD and final consideration, then, is the responsibility which the passion of Christ enjoins upon us. We dare not underestimate the strength we have because of being redeemed in love by Jesus. When we make vows, we cannot disavow the power put into us to observe them faithfully. When we are given any charge to do in obedience, we are also given the power and the strength to do it. So, when remembering and focusing in identification on the passion of Christ, we need also to make active his own mandate through the inspired word of his apostle, that "we fill up in ourselves what is wanting in the passion of Christ" (Col. 1:24). What is wanting to Christ's passion in me? It is my own bruises of body, of heart, of spirit, bruises of disappointment, bruises of frustration, bruises of misunderstanding, bruises of ingratitude, bruises perhaps of rejection. Aware of this, remembering,

focused, identified, we can truly pray, "Passion of Christ, make me strong!" We dare not pray it unless we are prepared to accept the responsibility of having the strength of the passion of Jesus given to us.

When Dismas made his petition and his exalted act of faith and homage, does not the very instinct for truth tell us that Christ responded as God, that the dying hand lifted? How could he have replied as he did with his beautiful, suffering, bloody, battered head sunk upon his chest? We know that he answered as a King. He used royal words and began his statement as he began all his other statements of great authority and solemnity: "Amen, I say to you." A king is speaking. "This day." Authority. There is no doubt about it. He knows the time and the hour. "This day you shall be with me in paradise" (Lk. 23-43). After that, no doubt, the dying head dropped again. But Dismas had received the strength that was given; and even as we must, he had to accept the responsibility for what he had been given.

We know how St. Paul loved to enumerate all the things he had done and suffered for Christ. Certainly he is not boasting: "Look at Paul: what a great fellow he is!" No, he is marvelling at what Christ's passion did in him when he allowed it. In this way, he says, "I was flogged this many times, I was shipwrecked, I endured this, that I came through, this I suffered"—a whole list of things (2 Cor. 11:24ff.). But this is the same man who said: "Take this temptation away; it's too much." We know that Christ said: "No. Be strong in infirmity. "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Cor. 12:9). And Saint Paul let himself be made strong in infirmity. That is why he can say: Listen to this!

▲

All of us can look back on our own little lives and search out instances in which we have allowed God to let us surpass ourourselves. Because we are redeemed by Christ's obedience in his passion and death, we no longer have the right to say: I can't do it. Strength has been given. So now we pray: "Passion of Christ, make me strong," knowing that first of all we must remember it, then focus upon it, then identify our own little bruises as making up in us what is wanting in that passion of his. We begin to join our own hesitant refrain to his great theme: "Ought I not have suffered this?" Ought I not suffer for all the world? Ought I not suffer for benefactors who befriend us and for those others who think our life a waste? "Passion of Christ, make me strong." Again, it is a dangerous prayer. For if I ask to be made

strong in this way, I *will* be made strong and have to abdicate any further right to say, "I can't."

In this prayer I deliver up to Christ my former right to say, "I cannot do it."

In The Cave

Sold
cloth and horse
to buy the stone whose weight he feels
crouching near the church
in disrepair
burrows deep terrain
tear—stain—musty
with sorted sordid scents
doubled and recessed
his ribs, folded reeds, like an accordion exhaling
hollowed stomach whispers "hollowed heart"
" " "hollowed heart" " " treble back other walls
Stalagmite's silhouette through the transitory shadows
as a far light filters the aphelion
—hears angry voices and cowers lower
petrified youth rolls open empty yearning
to inexplicable weight
till Francis becomes cage
and from the black aperture
of a motionless mouth
fly forth in choral formation
lark after lark

Hugoline A. Sabatino, O.F.M.

My Franciscan Pilgrimage to Assisi

July 8 — August 6, 1978

I flew to Rome
ready with pen and notebook
to jot down quickly all I saw and experienced,
but the call "Avanti!" kept me
on the go so much
that my notebook was blank and it was time
to go on to the Rieti Valley.

Greccio, Fonte Columbo, La Foresta, Poggio Bustone—
Look, listen, learn—and still
my notebook was blank.
"Avanti!" and on to Assisi.

Down at the bottom, St. Mary of the Angels
enshrining the Portiuncula.
Up at the top La Rocca and even higher up—
The Carceri.
To the east, Santa Chiara
and to the west, San Francesco
and all around, San Rufino, San Damiano,
Rivo Torto, San Stefano, the Chiesa Nuova,
the Piazza del Commune and the narrow streets
of Assisi.

All this so alive with the spirit of Francis
and Clare.
No time to write!

Too much to feel and absorb;
and always the call of "Avanti!"
for there is so much to see, to grasp.

By now, my body—especially my feet—
knows the physical aspect of being pilgrim.
My mind is swirling.
My heart is swelling.
My notebook is blank.

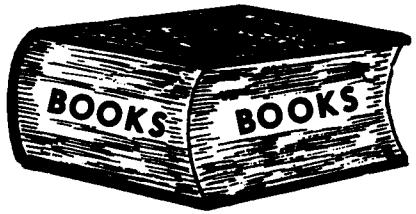
And then on purpose, the cry "Avanti!"
is no longer spoken.
The physical pace is slowed down
so that the meaning, the basis, the purpose
of Francis's life can be felt much deeper
than my mind, or my heart, or my feet.
But there is still that attentive
listening, watching, searching
both in the places so filled with
the Franciscan spirit
and also within myself;
for surely I have become more aware
of what brought Francis
up to the many hill caves,
always seeking
    that quiet,
    that solitude,
    that freedom
    to be alone with God.
And still my notebook is blank.
For no words can truly capture
what was felt on Mount LaVerna,
the place of Francis's stigmata.

Then it was time to be at my own hermitage—
three days high above the Rieti Valley
    at Poggio Bustone,
to say humbly to God
"Here I am, Lord. I am one
of the many who has attempted
to follow Your Gospel as
    Your beloved Francis did.
Touch me,
teach me,
tell me
how to follow more closely."

Yes, during those days there was time—
But, Oh! no, there are no words
in my notebook.
He has written them deep in my heart,
and now that I have come down—
very reluctantly—from that mountain,
the only way I can ever express
what I saw, grasped, felt, absorbed,
is to live the Franciscan way of life
to the fullest.

And now, looking out at the Allegany hills,
I know my notebook will remain blank,
hoping that my life will express
what I experienced so deeply
of the love of God
Through the spirit of Francis.

Sister Eva M. Di Camillo, O.S.F.



The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves, and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times. By Raymond E. Brown, S.S. New York: Paulist Press. 1979. Pp. 204, including indices. Paper, $3.95.

Reviewed by Father Cassian F. Corcoran, O.F.M., L.S.S., S.T.D., Professor of Sacred Scripture at the Washington (D.C.) Theological Union.

This is a fascinating study of the history of the Johannine community as it is reflected in the Gospel and in the Epistles of John. A careful and reflective consideration is bound to enrich one's appreciation and understanding of Johannine theology. Father Brown reconstructs the history of the Johannine community and its theology in four phases: (1) the origin of the Johannine community, (2) the time when the Gospel was written, (3) the time when the Epistles were written, and (4) the Johannine dissolution after the writing of the Epistles. Summary charts clarify his construction, and two appendices conclude the book. The first is a critical analysis of the reconstruction of the Johannine community and its theology as it is proposed by five contemporary scholars, and the second discusses the general position of women in the Johannine community.

Two aspects of this work merit special compliments. In the first place, phase three, on the date of the Epistles' composition, stands out. This part of the book underscores the author's masterful control and understanding of Johannine thought. It examines and explains those issues that polarized the Johannine community: viz., Christology, ethics, eschatology, and the Spirit. It deals with them in such a way that it brings out the relationship between the Gospel and the Epistles. The approach the author takes in the consideration of these issues shows how theology develops and is affected by the thinking of the time. In the second place, Father Brown argues that the Beloved Disciple is not to be identified with John, the son of Zebedee. Furthermore, the Beloved Disciple began to follow Jesus in Judea when Jesus himself was in close proximity to the Baptist and in time became a great authority to the Johannine community.

In the preface to his work, the author modestly points out that his reconstruction of the history of the Johannine community and its theology is at most probable (p. 7). Anyone interested in the formation of the New Testament and the circumstances that led to the writing of its documents will find the work of this first-rate American Johannine scholar insightful and packed full of first-century Church history and Johannine theology. It is well written, scholarly, yet "intelligible to any educated person" (p. 7), and it manifests sound critical judgment. This book is a positive contribution to understanding the Johannine community and its theology. I recommend it highly.

In the Shadow of His Wings: A History of the Franciscan Siters. By Sister Mary Assumpta Ahles, O.S.F. St. Paul, MN: The North Central Publishing Co., 1977. Pp. xxviii-555, including index. Cloth, $12.50.

Reviewed by Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.C., Monastery of St. Clare, Lowell, MA, a frequent contributor to our pages and co-author of Two Prayers for Two Stones, *a collection of poetry about St. Francis published by the Franciscan Herald Press in 1976.*

Never have I found it so difficult to review a book as I did *In the Shadow of His Wings*! I found the lengthy account of Mother Ignatius Hayes and her three foundations packed with interesting adventures, human problems with which we can all identify, and a style which kept one reading—*and* I found myself wanting to comment on everything! Since that is impossible, please accept my choice of some outstanding events, persons, places in the life of Mother Ignatius and her communities.

"The greatest miracle is I, myself —the fact that I have not given up" (p. 48). These words are indicative of the state of mind of Mother Ignatius after experiencing the failure of plan after plan—seeing a plan fall through or never see birth because of some human frailty or interference. God's grace in her had not been wanting nor unused as she passed through her early life in the Anglican Church, then her rebirth to Catholicism, and finally her founding of a thriving Franciscan way of life in Rome (Italy), Little Falls, Minnesota; and Rock Island, Illinois—each of which had its own specific work for the Church.

Sister Assumpta has divided the work into four parts: missionary dream; its fulfillment; its growth and expansion; the breakthrough after Vatican II. The extensive table of contents, the index, the notes, and the numerous illustrations all add to the life and genuineness of the author's labors.

Part I takes the reader through the early years of Elizabeth Hayes as teacher in the Anglican Sisterhood through which she became awakened by the call to the Church of Rome. Her undaunted zeal for mission work is several times averted, but her hope, her trust, and her enthusiasm carry her on. Through her trials she learned "complete detachment—that utter indifference to success and honor—which she, as a Foundress in the Franciscan family would need to help her through hard times to come" (p. 50).

Part II, "The Lure of the Westward Trail," briefly discusses the possibility that Mother Ignatius and the Indians were on somewhat friendly terms. She may have handed food through her cabin window to a "now-and-then stray Indian." Her arrival, however, was at a good time, when scalping raids were no longer popular.

The reader will rejoice with Mother Ignatius when she finally establishes her first girls' school (of which, it seems, the boys were a

bit envious) in Belle Prairie. $55.00 tuition and board for five months—no heat—food at a minimum—and cleaning charges—but the education was the finest anywhere. The school was a combination religious educational, and industrial institution. This was quite an accomplishment, considering the fact that there were only two Sisters to staff the school. Bills mounted up as the Sisters' charity toward all grew out of bounds. Financially the school became threatened. Through it all the girls apparently had a great time, for the Academy's alumnae manifest a respect and admiration for the Sisters —"all summed up in a magnificent statement by an aged admirer, in a voice filled with awesome respect—'Those were the Sisters!' " (p. 122).

One of the book's best features is that Sister Assumpta brings other persons into the story, such as Father Junipero Serra in the California missions; Father Buh, pastor and the Sisters' director in Belle Prairie; Father Lemay, dictator and destroyer of Belle Prairie; Mother Maddalena Bentivoglio, Foundress of the Poor Clares in the U.S., and many others, not merely mentioned in connection with Mother Ignatius, but depicted with enough background for the reader to understand these personages and their deep struggles too. This was surely an era of great zeal, great labor, and great men and women in the United States toiling for the sake of the Kingdom.

Desperately in need of more funds to keep the Academy operating, Mother found herself in the California missions. Searching for more seasoned laborers, more priests and funds, she journeyed to Rome. But there was a strange turn of events in accord with God's inscrutable will, for she returned with no laborers for the school, few funds or priests—only two Poor Clares who had been commissioned by the Pope to go with her to Belle Prairie. As they were taking leave of his Holiness, he handed to each of the Poor Clares a medal of Our Lady for help and protection. When Mother Ignatius stepped forward, thinking to receive a medal, his Holiness stated, "But you have nothing to do here." The Cardinal standing nearby was astonished. "Nothing to do here? when she was the promoter of the work?" (p. 104). Whereupon his Holiness presented her also with a medal.

The journey across was filled with enthusiasm as Mother Ignatius thought herself to be blessed by taking the Poor Clares to live in conjunction with her community as a powerhouse of prayer or, as she said, "a veritable powerhouse of blessing." But the delight and enthusiasm were short-lived on both sides. Once in New York the priest who had come with the Poor Clares would go no further without more orders. He advised the Poor Clares to do the same. What could they do? What should they do? They could not speak English; they had had little money; they had nowhere to go! Human foibles, misunderstandings and fears caused Mother Ignatius to travel back to Belle Prairie minus the Poor Clares. But the journey of the Bentivoglio Sisters would be fraught with the same excitement, disillusionment, and frustration as Mother Ignatius's— even though it would be a separate journey.

Among her apostolates one of the most frustrating and yet the most rewarding was her work among the Negroes in Georgia. The frustrations came, not from the girls, but from lack of food and poor accommodations. A laughable, yet tragic situation is recounted about the acquisition of a cow:

> For some reason the animal had taken a dislike to Mother Ignatius . . . possibly sensing that [she] . . . was afraid of her . . . the cow made an onward rush toward the Superior, who alarmed and frightened, ran for safety . . . . A young colored girl . . . addressed the cow . . . "You miserable cow, you! Because you got after Rev. Mother you'll die a miserable death!" The next morning the would-be attacker was found dead; she had strangled herself with the halter rope! [p. 151].

Once again the girls and Sisters were without milk. But the Christlike atmosphere of the institute did much to offset the rigidity of the boarding school rules and monotonous menus.

Mother Ignatius, while dependent upon Divine Providence, also knew that one had to use one's talents to help oneself, and her business abilities were evidenced by the success of the *Annals of Our Lady of the Angels*, a short periodical intended to instruct and edify, as well as the founding of the Association of the Clients of St. Anthony, for the promotion of good books. These two works brought in goodly revenues as time passed and were carried on even after her death in 1894.

One Franciscan quality that Mother Ignatius seemed destined to exemplify was that of mobility. Hardly had she settled somewhere, when she was off to raise funds or to recruit girls for the religious life. One of her major moves was to establish, upon request, a motherhouse and novitiate in Rome, Italy. Even there she had to move from the original quarters to a healthier section with "a beautiful location at the summit of a gentle slope . . . adjoining garden for meditative walks, peaceful rests, recreation, and fresh air." Now all that was needed was a little additional property and a wall to insure privacy. Once more trouble began, for the man whom she trusted duped her three times the sum the property was worth—and it was all done slickly and legally. It is no wonder she took herself to the shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows to seek some consolation—and consolation came in the guise of a young man who saw through the problems with them. An annoying lawsuit followed when she could not pay. Pope Leo XIII encouraged her to act with prudence and with his blessing. When the ugly affair ended, at last, she gave full credit to the Blessed Mother and St. Anthony, who was the man of her house in all her affairs.

Meanwhile in Belle Prairie the Sisters were being subjected to the whims of an ill-intentioned priest who refused them spiritual aid, demanded obedience to him in contradiction of their Constitutions, denounced the Sisters from the pulpit and threatened to go to the Bishop. Much suffering ensued until the misguided priest had his faculties revoked, whereopon he refused to obey the Bishop and continued to exercise his ministry, saying that he had permission from His Holiness. Now his tirades were lashed also against the Bishop, and his followers were not loathe to do vengeful things—

such as burning the convent and school to the ground. Only by God's grace did all girls and Sisters escape from that inferno.

Now, with no place to go, the Sisters looked to the Georgia mission for help; but that too was under fire and would soon close. While waiting for instruction from Mother Ignatius, all of them went to live in the only building left in Belle Prairie —the *barn*; but as they said, "it was their barn." Still no response from Rome. How could they know of Mother Ignatius's illness? Perhaps Rome was too far away to govern a community in the U.S. So, with the encouragement of the Bishop, the Sisters filed to become diocesan, and the permission was granted. Autonomy seemed necessary, but the separation was painful. "Pain is the deepest thing we have in our nature, and union through pain and suffering has always seemed more real and holy than any other" (Arthur Henry Hallam, p. 247).

Part II continues to explore the expansion of apostolates of the Little Falls community, especially in Minnesota and, finally, their response to a need in the South American missions. Now, while the American community thrived, so too did the Roman; and Mother Ignatius planned another house in Rome. Her planning also included her desire to see her American spiritual children again. So in 1893, "ignoring the weakness and infirmities of her body," she traveled as far as Naples, where she was overcome. True to the pattern of her life, Mother Ignatius did not do what she intended, but rather followed God's directive. Nor did her Franciscan mobility end here: three times her body was transferred to another site until, at last, it rested in the Sisters' St. Michael's Mortuary Chapel.

Post Vatican II years show the community, with the typical Mother Ignatius determination and enthusiasm, adjusting to the changes and changing for the better service of the Church. The list of missions and apostolates is a great credit to the small community which labored so long and hard, first at Belle Prairie and then at Little Falls.

Truly this book is evidence that this Franciscan Congregation is "anchored in trust and rooted in God's love, [that] it may confidently look forward to resting securely *In the Shadow of His Wings.*"

'The Spiritual Combat. By Lawrence Scupoli. Translated by William Lester and Robert Moran. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. xvi-240. Paper, $3.45.

The Lord Is Within You. A Book on the Presence of God. By Anselm Moynihan, O.P. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1979. Pp. 137. Paper, $2.95.

The Practice of the Presence of God. The Complete Works of Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection. Translated by Sister Mary David, S.S.N.D. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. 127. Paper, $2.25

Reviewed by Father Wilfrid A. Hept, O.F.M., Moderator of the Secular Franciscans at Providence, Rhode Island and a member of the staff at St. Francis Chapel there.

Someone once said, "I am too busy to read good books; I have time to read only the best." It seems

several publishing companies are following this principle and are publishing some of the best of the past masterpieces of the spiritual life. Two such recent publications come from the Paulist Press: *The Spiritual Combat* by Lawrence Scupoli, and *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence. Both would have been found on the bookshelf of almost every spiritual director several decades ago. Another such classic is *The Lord Is Within You*, a fine paperback by Father Anselm Moynihan, O.P., published by Michael Glazier, Inc. It is true that times and literary fashions change, but the essential questions relating to man's quest for God are perennial. It is refreshing to read these new translations and editions adapted to suit new times and circumstances.

The most practical of the three is *The Spiritual Combat*, first published in Venice in 1589. Saint Francis de Sales called it "the golden book" and carried a copy of it in his pocket for eighteen years. He read some pages from it every day and recommended it to all under his spiritual direction. The book's purpose is clearly stated in the first chapter: it is to lead the soul to the summit of spiritual perfection. The author conceives this journey as beset by obstacles which come from our evil tendencies. By means of constant and courageous struggle against our evil inclinations we will achieve our goal. There are four essential weapons we can use in the struggle: (1) self-distrust, (2) confidence in God, (3) training in spiritual warfare through proper use of our mental and physical powers, and (4) prayer, both short or ejaculatory and prolonged in the form of mental prayer.

The author's method is thorough and precise, and it goes deep into the roots of each of these subjects. Of course the reader must be prepared to cope with the terminology of another era. But as Father Benedict J. Groeschel, O.F.M.Cap., points out in the preface: "The unique contribution of the author of the 'Spiritual Combat' is his readiness to use practical psychological suggestions without apology or disguise and his complete consistency throughout."

While this book concentrates on the means to perfection, a second book describes the presence of God in the soul. Very early in this book, *The Lord Is Within You*, Father Anselm Moynihan says: "There are ultimately only two kinds of people in the world: those who are aware of God, and those who are not aware of him."

To whichever class you belong, if you read this book, you will become more aware of the God within you. On page 112 the author compares the experience of the presence of God to "something like the way electricity works with us. We cannot see electricity in a wire. And it is very hard to explain its power and action and presence in the wire. However we know it is there by the brightness of the light bulb. God may also give us a kind of taste of his presence. . . . And it too, cannot be fully understood until we truly experience it." To dispose ourselves for such a taste of the presence of God, the author tells us, we need times of special silence and solitude. To read such chapters as "Aware of God," "Before the Eyes of God," "Rooted

in the Heart of God," and others, gives us an experience of being alone with God.

One who truly experienced this presence of God within us was Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection. In another paperback book we read of this seventeenth-century lay brother, a Discalced Carmelite. No conceited scholar was Brother Lawrence! Theological and doctrinal debates bored him, if he noticed them at all. His one desire was for communion with God. We find him worshiping more in his kitchen than his cathedral. He could say that the time of business does not with him differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of his kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, he possesses God in as great tranquility as if he were upon his knees before the Blessed Sacrament. This portrait of a man totally absorbed in God comes by way of "A Eulogy of Brother Lawrence" in the first 44 pages, followed by "The Way of Brother Lawrence," both chapters written by M. L'Abbé Joseph de Beaufort. The rest of the book is made up of interviews, spiritual maxims, and Lawrence's letters. All in all, then, the value of this book lies in its Christian humility and simplicity.

While the setting may be different for the modern religious or lay person, the life of Brother Lawrence speaks loudly and clearly that the most commonplace and menial tasks can be turned into a living hymn to the glory of God. Some readers will find in one or all three of these books deeper insight into the ways of the spiritual life. Whether yours is a Martha-kind of work full of activity and busy service, or a Mary-kind of work full of quiet and peace, these books may be for you.

Celibate Love. By Paul M. Conner, Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 208, including bibliography and index. Cloth, $9.95.

Celibacy, Prayer and Friendship: A Making-Sense-out-of-Life Approach. By Christopher Kiesling, O.P. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1979. Pp. xx-229. Paper, $5.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy, Fordham), Associate Professor of Philosophy at Siena College and Associate Editor of this Review.

Two new books by Dominican priests help to illumine the important religious subject of celibacy.

The topic of Father Connor's book is "chaste, masculine-feminine love as it relates to divine love" (p. 9. Using an a priori approach from Scripture, theology, and psychological theory, as well as a posteriori evidence from the lives of the saints, the author argues convincingly that male-female friendships among mature, consecrated religious can be helpful and positive in building up the reign of God in each individual as well as in the whole Christian community. This does not mean that everyone in vows should set out to seek a spiritual helpmate, but it does mean that the "cult of safety" should not inhibit one from entering into friendships which do arise and show by their fruits that they are of God.

Ruled out of bounds for the celibate are the complementing love of the sort found in friendships with the married or the single not vowed. Out of bounds too are friendships with vowed people which interfere with prayer life, restrict availability to others, surround themselves with "romantic accoutrements, approach the possessiveness of married love, or—in general—in which God is not truly the First Love of each. Friendships can exist without any of these factors, as they did between Dominic and several women, Catherine of Siena and Raymond of Capus, Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Joan de Chantal, and Teresa of Avila and Father Jerome Gratian.

Among the helpful distinctions found in the work are those (1) between functional love (the real concern, compassion, and affection for the person one is helping) and friendship love (with its mutuality and equality); and (2) between physical love and sensate love, the latter being an emotional love which can go in either a physical or a spiritual direction.

Celibate Love is a book to be mulled over, not a primer of self-help; for religious life, like any life, cannot be lived out of a book. It must be lived in the light and warmth of the Spirit.

Father Christopher Kiesling has successfully integrated faith and human experience in approaching the three topics of his eminently readable book.

With regard to celibacy, one of his best insights involves distinguishing motives for celebacy in general from motives that actually inspire a particular celibate. The latter type of motive changes throughout the course of celibate life—this claim fits my experience as well as the author's.

With regard to prayer, Father Kiesling describes the practice of the presence of God and simple affective communication of feeling. He devotes a chapter to developing Trinitarian prayer.

And he elaborates quite thoroughly upon friendship: in particular, the friendship of the male and the female celibate. Among his important observations in this connection are the need for maturity in such relationships (for some they are just definitely out of the question), the need for prayer, and the need for prudence. A whole chapter, in fact, is devoted to "matters of prudence," and it is carefully worked out so as not to engender in the reader either scrupulosity or laxity.

Two excellent chapters on "Difficulties in Celibate Life" and "The Spirit of Poverty" form the perfect complement for his thoughts on celibacy, prayer, and friendship: thoughts from which all religious can derive profit.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Catholics and Broken Marriage: Pastoral Possibilities of Annulment, Dissolution, the Internal Forum. John Catoir. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 69. Paper, $1.95.

Written by a former tribunal member, this question and answer book is a valuable reference source. Father Catoir sees remedies for many broken marriages as matters of justice, and throughout he emphasizes the principle of justice tempered with mercy. He reconciles adherence to the principle of the indissolubility of marriage with the application of canonical and moral principles to particular marriage cases. Although generally realistic in his assessment of the situations in broken marriages, Father Catoir does not, I think, face the issue of scandal fully, as someone in the Catholic community, sooner or later, must do.

The Pain and the Possibility. By Paula Ripple, F.S.P.A. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 143. Paper, $2.95.

The author, a Franciscan sister, is Executive Director of the North American Conference of Separated and Divorced Catholics. She writes from a wealth of personal experience with those undergoing the trauma of divorce. Her goal is to show that divorce can be the beginning of a new life, even one with God and the church. She wishes to dispose of the stereotyping of divorced people as "bad examples," for her experience reveals them as far from that. (In fact, I had the thought that she was substituting a new stereotype: the God-fearing, God-desiring, mature, family-oriented type). I found her application of the familiar stages of dying to the loss of a spouse interesting, and that chapter to be among the best in the book. While I would not call this a primer for the divorced, I think some in that situation—as well as their families—may indeed find it helpful.

God Never Says, "Yes, But . . ." By Leonard Foley, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1979. Pp. vi-74. Paper, $1.50.

Four important areas of our lives concern guilt, conscience, suffering, and prayer—especially prayer of petition. In rather well developed and popularly written essays, Father Foley addresses the questions that believers raise in these areas and offers his own "answers." "Answers" has to be written in quotation marks, for whenever we enter the realm of faith, then mathematical precision must give way to trust in mystery. I see this little book's greatest service as that of a catalyst for a prayer-scriptural discussion series.

All the Days of Lent. By Colane Recker, O.S.F. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 63. Paper, $2.45.

This little book is a composite of "Scripture, thoughts, and things to do." Arranged so that there is one of each of the three for every day in Lent, the book leads us through chapters 17-19 of the Gospel of John and summons us to be at one with one another and with God. Each page of print is set on a background sketch of words or figures which add to the attractiveness and impact of the book. This may be a bit late for 1979; but Lent will recur; and *All the Days of Lent* will prove a useful tool for reading and reflection during that sacred season.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Brown, Raphael, *True Joy from Assisi.* Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, Pp. xlii-268, including appendices, bibliography, & index. Cloth, $8.95.

Girzone, Joseph F. *Kara: The Lonely Falcon.* New York: Vantage Press, 1979. Pp. viii-48. Cloth, $4.50.

Jones-Prendergast, Kevin, ed., *Letters to God from Teenagers.* Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1979. Pp. vii-102. Paper, $3.50.

Van Hook, John E., O.F.M., *Systematic Philosophy: An Overview of Metaphysics.* Hicksville, NY: Exposition Press, 1979. Pp. 147, including index. Cloth, $7.50.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The Cover and illustrations for our November Issue have been drawn by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., Monastery of Sancta Clara, Canton, Ohio.

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A REVIEW EDITORIAL

The Myth of Jesus

MYTH, WE HAVE often insisted in these pages, is not falsity or error, but may be the best way to tell the truth about the deeper dimensions of human life. This contention receives new and detailed clarification in a fine new Christology book by Dr. James Mackey, who holds doctoral degrees in both historical theology and philosophy of religion. He identifies himself as a priest in the course of his exposition, and other personal disclosures make it obvious that he is not a Roman Catholic priest. He is Associate Editor of *Horizons,* has engaged in missionary work, and presently teaches at the University of San Francisco. He writes so well, so eloquently, trenchantly, and on occasion so poetically, that several times as I was reading the book I wished that I could meet him or, at least, hear him preach.

Deeply impressed at the very outset with this book's erudition and scholarship, I took voluminous notes all the way through and considered expanding the present review into a discussion article, which the book richly deserves. When I realized the length such a discussion would have to assume, and the unavailability of space for it in the foreseeable future, I decided instead simply to make sure it came as prominently as possible to the attention of our readers and be content with engaging in terribly superficial, brief, and summary form its major issues.

Dr. Mackey is mainly concerned to insist that (quite in accord with our contemporary emphasis on history) the "quest of the historical Jesus" is not only capable of succeeding, but absolutely necessary for the proper grounding and understanding of the "Christ of faith." In his first chapter, therefore, he surveys the dismal history of the modern "quests," exposing the various authors' inadequate presuppositions and blaming them, rather than the sources, for the quests' failure.

Jesus: The Man and the Myth. By James P. Mackey. New York: Paulist Press, 1979. Pp. viii-311, including indices. Paper, $8.95.

Subsequent chapters make fruitful use of a masterful and responsible historical methodology to deal with the death, the resurrection, and only then the life of Jesus. In each case, myth, as a story woven from profound symbols, is shown to be not only legitimate, but the only way, really, that sense could be made of, and adequate expression given to, the way the disciples experienced Jesus. The order of these chapters is important—one can, historically, proceed only in this way to trace the construction of the "myth of Jesus."

After proceeding to justify the transformed symbolism in the Pauline writings (from "kingdom of God" to "faith, grace, spirit, and life"), the author deals with the titles given Jesus by his followers. He shows the historical relativity of most of them and singles out "Word" and "Son" for special treatment, explaining that these two are not symbols exclusively, but concepts as well. The discussion of both ways of knowing is quite good: symbols must be allowed to evoke the ultimate depth of reality, and concepts need absolute purification; to stop short of the end in either case results in idolatry. Still, as will become apparent below, one may disagree with what is meant by the "absolute purification" that concepts need. Analogy is not metaphor, but literal characterization.

Dr. Mackey goes on to survey patristic Christology, concentrating particularly on just what was wrong with Arius's heresy. He concludes with a return to the "historical quest," this time exposing the fatal flaw in Bultmann's quintessential Lutheranism with its rejection of the immanent and the historical. An Appendix deals with the Lord's baptism and birth, insisting on the non-historical character of the theophanous aspects and the consequent demand for faith because of, rather than despite, the events' scandalous nature.

Regular readers of Christological discussions in these pages will understand that I approached this book with my guard up, wary of any tendency toward reductionism and the host of errors spawned by our contemporary exclusively "low" Christologies. I am happy to report that I found little to deplore along these lines. Some of Dr. Mackey's discussions of the Resurrection may strike the reader as ambivalent, but there is no question as to his acceptance of the Lord's real, personal rising to new life. He is right, I think, that this is not the sort of historical event to use as a "proof" for anything; rather, its power in the Apostles" life and work is surely the main point in scriptural references to it.

On the other hand, I find the book flawed by its author's repudiation of metaphysics (ontology, explicit acknowledgment of structure) in favor of a purely functional theology. With regard to the Trinity, to begin with what is most basic, Dr. Mackey three times appears to give the Spirit no distinct personal reality (pp. 105, 189, 235ff.) before showing that he knows he should do so (p. 240) without really doing so. The Trinity is treated in much too

Plotinian a fashion, so that it becomes a series of "way stations" along the human mind's journey into the depths of the divine Rality. When the author deals with the Incarnation, he says that Jesus *manifests* himself in two ways (divine and human) rather than that he *exists in two natures*. (Unaccountably, the Thomistic explanation of this orthodox doctrine seems to the author to be at least implicitly Apollinarian (p. 246)).

I said, above, that analogy is not metaphor. Failure to perceive this distinction, it seems to me, vitiates Dr. Mackey's trinitarian and christological perspective. Concepts used for these realities must be "absolutely purified," yes. But to interpret this to mean that they are metaphorical is to espouse modalism with respect to the Trinity and agnosticism with respect to the Incarnation. Unlike metaphor, analogy insists on a literal meaning for terms used even as it has a built-in provision for avoiding sheer anthropomorphism. With analogy, one holds a basic literal understanding even while acknowledging that the terms are understood in a manner different from their original, empirical signification. This is quite as far as the orthodox Christian may go in his "absolute purification" of concepts.

The other main difficulty I had with the book lies in Dr. Mackey's acceptance of today's prevalent understanding of revelation according to which it cannot consist of explicit, precise doctrinal statements literally divinely revealed. I under tand and fully sympathize with this as a rejection of divine dictation, but one does not have to go as far as the author does in search of a more subtle interpretation. This stance with regard to revelation, of course, is consistent with his rejection of analogy: How can one say anything about God with any accuracy if all one has at one's linguistic disposal is metaphor? When it comes to miracles, on the other hand, I think a careful reading of what Dr. Mackey has to say will show him to be orthodox and pretty much on target.

In general, some readers will be less than fully satisfied with what may strike them as a new emphasis in the depiction of Jesus achieved through historical analysis of the myths of his death, resurrection, and life (the latter being analyzed on the basis of his parables, signs, meal-rituals, prayers, and especially service to others). I think that what there *may be* (surely there *need not be any*) of a "low" or "reductionist" nature in all this, is traceable to the functional emphasis that becomes explicit only later in the book.

Jesus: The Man and the Myth is attractively presented and for a book its size has very few misprints. It is exceptionally well organized, quite reasonable in price, and so replete with information, profound analysis, literary eloquence, and religious inspiration that any reader with a minimal theological training should derive great theoretical and spiritual benefit from reading it.

Fr. Michael D. Meilach, ofm

Perseverance in Our Vocation

A Statement from the Personnel Committee of the Province of St. John the Baptist

IN WRITING this paper, we realize we stand on holy ground. Every call from God is a mystery. His ways are not our ways, his thoughts are not our thoughts. "As the heavens are above the earth . . ." (Is. 55). So too, the perseverance in a vocation: it is a matter of grace.

The loss of a vocation is also a mystery. We believe those people are mistaken who say that what God calls one to, he can call one from, and that some vocations, though bound by solemn vows, can be temporary. We think this answer does not honestly face the question. We believe that the faithful God allows man in his grace to make permanent commitments.

The painful loss of priests and religious to the service of the Church in the last decade has been experienced in our province. From 1963 to October of 1974, a period of 12 years, we have had a total of 291 departures from the province, not including deaths. A further analysis reveals that since January 1, 1963, 98 brothers, 81 clerics, 60 novices, and 52 priests have left the ranks. The total number of friars in the province has dropped from 602 in 1963 to 534 in 1974.

Especially dramatic has been the loss of middle-aged personnel. These friars have received the maximum education and formation in the Order and have been presumed to be entirely committed. But we have found that this group is very vulnerable. They have had little preparation for the abrupt loss of treasured values and beliefs. This particular age group is also deeply involved in demanding work that leaves their adaptive energies sapped. They find no time to work through their vocational conflicts.

Religious are not the only people who suffer during the middle years. These years, from

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This "Statement" from the Personnel Committee of the Province of St. John the Baptist was distributed as the March-April Resource *for reflection and discussion by the Plan for Franciscan Living, consultation service described in an article by Father Anton Braun, O.F.M., in our November, 1978, issue. As a strictly statistical report, it may appear somewhat dated, but its substantive considerations, we feel, merit the serious attention of our readers.*

The loss of or separation from any of the significant people in our lives can precipitate this crisis. . . .

35 to 55, are especially crucial in the life of any man. Dr. Theodore Rubin, as well as other psychologists, has called the experience of facing middle age "the male menopause." When a man reaches the age that he considers the turning point in his life, he may suddenly feel "old." Actually, this change-of-life reaction may have been developing unnoticed for some time. Causes include anxiety over the loss of youth, a decline in its powers and promise, the death of a parent or friend, an accident or serious illness. Depression, stagnation, the recurrence of adolescent personality problems are symptoms which may point to the occurrence of male menopause. Ken Rogers further suggests that the problems unresolved in earlier life are reawakened, which compel many to see changes in their lives or significant elements of their life-style. At a deeper level, however, they wish to halt or even reverse the aging process and thus the advent of death. The awareness of death, then, on either a conscious or a subconscious level, is the second cause of stress. Such attempts to deny the inevitable end in frustration which may actually destroy some of the deepest values or most vital relationships of life.

The crisis of middle age offers to the mature pesrson a splendid opportunity for even greater growth —especially the man of middle years who has dedicated himself to a lifetime commitment to God in a religious Order.

From a review of some of the sociological research on priests who leave the priesthood, some conclusion may be drawn which can be applied to religious life in general. A main cause of defections from the priesthood might be called a *change in role identity*. In the past, the priest, the bishop, and the layman all had definite expectations, which served to reinforce the priest in his role. Now the old role is gone, and the new role is not determined yet. The priest is in a psychological no-man's land.

Another serious crisis that can strike at any time is the loss of emotional support, either through death or through alienation. The loss of or separation from any of the significant people in our lives can precipitate this crisis, be they parents, family, fellow friars, close friends, superiors, or work associates. Any loss of emotional support results in depression and loneliness. At times the friar himself directly or indirectly causes the crisis. Other times the friar is the victim of an unfortunate

coincidence of several of these circumstances. Invariably the friar will seek new support from another person, who might be called the "crucial other."[1] Who this happens to be may determine the friar's future. Consequently, his confreres have a special obligation to provide for the emotional support he needs during these periods of crisis. If the "crucial other" is someone who counsels him, or even hints, that he should leave religious life or the priesthood, he may very well take the suggestion.

The loss of self-esteem, the depression resulting from failure and inadequacy in production or performance, which in turn has been used to measure success and worth in today's competitive society, may well be a first indicator of a crisis in vocation, a crisis in faith. The lack of human signs of success tempts a friar to question his worth, without taking into account his commitment and dedication to God. The individual who follows this course has not grasped the basic fact of the Christian life: God is involved in every detail of his life. God has a plan for everything that happens to him. But now it seems that God is no longer involved, or at least no more involved that a somewhat less than wholly concerned spectator. The examination of faith commitment should take precedence over examination of our priestly and religious commitment.

To this point, the issue of perseverance has been examined from the viewpoint of the experience of loss and the resulting crisis. What of the even more basic question of decision? How valid is a decision made years ago, in a different frame of mind? Perfect decisions, even life decisions, are rare; for what human being is perfect? Still, human decisions can and must be reasonable. We can determine, for the most part, our future, the direction of our life, by our significant decisions. There is a "future self," what I wish to become, which is molded by every serious decision I make. Other persons are wrapped up in our human decisions, and they form—by their belief in us, their support, and their demands upon us—a part of the whole complexus which we call our "self." Fidelity, at all levels, is rooted in faith in self, a self which can never be known with finality or mathematical certainty. I can only believe who I am called to be.

Decision is also based on a faith in one's community: that I can rely on the faithfulness of the

[1]Eugene Schallert, "Reasons Predicated for Leaving the Priesthood," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 71 (Jan., 1971), 261ff.

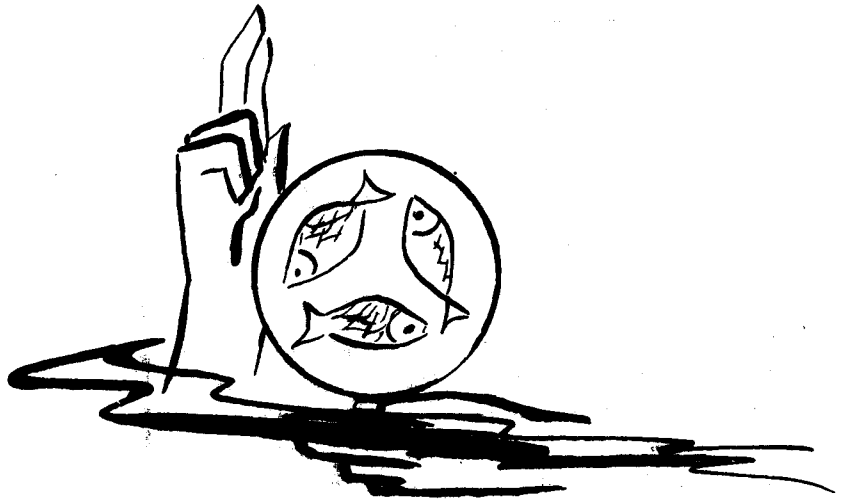
other members. Ultimately, however, I must appeal to Someone Other, who is present to men and unswervingly constant. For we cannot foresee the future with any degree of certainty; but we do make decisions which determine and commit our very selves to a specific way of living in a future we see only dimly. We commit ourselves ultimately to a God who is Lord of History: past, present, and to come. We are aware of ourselves as changeable creatures—changeable in our moods, our ambitions, even our basic perceptions of life. But we transcend ourselves in faith, for by our vows we lay our lives in the hands of God, who is unchangeable in his fidelity, who promises to be with us all days even to the consummation of the world—a promise we must take with complete trust, with patience and humility.

Unfortunately, man is sinful and weak and prone to error. The direction of fidelity, its expression, may be mistaken. One may not realize how much he was influenced by outside pressure, for example. Continued fidelity to a faithful God may in some cases require the choice of another commitment. But this possibility does not in the least touch upon *me* here and now, or upon the faith with which *I* made my original decision. In other words, there is no reason to presume from the start that *my* self-knowledge is so woefully inadequate and my faith about *my* future as a religious so ill projected that a final commitment is never justifiable at all. If this were so; if faith in myself were so inherently irrational that no sensible human being could dare run its risk, then no one could ever make a promise, and the whole question of fidelity would become absurd.

The scientists have spoken. The philosophers have had their say. The issue now lies in the hands of the theologians. All discussions of fidelity must begin with the original insight of the first theologians of the Old Testament: that we can be faithful, not because we are strong, but because God has been faithful to us. Some consider God's fidelity to the people Israel, despite the frequent lapses, to be the central theme of the Old Testament. Speaking to David, Nathan prophesies:

> . . . but I will not withdraw my favor from him as I withdrew it from your predecessor Saul, whom I removed from my presence. Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me: your throne shall stand firm forever [2 Sam. 7:15-16].

Personal commitment to the Covenant, which is always more than the minimum required, is the individual's response to God's faithfulness.



The New Testament reaffirms God's fidelity with a New Covenant, sealed with the blood of Jesus. Conversion to Christianity envisages life-long fidelity. The call to follow Christ envisages no end. Paul saw himself called to a lifetime commitment: "Yet preaching the Gospel is not the subject of a boast; I am under compulsion and have no choice. I am ruined if I do not preach it" (1 Cor. 9:16).

All that is said about God's and man's fidelity has a bearing on man's general call to Christianity. We must conclude that, if the faithful God calls a person to a particular way of life—for life, that person can rely on God's own fidelity to enable him to be faithful. The person's own efforts to be faithful are rooted totally in God's fidelity.

As Christians, and especially as religious and priests, our response to God's enduring call, his unceasing gift of love and grace, places us in a highly visible role. But remaining faithful to our vows and orders, we sacramentalize, make real, the invisible fidelity of God for all. As Franciscans we cut a high profile and serve to bolster the faith of our fellow Christians. At all times, but especially in times of great change, there is urgent need for very visible signs of this fidelity of God to his people.

Francis was always the first to recognize his own weakness and to praise God for the miracle of grace in his life. His own memorable words, "Up to now we have done nothing," express an ongoing fidelity, which was his response to God's unwavering faithfulness to him. As friars, we must also accept God's grace as

the only real agent of fidelity, letting the powerful influence of Saint Francis assist us to live the Gospel joyfully, unaffectedly, simply, and to show Christ to the world in poverty, brotherliness, and littleness. Faithfulness demands a deepening maturity of character, a continual purification of motives, and steadfast commitment to our baptismal covenant. All these aspects of perseverance, finally, must take place in the context of the daily support of the fraternity.

The earliest spritiual writers linked the loss of vocation with the capital sin of *acedia*, mistranslated into English as "sloth." They called it the "noonday devil," characterized by spiritual torpor, an attitude that says, "I just don't care any more." John Cassian's description may have a contemporary ring:

> The sum total of all the drawbacks of this disease was elegantly stated by blessed David when he said: "My soul hath slumbered through heaviness" (Ps. 118:28), that is to say, boredom. Very properly it was that he said, not the body, but the soul had gone to sleep. For the soul does indeed slumber with respect to the contemplation of the virtues and beholding spiritual meanings, if it has been wounded by the dart of this disturbance [Institutes, Bk. X, ch. 4].

Alan of Lille called *acedia* that which draws back the Christian's hand from the plow. Saint Thomas brought the long development of thought on *acedia* to a head when he defined it as "sadness in the face of spiritual good." He opposed this vice to the theological virtue of charity or love of God.

Acedia is still with us. One might conclude that it is particularly besetting for those in middle age, and especially contemplatives: teachers and professors. One of the principal symptoms is a desire for greener pastures, more diversion. Georges Bernanos once said: "You understand nothing of the twentieth century unless you realize that everything in it conspires against the interior life." With this insight in mind, we as religious might examine our use of the media and our other diversions. Do they block the inwardness necessary to seek the truth that lies within? Do they hamper our struggles to persevere?

A closing word must be said concerning our feelings about those who leave. Departures do not evoke one stock response. Some, in evident discomfort for years, leave in peace, and we are relieved. Some may insist that they have no feelings when others leave. Is this avoidance, or rationalizing? To displace anger we may blame; sadness may become chronic bereavement; envy may surface as resentment. Any of these feelings occur after the experience of loss. The mature, healing response to these feelings is to meet them head-on, admit them, and use them as another step to maturity.

Admittedly this statement is incomplete. We have skirted some important issues, such as loss of faith and problems with celibacy. We wish to invite other friars to join with us in continuing this study. From the foregoing material, however, we can voice some conclusions.

1. All who are struggling with their vocation are urged not to work out their problems in isolation, but to seek spiritual direction.

2. The importance of good fraternal life can scarcely be overemphasized for needed spiritual and emotional support.

3. Our shared prayer together must become more genuine and characterized by fraternal concern for one another.

4. We must renew our spiritual vision of a consecrated life, as a mode of existence which is special in itself.

5. We must recommit ourselves to fulfilling our vows faithfully, thoroughly, and radically.

6. Each friar should ask himself about the attitude he is forming concerning faithfulness, and whether his attitude is a true expression of the Gospel.

Ego Eimi

Living water, liquid light,
quench dark thirsting; slake dry sight.
Bread of sweetness unsurpassed,
feed wry starving; break dour fast.

Sheepgate, shepherd, lamb—all three
allude to Your own Trinity,
Which—being far beyond my state—
my thinking halts, awed, inchoate.

And yet, if I, benighted, stray,
I hear Your words, "I am the Way."
And, trusting Truth, I turn, contrite,
to find You, Lord—Love, Life, and Light.

God's brilliant Word by men misread,
come, blast the shadows of our Dread!
Ravage the mountains: raise the plain,
reveal Your eschaton and reign.

Sister M. Felicity Dorsett, O.S.F.

A Francis Song

I

In an apparel
not gold,
Garmented
sans velvet,
Dressed only
in woolens
and sack,
I would present myself
to caliph and king
to prince and baron
to power and authority.

Seeking
a peace
so distant
so desirable
to humanity.

Seeking
an order
to life
and love
for humankind.

Asking
a touching,
a reaching
that
fraternity
reals
fraternity
reals
fraternity
births
in brothers.

Asking
not
commiseration
nor
sympathy
but
pursuit
and a living
of
that
poorness
and simplicity,
that
celebration
of life,
and
an acknowledgement
of creation
and its
potential—
of creation
and its
so very glorious
performance,
of creation
and its
humbling
presence
on life's stage
as presented to
whited women
and
those blacked,
to actors unrôled
to farmers unrained
to soldiers unwarred
to mariners unstarred.

A creation
unsurpassed
and
not fully realized.
Tokening beatitude
yet so easily
distorted
and trivialized.

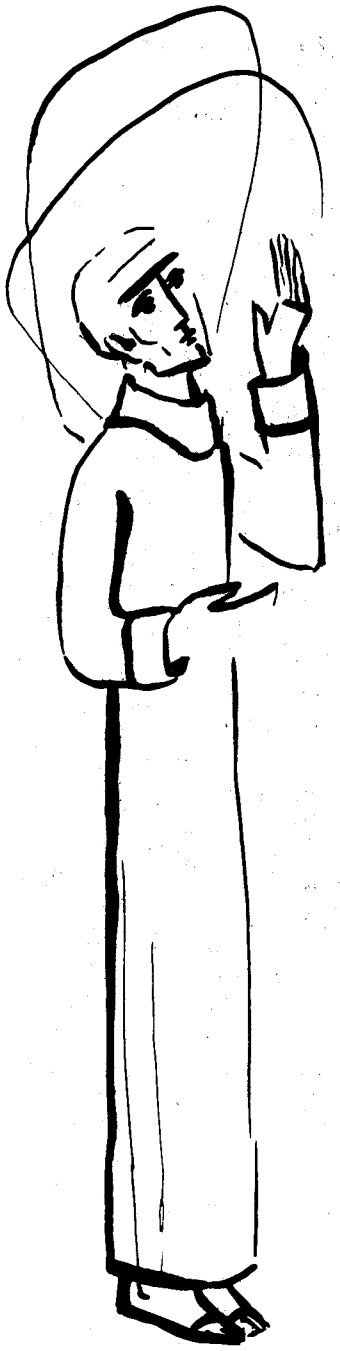
II

Attempted in homage—
my rule,
my theory,
my hope.

I invited them.
I wanted them.

They couldn't
They wouldn't.

I remain
unreachable
Yet I was
am a man.
Chosen,
I must confess
Inimitable,
I must regret.



Mirror,
man has
accorded me.
Image,
the friars
insist.

A follower,
a lover,
a child,
I permit
myself
only to suggest.
Covered in weakness
Clothed with inadequacy
Standing in sand—
Yet persisting as
a spider's web
a bird's nest
a water's motion.
We live
in Your Hand
We breathe
in Your Love
We love
in Your Grace.

I,
poor brother,
Francis,
desire
Your patience
Your kindness
Your strength,
need
Your love,
poor man
that I am.

Mount Alvernia
September, 1978

Justin Bickel, O.F.M.

The Paschal Mystery in the Writings of Saint Francis

SISTER JOANNE BRAZINSKI, O.S.F.

THE SPEED of our contemporary world has seduced modern man into accepting many things without taking time to examine them or think them through. It has given him neat categories, compartments, and labels for people, things, and events, so that he does not have to ponder long before making judgments. Quick decisions can be made, and thus he can move on to the next appointment, task, event.

Unfortunately, this speed-acceptance attitude has touched man at his religious core also. There is much of our Christian tradition that we take for granted. We give mental assent to many things, labeling them "Christian," "non-Christian," "good," "bad"; and then we simply move on to the next topic of discussion. Perhaps too many of our Christian mysteries and principles have never been given sufficient reflection—we have never taken time really to ponder them or deliberately to embrace them; and thus they have never touched us deeply nor become living realities in our lives.

Taking a deeper look at the reality of the paschal mystery in the life of a Christian and a religious has involved me in much reading and reflection, from which many questions have emerged. Do we realize that the Christian vocation is to *live* the paschal mystery? Do we recognize the call to "die" with Christ as a life-giving invitation? Do we have the vision of resurrection that makes the daily dying to self a *gift*, a unitive, freeing experience? It is counterculture to live the paschal mystery today; can we do it? As religious of the twentieth century, are we embracing that living death which makes us a freer, more Christ-centered people? In the Franciscan tradition that we profess, what part does this death-resurrection reality play? What does Francis leave us in his writings, as a legacy in this regard? What does all this mean to us as Christians, as religious, as Franciscans?

Sister Joanne Brazinski, O.S.F., wrote this paper in partial fulfillment for the completion of the Institute of Religious Formation Program at St. Louis University. Nearing the completion of her work in the Franciscan Studies Program at St. Bonaventure University, Sister Joanne is currently the Formation Director of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God, Pittsburgh.

Death, in the discussion to follow, does not of course refer exclusively to the cessation of all vital functions—the end of physical life; rather, it is used to mean a transformation—a process of "letting to" effected by the vision of greater life. Resurrection, similarily, is not a rising from this state of decay and disuse, but rather the deep experience of life: living and experiencing the Lord's kingdom here and now. The core meaning of the expression "paschal mystery" is of course the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; but the term will also be used to denote a daily dying, a continual conversion, the acceptance of living with the questions of life and the insecurities of the future.

The Lord's own life is of course the example par excellence of what it means to do all this. His words which we read in the Gospels not only speak of the reality he lived but also invite us to live it with him. "Whoever wishes to be my follower must deny his very self, take up his cross each day, and follow in my steps. Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will save it" (Lk. 9:23-24). "I solemnly assure you, unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. 'But if it dies, it produces much fruit" (Jn. 12:24).

To be Christian means to follow Jesus Christ. Are we aware of the implications of this statement? When we attend Mass, is it a "celebration" of the paschal mystery? Is liturgy a "strength source" for us to embrace the daily dying to self in order to rise with Christ in the experience of living the kingdom here on earth?

A contemporary author has said of Francis of Assisi that his life was no more and no less than a Christian life. What made the difference was the intensity and imagination with which he lived it.[1] For Francis the paschal mystery was truly a reality; it was so real in his life that his very body carried the marks of his embrace of it. In Celano's conversion account, we see Francis's eagerness to be identified with Jesus, to *live* the paschal mystery, to embrace this death-resurrection reality. In the initial stages of his conversion, Francis endures the humilitations of rejection, beatings, ridicule, disinheritance. Ultimately, he can even "die" to his delicate, refined nature by kissing the leper—an act the thought of which previous-

[1]Walter Nigg, *Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975), p. 7.

ly had repulsed him.[2]

As Francis lived and worked among the lepers, others came to him who wished to follow his lifestyle, to partake of his inner joy, to share in his resurrection vision. These men wanted to learn the secret mysteries of life through death, joy through self-denial, possession of the kingdom through humility and poverty. After celebrating the liturgy with his first followers, Francis sought guidance in the Word of God; he asked the priest to open the Gospels three times to see what the Lord would reveal to them about their future.

"If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions, and give to the poor... and come, follow me" (Mt. 19:21).

"Take nothing for your journey, neither staff nor knapsack, shoes or money" (Lk. 9:3).

"If any man will come after me, let him renounce self, take up his cross and follow me" (Mt. 16:24).

What more direct words could be used as an invitation to live daily the paschal mystery, to die to one's desires for wealth, prestige, honor—to die to one's very self? Francis and his brothers rejoiced, and this became their program, their very *rule* of life.

These passages form the scriptural foundation of the Franciscan Order. Have Franciscans throughout the ages continued to pledge the living out of this mystery? Have we realized the implications of following this way of life? Have we perhaps missed sharing part of Francis's vision because we have been afraid of the "dying"? Are we living as Franciscans if that total identification with Jesus, even to death, is not part of our primary life goal?

Francis's whole life was an ascent to total transformation into Christ crucified. His life gradually became a participation in the "great and marvelous mystery of the Cross."[3] His living out of the paschal mystery was a daily dying, a minute by minute dying, so that Christ could live more fully in him. All the pleasures of the world were a cross to him, because he carried the cross of Christ rooted in his heart" (2 Celano 211; p. 531). The cross spoke to him of annihilation, and it was an insistent invitation to self-renunciation and interior poverty. For Francis it was never death for the sake of death, but rather death as a means of union with his Lord, a participation in his very life. Francis was a lover, and because he loved Jesus Christ so intensely, no dying was too difficult or beyond his reach; his eyes were always fixed on his Lord. That vision and that love were the motivating forces in his life. After each act of asceticism, each action of death to self, Francis experienced a deeper life in Christ; he became more rooted in him and was thus able to live the kingdom here on earth.

There are many examples in the life of Francis that manifest his living out of the paschal mystery event, but perhaps even more important are his writings to us concerning this reality. He has left us a legacy, an invitation, a challenge; he beckons us to "die," invites us to "renounce self." He promises the kingdom and salvation and God if we also have the courage to live the paschal mystery by following "the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ."

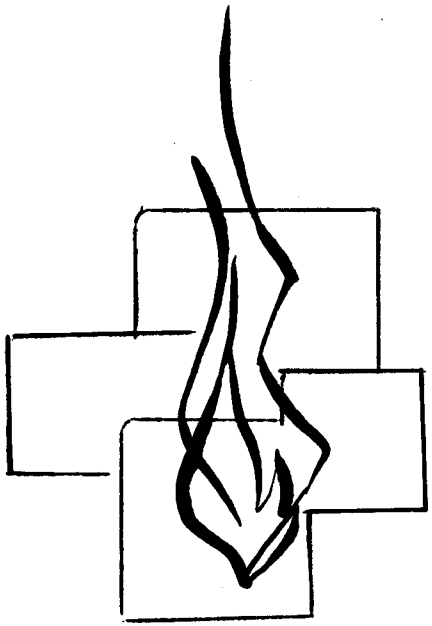
This invitation to the life of penance, the message of embracing death, threads its way through the Rule of 1221 from beginning to end. From the very opening lines Francis reminds his followers that their way of life is a call to death through self-renunciation and interior poverty (ch. 1), is a call to be emptied as the Lord Jesus Christ was emptied. Francis's vision and understanding of the paschal mystery was a lived experience; therefore, he offers specific ways the brothers are to live this death experience. He invites them to die to their uncontrolled natural desires and their pride by fasting (ch. 3) and begging alms (ch. 9). In regard to begging, he says they "should have no hesitation about telling one another what they need, so they can provide for one another" (ch. 9). This concept of begging has mind-boggling implications for the experience of community even today.

To emphasize humility and poverty as ways of embracing the paschal mystery, Francis forbids his friars to wield power over anyone (ch. 5), to accept positions of authority (ch. 7), or to accept money (ch. 8). Francis was aware of the intrinsic opportunities to "die" that accompanied community living. Concerning these he says of the brothers: "There must be no quarreling among themselves or with others ... let them be without a word of criticism or condemnation ... they must give no thought even to the slightest faults of others" (ch. 11). He suggests that in humility and with much eagerness, the brothers always be ready "to wash one another's feet" (ch. 6).

In reflecting on the excerpts of this Rule, we see clearly that Francis does not merely prescribe for us acts of mortification to follow; he did not mean simply to inculcate a progressive control of the instincts by deadening the appetites of the heart. The Christian ascesis and death to self that

[2] 1 Celano 17; *Omnibus*, p. 243. All subsequent citations, with page numbers in text, are taken from this edition.

[3] St. Bonaventure, *Legenda Major*, X, 8; p. 786.



he enjoins in this document touch the very core of our being. They demand a conversion of heart, the cultivation of counterculture attitudes and values, and the vision of treasuring the Lord above all else.

> They should be glad to live among social outcasts, among the poor and helpless . . . if people insult them and refuse them, they should thank God for it, because they will be honored before the judgement seat of our Lord Jesus Christ for these insults [ch. 9].
>
> No matter where they are, they must always remember that they have given themselves up completely and handed over their whole selves to our Lord Jesus Christ, and so they should be prepared to expose themselves to every enemy, visible or invisible, for love of him [ch. 16].
>
> We should be glad when we fall into various trials and when we suffer anguish of soul and body, or affliction of any kind in this world, for the sake of life eternal [ch. 17].

Francis believed that death in all forms opens the ears of the heart to God, frees us from ourselves, sharpens our vision and our appreciation of the value of all life, and gives us an inner joy and peace that no one can take away since it is rooted in our God. "They should let it be seen that they are happy in God, cheerful and courteous, as is expected of them, and be careful not to appear gloomy or depressed like hypocrites" (ch. 7).

It is not enough that as Franciscans we be people who live this mystery; it is also part of our legacy and inheritance to announce it. Francis commissions us to call others to living this death-resurrection reality: "... beg and implore everyone to persevere in the true faith, and in the life of penance, there is no other way to be saved" (ch. 23).

Thus, we see the Rule of 1221 reflecting the reality lived in Francis's own life: an embrace of the daily dying to self. The life of penance is conceived not as a burden but as a liberation and a participation in the very life of Jesus Christ. Are we as Franciscans living the spirit of this rule,

or have we allowed culture and society to dictate and control our values and vision? Have we slipped into the "comfort" of pride and possession? Have we forgotten how to "die"?

For Francis this mystery of death with Christ in order to rise with him to new life was real and vibrant. He did not simply look on the life of penance as a matter of interior acts and good intentions, but rather as a concrete way of expressing imitation of Christ. Many of the exhortations he gave to the early brothers centered around this theme. In Admonition 5, he speaks of dying to one's pride and sense of self-sufficiency. He extols God as the eternal Gift-Giver and in doing so awakens within us an awareness of our dependency on him. His words bring gratitude and praise to birth in us as we realize all good things come from our God and are not from ourselves. "But there is one thing of which we can all boast; we can boast of our humilitations and in taking up daily the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (p. 81). This is to be our legacy, our joy: living in gratitude and dying daily, carrying willingly and lovingly our cross.

In many of his writings, Francis reminds us of our promise to "walk in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ." He presents the Good Shepherd image in Admonition 6 and urges us to reflect on how the Lord endured the agony of the cross for the sake of his sheep. The saints before us have "followed him in trials and persecutions, in ignominy, hunger, and thirst, in humiliations and temptations . . . for this God has rewarded them with eternal life" (ibid.). Francis is aware that man can appropriate even that which is intangible; thus he exhorts us: "We ought to be ashamed of ourselves, because the saints endured all that, and we who are servants of God try to win honor and glory by recounting and making known what they have done" (ibid.). Francis admonishes each of us to do his own dying, to do his own cross embracing in imitation of Jesus Christ, not as a one-shot deal, but as a daily choosing to follow him in this death-resurrection experience.

Although Admonition 10 is concerned with exterior mortification, calling us to die to the appetities and desires of the flesh. Francis makes us realize our dying must go beyond this level. In Admonition 14 he exhorts us to die to our self-esteem, to our defensiveness, to our very self. He invites us to foster counterculture attitudes as he encourages us to think less of ourselves and to "love those who strike us in the face" (p. 83). Can we live with such values? Can we accept this degree of dying?

Total renunciation was important to Francis as a means to total identification with Jesus Christ. This is why there were no limits to the dying he recommends to us: all had to be given, all possible forms of death had to be embraced. In his "'Letter to a General Chapter," he exhorts the participants: "Keep nothing of yourselves, so that he who has given himself wholly to you may receive you wholly" (p. 106). We are to cling to nothing, to fear no form of death, if we expect to be received by the Lord Jesus. Since the very reason for our Franciscan vocation is to bear witness to the message of the Lord Jesus Christ by word and deed, we must realize the necessity of living Francis's words: " . . . be well disciplined and patient under holy obedience, keeping your promises to him generously and unflinchingly" (ibid.). To be well disciplined, one must know the taste of death, the experience of surrender, the freedom of "letting go." One must be patient as he dies slowly and foster a loving heart that refuses no embrace of death because of its deep love.

Francis saw the Eucharist not only as a commemoration of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus, but also as a participation in this mystery. He contemplated the Real Presence principally as the perpetuation upon earth of the redemption effected in the immolation on the cross.[4] He writes to the General Chapter:

> Kissing your feet with all the love I am capable of, I beg you to show the greatest possible reverence and honor for the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things, whether on the earth or in the heavens, have been brought to peace and reconciled with Almighty God [p. 106].

In his well known "Letter to All the Faithful," Francis invites all Christians to live the paschal mystery. He recounts the Lord's celebration of the Pasch, his agony in the garden, his death to self-will and acceptance of the Father's will. He reminds us that the Lord's sacrifice on the cross was for our sake, and that his emptying of self was total and complete. Francis reassures the faithful that as Christians their vocation is to "follow in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ" through their own ways of death to self. In speaking of death to the desires of the flesh and of living a life of penance, Francis says: "On all those who do this and endure to the last the Spirit of the Lord will rest; he will make his dwelling in them and there he will stay, and they will be children of our Father in heaven whose work they do" (p. 96). Is he not giving us the reassurance of the resurrection experience in the here and now? He promises sonship and the eternal, abiding presence of our God if we live the vision of resurrection through death. Of those who refuse to do penance and die to self, he says that they are blinded by their own uncontrolled longings and desires: " . . . they lack spritual insight because the Son of God does not dwell in them" (ibid.). Of those who are "slaves of the world and of the desires of their lower nature, concerned primarily with the cares and anxieties of this life," he says that they have no good in this world and "nothing to look forward to in the next. They imagine that they will enjoy the worthless pleasures of this life indefinitely, but they are wrong" (p. 97). He emphasizes this fact, as well as summarizes one of the major themes of this Letter, in the final section: the dialogue with the unrepentant sinner. Here he reminds man that unless he dies daily to himself through acts of mortification and self-denial, he will not be ready to embrace the final moment of life and accept physical death.

Francis saw this daily dying as inevitable for the practice of virtue. In the "Praises of the Virtues" he stresses the necessity of self-denial, this dying to self-love and self-attachment, as the basis of any and all virtues: "In all the world there is not a man who can possess any one of you [virtues] without first dying to himself" (p. 133). In expressing this death to self as the essence of the Christian life, Francis emphasizes the importance of self-denial for identification with the Lord. In this same work, he stresses obedience as a special call to the death experience, because through it man subjects himself to others, mortifies his lower nature, and gives his own will as gift to the Father.

The last works of Francis to be considered in this reflection are his "Praises before the Office" and his "Office of the Passion." The former work was composed by Francis to be recited before the regular office of the day. It is made up of passages from Scripture, exclusively from the Books of Daniel and Revelation. It is a song of praise to God for all his works, and it certainly reflects the resurrection vision. "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God almighty, who was, and who is, and who is coming" (p. 138). Perhaps Francis wrote this so that the brothers would begin and end the day with the resurrection vision before their minds. He knew that without this reminder, this reality, any kind of dying would seem worthless and of no avail. It was not enough to die, one had to realize the reality behind the con-

[4]Lazaro Iriarte de Aspurz, *The Franciscan Calling* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974), p. 32.

stant death-experience: new life in Christ. Each day in these praises the brothers prayed: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and divinity and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing" (ibid.). They praised their God for all in heaven and on earth; they praised him for his constant presence and for the promise of resurrection, the promise of new life through death.

Then, after this prayer, they often prayed the "Office of the Passion." This work is what the Italians call a "cento," a literary piece composed by uniting pieces of quotes from other places. It is a kind of literary mosaic. The psalms of this office are made up of verses or parts of verses from scattered places in the Book of Psalms. Occasionally a verse or phrase is taken from another part of the Bible, and sometimes Francis adds his own words. The whole office is filled with the warmth and devotion of a deeply earnest man of prayer who lived in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ. The various "patchwork" psalms form an office that praises God through the Cross and Passion. This office is full of hope and anticipated gratitude, for Francis knew well that the "world to come" was already present. This is what the brothers were to live and pray: the dying to self with their eyes on the resurrection. They were continually to find a deeper life in the death expression they chose daily to embrace. It was thus that they could proclaim the glories of the kingdom of God, for they were testing it in the here and now through their embrace of the cross and their daily response to the invitation to die to self.

What does all of this mean? What has this reflection on the paschal mystery said to me? What avenues have been opened that I previously had not been aware of? What vision has it begun or sharpened in my life? What does it all say to me as Christian, as Franciscan?

To begin with, being touched by the reality of the paschal mystery in my everyday life has been an awesome experience. It is as if I am seeing Christianity with new eyes, with a new vision. It is only a beginning, and I realize that; but it is the beginning of a deeper awareness, the beginning of a different kind of vision, the beginning of a transformation, a depth experience. I am becoming more aware of the call as Christian to live this reality —to die to self in everyday situations and encounters.

Eucharist has taken on a deeper dimension of meaning. It is the celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; it is a reminder, an invitation to die to self, to be emptied as the Lord

Jesus himself was emptied, to be broken as he broke his own Body and invited the apostles and each of us to do likewise in memory of him. The Eucharistic liturgy is a participation in the paschal mystery and at the same time a "strength source" for the living out of the death experience. It is a promise of the kingdom and at the same time the experience of that kingdom in the here and now. It is a sacred time of worship and union; it is invitation and response.

By reflecting on the reality of the paschal mystery in the writings of Francis, I am becoming more aware of the richness that lies within our Franciscan heritage. I am beginning to understand what John Moorman has said of Francis: "He lived a Christian life and what made the difference was the intensity and imagination with which he lived it."[5] Perhaps the secret of the Franciscan life lies in the rediscovery of that intensity and imagination.

Throughout the writings of Francis I am struck by the constant invitation to "die." In so many ways Francis promises that living the paschal mystery is the secret of salvation, the promise of the kingdom, the experience of freeing oneself for God, the experience of letting him take over in your life. For Francis living this reality was a vision-sharpener that led one to complete dependence on God and fostered a reverential sense for all things. He has written in so many ways that his followers are to embrace the cross, to encounter this living death experience because of their vision and love of the Lord Jesus.

His message has said to me that as a Franciscan I must not only be willing to die, but ready to do so lovingly. It has said that each and every day I am called to die in different ways: to my natural desires by mortification and fasting, to my own will by listening, giving, and obedience, to my very self by surrendering and dying beyond the limits of reason. His message is an invitation to be counterculture, to be apart from the crowd, to develop attitudes not always acceptable to society.

This reflection experience has left me with questions that need to be lived, with an enthusiasm to do my own cross embracing, with an eagerness to search and discover the very practical and everyday ways of "dying to self" that are encountered each day; it has made me reflect on the meaning of living and proclaiming the kingdom.

This study in no way has exhausted the topic of the paschal mystery in the writings of Fran-

[5]Cited by Nigg, p. 7.

cis of Assisi; it has simply been an attempt to reflect on this reality in the light of the Poverello's writings and to discover his legacy to us in this regard. If this "dying to self" is such a vital part of our Franciscan heritage and mission, perhaps we need to reflect individually and communally on it, to discover and rediscover it.

At the end of his life, Francis said, "Let us begin, for until now we have done nothing" (*Leg. maj.*, XIV, 1; p. 737). Perhaps there is a certain dying in always beginning, in not being able to look back over achievements and successes and see how far we've come. Perhaps we need to look at each day as the beginning of our dying. Perhaps we need to discover, not merely with our intellects, but with our very lives, the meaning of "new life through death." We are gifted with the invitation to die, to live a constant death experience; do we have enough of the resurrection vision and experience to accept this invitation? Is our love great enough to embrace all forms of death? Are we rooted in the Lord enough to be a counterculture people who live for the kingdom to come and *in* the kingdom on earth?

R.S.V.P.

Oh, God!
What, incarnation time again?
Can my muddled heart and flabby flesh
bear your awful weight?

Your taste, you know, is tacky—
forever dabbling in the clay.

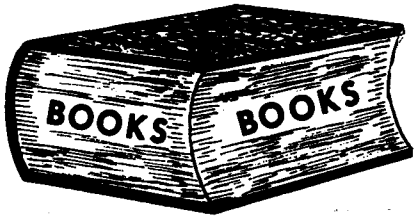
Don't you know that marble, bronze, and stone
are finer,
far more fitting to your Glory?

You might at least have mercy on our moods;
spare us the task of being Body.
Well enough for you to do it—
but we are reluctant brothers,
sorry sisters, at our best.

Still, Love will not be stayed.
Dusty Glory it may be,
but still it shall be Glory!

Come, then, Word, leap down . . .
take flesh in us, be born anew.
Your world awaits you.

Sara Pahl



The Mass: Meaning, Mystery, and Ritual. By George Every. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 200, including index and color illustrations (8 1/2"x9 3/4"). Cloth, 14.95.

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.

Prefacing, as he does, his treatment of the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper with a discussion of the roots of human ritual in primitive history, the author thereby reflects his main purpose—to describe the development of the Mass from the perspective of its *ritual* (prayers and ceremonies). This is not to say that questions of theology/doctrine are overlooked. As a matter of fact, the author devotes an entire chapter to the notion of sacrifice in the Old Testament and how this was appropriated by the early Christians in their understanding of the Eucharist. Interesting is the author's description of Christianity as a mystery cult (as these had developed at the time of the Roman Empire) in its relationship to the religion of Judaism.

There follows an account of the spread of the Roman rite of Mass to the newly evangelized nations of Europe, with the author pointing out the mutual cultural influence and interchange between Rome and these emerging countries as this process affected the liturgy.

As a prelude to the Council of Trent, Every (a convert from Anglicanism) pointedly describes some of the liturgical abuses rampant in the late Middle Ages—practices which cerntainly provided a context for Luther's and Zwingli's cries for liturgical and ritual reform. The author succinctly delineates the controverted doctrinal issues vis-à-vis the Mass, with which Trent was confronted: is the Mass a true sacrifice? is the private Mass without a congregation a valid celebration? is Mass at which the congregation does not receive Communion valueless? what precisely happens to bread and wine in the course of the Mass? An interesting sidelight to all of this: to uphold the efficacy of private Mass Trent came to view this form of liturgical celebration as the normative, and the Missal of Pius V required the celebrant to recite even those parts which originally pertained to the choir and/or the congregation (Introit, Offertory, and Communion antiphons, etc.).

The growth of the modern liturgical movement in Europe provides the setting for the author's treatment of the reforms initiated by Vatican II. Of special interest is Every's comparison of the third and fourth canons, in both content and structure, with the Eucharistic Prayers of the Eastern Churches, as well as the resonances of early Christian sources that are found in these new canons of the Roman rite.

Some inaccuracies occur in the book: e.g., one of the three Scriptural readings on Sundays is *always* taken from the Old Testament (p. 54); in the Chrism Mass, the place for the Blessing of Oils is immediately before the final doxology of the canon (p. 88)—de facto, only the Oil of the Sick is blessed at this juncture.

All in all, this book is not of the same quality as those of Jungmann and Howell. The author has a penchant for detail which might easily discourage all but the most enthusiastic liturgist. This criticism is not intended to detract from the author's scholarship—only to indicate that this work is by no means light reading.

Also, one might have hoped for a summary at the close of each chapter (since disparate material is treated in each) or at least at the end of the book.

The book is endowed with an abundance of illustrations and pictures which do differentiate it from other studies of the liturgy. However, its price ($14.95) might well place it out of range for the popular audience.

New Pressures, New Responses in Religious Life. By John P. Dondero, F.S.C., and Thomas D. Frary. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1979. Pp. xviii-172. Paper, $5.95.

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., M.A. (English), Coordinator of Alumni Services at St. Bonaventure University.

A psychologist and a theologian have collaborated in presenting in this book their thoughts on the state of religious life in the United States at the present time. The psychologist is a religious, and the theologian is a layman. The authors explain their purpose in their Introduction: "Together we have discussed possible ways of looking at the important issues and problems facing religious life. . . . Now we want to share what we have thought in the hope that our views may provide some common understanding for those in religious life and for the laity in thinking about life" (pp. xii-xiii).

The authors treat their subject in ten chapters and a conclusion. In the first chapter, "Perspectives on Vocation," they present their understanding of vocation as "God's call and a person's response lived out, worked at and completed" (p. 17). "Vocation in the Church is not a thing . . . someone can lose, or find, or break, or water. Vocation is an event, it is a happening" (ibid.).

The chapter entitled "Revitalization of Religious Life" is extremely critical of the leadership role in many

religious communities and suggests a reexamination of the position of authority in communities. Perhaps, the authors write, there has been too strong a tendency to make an identification between the action of the Holy Spirit and the decisions of the person in the position of responsibility. The authors suggest that religious tend frequently to become so introspective that they find it difficult to revitalize their communities. They suggest "strengthening the impact of religious life on the people of God in this day and age is dependent on listening" to those who are not religious. "That listening cannot be done from afar, from the isolation of our religious houses" (p. 32).

In the ensuing chapters of their book, the authors express their views on a variety of subjects: obedience, chastity, love relationships, community, theology, the Kingdom, reconciliation. The influence of the psychologist is present in almost every sentence. The theologian interjects some "new theology" in the consideration of all the topics treated. An interesting emphasis in many of the chapters is the idea of smaller communities as the saving feature of religious life in the future. The reason for such detailed treatment of this feature of contemporary religious life, the authors explain, is the necessary recognition of individual worth and personal growth that seem so much more readily promoted in this form of community; living with so many, the individual can shirk the responsibility of creative growth.

New Pressures, New Responses in Religious life is an interesting presentation of the theological and psychological insights of the authors about religious life in the United States in 1979. Admittedly, the writers do not attempt to suggest what religious life ought to be. Their book describes religious life as they have discovered it to be in their work with religious communities in America over the past several years. Their "existential" approach to the various topics is a "here and now" appreciation of living the evangelical counsels. In this reviewer's opinion, the writers have caught the "spirit of the times" in religious living during the seventies. As an instructor in English Composition to college freshmen, however, he could not but be appalled by the number of split infinitives. Otherwise, the book is very readable; the reader will get the most out of the work if he is constantly mindful that the authors are writing as professionals: one a psychologist and one a theologian. Hence their optimistic conclusion: "Whether from the theological perspective or the psychological perspective, the current emphasis on individual worth, on the value of person over institution, on the call to a personal responsibility for there to be corporate witness, on the necessary to mute differences in engaging in the ministry of reconciliation—all are viewed as revivifying life" (p. 171).

Forty Years behind the Wall. By Father M. Raymond, O.C.S.O. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 336. Paper, $5.95.

Reviewed by Father William Meninger, O.C.S.O., St. Joseph's Abbey, Spencer, Massachusetts.

In his breezy introduction (which begins with "Hi!"), Father Raymond primises that his book will be "shockingly different—and differently shocking." Unfortunately, he does not live up to his promise.

It is a difficult thing to criticize a man of Father Raymond's stature as a monk, as an author, and as a man of many years' experience of people and of life. These qualifications alone make almost anything he chooses to write worth reading. Yet I am forced to say my overall impression of his book is negative.

I began reading it with some eagerness. What a period he lived through! Forty years as a Trappist during what have probably been the most significant decades in the history of the Order. Yet it seems that the aggiornamento, which really began for the Trappist ten years before Vatican II, had hardly happened at all. Perhaps it was unfair of me to look for significant historical elements in a book which as autobiography must necessarily reflect personal responses even from one who has, as Father Raymond admits, a "selective memory." Nonetheless, apart from a very few references to new construction, redesigning the monastic church, and some liturgical changes, one would never realize he lived through one of the most traumatic and momentous periods in the history of Gethsemane, of the Cistercian Order, and indeed of the Church itself.

The first nine chapters, beginning with Father Raymond's entrance into Gethsemane as a Jesuit priest in 1936, read like a loosely connected florilegium of sermons. They are "pre-Vatican II" in content and expression; but, for all that, solidly theological and as valid today as at any time in the long life of the Church. For anyone under 50, however, I think they are likely to be tedious. Yet for those who can still respond to that particular style they are worthwhile reading.

Father Raymond's forty years spans the period when the Trappists, a penitential order, once again became the Cistercians, a contemplative order. This is somewhat obscured by the admittedly valid, wholesome, and obedience-orientated progression of his life described in the last five chapters, beginning with the tenth: "A Third Vocation . . . Reacquaintance with the World." While many of the early chapters are involved with a description of Father Raymond's growth in understanding the value of the contemplative life to the Church ("What tangible results could we see of all our praying?"), the last four chapters are precisely that: a description of Father's personal involvement with people outside his monastic environment. In one sense this can hardly be criticized. After all, he is writing an autobiography, and if that is the way it was, then that is the way he should tell it! One wonders, though, if his monastic community and way of life really had so little influence on him in the past twenty years, or if it was a negative influence and his "selective memory" simply prompts him to pass over it in relative silence.

Writing in his "75th year of life, 58 years as a religious and 45 years as

priest," Father remarks: "Age may not bring wisdom but it does make one wary of innovations." One does see between the lines more than a nostalgia for the past (pre-Vatican II past); there are even regret and disapproval of the present in spite of some optimistic statements to the contrary.

Yet, one feels impelled to say, so what! He lived (and still lives) the past traditions successfully, as many others did and do. The "changes" were not necessary for him, and he has a right to regret the passing of so many traditions and practices which he lived authentically and effectively. In spite of his reservations, Father Raymond's attitude remains one of positive hope, joy, and optimism.

I do, however, feel disappointed. One should be able to expect something more worthwhile from the author of *The Man Who God Even with God.*

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

A World at Prayer. By Robert J. Fox. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1979. Pp. 224. Paper, $3.95.

This is not an ordinary book of prayers. It is a manual of visual aids to prayer on any and every occasion: prayer before and after Confession and Mass, at the start and the end of the day, in happiness and in sorrow. It is a book of prayers for others: prodigal sons and daughters, parents, the elderly, missionaries, priests, and sisters. It is a book of prayers to Our Lady, to Jesus in the Eucharist, to the Father, and to the Spirit. Of special value are the *contemporary* examination of conscience and the "clause" method" of praying the Hail Mary in the Rosary—adding after "thy womb, Jesus," a clause such as "whom you have brought to Saint Elizabeth." Religious and priests, as well as all prayerful adults, will profit from this work.

Lord, Hear Our Prayer: A Collection of Traditional and Contemporary Prayers. Edited by Thomas McNally, C.S.C., and William G. Storey, D.M.S. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. vi-366, including index. Leatherette, $4.95.

This fine publication is a combination mini-breviary, with its daily and seasonal prayers, and "occasional" prayer book with Psalms, readings, prayers for various intentions, litanies, etc. It is quite handsomely bound and so forms an elegant as well as very manageable aid to prayer for any serious Christian.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Elwood, J. Murray, *Kindly Light: The Spiritual Vision of John Henry Newman.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 127. Paper, $2.95.

Green, Thomas H., S.J., *When the Well Runs Dry: Prayer beyond the Beginnings.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 175. Paper, $3.50.

Kelly, George, A., *The Battle for the American Church.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979. Pp. xi-513, incl. bibliography & index. Cloth, $14.95.

Sheed, F.J., *Christ in Eclipse: A Clinical Study of the Good Christian.* Kansas City: Sheed Andrews & Mc Meel, Inc., 1978. Pp. x-158. Cloth, $8.95.

in love with Assisi, clinches the theme of his book with its ever so brief treatment of the novel that despairs of every other section of the world but Assisi.

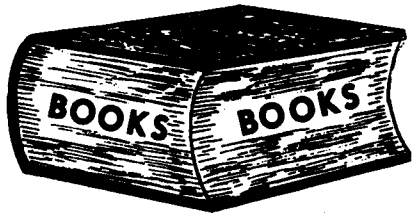
Now it scarcely needs to be said, but out of my Franciscan love for the Mother of God I'll say it anyhow: pilgrims to her various shrines on earth have experienced no less genuinely than pilgrims to Assisi the same inner peace and a joy nothing short of heavenly. But here let it be remembered that the very cradle of Franciscanism, the center of the Franciscan movement, was itself a Marian shrine. Though situated in the valley somewhat off from the town, the little chapel of St. Mary of the Angels must always be considered an integral part of the complete Assisian domain. It was and it remains, as its title asserts, a Marian stronghold against evil.

In its blessed confines Francis not only heard the angels sing but founded his three orders, dedicating them to the Queen of the heavenly choirs. There, too, through her intercession he won from his beloved savior the Portiuncula indulgence. This man, who wanted to own no property, yet made one allowance: St. Mary of the Angels. If any ruffians drive you out of this holy place, he told his companions toward the end of his life, come back in through another door, for you must never give it up. He died by his own request on the floor of a cell adjoining the chapel, a cell in the friary which had been built unto the chapel to give the first Franciscans their headquarters. The lone remnants left of that complex are the cell itself and the chapel both of which now stand within a large basilica bearing their same glorious name.

Before he died singing his invitation to Sister Death to take him, the saint had had his friars carry him out on a stretcher to a vantage point on the lower plain which commanded a perfect view of Assisi. He blessed it fondly, this hillside so radiant in the morning sun, so peaceful under the stars, so ever reminding of its adorable Creator. At the age of forty-five Francis was going home, yet not without a pang from memories of exile. He still loved the town, its vicinity of valley and ridge, and with his blessing his spirit seems to have settled permanently on the holy environment.

Raphael Brown stresses the importance of that blessing, and rightly so, in his highly commendable book. Other great saints have had their mortal remains preserved from the corruption of the tomb. Not so Francis of Assisi. However, a different kind of miracle is at work on his behalf. Seven centuries after his body was laid to rest and began to go the way of most flesh, his spirit remains as alive as during his lifetime throughout the Assisi area. His final blessing upon everything thereabout, the homes, the streets, the fountains, simply everything, still prevails. Pilgrims cannot breathe the air of that environment without feeling, especially in the shrines, the saint's influence: the joy of having come nearer to God.

True Joy from Assisi in treating all this deserves to be read and reread and then kept handy for a third reading.



God Said: Let There Be Woman: A Study of Biblical Women. By James A. Fischer, C.M. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1979. Pp. xiv-115. Paper, $4.95.

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

With all the controversy today about women in a man's world, scriptural sources are being used to prove the inferiority or the superiority of women, depending on one's particular prejudices. Many conclusions are drawn from biblical quotations taken out of context, without considering the period in which they were written, the customs which were accepted in that era, or the insight of the inspired writers. It is Father Fischer's purpose, as stated in the Introduction, to give his honest opinion, inadequate as it must be, of the entire biblical attitude toward women.

In the first chapter of this book, the reader is introduced to some of the women, heroines as well as villains, mentioned in the Bible. These individuals are portrayed as playing important roles in the history of salvation. The author gives his own insight as to their character and their relationship to God. He also lists a number of commentaries which have been written, with his opinion as to their usefulness. These listings are found after each section throughout the book.

Many books of the Old Testament, as well as some of the writings of the New Testament, are known as Wisdom Literature. Through these passages, which are considered in the second chapter, attitudes toward women are perceived by observation toward real life experiences in accordance with the social customs of the times. We see the portrait of the worthy wife in contrast to the unworthy adulteress. The Christian attitude toward women is seen in the first Letter of Peter and some of the Pauline Epistles. Here we are confronted with many controversial statements, but "the significant theological insight is always that of unity of man and woman, not of inferiority" (p. 72). "Man is incomplete without woman; he needs her to find some sort of answer to the riddle of who he himself is" (p. 74).

The many feminine symbols are dealt with in the third chapter. Symbols are created through life experiences and lead to meditative thought and contemplation. "The feminine symbols often say that God is very like the woman whom we popularly describe as feminine—loving, peaceful, instructing, contemplative, life-giving" (p. 111). "For our purposes, we may very well

ask why the Church—and every commentator agrees that we are looking at the Church when we look at the Woman—should have been portrayed as a Woman" (p. 103).

Even though the author gives no enlightening answers to our current problems of women's rights, a slow and meditative reading of this work will help us to understand that true freedom and a sense of fulfillment can come only from within as we live our daily experience aided by faith. I must admit that I have been a little disappointed that Father Fischer did not deal at greater length with Christ's attitude toward women. Readers who are interested in this subject would find the following books helpful: *The Woman at the Well*, by Adrian van Kaam, C.S.Sp. (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1976); *Jesus and Women*, by Lisa Sergio (McLean, VA: EPM Publications, 1975); and *Women: Image of the Holy Spirit*, by Joan Schaupp (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1975). The last named of these was reviewed in THE CORD 26:5 (May, 1976), 156-57.

Liturgies for Little Ones: 34 Celebrations for Grades One to Three. By Carol Rezy. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 160. Paper, $3.95.

Everything You Need for Children's Worship (Except Children). By Jack Noble White. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. viii-104. Paper, $3.25.

Reviewed by Mrs. Margaret E. Clarke, Director of Religious Education and Liturgical Music for the past ten years at St. Edward the Confessor Church in Clifton Park, New York.

Two fine resource aids for children's Liturgies deserve to be brought to your attention.

Liturgies for Little Ones contains 34 celebrations for grades one through three, designed especially for teachers who have access to art material, etc.

There are four celebrations suggested for each month of the school year from September, ending with two for June. These are easily identified by the seasonal and liturgical changes of the year with similar formats for each Liturgy consisting of the Theme, Readings, Responsorial Psalm, Gospel, Petitions, and Preparation of Gifts, followed by the musical and banner suggestions.

The original "Calico" art work woven throughout the book lends a delightful added dimension to the themes.

The author, being a second-grade teacher, is well versed in the interests and abilities of the primary child and gears her ideas and activities to this level, thereby providing the average teacher with a practical source. Another "plus" for the book is the selection of songs taken from popular children's liturgical music collections that are easily available (titles and addresses are listed in the back of the book).

My first impression of the book's limitations soon waned upon the realization that it provides exactly what the title indicates, and I would highly recommend it for the purpose for which it was intended—Liturgies for "little ones."

Everything Your Need for Children's Worship adds another good source to the increasingly growing list of material available for children's liturgies. The first section of the book contains four services, followed by thirty scriptural based ideas for Liturgies. The format for these is similar in each case, including readings, props, and activities; however, the author readily points out these should be treated with the necessary flexibility for classroom and/or worship usage in grades kindergarten through eight. (It is my opinion that this section would be more easily used in the classroom, since most suggested activities involve the children's doing artwork, crafts, or bodily movements.)

The last section contains original music for the ordinary parts of the Mass and original words and music for paraliturgical worship.

Mr. White has the unique qualifications of experience with children and extensive musical and liturgical background in the Episcopal Church. These qualifications, and his obvious love for children and sincerity in providing them with happy liturgical celebrations, give his book the necessary credentials for consideration by liturgists responsible for planning children's worship, and provide a splendid resource for elementary religious education teachers.

John Paul II: A Pictorial Biography. By Peter Hebblethwaite and Ludwig Kaugmann. New York: McGraw Hill, 1979. Pp. 128, including index. Cloth, $14.95; paper, $7.95.

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

This brief biography succeeds in situating John Paul II in the real world. Fascinating to me were the pictures of his parents, himself as a young boy, and the places, especially churches, in Poland that featured so much in his life. The narrative of his young manhood leaves one wanting much more, as does that of his continuing church career. In tracing his activities as bishop and the confidence shown him by John XXIII and Paul VI, his activities at Vatican II and in international affairs, the authors make clear how well known in church circles was Cardinal Wojtyla. The accounts of his trips to Mexico and Poland are well done and splendidly illustrated. An outline of his life against thebackground of world history is helpful, but a simple year by year chart would have been welcome. I wanted to know more about his priestly career 1951-1955, much of which was spent as a professor.

Hebblethwaite and Kaufmann have succeeded in not only informing us about John Paul II but also arousing the desire to know more of the man God has chosen to be the Shepherd of his flock on earth.

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The Staff of the

Franciscan Institute

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 have been drawn by Sister Marie Monica, O.S.F., OF THE Sacred Heart Academy, Klamath Falls, Oregon.

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A REVIEW EDITORIAL

A Timely Prescription

WHEN THE venerable and redoubtable Frank Sheed gave a lecture in Madras recently that city's *Catholic Leader* decided he had discovered, like Parkinson, a new "disease," called "Sheed's disease." For that pathological condition which consists in a strange forgetfulness of Jesus Christ even among those who profess to be his followers, the author prescribes a powerful antidote in this "clinical study."

What he recommends is certainly nothing exotic: just that we rouse ourselves from our coma by reading the Gospels as though we believed them to be what we claim they are. Instead of letting the familiar words fly by, over our heads, as we daydream our way through a passage, we should feel their force—their challenge, their revelatory power. Part I of this book shows, in its fifty pages, the effect this can have on us.

The second major part comprises nine chapters that can be aptly described as "A Map of Life," which happens to be the title of one of the same author's earlier books, which I reported on for a sophomore English course. So impressed was I with that book that, as I recall, I felt the only way to do it justice was to create something literary myself; and the report was done in an allegorical genre: a description of the "wedding between theology, King of the Sciences, and literature, Queen of the Arts." It's a good few years later now, but Frank Sheed has lost none of his eloquence, practicality, and good, solid orthodoxy. A "map of life" is precisely what he gives us once again, in a timeless but timely way with references to the most contemporary of situations.

Christ in Eclipse: A Clinical Study of the Good Christian. By Frank J. Sheed. Kansas City: Sheed Andrews & McMeel, 1978. Pp. x-158. Cloth, $8.95.

Only when we have regained consciousness of the Lord and his role in our lives can we focus our attention once again on what life is all about, why we are here, where we are going, and how we are to get there.

In answering all these questions, the author manages in his brief 158 pages of scintillating prose to furnish a compendium of doctrinal theology (including a resoundingly and unabashedly orthodox trinitarian theology and a sky-high Christology), a moral theology that distills the best of what Häring and Gilleman so painstakingly worked out a decade and a half ago, and a spirituality that any Catholic, including the religious who fancies himself too "advanced" to need such basic reminders, can savor with great profit.

Of course a reviewer must have his chance to complain about something, and I did manage, even in this book, to find two gnats to strain at. First, there is the interpretation of "virtue" as implying (through its etymology, the Latin *vir*-man) humanness, whereas the proper emphasis is on strength. The Latin *homo* refers to human beings as such. and *vir* stresses the masculine specifically—hence power, strength. And secondly, I have trouble with the author's contention that the philosopher can attain no certitude about reality or about God (p. 55), a position that is surely contradicted on p. 116: " . . .you know from your own reasoning . . . that God *is* there."

Yes, that's all I could find! Before I conclude, though, I want to take advantage of this context to answer a question that has been put to me more than once: Why do I so often *recommend* a book after extensive discussion of what I consider its flaws (cf., e.g., last month's editorial, or pp. 223-24 of last July-August's issue)? The answer is that things are not just plain black or white. A book can have many flaws, even as regards its main thesis, and still offer a wealth of solid insights. Evaluating it is, then, a matter of balancing pros against cons. Sometimes the reading on the balance scale is pretty close to dead center, and "recommending" the book means that despite flaws, it should do you more good than harm to read it.

In this case, however, the verdict is solidly positive. Here is a book to give yourself or anyone you know for Christmas—an occasion for which nothing could be more appropriate. What better time to dispei the eclipse, than our celebration of the occasion when the people that walked in darkness saw, at last, a great Light!

Fr. Michael D. Meilach, ofm

Reflections in the Spirit of Saint Francis of Assisi

Christmas Has a Message

JOHN HARDING, O.F.M.

IT IS true that God is everywhere, but he makes himself present to us in many different ways. In this he provides a variety of opportunities for service. Saint Francis of Assisi knew this and found it wonderful to think on. More than this, he found it wonderful to *act* on! One of the ways in which Saint Francis acted out this awareness of God's presence is when he decided to represent the event wherein God himself acted decisively: the Incarnation.

The setting of this remarkable event—unfortunately *too* familiar to most of us Franciscans—was a small village named Greccio. It was here that Christmas, an occasion with which almost *all* Christians had become too complacently familiar, "came alive" in the lives of many people searching for meaning in their lives.

Francis was a natural poet and loved to express outwardly the exuberant thoughts which filled his heart and mind.[1] There are many events in his life which bear witness to this fact, but few are more vivid than his re-creation of the scene at Bethlehem. It was in this, and in his re-enactment of the Last Supper, that he expressed most profoundly his tender love for the incarnate, crucified, and risen Lord Jesus Christ. This all-consuming love was to reach its fulfillment when Francis was sealed with the Stigmata on the mount of La Verna in 1224.

There had been some strict pronouncements regarding drama, and even though it was made clear that this did not include the Nativity and Easter dramas (providing that these were carried out with due reverence), Saint Francis, out of respect for the Holy See, as Saint Bonaventure informs us, "asked and obtained permission of the Pope for the ceremony, so that he could not be accused of being an innovator, and then he had a crib prepared, with hay and an ox and an ass."[2] It was a fortnight before Christmas when Francis returned from Rome to the valley of Rieti. He asked that his friend, Giovanni da Vellita, lord of Greccio, come and see him at Fonte Colombo; he told him:

> "If you want us to celebrate the present feast of our Lord at Greccio, go with haste and diligently prepare what I tell you. For I wish to do something that will recall to memory the little Child who was born in Bethlehem and set before our bodily eyes in some way the inconveniences of his infant needs, how he lay in a manger, how, with an ox and an ass standing by, he lay upon the hay where he had been placed." When the good and faithful man heard these things, he ran with haste and prepared in that place all the things that the saint had told him [1 Celano, 84; pp. 299-300].

Thus the scene had been set. Word was sent to the friars and to the local people. St. Bonaventure tells us that "the forest resounded with their voices and that memorable night was lit up by brilliant lights and torches" (*Leg. maj.*, X, 7; p. 711).

Saint Francis, who was a deacon, preached on the humility of the "poor King" in words that were characteristically simple and direct, tender and devout. He succeeded in rekindling the love of his fellow men and women for Jesus Christ and for one another. Francis understood clearly the meaning of Christmas. He knew that it made real again the living memory of God's wonderful gift to mankind: himself.

Saint Francis was deeply moved by the humble ways through which the "Lord of Majesty" chose to reveal himself. The crib was one such way. The Lord "made himself lowly for our sakes" and, by doing so, raises us up with him. Francis loved the humanity of Jesus and sought always to bring men and women closer to him by encouraging them to meditate on these lovely mysteries, especially the crib.

Christmas, then, has a message for everyone.

- For those who are poor.
- For those who are broken by anxiety of heart, mind, or body.
- For those who have had their dignity trodden on and their relationships ruptured.
- For those who suffer in their powerlessness to cope, be it socially or in the ordinary problems of their personal life.
- For those who fear for the

[1] See, in this regard, Father Leander Blumlein's discussion of the poet and dramatist Francis, in the October, 1979, issue of THE CORD.

[2] *Leg. maj.*, X, 7. This citation is taken from the *Omnibus*, pp. 710-11, as are the others referred to in text.

Brother John Harding, O.F.M., of the English Province, is a student for the Franciscan Priesthood and has contributed articles of Franciscan interest to other journals, including the Indian periodical Tau *and* The Tablet.

future, who do not know hope, who have no one to understand them, to love them for what they are.

• For those who find it impossible to break out of their little world into the freedom of giving and sharing and, by this, to be more human.

• For those who suffer imprisonment for their actions, be it just or unjust; who are forgotten save by a few.

For these Bethlehem has a message: The Christ is born; he will free you!

• For those who are young and have nowhere to go or no one to meet and be with.

• For those who are not so young and want some certainty in life, who worry about the future but find it hard to cope with the present.

• For those who are elderly and have to face all the difficulties that this entails, for whom the future might be uninviting.

• For those parents who often struggle to provide for their families.

• For those children who feel unwanted or deprived of parental love.

• For those priests and religious who feel that much of the original zeal has gone and life needs a new beginning, who have become burdened with trials, for whom prayer is a pain and community life an endurance, who are lonely in the midst of their fellow priests or brothers and sisters.

For these Bethlehem has a message: God is with us! He will comfort you.

• For those who are divided from their families, friends, neighbors—either through their own fault or for reasons not known.

• For those who cannot forgive, who cannot be reconciled, who cannot celebrate—especially the Eucharist.

• For those who have hardened their hearts to those among whom they live.

• For those who must dominate others—have power, rule, fight.

• For those who prevent Christmas from being a time of rejoicing because they do not understand or do not wish to try.

For these Bethlehem has a message: Peace to all men of good will!

SAINT Francis understood that all things have their origin in Christ and that, in the fullness of time, they will be brought to completion in him. Francis loved the very humanity of Jesus and sought to imitate it perfectly in his own life, that others might do likewise. People—and indeed, all creation—deserve to be loved on account of the Lord who became man in order that "nothing might be lost."

This model, which has Jesus as its center, is at the heart of the Franciscan vision. Here the human acts of Jesus: his birth, his daily life as portrayed in the Gospel pages, his death as a rejected criminal, and his giving of himself in the Eucharist, all touch the ordinary lives of mankind. Francis was "at home" with Jesus and tried to extend this security to include the whole family of mankind.

Christmas is a time when these and related ideas are once again brought to the fore. Another year has almost passed, and we await the new year of grace—that is, another's dignity. This is no easy task. But the events surrounding the birth of the Messiah indicate how it is possible, in the midst of such hardship, for there to be a peace and a joy which man cannot give. This peace is in the sublime mystery of the Incarnation. The crib is a "sign of peace" to the nations and gives us our hope: Jesus Christ, Son of God made Man—Emmanuel, God with us!

★

Christmas Dialogue

Babbling Baby on the straw
Gurgling things no man can know
Waving hands and kicking feet
Smiling lips and shining eyes—
What a man-like God disguise!

As You hold the universe
Safely on its winding course
Arms do gather you to rest
On a maiden's virgin breast.

Whisper softly, as You draw
Men from lands of long ago,
To a child whose wish for You
Is as real as gifts of gold.

Sister Mary Thaddeus, O.S.C.

O Bone Jesu, Exaudi Me

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

WE HAVE come now in our reflections on that loved prayer, "Anima Christi," to a very simple invocation which one might think is a kind of rest point in this very daring prayer. We have called upon the soul of Christ to achieve something in us, we have turned to the body of Christ in a very particular way, we have asked to be made drunk by the blood of Christ and to be enabled to flow out in life through self-giving death by the power of the water from the side of Christ. We have begged to be made strong in the passion of Christ. Is this particular place to which we have come in the prayer indicative of a time to sit down, relax, and serenely say, "O bone Jesu, exaudi me": "O good Jesus, hear me"? No, dear sisters, I do not think at all that this is a pause between imprecations, invocations, and the ardent petitions of a lover. I think, rather, that we are rising to a climatic point where we look back upon what we have already asked in order that we may go forward to make even bolder prayers.

And so we cry out on this bridge of the prayer, "O good Jesus, hear me." A bridge, as we know, spans waters. We are supposed to walk across a bridge. It is a place for action. On little rustic bridges over small streams, one may perhaps pause to dream and reflect. This is not that kind of bridge. It is a bridge for immediate crossing over. A bridge is never meant to be an end in itself, but a means of going toward, a method for arriving.

When we say, "O good Jesus, hear me," we want to be reminded of what we are asking, where we are daring to go. We have on one of our little folders from our silkscreening department a word from someone you know: that "hearing increases with listening." And we have been reminded in our times more than once about the importance of listening, it being in many areas a lost art. We even have a book called *The Art of Listening*. We know that often, dear sisters, what we hear is not what the person means. We hear only words. And we need to become adept in hearing to a point where we can listen to what is beneath the words, to what the person is actually saying and which may or may not be fully known even to the person speaking.

Let us take some ready examples from the human condition. We have the bully. Sometimes there are bullies among children, sometimes there are bullies among adults. We have a lot of bullying "thinking" in our times among those who, chronologically speaking, have left childhood far behind. And what we hear coming from the mouth of the bully is domination, the determination to dominate, to back someone to a wall, to look down at this person and oblige him to do what the bully wishes. And so his words bespeak domination, aggressiveness. But if we have learned to listen beneath the words and actions of the child-bully or the adult-bully, what we will hear is something quite different from his words. We shall hear about that person's inferiority, because only the person who feels inferior has the need to domineer. We hear; or, rather, we listen if we have learned to hear acutely enough, to something under the domineering words and actions of the bully: fear, insecurity. And so, dear sisters, in this facile example, we see that we cannot be convinced that we have listened just because we have heard some words, just because we have seen certain actions.

Again, there is the example of the coward. We often hear from the mouth of the coward a great deal of boasting. If we have learned to listen *to* the coward, beneath what our ears hear *from* the coward, then we hear about a fear of truth. The coward has to boast because the truth seems far beyond him. I think you will remember that in another of our shared reflections, I gave the example of one of the generals of modern times, General Marshall Foch, I believe, who said that "any soldier who tells me that he has never been afraid in battle either has never been in battle or is a liar." Marshall Foch or whoever was able to confront the truth and admit that in battle one's normal and healthy response is to be afraid. A brave person does not hesitate to confront this healthy truth and to say: I am afraid. The coward has not reached this liberation of truth; and so we often hear from him boasting, sometimes sheer fabrication. However, if we listen in love, we may hear a plea to be liberated into the truth, into an ability to face and express the truth.

A third example would be the slothful person who very often

Mother Mary Francis, well known author and Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of our Lady of Guadalupe, Roswell, NM, has kept to a minimum the editing of these conferences given to the Roswell Poor Clares so as to preserve their spontaneity.

speaks with insolence. At least this is what our ears hear from the slothful person. But what the ears of a listening heart will frequently hear from a slothful person is the fear of being recruited to generosity. One encounters this insolent casualness. Under that, to the listening heart, is the fluttering fear of being captured to do something that costs, a fear of being recruited into a liberation of self which that person is not willing to accept and which she must be helped by love to face.

A final example is that of the insecure person who batters our ears with excuses, even fantastic fabrications, who can cross the line into sheer prevarication. What the loving heart that listens will hear beneath this flood of excuses and manipulations of reality is the pathetic little cry of the one who feels she has no margin for error. The secure person has a very wide margin for errors, knows that she will make many mistakes in life, and is able to confess them with mature good humor born in healthy humility. She is liberated into the truth, and so we do not hear those little bleating cries of weakness.

In any of the four examples I have given you: the coward, the bully, the slothful, the insecure, what we hear is often the opposite of the truth. Our ears hear on an upper and often superficial level; the listening heart hears something very different and sometimes even opposite. The bully is the one who feels inferior; the coward is the one so afraid of the truth; the slothful is the person with the fear of being led into generosity, the insecure is the person with no margin for error. We want to be good listeners, going beneath the surface of mere hearing.

Now, in this prayer, the "Anima Christi," we ask Jesus to hear us. What we really ask him to do is to listen to us in what perhaps we dare not articulate, what maybe we ourselves do not even understand at this point in our lives. And so we say, "You are a good Jesus. When you hear, you listen." Returning to our four examples: what sould we do if we were really listening to the interior cry of these persons? What response would we then make? It would surely be quite different from the response of merely hearing which for example, would want to super-dominate the domineering bully, whereas the listening heart would desire with love to establish the bully in his own personhood which is rooted in Jesus whose Personhood is God. Having helped to establish a person in his own radiant personhood, we have helped him discover that he has no need to domineer.

If we are really listening to the cowardly person instead of just hearing the embarrassing boasting, we shall want to respond with understanding so that he may be able to arrive at a normal response. We shall try to help him with our own normal responses, our own quickness to confess our faults, to register our errors, to ask pardon for our mistakes. If we are really listening, not just hearing words and so being annoyed and disaffected by the slothful person, we shall try to establish for him a good of givenness, not by preaching but by showing forth in our own lives that we have a goal of givenness and that we are always striving, if not always successfully, to achieve it. If we listen, instead of just the facile fabrications and excuses of the insecure, then I think that by our own faith in Jesus we can show him, too, that he really can, just as everyone can, do all things in him who strengthens us (cf. Phil. 4:13). We shall teach, again not in words or homiletics, but by our own way of living, that a person really can do all that he is asked. One can afford to say that one is wrong when he fails. We help him to arrive at saying, "I can!"

A superior certainly must listen to the cry of her spiritual daughter which may be the exact opposite of what the sister is saying. With the aggressive person spouting her aggressiveness, the superior must not stop at hearing this eruption of psychological lava but must listen to the crying need for disciplining that aggressiveness into the beautiful strength and leadership that it was designed by God to be. She has to listen and to teach that truth does not destroy but makes us free. She has to listen in the way the saints listened and were able to say, like Saint Philip Neri, "Hold me by the hand today, Lord, or I shall surely betray you." She has to help the one who tends to be cowardly to know that this is what we all must face: fear. Our Father Saint Francis was never more chaste than when he prayed, "Pray for me, for I may yet have children." The superior must help by listening to the true need and leading the sister to achieve the truth. She must respond to the real need in one who is perhaps slothful and ungenerous—the need to feel a greater need than that person's own need—and to help her rejoice at being driven by a love which is so much more impelling than the love of her own convenience, her own designs, her own unselfish purposes.

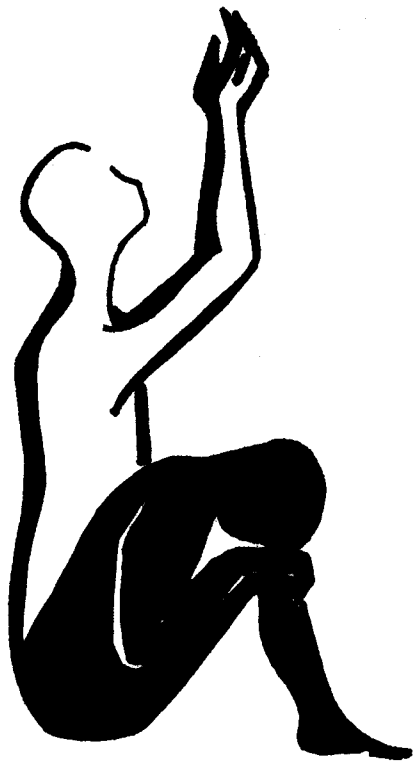
If a superior—or anyone else, for that matter—hears only words, she can easily become very discouraged. But if she listens to the little crying need that says, "I do not know yet what it is to experience needs greater than my own. Will you help me?" she will be urged to respond on a

profounder level to a deeper need. She needs with the insecure to make the person greater than her weakness by bringing her to an ability to acknowledge that weakness and infidelity. She requires especially to listen to that person's great need to be assured that she is still loved when her weakness, her infidelity, her failures have high visibility. For there is that wonderful security of realizing that others see our weaknesses and failures and so, in loving us, are not loving a phantasm or an illusion, but the real person—the stumbler, fumbler, babbler, sinner. Yes, dear sisters, that is a wonderful thing! Above all, wonderful to remember that God holds the complete folio of our miseries and still loves us—and that he, this good Jesus, listens to something beneath what we are saying, hearing the real cry of the heart even when we do not hear it ourselves.

We have to love enough to be able to listen to the real need which is often enough the very opposite of what is being expressed in words. So, in the inevitable little "situations" in community life which must occur where real human beings live an authentic life together, a sister will hopefully learn to hear beneath an impatient word the need to be disciplined and will respond to what her listening heart has heard, not to what her ears have delivered to her brain. And so she will sometimes respond with a smile, sometimes with humor, sometimes with an expression of disappointment. How will she know which is the proper response? Only by being herself a person of prayer. When we are persons of prayer, it will be given us in that hour what to say and what not to say, what to do and what not to do. We shall know how to listen so that we may understand how to reply. Our listening will have gone far beneath hearing. We shall be good hearers like Jesus, which means that we shall be listeners.

So, when we are praying, "O good Jesus, hear me!" what we are really crying out is: "Jesus, only my *words* are saying that I need to be pitied, coddled; I've had a hard time and I need to be soothed." We are making another dangerous prayer. For we are saying: "O *good* Jesus"; and because he is so good, he responds not to the articulated need but to the real one. He does not just hear, he listens. To our expressed need to be soothed and coddled, he responds with the occasion of greater sacrifice.

You recall how, in those recent notes from our sisters at our new foundation in Alexandria, we all laughed a little when they wrote: "We have our straw mattresses now, and already there is a great improvement in muscle tone!" I thought about that in a serious way afterwards, reflecting that this is how good Jesus answers us. We are saying in one way or another: "I am tired. I need an innerspring mattress." But Jesus knows the need for muscle tone, and he gives us a hard bed to lie on. He listens deeply because he loves us deeply, because he is our good Jesus. Being good, he often could not give what our words are asking. He listens to the heart, and he always responds. When our words, articulated aloud or spoken only in the chamber of the mind, complain: "I am misunderstood," Jesus listens and replies, "I understand you perfectly. And I still love you. You have no need to play-act." Our words cry out to him, "O Jesus, I cannot do it." But we are talking to a good Jesus who listens to the true need of the heart created by the Father in his own image and partaking through him of his omnipotence, part of his image, so that we can do whatever he asks of us. This is the work of his creative grace.. And so our good Jesus, hearing the words, "I cannot do it; get me out of this," listens to the spirit, the heart made in the image of the Father and knowing tht it *can* do it. Being good, he responds to this cry and not to the spoken one.



Thus, in reviewing our prayer we see that we have made a number of very daring petitions. We have asked the soul of Christ to be our own animating principle —oh! that's another story. We have begged to be made humble enough to listen to the cautions of the body: "Corpus Christi, salva me." In praying, "O blood of Christ, inebriate me, make me drunk," we have desired to be lifted out of ourselves, to surpass our own possibilities in this sacred inebriation. When we have asked the water from the side of Christ to wash us, we have pleaded to be made capable of total giving so that every drop of us

flows out upon others. And lately we have asked that the passion of Christ should strengthen us and, therefore, petitioned to take on the responsibility of those who have been made strong.

Now we say, "O good Jesus, hear me," which is to entreat: "Do not stop at hearing my words. You are a good Jesus; so listen to the heart which you have made and which often does not understand itself, though you understand it. Listen to the spirit whose capabilities you know because it is the image of your Father with whom you are One." So, dear sisters, when we call on our good Jesus to hear us, we need to remember that he is a good hearer, which means a listener. Therefore, he hears more than we can say, sometimes the very opposite of what we say, often enough what we would fear to hear ourselves. He listens to the voice of our own possibilities. He hears and sounds the deeps of our God-given potential. And he answers appropriately.

Christmas Lullaby

Harps wing-struck and songs interlock;
Angels have their skies to rock.
Jesus small has a cradle stall.
Lum la la. Lum la la. Lum la la.

Shepherds have pipes and dancing feet,
know how to put their sheep to sleep.
Jesus small has a cradle stall.
Lum la la. Lum la la. Lum la la.

Magi ride on camels that sway;
starlight guides them all the way.
Jesus small has a cradle stall.
Lum la la. Lum la la. Lum la la.

Ox and ass have naught at all;
God's own Son needs their stall.
Jesus small has a cradle stall.
Lum la la. Lum la la. Lum la la.

O wonder and joy in the whole world's Boy!
I am Lord Jesus's cradle.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

The Recluse John of Aremea

on occasion of his last visit to the Garden of Gethsemane—to a young disciple.

DAVID RUSSELL, S.F.

IT WAS here, in the Eternal Garden, that our Savior came to pray, and to drink of the Cup of the Will of God. Here, giving its shade, the patient Olive Tree, praising the year in its fullness, has distilled the Holy Oil in its fruit, its balm welling gently up through the centuries passing, to condense the First Light of Creation into the healing and the anointing. Each of us comes thus, seeking the Will of God in the stillness of our own Garden, being anointed with the Oil of Light, and going then forth in the Will of our Father.

But you have asked me of the Kingdom:

- You come seeking where you yourself are being sought, and find not. That you find him who is seeking you: this is the lesson of Life.
- You have taken the yoke of the Law without taking its Spirit. That you live the Law of the Spirit, this is the lesson of the Soul.
- Your steps have tracked even the trackless sands, and yet you find no shelter. That your very going becomes your shelter: this is the lesson of the Cross.

Now you must know, my son, there is a Guardian, a Keeper, whose domain is Earth and whose Mother is the Moon. He guards her wish which is the measure of longing in the heart of Man for all that is Shadow and not Substance, all that is the Taste and not the Nourishment, all that is the Reflection and not the Source—even as the Moon is no light of itself but is a reflection of the Great Light; even as the Lesser Light can cast shadows yet reveals none of the Colors of Life but only the sleeping shapes, so does he the Keeper fill the disciple with the Dream

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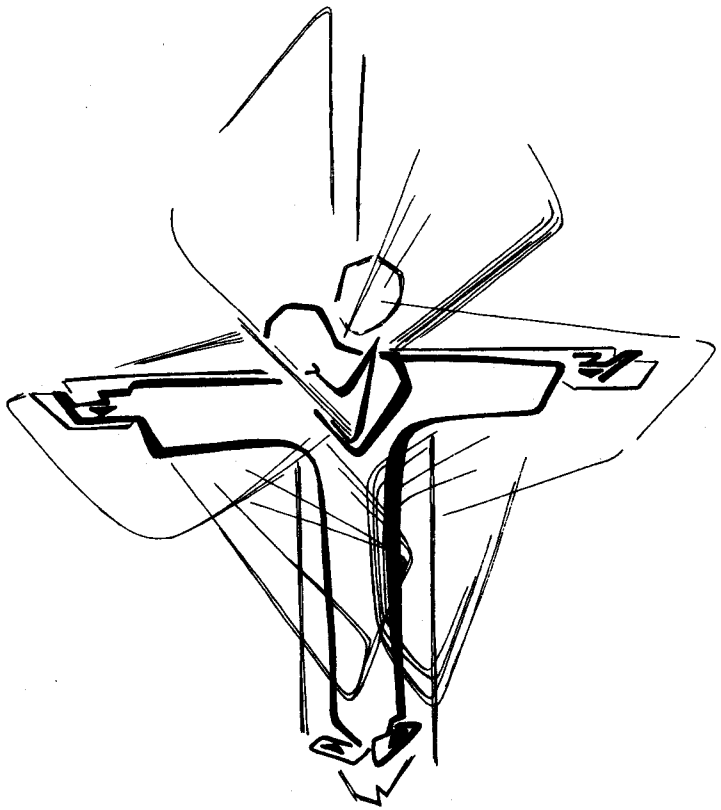
David Russell is a tertiary, the only Catholic living on the Danish island of Mors, which has 25,000 inhabitants. There are only four secular Franciscans in all of northern Jutland, he tells us, and they are unable to meet or communicate on a regular basis after Profession. In their isolation, they can make good use of any literature you can spare. Write David at Molbjaergvej 9, 7950 Erslev, Denmark.



but not the Reality, with the Form but not its Substance, with longing but not the Hope.

Yet there shall be no sign given, for the Son of Man cometh only to the Waiting Heart, in the time which only his Heart knows. Our Hope therefore is not in signs but in the Word which He has sent among us.

Touching at our life, speaking of that which only the heart can bear—secretly in the dead of Night where the soul cries out in the Dark, he comes, transforming every past to Future, every death to Life.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the Beginning, is Now, and ever shall Be, World without End.

And the Kingdom of God is of the Father—the One which is greater than One. Not the living, nor the life, but the Word: the place out of which Life arose.

The Kingdom of God is of the Son—the Self. The Life made manifest in me. I am my Father's child, was born in Christ before the Beginning. The Self knows

itself by two conditions: the Soul which aspires to know the Father, and the Body which is the Soul's being-of-its-knowing.

The Kingdom of God is of the Holy Spirit: My Father's Word in me, that of which the Soul knows, that which knows the Father within his Temple.

It is asked:

• Master, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?

And it is answered: Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. How shalt thou Love the Lord thy God?

• With all thy Mind, for it is the Mind that sees the Father's Hand. It is the Mind that hears his Voice speaking in the tongues of the Teachers raising up the Child to the Man. Honor thy Mind.

• With all thy Heart, for it is the Heart that feels the gentle Voice of the Spirit and hears its Song singing to each and to all, making them One: One in each other, One in the Father. The Heart is the Way.

• With all thy Heart, for it is the Heart that feels the gentle Voice of the Spirit and hears its Song singing to each and to all, making them One: One in each other, One in the Father. The Heart is the Way.

• With all thy Soul, for it is the Soul that hears the Word of the Father, and the whole Man bows in prayer. It is the Soul that fills the Eye with its Seeing, and the Ear with its Hearing. It is the Soul that knows the Days of the Lord and perceives his Way. Live in thy Soul.

And the last is this: Love thy neighbor as thyself. This is the greatest Wonder in the Kingdom, for it is in this alone that God is made manifest. Our Savior said to us, "Love one another as I have loved you." In this alone are we made One, One in God.

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End of the Exile

He walks through familiar throngs
of Known or similar face
envisioning the homeland of all
while the vestige of a homing beast
obliviously sure-footed
carries his Master's wife
in lulling pace.

Neither is known:
neither far lands nor home
indistinguishable to hope,
finds himself an amnesia victim
where his forefathers have grown—
justice of the ripened age
once more in a mother's womb
awaits rebirth.

His silent wife expects a different birth
More than return
beholds the true visage
of son or daughter in passerby
Neither boundless dream nor bounded fact
indistinguishable by hope
she thus confuses his life.

Though a man leave father and mother
for dusty roads
to sit by his lady's side
She will cause him to return
where David's spiritual town
Materializes sheer Majesty
about their feet
Now Joseph and Mary have entered Bethlehem
we are enrolled in our ancestral home.

Hugoline Sabatino, O.F.M.

A REVIEW ARTICLE

A Commentary on *True Joy from Assisi*

VALENTINE LONG, O.F.M.

IT LIES on a hillside, the little town of Assisi, peaceful in its golden sunlight, suggesting an air of pride, as if remembering Francis. It has known scarcely any change since his day. It is satisfied to remain what it was when he walked its narrow streets, so that today many a tourist walking the same streets almost expects at the next turn to meet the saint in person.

His spirit dominates the town, the ridge above, the broad valley below: the theme, indeed, of Raphael Brown's *True Joy from Assisi*. No thoughtful visitor can breathe the air of so blessed an environment, the book goes into detail to show, without catching the spirit of Francis. It is is a feeling of nearness to God, which engenders a deep inner joy not of this world. The author felt that joy himself, often, every time he lingered at the favorite Franciscan haunts. The title of his book acknowledges the fact.

But in speaking for himself, Raphael Brown speaks the sentiments of the many who have shared his experience. He quotes not a few of them. Luigi Salvatorelli happened to be in Assisi at an autumn sundown when out of the bright silence there came to him from the belfry of San Francesco the sweet, solemn tolling of some indefinable message, "very near yet seeming to resound from a mysterious distance, directly from heaven." The music blending with the splendor of the landscape afforded the stranger in town an entrancing moment. "For that moment," Assisi had become for him "the vestibule of eternity." It made him want to write a *Life of St. Francis*, which he did.

As for Johannes Jorgensen, another biographer of the saint, he felt impelled to prolong his first visit to Assisi through three weeks. He had good reason: into his agnostic soul had stolen the grandeur of a strange joy. It happened one day at noon. First, too eager to wait a moment longer, the thin little notes of a single bell began the Angelus alone, when presently a symphony of louder bells joined in, reaching the ear from every direction. The fascinated Dane caught their meaning, and it brought him a taste of ecstasy. We have his own word for it. "All the high towers and all the small belfries, in which one sees the bells swinging in and out, all of them ring, all of them chime, all of them rejoice, all of them play before the Lord and praise His holy Mother: *"Ave Maria, gratia*

True Joy from Assisi. By Raphael Brown. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979. Pp. xlii-268, including appendices, bibliography, and index. Cloth, $8.95. Father Valentine Long, a Jubilarian of Holy Name Province, has written many fine spiritual books and been a regular contributor to *Friar*. His article "Thank God for the Pope," appeared in last July's *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*.

plena . . . and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus!"

Yet it was a different occasion, a completely silent occasion, that clinched the poet's resolve to embrace the faith. Down on the plain below Assisi he was kneeling in the chapel of St. Mary of the Angels, the little chapel now within a larger church, when into his soul flowed "an awesome power," an intensity not to be resisted, "a marvellous peace." Immediately the favored soul understood what Friar Thomas of Celano meant by these strange words in his biography of the saint: "Although Francis believed that heaven's graces are imparted everywhere to God's chosen ones, he had learned nevertheless that the church of Saint Mary at Portiuncula was filled with more abundant grace and visited more frequently by heavenly spirits." Johannes Jorgensen was feeling something of it himself, and eighteen months later in Copenhagen embraced the Catholic Faith.

Another Assisi convert, a talented sculptress and writer from England, the first cousin of Winston Churchill, climbed the steep grade to the upper reaches of the town and went into the Basilica of Saint Francis and down into the crypt. She emerged not the same Clare Sheridan. What happened to her down there we know from her own account: "I only remember that I exhausted myself on those stone steps. I lost consciousness of time." That sense of eternity, an inner sweetness of joy, which others had felt in the shrines of Assisi, she now felt—with an urgent desire for the faith of Francis. Mrs. Sheridan did not follow out her desire at the time. But fifteen years later, in 1946, after an interval of longing, punctuated by the death of a son, the bereaved mother was kneeling again before the saint's tomb. She announced to him in a faltering voice: "Here I am, back! Help me!" He did. She returned to England a fellow Catholic.

Down in San Damiano at the lower edge of Assisi the same blessed influence prevails. In its little chapel, where the divine voice from the crucifix had requested Francis to repair its former ruins, a Franciscan priest and author from France knelt to pray only to grow conscious of "an immense, intense peace," much as Clare Sheridan had known it in San Francesco high up on the hill. "I would gladly stay in this dark chapel for hours," wrote Alberic Dubouis in retrospect as if he were still living the experience. "Christ is speaking here yet. He speaks to me." Afterwards in the adjoining cloister, in which Saint Clare and her Poor Ladies had prayed out their years on earth, he felt "beyond time, already in eternity."

The sense of a superior world, experienced by tourists to San Damiano, San Francesco, Santa Maria degli Angeli, awaits also the sightseer who brings an open mind into the Carceri up on the mountain ridge above Assisi. These are the cavernous haunts where Francis used to commune alone with his all-lovable God, with only the angels his attendants. They are fraught with grace, as many too who found out for themselves have testified by word or deed. The friar, for example, who escorted Monsignor Wiseman into one of the rugged hermitages reports that the future Cardinal sat for a long while in awed silence, the serenity of a profound contentment visible on his face. When he did come out of the reverie he reached to the ground to dig out a flower by its roots with his pocketknife, careful not to loosen the soil from the flower, because, as he explained, it was "holy soil" and he wanted a souvenir from the hallowed cave.

So runs the testimony of a mere few of the visitors to Assisi who have supplied Raphael Brown with a wealth of material for his theme: that the environment is holy and induces in the unlikely as well as the likely an urgent longing for God—a longing infiltrated with a strange joy. "Here we feel we want to be good," says Maria Sticco to the point. *True Joy from Assisi* includes a succession of such quotable tidbits from known and unknown alike, and all to the same effect. "He who comes here," is how Camille Mauclair expresses the common experience, "feels seized with reverence and yields to a mysteriously healing magic which revives in the most forgetful a sense of childhood innocence."

The author himself says of the hundreds of pilgrims known to him in Assisi, that he has yet to meet one "who has not had this experience to some degree." The joy of the place takes possession of them sooner or later during their stay, be they worldly or pious, of this temperament or that, and of whatever nationality. Raphael Brown has done his readers a great service in bringing his enormous mass of evidence together in a single book, though not always with perfect coherence. His effort, certainly, required an indefatigable research which merits from his readers their unstinted admiration. And I, an admirer, am additionally grateful that his research did not overlook Alfred Noyes.

Of the many writers who at whatever time fell under the spell of Assisi, none to my knowledge has acknowledged it more dramatically and therefore more impressively than Alfred Noyes, not of course in his poem "At Assisi," nor in his grateful essays on the subject, but in the fianl twelve pages of his apocalyptic novel, *The Last Man*, which in its American edition bears the title of *No Other Man*. This English convert who wrote a forceful prose as well as verse spent three days at Assisi in the March of 1938. When a year later the Second World War broke out in full fury, he conceived the idea for his novel. It features episodes of nearly total destruction by means of an irresistible death-ray used by the warring nations, so that a mere remnant of mankind survives.

This brings the plot to its denouement. Where on all the earth does the remnant survive? In Assisi, no less. If the human race deserves to start over and to renew itself once again, as after the Flood, then where better than on that blessed hillside in Umbria, which still exudes the spirit of Francis. Alfred Noyes carried away from his visit the conviction, which his novel portrays, that such a spirit alone could exert the influence to create a new worthwhile order. *The Last Man* sold well in our most turbulent of centuries, and the most atheistic; and after the first atomic bombs exploded on Hiroshima and Nagasaki it was reprinted. Raphael Brown, a Franciscan tertiary