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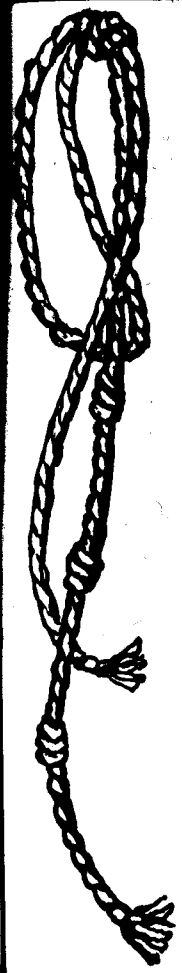
The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW



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The CORD

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Standard Abbreviations used in **The CORD** for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Flor: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

A REVIEW EDITORIAL

A New Synthesis of Christology

THIS IS A MASTERFUL synthesis of biblical, patristic, and speculative Christology. Despite its 408-page length, it is actually a quite economical treatment with very little repetition. As a writer, Galot manifests an admirable discipline, enhancing the clarity of his exposition with the use of multiple level subtitles, so that even though the book has an index of authors only, specific subjects are easy to locate.

The book is divided into five main parts: methodology, Scripture and its patristic development, conciliar definisions, the ontology of the Incarnation, and the psychology of the Incarnation.

In Part I Galot gives the work's orientation, pointing out that the Lord himself expected us to speculate on his Person ("Who do you say that I am?"). Rejecting as inadequate Rahner's transcendental Christology, he emphasizes with fine balance the priority of faith, the need for historical investigation, and the way in which an ascending Christology can complement the descending.

Balance, indeed, is a hallmark of the author's entire presentation, together with a breathtaking panoramic perspective. The Incarnation of the Word is firmly situated within a broader vision of creation and an Old Testament "Incarnation" in a wider sense, meaning God's self-revelation, action in history, and presence to his people.

Who Is Christ? A Theology of Incarnation. By Jean Galot, S.J. Translated by M. Angeline Bouchard. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981. Pp. xvi-408, including index of authors. Cloth, 10.00.

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Part II embodies a superb and up-to-date exegetical discussion highlighting major sayings of Jesus that testify to his divine origin: especially the I AM sayings found mainly in John, the title "Son of Man," and the expression "abba." The sign value of our Lord's miracles is emphasized, without prejudice to their apologetic value, and the problem of historical verification is deftly shown to be irrelevant.

Part III bears no pretense of originality or development, but it is a good and handy summary of conciliar developments as responses to all the major heresies of the ancient Church.

If the book can be said to have any "high point," save in relation to a reader's own particular interests, I think it would have to be Part IV, where the person-nature terminology is not only vigorously maintained, but also creatively elaborated both in terms of trinitarian theology and in terms of modern ontological and psychological insights into the meaning of personality. Mention must be made here, even though there is no space for extended discussion, of Galot's insistence on a genuine "metaphysical" (the term is his) mutability on God's part. While the author stops short of anything I would consider really *male sonans*, this does seem to be the one instance in the entire book where no really satisfactory positive elaboration emerges, though I think one is available in the "field of consciousness" framework recently set forth by Father W. Norris Clarke.

Part V takes up, as it were, where the ontology of Part IV leaves off. The delicately nuanced definition of person as relational being, already explained in Part IV, is now developed in terms of a growing human consciousness of a divine Self and a messianic mission. (This is the only consciousness to which Scripture explicitly attests, so that the assertion of a divine consciousness is properly speaking a theological conclusion.) Rejecting the unwarranted claim that the mortal Jesus possessed the Beatific Vision, the author goes on to develop a full psychology, discussing the unity of the Lord's human knowledge, his faith, his freedom, his temptations, his holiness, and his impeccability.

In a concluding chapter the author insists once again on the unity of the ontological and the functional in the Incarnation and the impossibility of reducing the former to the latter. Also in this chapter is found the book's only discussion of the "motive for the Incarnation." (The subject is only alluded to in passing, in Part I, and it is not discussed in Part IV either, under the heading "Reason for the Son's Incarnation," because the section has to do with why it is the Son rather than the Father or the Spirit who became man.) Galot sidesteps the notorious Thomistic-Scotistic controversy, espousing only implicitly what can probably be called a Molinist "compromise": "Only the incarnate Son of God could bring fulfillment to the divine plan for a filial mankind to be raised to the level of the divine sonship . . . (p. 403.

The translation is in general quite good, although I found "enounce" for enunciate and "propositions" for proposals, along with an occasional misplaced "only." On the other hand, some complaint has to be registered with regard to the typesetting. Readers who have noticed the recent "corrections" run in our pages must know that I understand the practical inevitability of some typographical errors. Still, given a book this important, I think I would somehow have managed to find a way to lavish unusual, appropriate attention upon its physical production. It contains an abundance of every conceivable type of misprint: omissions, reversals, substitutions, spacing errors, etc.

None of these physical flaws, fortunately, involves any damage to the book's content. *Who Is Christ?* is a contribution of the first magnitude to contemporary Christology, restoring balance and orthodoxy in many areas where such influential scholars as Cullmann, Bultmann, Küng, and even Rahner have offered inadequate developments or downright heretical distortions. For this balance and orthodoxy, for its breadth of vision, for its speculative power, and for its originality, the book cannot be too highly recommended. At $10.00, it is quite simply a steal. Ω

Fr. Michael D. Meilach, Jr.

To Saint Francis

Saint Francis loved God
And all God's creation,
The sun and the moon
And the creatures of the earth,
Birds, animals, and mankind.

Fraternity bloomed
In the heart of Saint Francis,
Sacrificing all:
The stigmata in his hands,
Complete following of Christ.

Nourished by the blood
And body of Christ, Francis
Loved to follow Christ.
Unwavering devotion
Brought God's blessings to His Church.

Neal Henry Lawrence, O.S.B.

Penance in the Writings of Saint Francis—I

SISTER JOYCE BRANDL, O.S.F.

MOST RELIGIOUS GROUPS heeded the call of Vatican II to renew their life of consecration by deepening their knowledge and understanding of the specific charism of their founder (*Perfectae Caritatis*, ¶2; Flannery, 612). The need for periodic renewal is described by C. Esser thus:

> The religious orders of the Church have come a long way through history. And on the way, they have taken much dead freight, which today encumbers and often hinders them from appropriately fulfilling the tasks which the Church expects of them, precisely today. They have to do for themselves in particular, what the Church is trying to do in the Council for the Catholic community in general. Recent Pontiffs have specifically asked the religious orders of the Church to get on with the task of updating—beginning with the directives of Pius XII to the Congress of Religious in 1950 to the almost pleaful entreaty of Paul VI to the General Chapters of various Orders in 1964. The Popes always ask for an awareness and a re-thinking of the origins of respective orders, so that from the spirit, force, and power of those beginnings, an updating to today's tasks and circumstances might be effected [Esser, 1977, 3-4].

Franciscans of the Third Order Regular, of which the writer is a member, met in Madrid at Easter, 1974, in their Fourth Interobediential Congress with the express purpose of discerning the spirit of the founder as the Second Vatican Council had directed (cf. Delaney and Horgan).

At this Congress a phenomenal discovery was made: namely, that the Third Order Franciscans represent a distinct tradition—that of the "Franciscan Penitential Tradition"—within the Franciscan movement, which likewise embraces the Minorite of the Friars Minor, Conventuals, and Capuchins, and the Clarissan of the Poor Clares (ibid., 1-6). This tradition, that of the penitential movement, was already in

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existence at the time of Saint Francis. It was called the "Order of Penance" and was embraced voluntarily. Admittance was by way of a specific liturgical rite (ibid, 2). It was usually lived on an individual basis, though it included lay people and clerics. Francis embraced this life when he first "left the world." Out of his own witness to this penitential tradition the Franciscan Order of Penance was born, and its first members were called "the penitents of Assisi" (ibid.).

The life of a Third Order Franciscan today, as back in the thirteenth century, calls for an embracing of this penitential tradition. As Sister Jean Glisky reminded Franciscans at the Annual Federation Council meeting in 1978,

> There is need among us to lay claim and to live more fully our tradition of penitence, abandoned by so many Franciscans of today's world, and to accept the responsibility of passing on that tradition. As Franciscans of the twentieth century, we have this responsibility and this challenge.

I plan in the following pages to do the following things: (1) locate all instances of the term *penance* (*poenitentia*) in Francis's writings, (2) categorize them if possible into like groups, (3) study the passages specifically for Francis's meaning of the term and use his writings, as well as other commentaries, to help elucidate the meaning,[1] (4) analyze passages according to structural analysis when feasible, and (5) draw conclusions concerning the meaning of *penance* for Francis.

I. The Writings of Saint Francis

FROM THE EXTENSIVE and elaborate discussion of bibliographical sources in the original version of this study, the following brief division is retained, using the standard abbreviations to be found on the inside front cover of this magazine.

A. Listing of the Writings, by Category.

1. Rules, Testament, and Admonitions: RegNB, RegB, Test, Adm, RegEr, UltVol.
2. Letters: EpFid, EpCler, EpOrd, EpMin, EpCust, EpRect, EpLeo.
3. Extant Hymns of Praise and Prayers not already included in other works: ExhLD, CantSol, SalVirt, SalBMV, LaudHor, OffPass, ExpPat, EpAnt.

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[1]Bibliographical materials found most helpful were Esser and Grau, Dukker, Crosby, *The Madrid Document*, and Pazzelli (cf. the list of references at the end of this article).

B. Brief Description of the Writings.

The first Rule for which Saint Francis received oral approval from Pope Innocent III is no longer extant. His writings present two independent redactions of the Rule, that of 1223 and an earlier one, but it is quite certain that the earlier Rule contains some of the original statements of the 1209–1210 Rule (cf. Esser, 1970, 89). Some supporting data suggest that the original Rule was added to and elaborated at General Chapters of the Order, as the family of friars grew, under the influence of the Fourth Lateran Council, and under the influence of Saint Francis's vocation to seek martyrdom. Although the ministers and some of the more educated friars did not accept the Rule of 1221, it does reflect Francis's ideal of the way of life he wished the friars to live. Accordingly Francis, with the help of Brothers Leo and Bonizo, a canon lawyer, drafted still another rule in 1223, which was approved by Pope Honorius III. Francis dictated his last writing, the Testament, shortly before he died in 1226, calling it "a reminder, admonition, exhortation, and my testament" (Test; *Omnibus*, 69).

The Admonitions are considered a collection of Francis's words of admonition, exhortation, and sayings regarding various points of the ascetical life. These were assembled after his death.

Of the letters Dukker (1959, 149) says that Saint Francis, by way of these "simple encyclicals," tried to reach all those whom he could not possibly contact because of his illness and in this way tried to strengthen them in the right spirit. Francis's Letter to All the Faithful has been called the most beautiful and vivid of all his writings. It is not certain when it was written, but it may have been during one of Francis's four periods of prolonged illness. The Letter to the Chapter was written in like circumstances.

It appears that the Letter to a Minister was addressed to a provincial minister sometime between 1221 and 1223. During the last part of Francis's life he wrote the Letter to Superiors, which contains among other things an admonition to preach penance.

C. Use of the Term *Penance*.

Penance was a significant term for Francis. He used it twenty-one times according to the texts we have in the *Opuscula* (145 pages). It appears twelve times in the Rule of 1221, twice in the Testament, three times in the Letter to All the Faithful, and twice in the Rule of 1223, as well as once each in the Letter to a Minister and Letter to Superiors. It appears to have two meanings in Francis's writings: penance outside

> Francis understood well the aspirations of the human heart . . . in its struggle towards salvation. . . .

the Sacrament of Confession, and (as sacramental penance) satisfaction required for the Sacrament. In this study each of these passages will be cited and discussed in chronological order.

It is helpful to keep in mind a comment made by P. Hermann in his Introduction to the *Omnibus*,:

> Francis was not a philosopher given to abstract reasoning. He was rather a poet and an apostle, taken up with the concrete here and now of the lives of his followers and of the faithful in general. That is why we do not find in his writings an organized compendium of ascetical or mystical theology, but rather day-by-day admonitions and exhortations to a better life. Still, though he was not a philosopher in the strictest sense of the term, he understood well the aspirations of the human heart and its needs in its struggle towards salvation and sanctification [19].

II. Penance Outside the Sacrament

THE FIRST QUOTATION considered here is taken out of turn; though it was written at the end of Francis's life, it is cited first because it refers to the earliest days of his conversion.

A. The Testament.

1. *To Begin Doing Penance.*

> This is how God inspired me, Brother Francis, to begin doing penance [*incipere faciendi poenitentiam*]. When I was in sin, the sight of lepers nauseated me beyond measyre; but then God himself led me into their company, and I had pity on them. When I had once become acquainted with them what had previously nauseated me became a source of spiritual and physical consolation. After that I did not wait long before leaving the world.

Thomas of Celano marks this experience with the lepers as the beginning of the Saint's conversion, in which he was "changed perfectly in heart" (2Cel 10; *Omnibus*, 370). It is a paragraph rich in meaning, which describes the work of God and the cooperation of his servant.

In the above incident Francis describes his situation before and after his conversion. A diagram helps to outline the main aspects:

before (God led him)		after (God led him)
"in sin"	→	(no longer in sin?)
"sight of lepers nauseated him beyond measure"	←	"what had previously nauseated him"
(source of desolation?)	→	"source of consolation"
(physical desolation?) (spiritual desolation?) (outside their company)		"both physical consolation and "spiritual consolation"
(not acquainted with them?)	←	"once he became acquainted with them"
(had no pity on them?)	←	"had pity on them"

The left column depicts Francis's situation before his conversion; the right, the experience of God's grace. Francis characterizes the period before his conversion as "being in sin." This is evidenced by the fact that "the sight of lepers nauseated him." Granted most persons would have their stomachs turned at the sight of lepers, Francis's abhorrence was so great that their sight "nauseated him beyond measure." In fact, Celano recounts that he loathed them so much "in the days of his vanity, [that] he would look at their houses only from a distance of two miles and would hold his nostrils with his hands" (1Cel 17; *Omnibus*, 242).

Francis's conversion occurs when God takes the initiative: "God himself led me into their company." A marvelous transformation occurs. What had once nauseated him, the sight of lepers, no "becomes a source of spiritual and physical consolation." Under the influence of grace Francis has a change of mind and heart. He has taken the initiative. From this conversion experience emerges a new man. Francis turns from being "in sin" to being led by God. He acquires a change of attitude. He goes contrary to his natural inclinations; consequently he is able to feel attraction for lepers as persons, a situation where the average person is repulsed. With God's grace he is now able to seek companionship with lepers and manifest pity for their misery.

For a little while longer Francis clings to his former life. Then, he says, he "left the world . . . to begin to do penance." "His turning to the way of penance, following the path of returning all to God, had begun. Everything that pertained to the world he left behind" (Esser, 1970, 86).

Penance in this first saying, then, represents doing penance as one

expression of the fundamental conversion experience in the life of Saint Francis which begins form him a new way of living. Evident in his radical turn from being "in sin" to being "led by God" is a complete change of heart and mind, the essence and beginning of every sincere conversion to the Lord.

2. Leading a Life of Penance. In his second use of *penance* in the Testament, Francis insists on the need for freedom for the friars, wherever they are, to do penance:

> If [the friars] are not welcome somewhere, they should flee to another country where they can lead a life of penance with God's blessing [*fugiant in aliam terram ad faciendam poenitentiam cum benedictione Dei*—Test; *Omnibus*, 68]

This statement confirms the priority which Francis placed upon the necessity of "leading a life of penance." In the paragraph preceding the above quotation Francis exhorts the friars to be "very careful to accept churches and poor dwellings in harmony with their poverty. . . . [These] they should occupy only as strangers and pilgrims" (ibid.). If they are not accepted by the local authority, Francis encourages them to go elsewhere. In the Rule of 1223 he again admonishes them to live "as strangers and pilgrims in this world who serve God in poverty and humility" (RegB 6; *Omnibus*, 61). Thus Francis calls his brothers "to lead a life of penance" with a detached spirit, which is implied by the notion of pilgrim and stranger. He admonishes them not to sink their roots in any one place. One can safely conclude that a person is able "to lead a life of penance" or of on-going conversion anywhere in the world.

The major insight gained from this use of *penance* by Francis is that penance is part of the life of a pilgrim or stranger: such a person must

be detached from places and things, and he or she can live this sort of life anywhere at all.

B. The Letter to All the Faithful.

This letter was addressed to "all Christians, religious, clerics, layfolk, men and women, to everyone in the whole world" (EpFidI; *Omnibus*, 93). In it Francis does not "actually suggest the formation of any society or fellowship, but he does lay down the principles upon which a religious life might be based" (Moorman, 42). The letter contains two statements including the term penance which are concerned primarily with fundamental conversion.

1. *Fruits Befitting Repentance.* The first quotation concerns the results in practical life, of doing penance:

> Besides this, we must bring forth fruits befitting repentance and love our neighbors as ourselves [*Faciamus insuper fructus dignos poenitentiae*—EpFidI; *Omnibus*, 93].

What does Francis have in mind by "fruits befitting repentance"? He adds, "love our neighbor as ourselves." It appears he intends what Luke says in 3:11–14, where Jesus responds to the crowds who ask him the same question: "He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise. . . . Collect no more than is appointed you."

A true conversion is manifested by a love of one's neighbor, which is demonstrated in concrete works. Love of neighbor brings forth "fruits befitting repentance."

2. *Who Refuse to Do Penance.* In the second quotation from the Letter to All the Faithful, Francis says those who are not repentant and do not receive the Eucharist are blind:

> All those who refuse to do penance [*qui non sunt in poenitentia*] and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are blind, because they cannot see the true light, our Lord Jesus Christ. They indulge their vices and sins and follow their evil longings and desires, without a thought for the promises they made. In body they are slaves of their lower nature, with all the cares and anxieties of this life; in spirit they are slaves of the devil. They have been led astray by him and have made themselves his children, dedicated to doing his work. They lack spiritual insight because the Son of God does not dwell in them, and it is he who is the true wisdom of the Father [EpFidI; *Omnibus*, 97].[2]

[2]R. Pazzelli stated in personal correspondence to the author that he would translate the Latin phrase, "who do not live in penance."

Those "who refuse to do penance" are blind; they "commit vice and sin"; they follow their lower nature, the promptings of the devil and the allurements of the world; and they fail to live up to their commitments. A fundamental conversion, true repentance, implies a turning from sin, a reorientation of one's whole life from selfishness to unselfishness, from self-centeredness to other-centeredness, to the God who communicates himself and nourishes those who are repentant through the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ω

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Epiphany

Worshippers from afar, skilled in skylore,
Leaving the glow of kindly fireside and worldlywise censure
Hasten after the Star of Jacob
Gleaming, beckoning beyond
Trackless deserts, towering mountains, rapid streams.
They set their faces toward Jerusalem
Desiring the Long-Desired of every nation.

Arise! Behold! Adore! All flesh would see salvation!
Yet Israel knew not God at her doorstep
Her fingerposts point a path to poverty's treasure
Her feet of clay make stones cry out, "Hosanna!"

No pomp nor panoply of palace men-at-arms,
No lords and ladies, no silks and satins.
"They found the Babe with Mary, his Mother."
Falling prostrate, they were content.

Jesus, hidden mystery made manifest,
Make me Your Jerusalem,
Ready for struggle while tenderly gathered in.
Morning Star, take my hand and lead on
Not to Bethlehem only, but to Calvary
And Easter in You.

Cana

Six stone jars
Stationed as sentinels
To the Master's command.
"Do whatever he tells you."
Don't doubt. Don't hesitate.
Premature hour gathers in
Powers of prophets from of old
Lesson readies new ones for
Last Supper salvation feast.
Freely flowing, brim-full
Miserless quantity and quality
Sign divulged
Word passed mouth-to-mouth
As if on wings.
Son of Man, giving new wine,
Flood the old wineskins
Of my heart.

Barbara Doria

MONTHLY CONFERENCE

Saint Francis and the Spirit of the Liturgy

DOMINIC F. SCOTTO, T.O.R.

DOWN THROUGH THE AGES Saint Francis of Assisi has been symbolic of many things to many people. He has been rightfully characterized as a great social reformer whose pacifism, gentleness, and love for all men helped to reshape the entire social order of the Middle Ages. Through his understanding of the universe he has been admired as the patron saint of ecology. His Canticle of Brother Sun testifies to his unique and profound love and respect for all of God's creation both animate and inanimate. Most deservedly he has also been cast in the role of one of the world's greatest religious reformers whose founding of the Franciscan Order, in an age of great violence, spiritual decadence, and heresy, helped to stabilize, strengthen, and rebuild the religious foundations of a tottering Church.

There is, however, another aspect of Francis's influence which is hardly ever specifically referred to, and that is the profound influence he exerted upon the liturgical life of the Church. While I strongly believe that we may refer to him as a liturgical reformer as well, his influence was not so much the result of a very conscious effort on his part, as an outgrowth of his own rich personal piety and spirituality. And while his influence may not have led directly to any legislated liturgical reforms in his day, it nevertheless most certainly helped to bring the liturgical life of the Church into a more faithful conformity with the true spirit of the Liturgy.

Franciscanism was born in an age of great liturgical chaos within the Church. What we so commonly refer to today as the active and knowing participation of the people of God in the liturgical life of the Church, a participation so strongly advocated by the Constitution on

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the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council,[1] had been almost completely lost. Latin was the official language of the Church which in effect was unintelligible to the unlettered who made up the major portion of the faithful. A great gap had developed between the clergy, the liturgical life of the Church, and the laity. The average worshipper, to a great degree, had developed a spirit of religious indifference toward the priests and prelates of the Church. Whatever respect was demonstrated emanated primarily out of deference to the temporal power invested in these offices. The sacramental life of the Church was also in disarray, as was demonstrated by the great neglect exhibited toward the Eucharist—toward frequent communion and the cult of the real presence. It was in this milieu of liturgical and spiritual confusion and disorientation that Saint Francis made his appearance (cf. Klauser, 94–108).

Francis very prophetically saw the Eucharist as the very heart of the Christian life itself from which . . . flowed the priesthood and the entire cultic life of the Church.

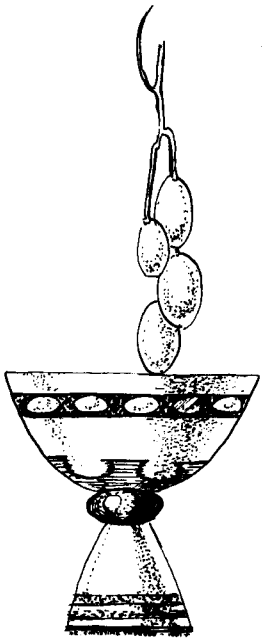
While Francis was praying before the painted image of the Crucified in the tumbledown chapel of San Damiano, a graphic symbol of the sad state of the Church of the times, the voice of the Lord came to him three times telling him: "Francis, go and repair my house. You see it is all falling down." While initially Francis understood this command in a very literal sense, Saint Bonaventure tells us that the Holy Spirit later made him realize that this message applied to the universal Church (LM II.1; *Omnibus*, 640). Throughout his life Francis's every thought, word, and deed were, in effect, a response to that request from the crucified Lord in San Damiano.

Here, I wish to elaborate on one aspect alone of that response: an aspect I consider central not only to Francis's personal piety and

[1]See *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy), in Flannery, ¶¶11, 12, 14, 17, 19, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 41, 48, 50, 53, 55, 56, 79, 90, 106, 113, 114, 121, 124.

spirituality, but also to the great liturgical influence which he exerted upon the spirituality of his times.

At the very heart of Francis's personal piety was his all consuming love for the Christ of the Gospel, to whom he wished to conform himself completely. Francis not only found in the Eucharist the inspiration and nourishment of his own personal piety, but very prophetically he saw it was the very heart of the Christian life itself from which, as from a fount, flowed the priesthood and the entire cultic life of the Church. We have but to examine his writings, most especially the first of his Admonitions, or the Letters to a General Chapter, to all Clerics, to all Guardians, and to all the Faithful, to become thoroughly convinced of this. For Francis the Eucharist meant that Christ was always present in his Church, especially in his liturgical celebrations.



With Eucharistic devotion at a very low ebb, Francis returned repeatedly to this theme in all of his writings, demonstrating with what great devotion, awe, and wonder he held the presence of Christ, as both priest and victim, in the Eucharist. It caused his heart to overflow with love for the crucified Jesus and with an insatiable desire to communicate God's love to all men, which he did with singular success. This reverence for the Eucharist extended as well to the ritual ceremonies of the Church and to the physical churches themselves which he viewed as the sacred places in which all these wonders transpired. It is this Christocentrism of Francis, which was so much in harmony with the true spirit of the liturgy, that was ultimately responsible for all the other influences which Francis exerted upon the prayer life of the Church.

Among such influences were his reestablishment of Christ in the hearts of many faithful, his introduction into Christian piety of a religious attitude which brought the faithful into a much more personal and confident relationship with the Father, his restoration of a deep sense of reverence for prelates and priests, and his promotion of a profound veneration for the word of God as contained in the Sacred Scriptures.

But at the heart of these many and varied influences was Francis's devotion to Christ. It was out of his Christocentric orientation that Francis's authentic spirit of poverty flowed. Solidly rooted in the Bible, it was a spirit out of which Francis always viewed himself as being constantly poor and small before God and men. This internal conviction of poverty, of smallness, of humility, helped Francis to open himself completely to the Lord and to commit himself primarily to Him alone. This attitude of poverty, so beautifully espoused and witnessed in the life of Francis, lies at the very heart of the spirit of the liturgy, for in order to be truly united to Christ in the offering and in the sacrifice, the liturgy asks this very same commitment to poverty from all Christians (cf. Montevecchi, 94–111).

Essentially, Francis's influence was simply this: for him Christ was everything, and his total giving of self to Christ, in conformity to Christ's own total giving of self to the will of the Father, fostered within Francis a spirit of poverty and of littleness before the Lord which is at the very center, not only of his own personal piety and of the Franciscan soul itself, but of the spirit of the liturgy as well:

> For the liturgy, "through which the work of our redemption is accomplished," most of all in the divine sacrifice of the eucharist, is the outstanding means whereby the faithful may express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church [*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶2]. Ω

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The illustrations for our January issue were drawn by Sister Christine Therese Schneider, S.S.J.-T.O.S.F., an artist at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The Finding

just one simple task
an ordinary father can watch an ordinary son,
and you were gone
emptying our life.
have we found really you?
yes, yet different
even more so.
if I could now find human voice
though useless
for you know my soul.
and why should you speak more?
how could Mary and I understand
when the very Temple doctors strain at your word?
must I lead as before
knowing you hear God's voice
and obey?
I motion, breeze-tendered leaf, to turn
will you follow?

now in silence you accompany us home.
it is as though some overwhelming
and irreversible force were suddenly
through courtesy stilled
leaving us time to ponder.
I begin the most unforeseen journey
I have hereto made.
Jesus, your childlike glance buoys me on
as translucent water drops
bear the wooden bark.
I move forward mute with shadows
hidden within your light.

Hugoline A. Sabatino, O.F.M.

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Correction

The name of Father Vincent B. Grogan, O.F.M., was inadvertently omitted from our 1981 index, top left of page 349, preceding the entry of his book review of **The Saving Word**. We deeply regret the omission.

The Tau and the Plant—I

SISTER FRANCES ANN THOM, O.S.C.

THE SYMBOLS of the sun and the moon have been used so often in conjunction with Francis and Clare that they have become well established metaphors for these great saints. There are two other symbols which were even more dear to the hearts of the hero and heroine of Assisi and, in fact, often used by them. The tau, the sign of those who were selected by God and mentioned in the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, was used by Francis as his own signature. This signature is still apparent today on the autograph preserved in the Sacro Convento in the basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi. Clare, inspired as she was by Francis's actions and convictions, often referred to herself as his little plant, a plant which would soon become the mother plant of many offspring. Thus I have chosen these two symbols as representative of the lives of Francis and Clare more truly than the sun and the moon, since Francis, whose love for the Crucified led him to the eccentric joy of the stigmata, and Clare, the little plant, remained rooted within the confines of San Damiano for over forty years.

It is believed that while Francis may not have been present at the actual proceedings of the Fourth Lateran Council held by Pope Innocent III in 1215, he learned of the concerns of the Pope and, pledging his allegiance to Rome, took the tau as his emblem:

> The TAU has exactly the same form as the cross on which our Lord was crucified on Calvary. And only those will be marked with this sign and will obtain mercy, who have mortified their flesh and conformed their life to that of the crucified Savior [Englebert, 196-97].

It is thus held that Francis's devotion to the Passion of Christ and the Pope's words were instrumental in his choice of the tau.

Perfect joy in the lives of the Tau and the Plant is, perhaps, a much overworked concept; but it seems the emphasis in perfect joy is usually placed upon the recipient of the situation and little is said of those who instigate it. In truth, that is the value of the story. A perfect joy situation handled well by the individual who is its recipient, leads to

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the ultimate holiness of the individual. There is, however, another side to the coin of perfect joy.

Instead of looking only at those who suffer, what of those who cause the suffering? Francis gives us a bit of insight into the situation in his story of Perfect Joy when he states: ". . . that Porter really knows us and that God makes him speak against us . . . perfect joy is there" (*Fioretti* I.i.8; *Omnibus*, 1318). Take a look at the words "God makes him speak against us"—what is Francis saying? Is God inspiring those who cause suffering to others? And again, "that Porter really knows us"—who are these persons who cause suffering but often persons of our very household, persons who know us well? They seem to be gifted with the ability to misinterpret, rationalize, form false judgments, in order to cause unnecessary and unwarranted pain to others. They have the gift of giving perfect joy. Without these persons the holy ones would not have the opportunity to attain great perfection. Great perfection can be found everywhere where man is. Personal relationships, the everyday rubbing of the shoulders, are some of the most difficult and most heroic actions of the human person.

Often persons of our very household . . . seem to be gifted with the ability to misinterpret, rationalize, form false judgments. . . . They have the gift of giving perfect joy.

The matter thus becomes clear: those who respond impulsively and spontaneously to a misunderstood grace of the moment (or human response) receive greater benefits by becoming witnesses of the holiness of those whom they mistreat, and this confrontation should affect them in one of two ways: they will be converted and repent, or they will become more hardened in their response. Two examples in the life of Francis are his father, who became more hardened, and the priest Sylvester, who repented.

How hard it is to realize that one may be the instigator of perfect joy for another! We like to think of ourselves as the recipient. Even Francis must have been aware that he was, at times, the instigator or unintentional instrument which brought sadness to others. But the true test is

the response to the situation. Thus we see Francis embarrassing his father before the entire populace of Assisi (you may say that Pietro brought it on himself). Nevertheless, Pietro was embarrassed and so was Pica. If Pietro had accepted this in the right spirit and had repented of his own greed and ambition, we might be hailing him as a saint today, as we do his wife.

Francis was not a masochist. He did not desire to be ill treated for the sake of ill treatment. Since evil behavior is sinful, Francis would most certainly be opposed to it, but with full knowledge of human nature, he devised the parable of perfect joy to help his brothers advance in holiness should they meet such a situation. At the time of his explanation of perfect joy to Brother Leo, Francis was experiencing a similar ordeal and was perhaps enlightening Leo regarding his own (Francis's) condition and thoughts. Francis had experienced victory and defeat in his encounters with perfect joy, as seen in the case of his own father who cursed him whenever they met and in the case of Sylvester who was a credit to the Order after his conversion.

The cross of having these necessary problematic people as witnesses to holiness, caused Francis both pain and virtue simultaneously. He realized that the common denominator of man is his sinful nature, and from this he was able to accept and understand even the most troublesome characters. If Francis found himself in an unsavory situation, he knew he could choose to act virtuously, thus causing the would-be offender to become a witness to his holiness or attempt at holiness. The response might then be a conversion which would be a matter for rejoicing. It is not unusual that from an evil action virtue may spring forth. This awareness man encounters in himself and in others, and sometimes one must shed his own identity (self-emptying) in order to take on the life which God requires of him.

All of us can identify, to some extent, with the experience of perfect joy, whether we have played the role of offended or that of offender. Knowingly or unknowingly, the roles are reversed from time to time, but if we learn, as Francis and Clare did, the love, the fulfillment, the beauty which perfect joy can give (even in minor resemblances) then we can truly say we know the meaning of the lives of the Tau and the Plant.

The Eccentric Love of the Plant and the Tau

IN A REAL SENSE, Clare's renunciation of her family and comfortable

circumstances was more eccentric than Francis's and even more dramatic, although unwitnessed save by her companion. One has only to recall the secret meetings, the Palm Sunday blessing, the breaking open of the rarely used door, the flight at night, the cutting of the hair and investing, the hastened trip to the nearby monastery, the clutching to the altar and the unveiling of the shorn head, to realize the wonderful cooperation with grace in the soul of this young girl. Unlike Francis she did not hear a voice directing her—except the voice of Francis himself; she did not go off into caves to pray nor hide from her father—her leaving was well thought-out and definite. She did not sell her possessions nor strip herself publicly; but the acceptance of the coarse robe, the cutting of the hair, and the willingness to leave her family were firmly sealed with God's approval.

From the very beginning of their conversions there seems to be a type of foreshadowing of the type of lifestyles they will live and leave to their followers. Clare's renunciation is secretly arranged and secretly carried out, and her life will be one of silence and enclosure. Francis, however, publicly renounces all and begins with a ministry to the refuse of society. His Order will be marked by its wanderings, its ministry, and its poverty. Both styles were Gospel-oriented; both styles, eccentric in their love for God.

Francis came first, of course, and he openly dramatized the situation of living Gospel poverty. By the time Clare was ready to respond to God's grace, Francis was quite well accepted or tolerated in and around Assisi. He was probably still considered by many as Pietro Bernardone's crazy son—and wasn't it a shame that he was turning out this way after all his father had done for him, etc. Then too as a male figure, Francis played a role more acceptable because these were times of a renewal of religious fervor and there were other well known groups caught up in similar zeal for the Kingdom. It seemed to be a trend of the time to try to exert an influence by attempting to live Gospel poverty, by preaching moral values to the people, by reaching out to the poor and despised in society, and by pleading for equality among God's people, much to the consternation of many of the hierarchy.

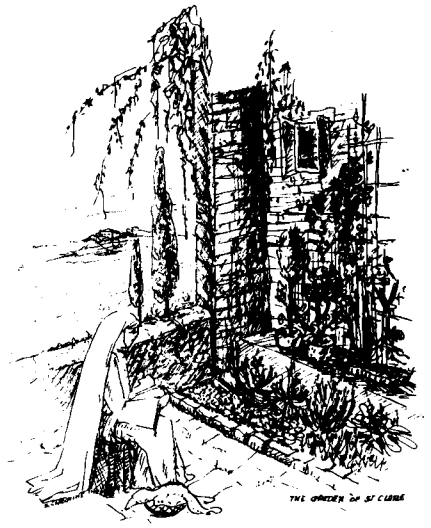
True, Francis appeared to be rather bizarre in his requests of his brothers: going barefoot, owning one tunic, not touching money, and begging from house to house. Who else would or could tell a brother to plant something upside down and have it grow! Who else would have such confidence in God as to make a brother whirl round and round until he fell from dizziness in order to find the direction the

Lord wished them to journey! How many more of these eccentric stories are told while his eccentric love for God continued to develop along the theme of perfect joy until his joy overflowed in the appearance of the stigmata!

Clare, however, was only eighteen, with a good bit more of an education than Francis and a promising suitor, if she wished. Instead, she too followed the romantically eccentric pattern of Christ's call and literally escaped from her home.

How fast is the heartbeat of a young man and woman who are deeply in love and who are in the process of planning their elopement? How much faster and how much more breathlessly must Clare's heart have beat as she hastened to her rendezvous to espouse the Lord! Although she was not yet free, she knew that once the consecration was made no one could take her from God. Even at this tender age Clare's steadfast spirit, courage, and common sense were evident.

Francis, for fear of scandal, placed her immediately in a Benedictine monastery, where she would be protected and where she would receive some training in religious life. Surely, both of them were aware that she would not be free to roam the hills as the friars did, nor spend time in secluded hermitages on the mountainside, nor work compassionately among the lepers—even though those things might be her heart's desire. The society of her time would have frowned on such antics by a woman.



Her flight to God consisted in more of a challenge as to how to live the Gospel precepts while surrounded by four walls and in a very close living community. With Francis she could say that the world was her cloister, and her heart's dimension would be so great that it would pray and sing in every corner of the world. Her desire for martyrdom would be heard in heaven; her compassion for the sick and poor would draw them to San Damiano; her great love for the Eucharist would ward off evil while her body would remain enclosed, silent, and unnoticed.

Equality—A Franciscan Value

FRANCIS AND CLARE WERE both aware that equality had little to do with the number of talents one did or did not possess. They realized that it is an attitude of heart and mind in the use of gifts for others and in the awareness that He Who has bestowed these gifts will demand an accounting of their use.

Francis made a brave attempt at equalizing the brothers not only by standardizing their dress, their lifestyle, their work, their prayer, but also by helping them to consider, on a supernatural level, who each one was in the sight of God. It is true that by holding all things in common, possessing nothing individually, dressing identically, the brothers were reminded exteriorly of what they were about. The real test of equality sprang truly from poverty in the form of self-emptying or detachment. Francis knew that a man of good will could and would detach himself materially, but he desired something more perfect from his friars: he desired even the deepest spiritual detachment—the detachment from who one is in the eyes of God. Then, and only then, could he be free from detachment and become one with God. Francis's vision was so keen on this point (even in the midst of his physical blindness) that he attempted to advise the brothers who were priests to become so detached even from the privilege of being celebrant at Mass that only one Mass per day should be celebrated and all in the community would be present at this Mass. Although this never came to pass, it ever remained an ideal in Francis's mind.

By his own example of remaining a brother, Francis seemed to emphasize the uniqueness of the special call to the priesthood while simultaneously emphasizing the value of minority through detachment from even such a special calling.

Francis was also concerned about those who became attached to a special spirituality or spiritual consolations in prayer. It seemed to him that this type of thing left no opening for the workings of the Spirit. He often said that such great lights or inspirations should not be discussed or desired. He feared the brother who was proud of his own prayerfulness, and he desired the Office to be recited rather than sung

(although we know he loved to sing) to prevent anyone's taking pride in his own voice, thus robbing God of the praise that is His due.

Clare, after the mind and example of Francis, included this recitation of the Office in preference to singing in her own Rule since the then established monasteries were much acclaimed for their marvelous choirs. Taking the Gospel precepts seriously, the Poor Ladies' praise of God was to be simple, holy, and unnoticed by the world.

As we know, Clare also despised the office of superior to the extent that she accepted it only under the promptings of Francis and the Bishop. Francis's reason for this was to insure the values of the lifestyle on which the Poor Ladies had embarked. The Order was yet too young to be without its original inspiration at its head.

Clare was spared many of the problems which Francis encountered because San Damiano was relatively small and would never grow to the thousands with whom Francis had to contend. Also, the lifestyle was more regular, more orderly. The Sisters did not go wandering about on missionary journeys nor become involved in secular affairs. But the problems Clare dealt with were equally real. Even an enclosed community is not free from trials, temptations, and excessive concern for its welfare. All the while she clung to her privilege of poverty, there were still those who, from admiration and concern (and with not as much faith) wished to lavish gifts and comforts on the Poor Ladies. How often admiration attempts to destroy (unwittingly) that which it admires!

Clare had explained all to Innocent III and received from his own hand the first draft of the privilege of poverty which she sought. As time went on and the Lord Pope Gregory became the Vicar of Christ, she found herself once more on guard against losing her privilege. The Pope, a long time friend, in his fatherliness and concern desired the Sisters to have more comfort and security. Several times he attempted to persuade Clare to consent to some possessions which he himself wished to bestow upon her because of his great admiration and because of his concern for the Sisters' welfare. Clare, however, firmly resisted—as firmly as she had resisted her relatives when she was eighteen—and became more and more adamant in her refusal to ac-

cept comforts. Misunderstanding her motives and not himself having the grace of so great a privilege, the Pope ventured: "If you fear your vow, we release you from it" (Legend 13; Brady, 29)! With this Clare's spirit came forth in full force since she knew that to give up this privilege would be to remove the touchstone upon which the Order rested: "Holy Father, never do I wish to be released in any way from the following of Christ" (ibid.). Poor Pope Gregory was not quite ready for this taste of perfect joy, but Clare by her response has left a great legacy to her followers. Ω

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After Communion

Throb robin red breast.
Why does your bosom flame?
Have you drunk His chalice?
Do you pulse His Name?

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

The Learner

Emmanuel sleeps.
Wisdom lays His head
upon a maiden's breast.
God-with-us, the Strong One,
in meekness finds His rest.

Light of the world into our darkness come,
Your little lamp
is set on Mary's arm
to warm our weary hearts,
to lighten our unwisdom and dispel alarm.

Small quiet Word, God's Foolishness,
teach us Your ways.
Out of Your silence You breathe forth your Dove,
out of Your weakness, strength for all our days.

Hush, my heart, for
Emmanuel sleeps. God's Wisdom
lies unheard.

Maiden of peace, Mother of all our Joy,
Gentle listener, safe keeper of God's Word,
bring my heart rest.
Teach me, Mary, give me Wisdom
Who sleeps upon your breast.

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

Book Reviews

Saint Francis and the Song of Brotherhood. By Eric Doyle, O.F.M. New York: Seabury Press, 1981. Pp. xii–207. Paper, $5.95.

Reviewed by William R. Cook, Ph.D. (Medieval History, Cornell University, 1971), for the past eleven years a member of the History Department of the State University of New York at Geneseo. Co-author of On the Shoulders of Giants: An Introduction to the Medieval World View, *forthcoming from Oxford University Press, and author of numerous scholarly articles, Professor Cook has lectured widely and has been an adjunct professor at Siena College and for the inmate education program at Attica Correctional Facility.*

The core of Father Doyle's book is a series of meditations on each of the praises of God in Saint Francis's "Canticle of Brother Sun." These meditations are written "to show how belief in the universal brotherhood can help us to create a better world" (p. ix). Thus Father Doyle follows a distinguished line of Franciscan writers from Thomas of Celano and Saint Bonaventure to the present in drawing from Saint Francis's life and writings those truths which are particularly relevant and useful to his own age and expressing those truths in contemporary language. In general, he succeeds. Indeed, there are sections of the book which should convince all but the most callous of people that Francis's "Canticle" is "a sublime expression of the authentic Christian attitude to creation, which is to accept and love creatures as they are" (p. 40), and that its vision "is of lasting significance and universal relevance" (p. 54).

In the chapters which focus on the praises from the "Canticle," Father Doyle has a loose structural pattern. He discusses various stories about Saint Francis involving the creature or creatures being praised. He often presents some reflections of important Franciscan theologians on the subject, especially Saint Bonaventure. He cites relevant passages from Scripture and mentions the role of the various creations of God in the life of the Church (I especially liked his discussions of water and fire in this context). Finally, he presents some modern scientific data and discusses the relevance of what Francis did and said in light of modern science, arguing that new information, rather than making it irrelevant, increases the importance of Francis's vision of creation. And Father Doyle quite rightly and convincingly pleads with modern men and women to recognize the truth of what Saint Francis did and said (sang) almost eight centuries ago if we are to live in a safe, clean, just world. Alas, Father Doyle almost completely abandons this scheme in the chapter about Sister Earth. Instead of recounting the wonderful stories of Francis and the flowers and trees and animals, reflecting on Bonaventure, or presenting interesting and sometimes distressing facts about the earth and modern man's treatment of it, Father Doyle devotes most of the chapter to an analysis of the thought of Teilhard de Chardin. That in itself is not a bad thing, but it destroys the structure and unity and leaves a certain emptiness and sense that the reader has been cheated of some information and important commentary.

The rather long first chapter, outlining the life of Saint Francis, is undistinguished and occasionally naive in the use of sources. It should have been shorter in light of the main thrust of the book. The chapter entitled, "Peace, Pardon and Suffering" goes a bit far afield and does not focus on vital contemporary issues such as suicide, euthanasia, and abortion.

Despite the weaknesses suggested above, this is a good book. In fact, it is an important book. Father Doyle has reflected deeply and intelligently on the message of Saint Francis, and he is an astute and frank commentator on modern life. The way he brings the former to bear on the latter is an important lesson on the importance of our tradition and the necessity to bring it to bear on the problems of the modern world. Secretary of the Interior Watt would tear out what little hair he has if he were to read this book, but it should be a joy and a resource for those who want to do more than subordinate every creature of God to man's desire for power and wealth.

Franciscan Christology: Selected Texts, Translations, and Introductory Essays. Franciscan Sources, No. 1. Edited by Damian McElrath. Series editor: George Marcil, O.F.M. St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1980. Pp. viii–240. Paper, $6.00.

Reviewed by Father Gabriel Scarfia, O.F.M., S.T.D. (Louvain), Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, NY.

With this anthology of Christological texts the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University launches what its general editor describes as "a new series heading, a new category, so to speak, hoping that it represents the answer to a newly felt need in the general area of Franciscan spirituality" (p. v). The motivation directing this collaborative project is to present (in bilingual, interfacing style of Latin original and English translation) "selections from Franciscan authors whose Christology represents the Franciscan tradition and who reformulate and translate Francis's Christological vision according to their own historical circumstances and audiences" (p. vii). In several of the introductory essays this claim of an originating inspiration in Saint Francis is asserted and at times demonstrated with plausible, if general, evidence.

A glance at the book's structure and contributors is instructive: first, the Christocentrism of Francis (E. Doyle and D. McElrath), then Christian discipleship in Clare's letter (E. Doyle), John of La Rochelle on Christ as King, Teacher, and Priest (G. Etzkorn), Bonaventure on the predestination of Christ (G. Etzkorn), James of Milan on the Passion (H. Eller), Peter John Olivi's Joachimistic perspective on Jesus (G. Marcil), John Duns Scotus on the primacy of Christ (A. Wolter), the nature of the hypostatic union according to William of Ockham (G. Etzkorn), and lastly Saint Bernardine of Siena on the name of Jesus (E. Doyle).

With the exception of perhaps one, each of the collaborators is a specialist in some phase of Franciscan studies, usually directly related to the section contributed. The opening study on Francis's Christocentrism tries to set the program and to anticipate the central themes of the entire book, since Francis's ex-

perience and appreciation of Christ are seen as mediated in various ways by several subsequent selections. This essay on Francis, an understandable exception to the text-translation format of the entire book, is based largely and happily on primary sources; perhaps more frequent use of some essential secondary studies (e.g., Esser, Clasen, Brady, Desbonnets) could have enabled these sources to speak more forcefully to a contemporary audience.

Each section after Francis contains three elements: first, an introductory essay, giving biographical details, background for the selected passage, and a brief, recent bibliography; secondly, a Latin text solidly and in most instances definitively established; and thirdly, an English translation. As a not so risky generalization, I would state that the translations as well as the introductions manifest scholarship that is not only skilled and expertly researched but also clearly presented. Since, however, "star does differ from star," I praise highly the introductions to Scotus, James of Milan, Olivi, and Ockham for their methodological and interpretive (in relation to contemporary significance) sensitivities.

From the point of view of content, certain themes lend important lines of continuity to this anthology. The centrality and indeed primacy of the Incarnation in God's creative and redemptive plan is seen to have been grasped intuitively by Francis (Admonition 5), elaborated speculatively but hesitantly by Bonaventure, and vindicated cogently in Scotus's argumentation regarding the absolute predestination of the God-man. Moreover, the paramount importance of the concrete imitation of Christ over against mere homiletic or theoretical exposition is emphasized in the sections on Francis, Clare, and Peter Olivi; that the primacy of this practical orientation ought to challenge Franciscan theologians and preachers becomes particularly evident in the chapters on John of La Rochelle and James of Milan. Both for their historical and for their contemporary theological significance the several text selections from Duns Scotus (by far the longest part of the book—43 pages) are very important. The devotional themes of the Sacred Heart, the Passion, and the name of Jesus are amply illustrated within the Franciscan tradition by the sections on James of Milan and Bernardine of Siena.

In a collaborative source work such as this the questions concerning the criteria for selection must always be faced. Why so-and-so discussing this and this? Because the scope of the anthology is so vast—Pre-Reformation Franciscan authors on Jesus—the editor wisely allowed maximum freedom to the contributors. These in turn try to justify their particular selection in light of the book's motif; however, no one really explains the actual choice of the individual Franciscan authors. Some are truly "musts," but after these few, legitimate questions can contest the remaining choices—Anthony of Padua? Another woman Franciscan?

For whom is this excellent book intended? The general editor acknowledges that the Sources series originated from several years of teaching experience at The Franciscan Institute. Obviously the work is a fine interdisciplinary course resource. Predisposed and specialist readers will also learn much from both the introductions and the texts themselves, most of whose translations have never been published widely or at all. However, for the book effectively to engage a broader readership even among Franciscans, especially given the series's spiritual orientation, another essential but formidable interpretive or "translating" task ought to be addressed directly and bravely. What significance do these historical, indeed classical, texts have for our living today? At least the addition of a concluding evaluative essay could have initiated such a "translation" process for the reader.

Within its stated purpose and perspective this handsome volume is a distinguished presentation of major Christological themes from the early stages of the Franciscan movement. Number One of this new series represents a very welcome and promising beginning.

The Proper Balance: A Practical Look at Liturgical Renewal. By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1981. Pp. 144. Cloth, $3.95.

Reviewed by Father Vincent B. Grogan, O.F.M., J.C.D. (Catholic University of America), a member of the faculty at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, New York.

The name of Joseph Champlin should be no stranger to readers of Catholic literature in the past two decades. An expertise in Liturgy is definitely enhanced by his practical experience as a pastor. Easy to read and with abundant footnotes, this book is divided into two segments.

The first is a general overview of the conciliar liturgical renewal (emphasizing especially the Mass), with the purpose of learning from the experience of the last twenty years so as to improve our worship and move confidently into the future.

Using as background the document "Norms on Eucharistic Practices" (issued on April 17, 1980, by the Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship), Champlin cites the many advantages resulting from the reform: the use of the vernacular, a broader utilization of the Scriptures, and active congregational participation; he then goes on to "concretize" these benefits with examples, usually drawn from his own parish. The author follows a similar format in discussing the problems associated with the renewed Liturgy. Among these are noted a misunderstanding of the distinction of roles of the celebrant and the congregation (as evidenced, for instance, by the joint recital of the Doxology at the close of the Eucharistic Prayer), and a neglect of the ecclesial nature of the Liturgy by some celebrants (e.g., an excessive intrusion of their personalities, opinions, or theological stances into the liturgical action—perhaps, an immoderate reaction to the almost absolute rigidity and impersonal nature of the unreformed Liturgy).

Father Champlin makes a valid point that failures in achieving the desired results of the liturgical renewal might be due to the rapid rate of change in the style and the ritual of worship, magnified, undoubtedly, by the inflexibility of the Tridentine Liturgy that was essentially unchanged for four hundred years. In this regard, he quotes Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock*, to the effect that the pace of change can be as important as its ultimate thrust or direction; that is, there was a failure to consider the psychological and emotional implications for the ordinary Catholic (and the celebrant?). As Toffler put it, "Novelty, therefore—any perceptible novelty—touches off explosive activity within the body, and especially the nervous system" (p. 43).

Champlin concludes the first part with a chapter on maintaining a proper balance in liturgical prayer, by mingling the best elements of the I and We (or the personal and communal) dimensions. He speaks of these as the vertical and horizontal perspectives that need to be "cross-stamped" or intersected. He suggests, along these lines, the observance of the periods of silence called for in the reformed *Ordo Missae* and a rediscovery of the value of symbols in worship, rather than adopting a purely utilitarian approach.

Celebrants and others with ministerial roles in the Mass will find Part II of this book particularly helpful. The author undertakes an examination of the various components of the *Ordo Missae*, highlighting those areas most susceptible to poor execution in the actual celebration, and offering commonsense suggestions along the way. The value of this segment lies in Champlin's ability clearly to relate specific rubrical norms to their liturgical/theological bases.

Among elements touched on are: why the term *Preparation of the Gifts* is more accurate than the term *Offertory*; the impropriety of the celebrant's ordinarily sharing the Greeting of Peace with members of the congregation; the distortion inflicted on the Liturgy by musicians who have developed the acclamations in the Eucharistic Prayer (viz., the *Sanctus*, the Memorial Acclamation, the Great Amen, which are intended to be brief interjectory responses) into lengthy pieces. This reviewer has participated in more than one Liturgy where the singing of the *Sanctus* consumed as long, if not longer, a period of time than the praying of the entire Eucharistic Prayer!

I personally entertain reservations on two points mentioned by Champlin. He maintains that when several chalices of wine are being used, water need be added to only one of them (p. 103); he offers no explanation for this position. Later on, he suggests that when the Preface is not sung, organ background music during its recitation can serve as a smooth transition to the singing of the *Sanctus* (p. 112). Yet no. 12 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (to which Champlin refers two pages later) would seem to indicate that when the celebrant is proclaiming any of the presidential prayers, no background music should be had.

This book could be subtitled: "What You Always Wanted to Know about the Liturgical Reform in Precise Fashion, but Were Afraid to Ask." Besides benefiting the clergy and those with special ministerial roles, this book should find a ready audience with every Catholic. All in all, it does live up to its name: a balanced, practical examination of liturgical renewal.

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The CORD

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

EDITORIAL

Needed—Some Quiet Types

IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN the glory of the Franciscan Order that it had room for any and every kind of personality and people from every class—rich, middle, and poor—educated and illiterate. And although Francis initially thought the Gospel required that all the brethren go forth two by two to preach the Gospel, by the time of the Rule's final approval in 1223 preaching was limited to those examined and approved by the General of the Order. And even before that, we have the account of Francis's silent sermon—his mere walking through the streets with a fellow friar. It became evident to Francis that not all friars are suited to the proclamation of the Word of God among the people. Some are called to wait on God in silent solitude. Others are called to serve the brethren, as did Juniper by his rather eccentric style of cooking.

In the renewal efforts in our communities sparked by Vatican II, the potential for apostolic, exterior public service of many of our religious brothers has been tapped. Teaching, liturgical ministry, and catechizing are works now done by brothers which would not have been done by a brother years ago, except perhaps in the Missions. It seems that more and more candidates for the brotherhood in the brotherhood are opting for that type of service which perhaps, humanly speaking, satisfies the active impulses of young Americans and the need to do something with people, something which will bring positive feedback.

In addition, positions of authority and in formation in the internal community have become part of the lives of many Franciscan brothers.

What concerns me in this new and newly developing situation is that the Franciscan vocation be unduly limited and restricted to the types of people who would be judged suited for exterior apostolate or formation work, or authority. Such a restriction would greatly impoverish our future, for we would miss the models of humility and contemplation offered us by the many brethren who are quite comfortable with serving the community in a physical way: by cooking, maintenance, housekeeping, tailoring, chauffering, or what not. Do not misunderstand me—I am not arguing we won't have anyone to perform household tasks so that we with an exterior apostolate can devote full time to that—although a legitimate argument can

(Continued on page 60)

The Contemplative Dimension of the Franciscan Charism

JAMES CURRAN, O.S.F.

ALTHOUGH THE PERSONAL contemplative character of Saint Francis is beyond dispute, few people realize that perhaps the majority of his early followers were contemplatives. Francis was indeed one of the Church's outstanding mystics whose contemplative contribution to the Church is undeniable. However, the late and highly respected Franciscan historian, Father Cajetan Esser, O.F.M., maintained in his references to the origins of the whole Franciscan Order: "A tendency towards the contemplative life, towards solitude, can [also] be observed from the very beginning (p. 225). "That tendency towards the contemplative life, [which] right from the beginning was characteristic of the Franciscan movement," (Ibid., p. 162) is one of Francis's greatest gifts to his followers throughout the world.

We must not confuse contemplation exclusively with the cloistered life which has always been characteristic of the Poor Clares. Pontifical or Constitutional Cloister, although valuable and supportive, is not essential to the contemplative life as was well demonstrated in the lives of Saint Francis and his early followers. Without going into detail about the value of those limited forms of enclosure or "poustinia" which are necessary to support the life of prayer and contemplation, we might simply recognize the historical fact that Francis lived *contemplatively* from the moment of his first conversion (*metanoia*) until the end of his religious life. In fact, he spent at least fifty percent of his time in the hermitages which he had founded in the Umbrian hills. As Raphael Brown points out in his introduction to the *Fioretti*, "By the year 1282 the small Province of the Marches had the amazing total of eighty-five friaries . . . the majority of those houses were undoubtedly isolated hermitages, for the friars of the Marches were preeminently contemplatives. It is therefore obvious that those friars had effectively grasped *the essence of the spirituality of Saint Francis*: the absolute unconditional primacy of the interior life, the life of ceaseless inner union with God, constant humble contemplation of the Savior, and intimate loving communion with Him which the Poverello called "the spirit of prayer" (*Omnibus*, p. 1274). Mr. Brown also states: "That this small-community contemplative life was in fact the ideal of Saint Francis is proved by the exultant praise he bestowed upon it at various times (see LP 71; 2Cel 178; 2Cel 194)" (*True Joy*, p. 180).

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The Tertiary Contemplative and Eremitical Tradition

THAT FROM THE very beginning there was a contemplative dimension to the tertiary movement should not surprise us, since the Order of Penitents of Saint Francis of Assisi took their inspiration not only from the penitential and eremitical movements of the previous century but also from the personal contemplative example of Saint Francis and the early friars. Groups of Penitents, Recluses, and Hermits had indeed existed before the time of Francis. In fact, the Church officially recognized the faithful of these groups as religious since the religious state was not at that time determined by the taking of vows, but by public investiture with the penitential or monastic garb and the profession of a *rule of life*. We see this clearly in the life of Saint Francis when he embraced the life of penance and put on the hermit or penitential garb. Such a simple act placed him immediately under ecclesiastical rather than civil law as was demonstrated by his appeal to the court of the Bishop of Assisi (L3S 6, 19; *Omnibus*, p. 908). In fact, for the first few years of his conversion (1206) until the arrival of the first Brothers and the verbal approbation of their way of life by Pope Innocent III (1209), Francis became an integral part of the Penitential Movement—the penitents (conversi), hospitallers, and hermits of his day (Esser, p. 206). Later, it was Francis himself who drew many of them into the Franciscan Tertiary Movement. He recruited his tertiaries, not only from single and married secular citizens of the surrounding cities and villages, but from groups of penitents, hospitallers, and hermits who were already living in communities or fraternal associations.

> Francis lived *contemplatively* from the moment of his first conversion until the end of his religious life.

As early as 1221, Francis himself visited and gave the Franciscan habit to Blessed Verdiana of Castelfiorentino, a Recluse, and later to Blessed Gerard of Villamagna, a Hermit (Habig, pp. 117, 383). In 1222, a fraternity of Her-

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mits was established near Gubbio by Blessed Bartholomew Haro who was influenced by Francis. Francis himself gave followers to this group and authorized it to receive other members in the future (Pazzelli, pp. 42–59). This contemplative traditiion in the Franciscan Tertiary Movement is further attested by the long list of canonized and beatified Franciscan Tertiary Hermits and Recluses up until the end of the eighteenth century. Even in our own day, among Tertiary Religious, are included not only 400 Congregations of Franciscan Sisters and 30 Congregations of Tertiary Friars, but 70 monasteries of Cloistered Nuns who all profess the same *Rule of the Third Order Regular of Saint Francis*, revised and approved by Pope Pius XI in 1927 (cf. Pazzelli and Temperini [1980]). That this contemplative charism is of the essence of Franciscan *spirituality* has been universally recognized even by the Secular Franciscan Order whose members, although they are called to remain vitally involved in the world as a special Franciscan "leaven," are reminded in their new Rule: "As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do" (*Rule of the S.F.O.* [1978], ch. 2, n. 8).

Vatican Council II and the Contemplative Dimension

AS RECENTLY AS January of 1981, the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes issued a document on the *Contemplative Dimension of Religious Life*. With substantial reference to the documents of Vatican Council II, the Congregation reminded us that "the contemplative dimension is the real secret of renewal for every religious life." In the guidelines, the Congregation affirmed the primacy of the contemplative dimension for Institutes of the active life as well as for specifically contemplative Institutes. In their directives, one can almost hear the echo of Francis's voice down through the ages exhorting and admonishing his brothers and sisters to be faithful to the primacy of prayer in their lives: "These friars are my Knights of the Round Table, who remain hidden in deserts and lonely places in order to devote themselves more completely to prayer and meditation, lamenting their own sins and the sins of others, living simply and behaving humbly, whose sanctity is known to God, and at times to other friars, but unknown to the world" (SP 72; *Omnibus*, p. 1203). "The friars to whom God has given the grace of working should work in a spirit of faith and devotion and avoid idleness, which is the enemy of the soul, without however extinguishing the *spirit of prayer and devotion*, to which every temporal consideration must be subordinate" (RegB 5; *Omnibus*, p. 61).

As we celebrate the 800th anniversary of the birth of Saint Francis, we must take care to spend this commemorative year, from October 4, 1981, to October 4, 1982, seeking to discover the contemplative dimension in the life of our Seraphic Father, Saint Francis, and draw on his inspiration to open our own lives to the *spirit of prayer*, which alone can make us more attentive to the demands of the kingdom and help us to see the salvific plan of God with the eyes of faith. We must listen to the words of our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II: "Your houses should be especially centers of prayer, of recollection, of dialogue—personal and, above all, communitarian—with him who is, and must remain, the primary and principal person with whom you converse in the busy round of your daily lives. If you succeed in cultivating this atmosphere of intense and loving union with God, you will be able to carry out, without traumatic tensions or dangerous aberrations, the renewal of life and discipline to which the Second Vatican Council has called you" (Address of 11/24/78, cited in *The Contemplative Dimension*).

Nearing death, Saint Francis wished to make arrangements, as a testament to his brothers, to preserve the life of silence, continuous prayer, and contemplation that had already made the Portiuncula a "holy place." "Why do I make these arrangements?" he said. "Because, if the brothers and the friaries where they reside stray some day from the purity of life and holiness that are befitting, I wish that at least this community be a beautiful mirror of the Order, a candelabra before the throne of God and the Blessed Virgin" (LP 9, 10; *Omnibus*, 985–87). Ω

T

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Penance in the Writings of Saint Francis—II

SISTER JOYCE BRANDL, O.S.F.

HAVING EXAMINED Saint Francis's use of the notion of penance outside its sacramental context in his Testament and his Letter to all the Faithful, last month, we continue our study this month with his first Rule.

C. The Rule of 1221.

The Rule of 1221 contains the notion of penance nine times in a non-sacramental sense. The first time it is used in this sense occurs in Chapter Twelve.

1. *Live [her] life of penance.*

> The friars are absolutely forbidden to allow any woman to profess obedience to them, but once the spiritual direction has been given her, let her live her life of penance where she chooses [sed dato sibi consilio spirituali, ubi voluerit agat poenitentiam—RegNB 12; *Omnibus*, 42].

The context of the chapter concerns itself with the relations of the friars with women, especially in sacramental Confession and in spiritual direction. Prior to the above quotation, the friars are told to "avoid the sight or company of women, when it is evil." The object of the exhortation is to protect the integrity of the friar.

The indication of "live her life of penance" is that the woman does not require a relation of obedience to a confessor or a spiritual director. Francis emphasizes this to the point that he absolutely forbids the friars to allow women to profess obedience to them, a procedure which definitely would set up special ties. Even though the passage was intended for the welfare of the friars, it indicates that a unique tie, such as obedience to the friar, is not essential for anyone who freely "lives a life of penance." Had this obedience been essential for the woman's ability to live such a life, Francis would certainly have permitted it.

Sister Joyce Brandl, O.S.F., a Franciscan Sister of Little Falls, Minnesota, where she is Health Director of the St. Francis Christian Development Center, wrote this paper in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Spirituality at Gonzaga University.

From the fact that Francis "absolutely forbids professing obedience," one can conclude that living a life of penance is possible without special ties to any human person. The implication is that the only essential relationship for a person is that to the Lord himself.

2. *Do* penance. In the second quotation of this series Francis urges a friar who has sinned to "do penance" for his sins.

> If a friar is tempted and commits fornication, he must be deprived of his habit. By his wickedness he has lost the right to wear it and so must lay it aside completely and be dismissed from the Order. Then he should do penance for his sins [Et postea poenitentiam faciat de peccatis—RegNB 13; *Omnibus*, 42].

The serious sin of fornication severs the friar from his Order. He has forfeited the right to wear the habit. Francis admonishes that he convert from his evil way and "do penance" for his sins.

It is assumed that the friar would first of all require sacramental Confession to absolve him from his sin. Francis frequently advises Confession in his writings. In Chapter Twenty of the Rule of 1221, e.g., he expressly exhorts them to confess their sins to a priest (*Omnibus*, 46).

"Do penance" presupposes falling back into sin from time to time, and Confession is the means available to reconcile the alienated sinner with the Lord and put him back on the right path.

In the time of Francis, in addition to private Confession, the sinner as represented by the friar under consideration, was expected to perform the non-solemn public penance for fornication. Solemn public penance, also in vogue, was never imposed on the clergy (Isabell, 36). The person commissioned to perform the non-solemn penance was given the knapsack and staff prior to making the penitential pilgrimage. This type of "penance" may be implied by Francis in this passage, since he himself had been a *conversus*, a member of the penitential movement.

3. *Repent, Bring forth fruits befitting repentance, In penance.* Saint Francis in the following quotation uses the term *poenitentia* four times and encourages the friars to preach the reality.

> Whenever they please, all my brothers may with God's blessing openly give the following or a similar exhortation and act of praise among whatever people: Fear and honor, praise and bless, thank and adore the Lord God almighty in Trinity and Unity, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Creator of everything. Repent [agite poenitentiam], bring forth fruits befitting repentance [facite dignos fructus

poenitentiae], for mind that you are going to die soon. Give, and it shall be given to you. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven. And, if you do not forgive people their sins, the Lord will not forgive you your sins. Confess all your sins. Blessed are they who die in repentance [in poenitentia], for they will be in the kingdom of heaven. Woe to those who do not die in repentance [qui non moriuntur in poenitentia], for they will be children of the Devil, whose works they do, and will go into everlasting fire [RegNB 21; *Omnibus*, 46–47].

The following diagram will help to relate the positive and negative elements present in this quotation with the implied ideas in parentheses:

"blessed are those who"		(woe to those who do not)
"praise God, Triune, Creator"	←	(praise God, Triune, Creator)
"repent"	←	(repent)
"bring forth fruits befitting repentance"	←	(bring forth fruits befitting repentance)
"give"—(God gives back)	←	(give—God does not give back)
"forgive"—"Lord forgives"	←	"forgive"—"Lord does not forgive"
"confess sins"	←	(confess sins)
"die in repentance"	←	"die in repentance"
↓		↓
(children of God)		"children of Devil"
↓		↓
kingdom of heaven		"cast into everlasting fire"

The Gospel message, Repent, is always a timely topic for exhortations. The Triune God, Creator, Father, is to be praised, honored, blessed, and thanked. Furthermore, "Do penance" is demonstrated by "bring forth fruits befitting repentance." This is done by giving to others in a broad sense as one's time, talents, material goods. God pays back according to one's own generosity in giving. "Repent" includes the notion of forgiving others even as the Lord forgives. If one cannot do this, neither will God forgive. "Repent" reminds all that we are sinners in God's sight. All ought to be aware of their sins, not try to hide them, but confess them openly. Those who live in this way are children of God who inherit "the kingdom of heaven." Those who fail to live in this manner "are children of the Devil, whose works they do." They reap "everlasting fire."

In this quotation Francis describes fundamental conversion. God is Father and Creator; human beings are his sinful creatures who must honestly acknowledge who they are in relationship to God. They must bring forth fruits worthy of repentance: give, forgive, to be worthy of the kingdom of heaven.

4. *Who did not practice repentance* and *served you in repentance*. The following passage of the Rule of 1221 contains the term "penance" or "repentance" twice, with elements similar to the previous quotation.

> And we give you thanks because this your Son is to come again in the glory of his majesty to send to the eternal fire those accursed ones who did not practice repentance [qui poenitentiam non egerunt]; but to say to everybody that did acknowledge, adore, and serve you in repentance [et tibi servierunt in poenitentia], "Come, you blest of my Father, take over the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world" [RegNB 23; *Omnibus*, 50].

The context of this passage ends in a paragraph which has just summarized the functions of the Trinity in relation to salvation history. The concluding thought of that paragraph is expressed in this passage in which the Son appears as Judge at the end times. The following diagram illustrates the parallelism found in this passage, with the implied ideas in parentheses:

"the damned"		"the blessed"
"did not practice repentance"	→	"did acknowledge you"
(did not adore you—?)	→	
(did not serve God in repentance)	→	"serve God in repentance"
↓		↓
"Send those into eternal fire"		Welcome those to "take over the Kingdom prepared for them from the beginning of the world."

When the Son comes "a second time in his glory and majesty," his judgment will be based on four points: (1) those who "have practiced repentance" or "have not practiced repentance"; (2) those who did acknowledge" or "did not acknowledge" God; (3) those who "did adore" or "did not adore" him, and (4) those who "did not practice repentance" or served you in repentance." Each of these will be discussed in turn.

In the first point, why does Francis begin with "practiced repentance"? We can understand the quotation better if we consider its fuller context in the twenty-third chapter of the Rule of 1221 (*Omnibus*, 50). By the phrase "have practiced repentance" (literally, acted repentantly or in repentance), Francis implies first of all the recognition of who humans are with respect to God. He states, "We are all poor sinners and unworthy even to mention your name" (God as Father—*Omnibus*, 51). And again, he says, "wretched and pitiable as we are, ungrateful and evil, rotten through and through . . ."

(*Omnibus*, 52). Left to ourselves, we humans are sinners, wretched, pitiable, ungrateful, and evil; we are creatures who refuse to open ourselves to God. "Have practiced repentance" includes the notion of being sorry for one's sins, turning away from sin, a radical changing of direction with a returning to God to be reconciled with him and healed by him. "Have practiced repentance" implies a change of heart and mind such as Francis experienced at his conversion. "Have practiced repentance" initiates the recognition of sin's gravity as opposed to God's holiness. There is acknowledgment of self as sinner. Anyone who refuses to admit this invites eternal damnation.

Does asceticism have any connection with "have practiced repentance" in Francis's mind? God himself told Francis, "Despise yourself, if you wish to acknowledge me" (2Cel 9; *Omnibus*, 369). In Chapter One of the Rule of 1221 Francis quotes Mt. 16:24: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (RegNB 1; *Omnibus*, 31). Thus it is evident that Francis bids his followers to live a life of some type of self-abnegation. But what kind does he have in mind? Dukker indicates that for Francis the term "penance" or "repentance" had the broad meaning which it possesses in Holy Scripture. He points out that Francis marks the beginning of his own "beginning of doing penance" with the great act of charity, the care of the lepers. Hence, he says, one can conclude that "penance" indicates something positive which animates Francis and others more than a mere consideration of sin and weakness. Francis summons us to follow Christ and to enter God's kingdom (Dukker, 9). Esser and Grau enlarge on Francis's notion of self-abnegation when they state that it is a life in which one empties self of every attachment, a life of constant dying to self (Esser and Grau, 191). They summarize Chapters Twenty-two and Twenty-three of the Rule of 1221 as

follows:

> To die to self is to deny oneself, to keep back nothing of self for oneself, to be wholly "pure" of heart, to live in total poverty of spirit. Only when we practice such a living death can our life be truly religious and centered on God [ibid.].

The appropriate virtue resulting from the recognition of one's sinfulness is humility, which acknowledges the truth of who I am and who God is.

With the acceptance of God's grace in the act of "penance" (fundamental conversion), the sinner turns from evil ways to begin a new relationship with the Lord. Francis points out in the following quotation that God is worthy of acknowledgment because of who He is and what He has done for sinful mankind.

> Almighty, most high and supreme God, Father, holy and just, Lord, King of heaven and earth, we give you thanks for yourself. Of your own holy will you created all things spiritual and physical, made us in your 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 [RegNB 23; *Omnibus*, 50].

Adoration of God appropriately flows from a grateful heart that contemplates who God is: Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier.

The last point Francis makes in the primary quotation under discussion is that the damned failed to serve God, while the blessed did serve him. What does Francis have in mind when he says, "served you in repentance"? The conclusion of his statement from Matthew's Gospel suggests the answer: "Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt. 35:34). Francis must have been aware of Jesus's criteria for attaining the kingdom: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me" (Mt. 25:35–39).

To serve our Lord "in repentance" means not only turning to God but also turning to those especially in need. The invitation is to feed the hungry, to share bread with those who have less than ourselves, to give drink to those who thirst, to provide clothes for the needy, to care

for the sick, to offer companionship to the lonely, the foreigner and stranger, to visit the isolated and the prisoners. The followers of Francis are asked to serve our Lord in this same way. A change of heart is manifested by appropriate deeds, as suggested above. This type of conversion is of course an "on-going" one.

Father Thaddeus Horgan summarizes what Francis intends to convey by the phrases "have practiced repentance" and "in repentance":

> From his [Francis's] reading of Scripture . . . [he] learned that Salvation History and Jesus mean one thing . . . God's will to pardon, to bridge the gap of estrangement and alienation, to be compassionate with his people who struggle for life in abundance. The Lord not only exhorted men and women to repentance, he welcomed them to his Father. He healed them, manifesting that God's power to pardon was in the world and alive. He instituted a new covenant relationship in himself by identifying with humanity. He accomplished this in his blood, the source of life in Hebrew understanding. He rose, and with him all humanity, to a new life of union with the Father [Horgan, 61].

Thus "have practiced repentance" suggests, for Francis, the beginning of a whole process of conversion. Through the merits of Jesus, the Father, who longs for sinners, calls them to fundamental conversion. Once these are ready to admit having abandoned God by a life of sin, he repairs the estrangement and welcomes them back. God is ever ready to effect a covenant relationship with the repentant sinner. "So shall you be my people, I will be your God" (Jer. 11:4b). If this was true in the Old Testament, how much more is it true since Jesus came into our world, identified himself with humanity, and established for all who choose it, a new, deeper, relationship of love with himself and through him with the Father! It is the deepening of this relationship with God, the living out of the conversion experience, that constitutes "in repentance."

To summarize: Francis, in this quotation, outlines the basic elements of what he means by "practice penance" and "in repentance." To practice penance or repentance represents a fundamental conversion—the recognition of the basic sinful human condition of willful self-alienation from God. In Salvation History Jesus earned the Father's pardon. Consequently the sinner no longer needs to be estranged from God. So long as he/she turns from sin and gives up inordinate attachments, the Father pardons and welcomes the sinner. The estrangement is ended. A new relationship is begun. God is acknowledged for who he is in himself and for what he has done for us. The appropriate stance for the sinner is one of humility, the

truthful acknowledgment of this sinful condition. Sincere conversion is manifested by self-abnegation, taking up one's cross daily to follow Jesus.

"In repentance" implies a deepening of the new relationship established with God. God is appropriately adored, honored, loved, and served. This life demands continuous daily conversion of oneself to God. It means coming to know in an ever deepening way what it means to be a person capable of sin, one constantly struggling with the law of nature, while following the call to a more intense union with God in love. Love of God is demonstrated by a life of self-abnegation and service. Self-abnegation is freedom from all inordinate attachments, the daily dying to self.

[A life of penance] demands continuous daily conversion of oneself to God . . . the daily dying to self.

The specific type of service Francis requires of his followers is that with which Christ will judge all at the end times. It is the service rendered to the needy, the poor, the downtrodden, the lonely and abandoned. "Repentance" is not so much the performing of penitential practices for one's own sins and the sins of others, as a life in love, the forgetting of self and the devoting of oneself to the poor for the Lord's sake.

5. *In the true Faith and in repentance.* In the previous quotation Francis stressed the need to serve God "in repentance." In this last passage from the Rule of 1221 he and the friars implore all Christians to persevere "in the true Faith and in repentance."

> And all who within the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church wish to serve God the Lord; and all the ecclesiastical orders, priests, deacons, subdeacons, acolytes, exorcists, lectors, ostiaries, and all the clergy; all the religious both men and women; conversi, all boys and girls and little children, the poor and needy, kings and princes, laborers, farmers, servants and masters; all virgins and continent and married women, all lay men and women; all infants, growing people, youths, and old people, the healthy and the sick; all persons of low and high rank; and all peoples, races, tribes and tongues, all nations and all men all over the

world now and to come—all we lesser brothers and useless servants humbly beg and entreat them that all of us may persevere in the true Faith and in repentance, for there is no other way for anyone to be saved [ut omnes in vera fide et poenitentia perseveremus, quia aliter nullus salvari potest—RegNB 23; *Omnibus*, 51 lacks the final phrase—cf. *Opusc.* 291].

All Clerics
priests
deacons
subdeacons
acolytes
exorcists
lectors
ostiaries

All Religious
men and women

All Lay People
conversi
boys and girls
little children
poor and needy
kings and princes
laborers, farmers
servants and masters
all virgins and continent and married women
infants and growing people
youths and old people
healthy and sick
low and high rank

All Peoples
tribes
families
languages
nations

All Men Everywhere
now living
and to come

It seems that Francis attempted to include all categories within the Christian Church. These listed are surely all inclusive and overlapping: non-religious clerics, all religious, all lay people; male and female; virgins, single, married; healthy and the sick; little and the great; a life continuum from infants to the aged. Regarding the general categories the *Opuscula* indicates that these came from Rev. 7:9. They are the ones who stood before the throne and before the Lamb. Hence it follows that Francis is referring to Christians. He invites all these to live "in the true Faith and in repentance," first individuals, then groups of peoples. Though it is obvious that he is speaking specifically to Christians, it also appears that he directs his appeal to all, since he includes "peoples everywhere now living and to come." Repentance is for all mankind, not only for a select few.

Two other omissions might be noted. Francis names all the orders of the priestly ministry with the exception of bishops and the pope. Was this simply an oversight? It does appear strange, as Francis had excellent relations with his bishop and the pope at all times, and these surely are leaders of this group (cf. 1Cel 15 and 32; *Omnibus*, 241 and 254). Another group he overlooks are the merchants (his father was a

member of this class), who rose to prominence at this time of history, though he does include laborers and farmers (cf. Gannon and Traub, 81–82). Did he deliberately exclude them as an example of the worldly-wise of his day?

The categories listed are self-explanatory except for the conversi or penitents, a group appearing as early as the fifth century. They were determined to break with a former way of life which today is characterized as worldly, though not necessarily sinful. They committed themselves to a mortified, entirely chaste or continent life-style. They were lay, religious, single, and married. They might live in monasteries, their own home, or attached to a church. Francis was a *conversus* for the first two years after his conversion, during which time he was attached to a church (cf. Pazzelli, 10–11, 27–30).

The present quotation comes from the concluding chapter of the Rule of 1221. In the preceding paragraph he addresses the Church Triumphant; in this paragraph, the Militant. He and the friars implore all these Christians and non-Christians "to persevere in the true Faith and in repentance." Both are essential for salvation; "there is no other way for anybody to be saved." Repentance is associated with the acceptance of God's free gift, faith in him. Francis was converted when he allowed the Lord to lead him. This was his act of faith. To renounce self and determinedly follow Jesus is to fulfill the first demand of Christ's preaching. "The kingdom of Heaven is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mk. 1:15). Since repentance presupposes at least a beginning relationship with the Lord, faith in God is a cornerstone for this life.

Francis may be referring to "true" faith because of the prevalence of heresy, especially within the penitential groups such as the Waldenses and the Cathari. These groups were extremely anti-clerical, so much so that some were excommunicated. Francis stressed to both his lay and religious followers adherence to Catholicism and fidelity to the true Church (cf. Pazzelli, p. 53; the author actually uses the term *anti-ecclesial*).

Francis stresses service as a fruit of conversion in the Testament, the Letter to All the Faithful, and the Rule of 1221—as we have seen in the foregoing pages. Here he emphasizes that the service requires an ecclesial dimension, that is, service rendered within the holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Church spelled people for Francis. This is seen in his conversion experience with the lepers. It took him a while to understand it in the incident where he set about repairing San Damiano, but he did realize, later, that "the divine command concerned

itself with the Church that Christ had purchased with his Blood" (2Cel 10–11; *Omnibus*, 370–71). For Francis the call to a fundamental conversion is ecclesial. It is through the Church that the repentant become people of God. Through baptism they become its members. The sacraments of Confession and the Eucharist sustain the life of conversion. While Francis does not specifically mention these sacraments in this passage, his writings are replete with references and exhortations to their reception as necessary for salvation (cf. *Omnibus*, 46, 62, 94, 134 on penance; 46, 94 on the Eucharist).

Penance or repentance is a lifelong process. Francis exhorts all Christians to persevere in it to the end. This was his own attitude. Toward the end of his life he exhorted his brothers: "Let us begin, brothers, to serve the Lord God, for up to now we have made little or no progress" (1Cel 103; *Omnibus*, 318).

It is clear that Francis envisioned the dying to self and the rising to new life as a daily event for anyone choosing penance as a way of life, and this way of life is absolutely essential to enter God's kingdom.

To summarize: the entire twenty-third Chapter of Francis's Rule of 1221 expresses the Saint's awe and thanksgiving to the Father for the redemptive work of his Son. He understood in a profound way that true faith, the belief in God and his divine plan of salvation and our response, the living of a life of repentance is essential for salvation. It is not meant for Christians only, but is intended for all mankind, present and to come. In other words, the daily dying to self, a life of on-going conversion in repentance, is required of all.

This saying brings out the need of an ecclesial dimension. Christians are asked to serve the Lord God in the "holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church" by the living out of the conversion experience "in penance" and by serving one another on a daily basis. Likewise they are asked to persevere to the end.

D. The Letter to Superiors.

1. To do penance. In this final statement concerning repentance or penance used in a non-sacramental sense derived from the writings of Saint Francis, the Poverello addresses the Superiors of the Friars Minor:

> In all your sermons you shall tell the people of the need to do penance [de poenitentia populum moneatis], impressing on them that no one can be saved unless he receives the Body and Blood of our Lord [EpCust; *Omnibus*, 103].

Francis does not spell out what the friars are to preach except that they shall tell the people of the need "to do penance." That he does not take this lightly is seen from the fact that he asks the friars to include this message "in any preaching" they do. In several previous quotations he emphasizes its absolute need for salvation; penance always involves a life of on-going conversion and calls for a daily dying to self.

Not only is repentance needed for salvation, the friars also ought to impress the people that "nobody can be saved except him who receives the Body and Blood of our Lord." In the Eucharist Jesus comes into the heart of the converted soul. Francis, no doubt, appreciated that the life of union with God is enhanced and energy received to live a life of penance by reception of the Body and Blood of Jesus. He writes, "The man who does not eat his Flesh and drink his Blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (EpFidII; *Omnibus*, 94; cf. Jn. 6:54). Here then both repentance and the reception of the Eucharist are seen as essentials for salvation. The Eucharist is the most excellent means available to enhance one's relationship begun with the Lord in the conversion experience.

This saying does not add anything new to the notion of penance as we have so far seen it used in the writings of Francis. It stresses the need for conversion in every person's life; hence the urgency to preach this message to all. It also adds a note on the importance of the Eucharist for salvation. Its supreme value lies in the strengthening of the bond formed with the Lord in the conversion experience, and it is a source of power in living out the demands of the "penance experience."

Summary.

Francis, from his own conversion experience, embarked on a lifelong process of "penance" or "repentance," of on-going conversion. From the quotations studied thus far—those concerned with penance outside the sacrament of Confession—the following characteristics emerge regarding the meaning of penance in the writings of Saint Francis.

First of all, penance is a God-given invitation which implies a free human response. It initiates a change from an old life, one that is centered on self, founded on sin, to a new life with the Lord Jesus which is God-centered, other-centered, and founded on God. The new life embodies the paschal mystery, which requires a daily dying to self with a rising to a new life in Christ. Francis invites us never to forget the sinner that is in each, which demands a sense of humility together

with the wonder of our being a redeemed child of the Father. It is a mystery that needs to be lived out to the very end of our lives.

This life is other-centered. For the follower of Francis there is a special call to the service of the needy, the most neglected, especially those requiring basic physical and emotional support.

This life can be lived anywhere in the world. It requires detachment from all persons, places, and things. In fact, the less attachment there is to these, the freer is the person to develop an attachment to the God who made us.

Freedom of movement is implied, and poverty of spirit a characteristic virtue. All peoples everywhere are called to live this life. No one is exempt. It is a sure road to the kingdom of Heaven.

III. Penance in the Sacrament of Confession

THE TERM "PENANCE" is used six times in the writings of Saint Francis with the meaning of sacramental satisfaction. The first of these appears in the Letter to All the Faithful.

A. Letter to All the Faithful.

Undertake penance. This first quotation from the Letter to All the Faithful concerns doing penance for one's sins. "Are you willing to undertake penance [Vis recipere poenitentiam] for all your sins?" (EpFid II; *Opusc.* 126; *Omnibus*, 98 has "be absolved"). In the context of this passage a dying man who has placed all his possessions in the hands of relatives refuses to make restitution to persons he has defrauded and cheated. He is willing to perform the penance; yet he condemns himself because he is not just. He refuses to make satisfaction. Francis indicates that performing the penance is not enough. When a person is sincere about doing penance he is willing to make the restitution demanded.

B. Rule of 1221.

Received penance . . . performed the penance. Francis emphasizes the importance of performing the penance imposed during Confession. He implies that the efficacy of the sacrament hinges on this condition:

> My friars, both clerics and lay brothers, are to confess to priests of the Order. If this is impossible, they may confess to any other qualified Catholic priest and they should be convinced that once they have received penance and absolution [acceperint poenitentiam et absolutionem] from any Catholic priest their sins are forgiven, provided that they perform the penance enjoined on them, humbly and faithfully [si poenitentiam sibi iniunctam procuraverint humiliter et fideliter observare—RegNB 20; *Omnibus*, 46].

It is not clear why Francis would need to emphasize to his friars the need to perform the penance imposed in sacramental Confession. The need could stem from the fact that many of the friars were simple layfolk and hence may have been ill informed about the sacrament. Confession was infrequent at the time, since the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 had to legislate annual confession and communion. Another factor might have been the stress placed on the performance of the penance at the time:

> Through the centuries one sees an unmistakable shift in the estimation of what constitutes the actual substance of the sacrament. During the first stage of the existence of the aural confession (early middle ages) the emphasis clearly lay upon atonement. Achievement of the penance was seen as the actual forgiving element [Tomlinson, 34].

C. Rule of 1223.

They should impose a moderate penance. The third use of sacramental "penance" in the writings of Saint Francis stresses the value of Confession for the forgiveness of sin.

> If any of the friars, at the instigation of the enemy, fall into mortal sin, they must have recourse as soon as possible, without delay, to their provincial ministers, if it is a sin for which recourse to them has been prescribed for the friars. If the ministers are priests, they should impose a moderate penance [cum misericordia iniungant illis poenitentiam] on such friars; if they are not priests, they should see that a penance is imposed by some priest of the Order [iniungi faciant {poenitentiam} per alios sacerdotes ordinis], as seems best to them before God [RegB 7; *Omnibus*, 62].

Francis is well aware of the frailty of humans who are inclined at any time to fall into serious sin. Should they be so unfortunate as to sin they should have recourse to the minister. In Chapter Four of the Rule of 1221 Francis reminds the ministers of Mt. 20:28: "I have not come to be ministered to, but to minister"; the souls of their brothers have been committed to them (RegNB 4; *Omnibus*, 34–35).

In his Letter to a Certain Minister, Francis states:

> If any one of the brothers at the instigation of the Enemy should sin mortally, let him be bound in obedience to have recourse to his guardian. And all the brothers who might know he has sinned, should not cause him embarrassment or loss of honor, but have pity for him and

francis

pierced,
he kept vigil.
his blood
mingled with
heaven.
a sign:
the wonder
of union.

gentled and consumed
by celestial fire,
the unquenchable desire
for his lover,
francis
submitted his body
to love's branding
and sealed the passion
in holy consummation.

Sister Lynda Michel Castronovo, O.S.F.

> keep the sin of their brother very secret; for it is not the healthy that need the physician, but the ailing [EpMin; *Omnibus*, 110].

Thus the minister (the physician who represents Christ) is there to support the fallen brother. At the same time Francis acknowledges that only the priest in Confession can absolve the friar. The performance of the penance is recognized as an integral part of Confession required for its efficacy.

Letter to a Minister.

To impose a penance. The final use of the term "penance" in Saint Francis's writings comes from his Letter to a Certain Minister:

> A friar who falls into venial sin should confess to a confrere who is a priest; if there is no priest present, he should confess to another friar, until he meets a priest who can absolve him sacramentally, as has been said. . . . The other friars have no authority to impose a penance [iniungendi poenitentiam], but must be content with the advice: Go thy way, from now on sin no more [EpMin; *Omnibus*, 111; cf. Jn 8:11].

Francis stresses the admission of sin as an important aspect of penance or on-going conversion. So he advises confessing to a confrere if no priest is available. It helps to keep one aware that all are sinners. Even though one has undergone conversion, the possibility of sin is a constant reality. The sacrament of Confession was given humans by a merciful Savior to absolve them from sins committed after converting to a life of repentance and is another means of grace to live a life of repentance.

Summary.

It can be concluded that Francis sees the efficacy of the Sacrament of Confession as dependent upon the achievement of sacramental satisfaction. This was the accepted position of the theologians of his day, and it is probably why he so strongly suggests carrying out the prescribed penance. He values Confession as a means of reconciliation with the Lord, especially in the case of serious sin, and as an on-going source of strength. He encourages the use of the sacrament for venial sins and even the confession of sins to one another as a constant reminder of our proneness to sin and infidelity to the Lord. Ω

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★

The illustrations for our February issue were drawn by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, F.F.S.C., who teaches at St. Joseph's in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Herald

"Why should I of all people
keep quiet,
who know God's love?
Brigandage comes from an empty heart;
from a soul overflowing, song.
My clothes are borrowed
my words are free—
you shall catch little booty in me."

Francis
juggler of stones
jongleur, now, *de Dieu*
juggles words and deeds
into chuckling rhyme
till booed, shooed and booted
(not worth a kill)
he does curtain call in the snow.

Ten fingers and a tongue
nimble, aquiver in love
play, staged,
to an empty valley.

"Well, you retired rag-vendor,
it's time you put this show
back on the road."

With a shoulder-shrug
and a "Hark a lark!"
and a "Yea no silver!"
he skips for another town.

Hugoline A. Sabatino, O.F.M.

Francis and Living the Gospel

SISTER MADGE KARECKI, S.S.J.-T.O.S.F.

ONE OF THE MOST FAMILIAR responses to the question, "How would you define the Franciscan charism?" is "Living the Gospel." This is a true, but inadequate answer. It is true since this is surely what Francis had in mind when he heard the missionary discourse from St. Matthew's Gospel read on February 24, 1208, for the Feast of St. Matthias. Celano tells us that he cried aloud in joy: "This is what I wish, this is what I seek, this is what I long to do with all my heart." The text from Matthew's Gospel gave shape and form to the desires of his heart.

But the answer to our question is inadequate because it is the intention of every religious founder to live the Gospel. They each had a vision of how they could act upon God's Word. This vision is the legacy shared by each of their followers and renders each religious family's way of living the Gospel distinct.

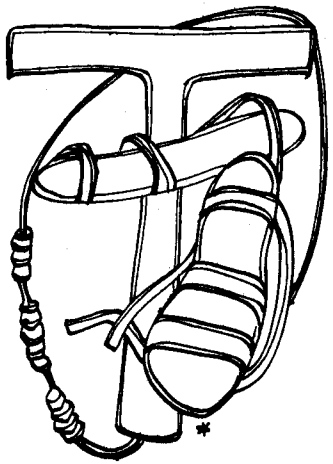
No one of us lives the whole Gospel; our lives are simply not long enough, and usually our hearts are not quite large enough to take in all the wisdom of the Gospel. Francis knew this intuitively. He also knew that the Church is served best when its members live and experience the various nuances that make up the whole Gospel. Francis was convinced of this and for this reason would not accept a Rule of life from one of the older Orders of the Church. His words are recorded in the Legend of Perugia (114):

> My brothers, my brothers, God called me to walk in the way of humility and showed the way of simplicity. I do not want to hear any mention of the rule of St. Augustine, of St. Bernard, or of St. Benedict. The Lord has told me that he wanted to make a new fool of me in the world, and God does not want to lead us by any other knowledge than that.

Sister Madge Karecki, who resides in uptown Chicago in service of the poor and is active in speaking and giving workshops on Franciscan life and spirituality, is a Consulting Editor of this review. This is the sixth in our series of conferences commemorating the eighth centennial of our Holy Father's birth.

Matthew 10 became the springboard for Francis's living of the Gospel and the basic melody line for the variations on on the theme which Francis composed under the Lord's own inspiration. It formed the "how" of his living of the Gospel. It was a fresh, new rendition of a very old song first sung by Jesus himself. Francis merely picked it up, wrote a whole new arrangement for it, and with the boldness that only faith and love can supply he rendered it the theme song of a new movement in the Church.

Francis's vision of the Gospel emphasized some essential principles that had become obscured as the Church interacted with culture. By emphasizing these values he formed a way of life for his religious family "the likes of which the world had never seen."



For Francis living the Gospel meant taking it up radically. From the very beginning of his conversion it seems that Francis seized upon the hard sayings of the Gospel. He would have no part of what Bonhöffer, centuries later, would call "cheap grace." It could be no other way since his image of Jesus was the one who spoke to him at San Damiano. The poor, suffering Christ would dominate his living of the Gospel and it was in his footsteps that Francis would follow. Because of this Francis defined living the Gospel in terms of a way of living for himself and his followers. If one searches his writings these values are seen very clearly.

Poverty by Choice. Life among the lepers taught Francis the dignity of all people in Christ and God's preferential love for the poor. From that time on he refused to define himself in terms of goods. Possessions would not shackle him to some arbitrary definition of himself based on economics. He was a son of the Father, and that was security enough for him. He had renounced the patrimony that was his as a son of Pietro Bernardone in front of the Bishop of Assisi and had made a choice in favor of another sort of patrimony. He chose the riches of poverty. In his person the words of the *Sacrum Commercium* take on flesh: poverty is the "better and easier way of going to God."

Pilgrimage Way. For Francis living the Gospel meant movement. It meant living for the day without any concern about housing or security. It meant being free to put one's gifts at the service of the Church, especially the poor. Most importantly it meant living the Gospel and preaching the Gospel among ordinary people. Francis needed no special housing or food, for the world was his cloister. Unlike the older Orders whose members lived their lives apart from ordinary people and developed a stable and "regular" way of Gospel living, Francis and his followers would live as a community, but in rented, borrowed, or even abandoned dwellings, without any rules about what they would eat or drink, doing work according to their individual gifts and talents. All of this enabled Francis and the early community to be a people on the move, passing over from this world as Jesus had done. They took seriously their identity as strangers and pilgrims en route to their true homeland.

Centered in Worship. Poverty and pilgrimage freed Francis to live a life of worship among the poor of Yahweh. His example spoke even more eloquently than his words. Here was a man who not only prayed, but had himself become a prayer through the attention he gave to the Lord. Just like Jesus, he wanted to be united with the Father, and so he spent long hours, even whole days, weeks, months in prayer. He called his community to that same kind of faithfulness to Jesus.

> Nothing, then, must keep us back, nothing separate us from him, nothing come between us and him. 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, honor, adore, serve, praise, and bless, glorify and acclaim, magnify and thank, the most high supreme and eternal God, Three and One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit . . . [RegNB 23; *Omnibus*,52].

This kind of fidelity to prayer was necessary if the friars were to live by God's Word. Prayer, poverty, and pilgrimage became the context of their mission.

Life among the Poor. Like Jesus, who renounced his status as the Son of God, Francis renounced the status of his birth. He could not deny or change his background, but neither would he consent to let it stifle the grace of God within his heart. That grace led Francis among the lepers. There he learned how to be that "new kind of fool." Francis's decision to live among the lepers was the beginning of a series of choices in which he exchanged the bitter for the sweet. It was so significant an event in his life that the pattern of his conversion became the way of life for the community. All those joining him

would have to dispose of their property and possessions and come to him as poor persons to live with him among the poor, so that they too might be able to exchange the bitter for the sweet. He and his community would seek out the poor and live among them as brothers and sisters witnessing to the truth of Jesus's words, "Blessed are the poor. . . ." They themselves were to be the poor of the kingdom with only one thing in mind: "to bear witness to Jesus's message and convince everyone that there is no other almighty God besides him" (EpOrd; *Omnibus*, 104).

Francis's way of living the Gospel is just that: a way. It demands action on our part.

Yes, living the Gospel is what Francis had in mind; it was in fact what he had been called to do. To do so Francis was inspired by ceretain key values from the Gospel which eventually took over his whole life. These values, taken from Gospel texts, shaped both his understanding of the meaning of the "hidden treasure" he had found and his way of living it out. He bequeathed to his followers a spirituality which challenges the orientation of our lives, brings us poor to Christ, and offers us a way of living which gives concrete expression to that very spirituality. It was his gift to the Church, and it is ours when we are faithful to his vision. Francis's way of living the Gospel is just that, a way. It demands action on our part. It is simply not a spirituality divorced from a lifestyle. Both are necessary. One without the other gives a distorted version of the story of Francis and of his way to live the Gospel. Ω

The Shack

SISTER MARIE KATHLEEN ABBOTT, O.S.C.

SAINT FRANCIS was an empty shack. But along with the buildings around him, he thought he was a fine structure that had the makings of a great palace.

One day a Monument was erected across the street and facing the shack. The Monument was in the likeness of the Great Builder's most Belovéd Who had chosen to be the most demolished ruin of a building, with great steel girders, twisted and torn, huge panes of broken and shattered glass, and jagged, jutting beams of bronze.

The Monument became as a mirror to Saint Francis, who now saw with clearer vision his own deplorable condition: how he was really a shack overrun with rats, snakes, and spiders. He was moved by the love of the Belovéd and desired to truly be like him. He opened the doors and windows and let the rain and wind blow through him, chasing out the things that had deceived him. Always, across the street, the Monument remained ever before his eyes. Always he saw that he was an empty shack, a welcome habitat for deception and illusion.

The storms were many—fierce ones and mild ones—and always the doors and windows stayed open.

The Great Builder was very pleased with the empty shack that had opened its windows and doors. As the Monument caught the light and sent its brilliance gleaming in all directions, the opened doorway to the shack received it. The radiance passed through the windows and the many spaces and cracks in its walls and roof.

As time passed, the shack became even shabbier. But this only let in more of the Monument's light, so that eventually the shack could hardly be seen. The Great Builder put the seal of the Belovéd on the little shack—on its roof and four walls.

Saint Francis was an empty shack (though he didn't always know it), an empty shack that received the glory of the Great Builder, was filled with it, yet never grasped it. He remained an empty shack, poor and rundown, but he reflected the beauty and splendor and greatness of the Palace across the street.

Yes, Saint Francis was an empty shack—a great little empty shack. Ω

Sister Marie Kathleen Abbott is a member of the Poor Clare Community in Langhorne, Pennsylvania.

Needed – Some Quiet Types

(Continued from page 33)

be made on that ground. I am claiming that good people can be called to be Franciscan who are not articulate before a group of people, who aren't bookish, don't want responsibility over others, and want to find God in a Franciscan community they serve. Zeal for souls does not demand one work with people or be an extrovert; it does demand spiritual depth and prayerfulness. The Franciscan vocation must, then, be wide enough to include those who wish to express their concern for souls through prayer and service of the community, as well as those who judge God calls them not only to the vowed life in common, but also to a specific external apostolate. Ω

Fr Julian Davies ofm

Book Reviews

The Absolute Primacy and Predestination of Jesus and His Virgin Mother. By Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981. Pp. xiii–177. Paper, $7.95.

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

In this priceless volume Father Juniper Carol, whom William Marshner rightly calls in the preface the "Dean of American Mariologists," furnishes the serious theologian with an invaluable guide to the plethora of writings over the centuries of the Christian era on what has been variously called the Primacy of Christ, the primary motive for the Incarnation, and (more correctly) the primary reason for the Incarnation.

In an introductory section Father Juniper outlines deftly the six possible positions theologians can take on the question of how Jesus and his Mother fit into the divine plan for creation. Having discussed the matter with him before the book's publication, I fear I still cannot perceive any substantive difference between, not (as the author suggests) the traditional Scotistic view, but rather Bonnefoy's adaptation of that view and that of Professor Marshner.

The latter development of the Scotistic position is, however, much more subtly nuanced.

At any rate, the book's main contribution is not speculative theology, at which the author so excels, but chronological and systematic documentation. A full "Part" of the book is devoted to Duns Scotus, his predecessors, and his immediate followers. A much longer "Part" is given to the proliferation of treatments on the subject after Scotus and a century-by-century cataloguing of subsequent contributions. All entries are coded to indicate to which of the six main views they belong, and each century's section is preceded by a helpful introductory note.

Il Poverello

O Father Seraphical
our joy and our pride
lead us, O glorious One
to serve the Crucified
in lowly humility
in true holy poverty—
What if the world deride?

Earth has its dark allure—
aid us in the Now
self fights to endure
but grace can endow—
You have conquered all
You have reached the goal
Triumphantly crowned!

Shine on from shore to shore
O Victor of the Fight!
shine on forevermore—
Christ is *the* Light!
beloved of the Crucified
wounded counterpart
Golden Star of our Night!

Sister M. Colette Logue, O.S.F.

In a concluding section Father Juniper provides (a) a numerical, century-by-century synopsis of the relative popularity of the various opinions, and (b) a fine, if brief, series of observations on how to interpret the wealth of data he has provided.

The book concludes with a very helpful index and an impressive list of the author's other publications. I cannot recommend it too highly, not only for its obvious value as a research tool, but also as a fascinating, panoramic view of the development of a fundamental question for any Christian: Why did God become man?

Rule for Hermitages: Way of Life of the Little Brothers of St. Francis. By James Curran, O.S.F. Still River, MA: St. Bede's Publications, 1981. Pp. 106. Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Sister Frances Ann Thom, O.S.C., a Consulting Editor of this Review at the Lowell, MA, Poor Clare Monastery, who adapted the Rule for Hermitages for use by the Fayetteville (NY) Franciscans and has lectured widely on that Rule and conducted workshops on it in three states.

The "Rule for Hermitages" expresses a lifestyle very dear to my heart, coming, as it does, from the

very hand of Francis himself—a rule in its entirety and originality, as far as can be determined.

Like all of Francis's writings, the rule is brief, open, and simple, thus lending itself to various adaptations for times and circumstances.

Brother James has aptly studied, prayed, and interpreted the Rule for Hermitages as a true follower of Francis, placing a balanced emphasis on both action and contemplation. For ten years now the Little Brothers have graced the streets of Boston with their presence among the poor ones of the Lord. In a well written, concise, interesting, and experiential account, Brother James tells of God's work in his soul and of his ready response to his discernment of God's will for him.

Bringing the reader up to date on his own life, progress, conviction, and continuing vision, Brother James then outlines the community horarium, prayers, and ceremonies of dedication as a Little Brother.

Even though this commentary on and adaptation of the Rule for Hermitages was written specifically for the Little Brothers, it appears as an excellent source of information for anyone who wishes to know, understand, and possibly live out the Franciscan ideal as Francis himself styled it.

May God continue to bless the "new shoot" on the Franciscan tree.

Church, Eucharist, and Priesthood: A Theological Commentary on The Mystery and Worship of the Most Holy Eucharist. By Edward J. Kilmartin, S.J. New York: Paulist Press, 1981. Pp. 100. Cloth, $4.95.

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.

To comment intelligently on any official Church document, a knowledge of its history, its particular genre, and its overall purpose (as well as something of the theological stance of the author) are absolute essentials. In this regard, Father Kilmartin acquits himself well. His entire first chapter is devoted to providing the necessary background; thus we learn that the style of *Dominicae Coenae* is quite personal, rather than an arid, doctrinal approach; that the document resembles more a theological reflection on the Eucharist than a dogmatic essay; that the papal Letter constitutes John Paul's personal faith-witness to this sublime Mystery. A particularly interesting comment made by Kilmartin focuses on the Letter's seeming preoccupation with Trent's pronouncements on the matter—its extensive use of Tridentine quotations and the discussion of the various aspects of the Eucharist within a Tridentine framework. The Pope took this approach in order subtly to counteract objections of reactionaries to the revised *Ordo Missae*and to emphasize the essential sameness of the Tridentine Mass and the post-Vatican II Eucharist; in so many words, the Pontiff, in his Letter, is seeking to defuse the tensions caused by the liturgical reform.

Kilmartin's expressed purpose (p. 1) is to situate the theological aspects of *Dominicae Coenae* within contemporary Eucharistic theology, which relates the Eucharist to both the Church and the priesthood. In this area, he gives the Pope mixed reviews; i.e., John Paul, for whatever reason, has not picked up many of the nuances of twentieth-century thinking on the Eucharist and operates, at times, from a more traditional stance. For example, the Pope develops his approach by starting with the Eucharist and priesthood, rather than beginning, as did *Lumen Gentium*, with the relationship of the Eucharist and the Church and thereby placing the priesthood within the broader ecclesiological context. Too, the Pope restricts the sacrificial action to the consecratory narrative proclaimed by the celebrant, who offers the Mass *in persona Christi*. Similarly, the papal Letter adopts Trent's almost exclusively cultic perspective on the priesthood. In defense of the papal approach and emphases, Kilmartin recognizes that the Pope had no intention of presenting a systematic treatise on Eucharistic theology.

The author does, of course, admit that areas of the Letter do reflect a Vatican II understanding of the Eucharist: e.g., that the whole Christ, Head and members, is the active subject of the Eucharistic celebration. One indicator of this community participation, mentioned by John Paul, is significant: the Procession of the Gifts is meant to symbolize and dramatize the offering made by the assembly of the "spiritual sacrifices" represented by the bread and wine. (It seems, in recent years, once the novelty of the practice wore thin, that the priest and congregation look upon this ritual in a purely pragmatic mode—simply as a way to get the bread, wine, and collection to the celebrant at the altar.) This emphasis on the assembly's participation serves to balance the stress on the differentiation of roles within the Liturgy and genuinely respects the difference between the common and the ministerial priesthood.

The author's commentary on each section of the Letter is for the most part brief, and in my view somewhat bland; much of the actual commentary says nothing that is enlightening. It is my distinct impression that this book represents an attempt to rush into print perhaps too quickly.

What this book does have to recommend it are the important background material of *Dominicae Coenae*, as noted above, and the actual text of that Letter, as an Appendix. A third value are the wide-ranging footnotes which Kilmartin provides for his own comments.

All in all, this book is a helpful preliminary interpretation of *Dominicae Cenae*, but by its very nature, it is certainly not the ultimate word.

Father Gemelli: Notes for the Biography of a Great Man. By Maria Sticco. Trans. Beatrice Wylczynski. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1980. Pp. viii–302. Cloth, $8.95.

Reviewed by Father Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., author of the recent Sons of St. Francis, Get Together *and several other important publications from Franciscan Publishers, Pulaski, WI, a member of*

the Sunnyside Franciscan Community in Chicago.

Forty years ago the most exciting book on Franciscanism was written by Father Agostino Gemelli, O.F.M., entitled *The Franciscan Message to the World*. At that time very few knew anything about the man, except that he had been a medical doctor, a psychologist, and an anticlerical socialist before his conversion and entrance into the Franciscan Order.

Now at last we have a biography about him by a gracious lady I had the pleasure of meeting, Maria Sticco, who knew Father Gemelli personally and worked closely with him for forty years. She was one of the first members of the Missionaries of Divine Kingship, a secular institute founded by Father Gemelli.

The subtitle of the book, "Notes for the Biography of a Great Man," gives the impression that this biography is a sketchy one. Actually, these "notes" are so copious that they give a vivid, exciting, and moving picture of the man and of his varied activities.

His enterprises were so numerous that they render the reader speechless. Father Gemelli never seemed to rest and was ever creative. He was the editor of several periodicals, a military chaplain under dangerous field conditions, an internationally known psychologist, and the founder of Sacred Heart University. All these accomplishments are described in a detailed and dramatic way. For Father Gemelli was a person always on the move—one who made things happen.

I met Maria Sticco a decade ago at Bethesda, Md., and never imagined that this gracious, slight lady could produce such a manly portrait of so great a man. What is remarkable is the way she could depict the times before and after World War I: the events, the atmosphere, and the personalities. In a way this was possible and necessary because Gemelli was right in the middle of all those events.

As devoted as Sticco is to the man, she does not gloss over his deficiencies. She portrays him as rude as well as sensitive; as dictatorial as well as open-minded; as unpredictable as well as organized. Nor does she gloss over his partial approval of Fascism or the one glaring instance of anti-Semitism.

The most heroic moment comes when Gemelli suffers serious injuries in an automobile accident. He barely recovers when the University is shelled during World War II and heavily damaged. Under these extreme conditions he strives mightily to keep the University going. He does not falter even when the Allies take over and try to get rid of him as an apparent friend of the previous regime. About this time he is involved in another automobile accident. And yet this succession of blows does not crush him; he remains indomitable under the most severe circumstances.

One reason he was able to bear up under this mountain of difficulties was that he had great friends in Vico Necchi, Olgiatti, Ida Barelli, Pius XI, and Pius XII. Their support and his faith enabled Gemelli to endure the worst.

This biography offers the reader a great story about a great twentieth-century Franciscan.

Books Received

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Bacigalupo, Leonard, O.F.M., *The American Franciscan Missions in Central America: Three Decades of Christian Service*. Andover, MA: Charisma Press (St. Francis Seminary, Box 263), 1980. Pp. xx–484. Cloth, $14.50; paper, $9.95.

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Saint Bonaventure's Disputed Questions On the Mystery Of the Trinity

Volume III of the
Works of Bonaventure series

A translation with scholarly introduction by Zachary Hayes, O.F.M. Pp.280 (1979), paper, $10.00 plus postage and handling.

THIS TRANSLATION makes Bonaventure's study available in English for the first time. A lengthy introduction aids in the understanding of this important work of speculative theology. Prepared by a leading Franciscan theologian, the introduction reviews the principal concepts developed in the work and situates the work in the history of Trinitarian thought.

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Standard Abbreviations used in **The CORD** for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy
[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

A REVIEW EDITORIAL

A Fine New Book on the Angels

MOTHER ALEXANDRA IS A TRULY remarkable woman as well as a convincing, powerful writer. The daughter of King Ferdinand and Queen Marie of Romania, she married Archduke Anton of Austria and bore him six children. Devoting herself to service of the wounded during World War II, she subsequently lived the life of an exile in several countries before settling in Massachusetts. Finally, her children either married or securely employed, she entered religious life, eventually becoming Abbess of the Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania.

All of this biographical background is important in that it lends a certain authority to the author's treatment of a subject taken seriously today by all too few people and thought by many to be the preoccupation of "pious souls" removed from the harsh realities of life. The author shows herself fully aware of the prevalent lack of interest as well as actual unbelief in the angels, but only occasionally does she wax polemic on the subject.

Mother Alexandra's study is thorough and systematic. Beginning with the Old Testament, she goes on to discuss the testimony of the Gospels to the angels' role in our Lord's life, passion, and resurrection and of the Book of Acts and the Pauline letters to their role in the infant Church. There follow some fine chapters on the Fathers, on Orthodox theology in particular, on the angels in the various Christian liturgies (Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran in addition to the Orthodox), and on the angels in Christian art.

The Holy Angels. By Mother Alexandra. Still River, MA: St. Bede's Publications, 1981. Pp. xiv-196. Paper, $8.50.

The book is not perfect, of course. It contains its share of typos, and there are a few (but very few) rather dubious statements (the angels are of infinite beauty—p. xiii; God is "supernatural"—p. 3; the mind sins—p. 10, etc.). But these detract very slightly indeed from a smoothly and interestingly written book, one filled with sage spiritual advice and attractive prayers. It is a most timely publication in this age so oblivious to the world of the spirit, for, as Mother Alexandra so beautifully puts it, "The Christian who leaves the angels out of his concept of God's world is like a man who thinks he holds in his hands a faultless crystal goblet filled with the elixir of life; yet all the time the goblet has a leak and part of the precious liquid escapes him" (p. 74). Ω

Fr. Michael D. Meilach, Jr.

The Lord of Ostia

Sheer duty was my lot
To him was given unreflective love.
When contention grew mid the
hugeness of life
love
being the stronger
acquiesced.
All his pain was mine
and the hurt of my office
he alone knew.
In cheerful tourney,
for changing his life's rule,
he counter-jousted
dubbing me bugbear
for his wayward sons.
Bounteous Father versus disciplinarian
—the verdict is just.
Yet, to my own meager defense:
Francis is a love
to draw all types of men—
I was among the first.

Hugoline A. Sabatino, O.F.M.

Francis: The Tender

SISTER FRANCES ANN THOM, O.S.C.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, the young Francis Bernardone showed positive signs of tenderness, not only in his so-called possible romantic carousings with his peers, but also in his concern for the poor. While it is true that he held his nose when looking in the direction of the Lazarets where the lepers lived, he did send someone with an alms. Somehow, the Lord stirred in him, under the façade of showmanship, a tender heart for those less fortunate. In later years this tender heart was more definitely manifested by the labors of his own hands to relieve the sufferings of the lepers.

Another aspect which is constantly recurring in Francis's works and writings is his love for the gentility of women, especially in the role of mother. The Blessed Virgin surely heads his list of women, for there is scarcely a prayer or letter written by Francis which does not either call upon her directly or extol her virtues. He further projects this devotion and admiration by admonishing his brothers, especially those in authority, to be gentle like mothers to their sons. Even those who have fallen into sin should find in their superiors the understanding, the forgiveness, and the tender concern of a mother. While it is true that the 13th century still smacked, somewhat, of the ritual and idealism of chivalry, Francis was literal in his observance of the concepts of the knight and the lady. Hence, his devotion was real, his respect for womanhood was real, and his admonitions to his brothers were sincerely lived.

Because of his fasts and his harsh treatment of brother body, it is rather hard, at times, to think of Francis as tender. Yet, we do know that he did not wish his brothers to imitate him in his eccentricities, since he was fully aware that each had a personal vocation to follow. Later, too, he apologized to his body for his harsh treatment of it. While he could come down hard on a "Brother Fly," he could be extremely gentle to a Brother whose fasting would keep him awake at

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night. While he could correct an emperor as he passed by, Francis could also write a soothing verse to assuage an argument between a mayor and a bishop.

Why else do we today, after 800 years, still commemorate the birth of Francesco Bernardone, if not because he has truly shown to each of us his role as Tender of souls and personally, down through the centuries, extended his care and loving concern?

Actually, it is easy to understand the Francis who talks to birds, tames a wolf, is followed by a lamb, sings praise to God aloud amidst a forest, or cries over the Passion of Christ. It is a bit more of a problem to understand the Francis who speaks of perfect joy in the midst of misunderstandings, insults, grief, disrespect, pain, confusion, and physical hardships—who can still say, with much tenderness and sincerity, to accept all of this without ill will and rejoice in it. All these things together have progressively produced the Francis of the stigmata whom we admire, and the hinge upon which all these things rested was Tender-ness.

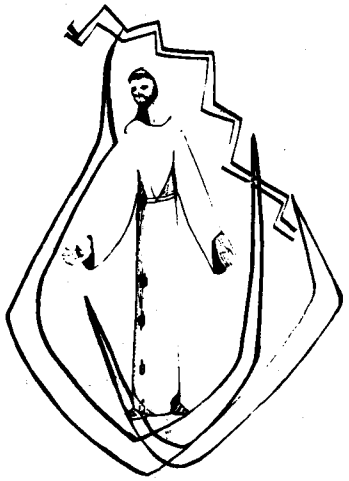
I have deliberately hyphenated Tender-ness since, after beginning this article, I decided I am not really saying what I mean at all. I began to feel like Alice in Wonderland who says, "I say what I mean and I mean what I say and that's practically the same thing." So, I began to consider the word *tender* in one of its more important definitions: one who tends, and I began to consider Francis in this light—as tender of souls.

A few questions entered my mind at first:

Was it easy for Francis to be tender—

when his father upbraided him?
when people laughed at him?
when he was imprisoned?
when he was thrown into a pile of snow?
when the Pope told him to wallow with the pigs?

when the Rule he had worked on was misplaced?
when he was plagued by the mice?
when he had doubts about the Order?
when he lost his sight?
when he suffered from the stigmata?



The answer, of course, is Yes and No simultaneously. Yes, because he knew what he was doing was right; and No, because of his own sensitivity. Perhaps I can liken the tenderness of Francis to that of a burn on the skin; even a light sunburn which is touched will bring forth a response. Well, Francis was burned in the light of the Son and bruised by the embrace of the Father so that he could remain ever responsive to the touch of the Holy Spirit as manifested through persons, places, or events. Often his sensitivity caused him to respond even before the request was made known. One such case is that of Brother Leo. We all remember Leo's dilemma and the classic response of Francis in writing. First Francis, as a good director (tender) of souls tells Leo all the right things to help him, but he does not close him off with advice; instead he closes by saying that if this doesn't help, then Leo should come to him. This is certainly Tender-ness!

In his letter to Anthony, Francis has a wider dimension to work with since his response will affect the members of the Order. Francis tends the entire community by keeping it on the spiritual plane. He allows the individual, in this case Anthony, full use of his talents which he brought with him to the Order, but he reminds him that the use of them should always lead those under his instruction to greater prayerfulness and devotion. As a true *tender* he looks to the broader dimension of his decision as well as the personal request of the individual. Then, once he has given the directive, his tending over, he trusts confidently that the person will follow his advice. We do not find any instance of Francis hounding the individual or checking up, though it may be that in some cases he was too trusting, overlooking the failings of human nature.

Being a universal man was not an easy job. Francis, however, never

turned his back on a friend, even on his deathbed. We need but recall Lady Jacoba's last visit to her friend for whom she had cared whenever he and his brothers visited Rome, to realize that Francis lived by the spirit and not the letter. As a true tender, he knew she needed to see him as much as he desired to see her and receive the gifts she was bringing. How differently the story would have read, had Francis held firmly to rigid regulation and forgotten the person involved!

One Rule which Francis has written and which seems to have come down to us *without gloss* is the "Rule for Religious Life in Hermitages." Barely a page long, it is so filled with the spirit of what Francis desired for his brothers that it is hard to comprehend on a first reading and even harder to live literally in our day and age. The popularity of the Rule is attested to by the fact that there are various groups all over the country who have used it to form for themselves a more authentic Franciscan life style. No two groups, however, seem to live it the same way, a fact that gives evidence of the richness and flexibility of Francis's thinking.

For me this Rule is the prime example of his Tender-ness in action. Taking the concept of motherhood, he has woven together with it the recitation of the Divine Office, community living, solitary prayer, and concern for one another as a way of life after the example of Christ. By exchanging the roles of mother and son, each of those in the hermitage community would learn a different type of concern for the other; the mother role becomes, in effect, the protective and provident, while that of the son becomes dependent and trustful. This is certainly an example of Tender-ness in the ideology of Francis which could produce the most perfect whole person.

Our final picture of the dying Francis: blind, stigmatized, emaciated, disease ridden, does not even hint at the joyful trickster who romped about the narrow lanes in Assisi nor the youth whose heart became passionate over Lady Poverty, nor even the converted young man whose encounter with Christ in the caves (over the hillsides and within the depths of his soul) led him to cast off his patronage and gather stones to rebuild a dilapidated church. The miracle of the transformation of his body from the rigidity and brownness of a corpse to the suppleness and whiteness of a child manifested to all observers the approval of God that Francis should be reckoned on earth as he was in heaven—a saint.

I dare to say that the hub around which all his virtues pivoted was Tender-ness. Why else would those crowds come to look at the corpse of a little, unknown man, unless he had been able somehow to reach out and touch their hearts? Why else do we today, after 800 years, still commemorate the birth of Francesco Bernardone, if not because he has truly shown to each of us his role as Tender of souls and personally, down through the centuries extended his care and loving concern?

Most tender Francis, show yourself as a Tender to your Franciscans today! Ω

Reflections on the Coast

Perched amidst the rocks
I watch the ocean come and go.
With a deceptive serenity it rushes forth
Only to suicide again.
And with that same unobtrusiveness
It retreats in calm
Certain that it will return.
With its bluish-foamy arms
It caresses and fondles each rock
In a soft lullaby:
Smoothing the jagged surface,
Rounding off the rough edges.
And after years of so many gentle kisses
Followed by those calm retreats,
Their faces now are softened.
Perched amidst the rocks
On this cool and sunny day
I watch the ocean come and go.
With a deceptive serenity it rushes forth
At the sight of a multitude
Of unique and special faces,
To touch each one for the briefest moment,
And to retreat in calm
Certain that it will return.

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

Francis Continues to Challenge Us Today

HUMBERTO CARDINAL MEDEIROS

MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS in Christ and St. Francis:

The Saint we celebrate today is a man who makes us nervous, not to say afraid, even as we honor his eight hundredth birthday. Francis of Assisi enkindles these feelings in us because he was such a radical in his approach to the reality of the Gospel, which means that Francis was satisfied only when he got to the root of things, the fundamentals of the Gospel message in all its mystery and sharp clarity. He could never tolerate mediocrity. He could not bear half-hearted measures. Like his Lord, he would get sick to his stomach at lukewarmness.

When we look at Francis, we should be nervous indeed, and even frightened, for he challenges us, our commitment, and our lifestyle. He is the very enfleshment of the words of Pope Paul VI in *Evangelii nuntiandi* (¶21):

> Take a Christian or a handful of Christians who, in the midst of their own community, show their capacity for understanding and acceptance, their sharing of life and destiny with other people, their solidarity with the efforts of all for whatever is noble and good. Let us suppose that, in addition, they radiate in an altogether simple and unaffected way their faith in values that go beyond current values, and their hope in something that is not seen and that one would not dare to imagine. Through this wordless witness these Christians stir up irresistible questions in the hearts of those who see how they live: Why are they like this? Why do they live in this way? What or who is it that inspires them? Why are they in our midst? Such a witness is already a silent proclamation of the Good News and a very powerful and effective one.

Francis makes us question ourselves. But we should not do so until we first question him: "Francis of Assisi, what made you tick? Santo Poverello, what made you so radical? Troubador of God, what is the song in your heart?" And over the centuries, he has but one answer: "Jesus Christ." He, who has been called the "mirror of Christ," cries out with Saint Paul: "All I want is to know Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:10). We need look no further. For him, nothing else was worth having except Jesus Christ. For many in the 13th century Jesus was a distant figure in the pages of the Gospels. For Francis, he was real. He was alive. He was everywhere.

> . . . what made Francis tick can make us all tick: the power of Christ within us.

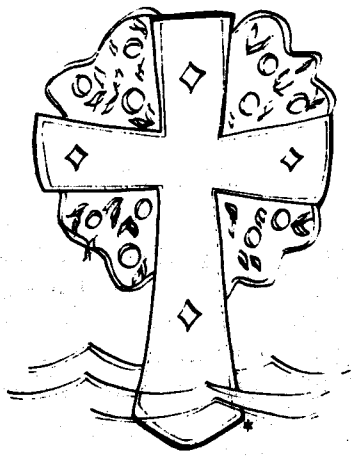
In every human being Francis saw a brother or sister of his Lord. At the beginning of his conversion the cry of the leper became the voice of Jesus Christ. From that point on he was possessed by the urge to embrace, to love, and to liberate. He had seen, he had encountered, and he now lived with Jesus Christ. Francis could not rest until he shared that vision and communicated that experience to all. Jesus Christ lives. But he was hidden in the alienation of the leper. The Prince of Peace was dying again on the senseless battlefields of feudal combat. He who emptied himself was not recognized because he wore the rags of peasant and serf. When Francis looked at many others, he saw in their faces the face of Christ: isolated, alienated, degraded, despised. He brought love where there was no love. He enkindled hope where there was no hope. He did it because he was a radical. He went to the bottom of things. He took the Gospel seriously.

Francis knew that he must not only converse with Jesus Christ in prayer, but also be a means to answer the prayer of Jesus, "that all may be one." And so he was a man driven by an inner power to be an instrument of peace, so that where there was hatred, he might bring love; where there was injury, pardon; where there was doubt, faith; where there was despair, hope; and where there was darkness, light.

But the genius of Francis did not end with bringing everyone together as brothers and sisters, in challenging the world with the reality of the Gospel. Where others looked at the Church and saw power and splendor—and even corruption that seemed a long way from the Gospel—Francis saw the Body of Christ. Others of his age claimed to hear voices that said, "Destroy and demolish and start

This is the text of the homily delivered by Cardinal Medeiros at St. Anthony's Shrine in Boston, on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the friars of Holy Name Province, October 11, 1981.

again." He heard the voice from the Crucifix of San Damiano, which said: "Go and rebuild." Not with mortar and brick, but with a life totally immersed in the Gospel, did he rebuild. He was the great reformer. He worked for renewal. He did it with love. And because he came, not carping, whining, and complaining, but with the Gospel of love, people listened to him and were uplifted, were encouraged. He succeeded where others failed because he came not to dismantle but to renew and to rebuild in Christ.



Francis loved every human being because he saw in each the face of Christ. He loved the Church because he saw that she is the Body of Christ. And finally, he loved all creation because it is the home of Christ. He knew that Jesus was no afterthought in the plan of God, but rather "the Firstborn of all creation, in [whom] *everything* in heaven and on earth was created. . . . *All* were created through and for him. He is before *all* else that is" (Col. 1:15ff.). In the song of the birds, the ripple of flowing streams, and the whisper of the breeze, he heard creation speak of Christ. All creation was a chorus that sang to him of Christ, his Lord and also his Brother.

If Francis were here today and we were to ask him, "How can we imitate you?" I think he would chuckle. He knew that the mimic frequently turns out to be a clown. "No," he would say, "since you have accepted Christ Jesus as Lord, sink your roots deep in him" (Col. 2:7). "With Christ, go to his brothers and sisters and embrace them. Build up the Church which is his Body with your love, and touch this creation with awe; it was made for him."

Dearly beloved, I hope that Francis makes us nervous and even frightened enough to make us question the depth of our commitment and the strength of our love. After all, what made Francis tick can make us all tick: the power of Christ within us. Francis was a poet, and another poet from another time has captured for us something of his spirit:

> Would I might wake Saint Francis in you all,
> Brother of birds and trees,

> God's troubador,
> Blinded with weeping for the sad and the poor:
> Our wealth undone, all strict Franciscan men,
> Come let us chant the canticle again
> Of Mother Earth and the enduring Sun.
> God make each soul the lowly leper's slave:
> God make us saints, and brave.
>
> Vachel Lindsay

To you who celebrate twenty-five years as friars, I come as your Franciscan brother, with congratulations and best wishes. Continue to raise questions with your lives. Let your lives and your lifestyle be a rebuke to the priorities of a generation immersed in consumerism. Make people ask: "Why are you like this? Why do you live this way? What or who is it that inspires you? Why are you in our midst?" Then answer them, like Francis, with every fiber of your being: "JESUS CHRIST."

To you who have served so faithfully as Franciscan brothers and sisters in the Church of Boston, I come, as Cardinal Hugolino came to Francis, with prayerful thanks. As your Archbishop, I know how friars, sisters, and secular Franciscans have been to so many the presence of Jesus Christ. I bless you and thank you, making my own the words of Paul which so vividly express the spirit of Francis:

> For my part, from the time I first heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the members of the Church, I have never stopped thanking God for you and recommending you in my prayers. May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, grant you a spirit of wisdom and insight to know him clearly. May he enlighten your inmost vision that you may know the great hope to which he has called you, the wealth of his glorious heritage to be distributed among the members of the Church, and the immeasurable scope of his power in us who believe [Eph. 1:15–19].

But we must also make our own the words of Francis: "Up to now we have done nothing. Let us begin!" Ω

Eternal Christ

The altar stands in humble expectation,
An oaken table, ready for the lamb.

We shall not ever cry: here is the wood—
but Father,
what will be the sacrifice?

He is ready.

The spear—it has already pierced his heart,
And even now the cup is being raised.

The wine-made-blood pours out to set us free;
His Body, bread of life, has ransomed me.

Sister Edmund Marie Stets, C.S.B.

Pieta

I gave up my Son
To bloodstained hands
They nailed Him to a tree;
Now He is dead
And to my breast
I hold Him close to me.
Father, yes,
He leads us now
His Death is map and chart;
I pray He will rise
Just as He said—
I Credo Him in my heart.

Sister M. Mercedes, P.C.C.

Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* as a Contemplative Work

PATRICK F. O'CONNELL

"WITH CHRIST I AM NAILED TO THE CROSS." These stark words from Saint Paul's Letter to the Galatians are a particularly appropriate beginning to Saint Bonaventure's series of meditations on the life, death, and glorification of Jesus, the *Lignum Vitae* or *Tree of Life*.[1] This work is the earliest and certainly among the finest literary expressions of the Franciscan devotion to the humanity of Christ, one of the most significant aspects of the movement for spiritual renewal sparked by the Poor Man of Assisi and his followers.[2] Although this reawakening of interest in the earthly life and activity of Jesus could,

[1]Quotations from the *Tree of Life* are taken from the translation by Ewert Cousins in the *Bonaventure* Volume of *The Classics of Western Spirituality* series (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), pp. 117–75, checked against the critical Latin text edited by the Quaracchi Fathers in *Decem opuscula ad theologiam mysticam spectantia* . . . 5th ed. (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1965), pp. 135–80. Section and page references to the Cousins edition will be incorporated into the text; I have not followed the division into sense lines used by Cousins. Quotations from the *Legenda Major* and the *Itinerarium* are also from the Cousins translation; page and section references to these works are also incorporated into the text.

[2]Considering the intrinsic worth and tremendous influence of the *Lignum Vitae*, it is rather surprising how little attention has been paid to it. All the entries in the definitive bibliography of Bonaventuriana found in Vol. V of *S. Bonaventura 1274–1974*, ed. Jacques Guy Bougerol (Grottaferrata: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1974), are concerned either with the works's iconography and influence on painting, or with the various vernacular translations. Even Cousins devotes only three pages of his Introduction to the *Lignum Vitae*, compared with ten pages for the *Legenda Major* and fifteen for the *Itinerarium*.

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and at times did, degenerate into emotional indulgence and the cultivation of sentimental pietism, or beget imaginative distortions relegating Jesus to the realm of fantasy, or give rise to a most unimaginative literalism which reduced the notion of *imitatio Christi* to a type of external mimicry, in its primitive form such a devotion transcended the strictly affective or moral to become deeply contemplative.

Its central importance for Francis himself is to be found not only at Christmas in the cave of Greccio, nor in his insistence on absolute poverty in conformity with the poor Christ, but above all in the reception of the stigmata on Mount La Verna. This visionary encounter was unquestionably both the culmination of his own intense devotion to the earthly Jesus and an impetus for the amazing growth of such devotion throughout Europe in the decades that followed. Here the central dynamic of this spirituality finds its most vivid emblem, a sign not only of the depth of one person's identification with Jesus but also of a universal invitation to union with Christ and incorporation into His body. The purpose of meditation on the events of Jesus's life is ultimately to become not simply an observer but a participant in the redemptive mystery, to die and rise with Him. It is this perspective, this experience, which animates Bonaventure's presentation of Jesus as the tree of life and makes his short treatise so effective in developing a contemplative awareness of union with God in Christ.

The ultimate goal of meditation on Christ's life, death, and glorification is nothing short of the heights, or depths, of mystical union: to be "transformed into Christ."

Although the *Tree of Life* never mentions Francis directly, an examination of the opening paragraph of the Prologue makes clear that he is as much the guiding spirit here as in works, such as the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* (The Soul's Journey into God) and the *Legenda Major* (Major Life of Saint Francis), where Bonaventure explicitly presents the saint as the pattern or exemplar of the Christian life. It is surely significant that the *Tree of Life* begins with a verse

which Bonaventure specifically applies to Francis in both these works. The *Legenda* describes him, after the experience on La Verna, as "now *fixed with Christ to the Cross*, in both body and spirit" (LM 14.1; p. 315). In the Prologue to the *Itinerarium*, Francis, like Paul, exemplifies the true follower of Jesus, who identifies with Him through love:

> There is no other path but through the burning love of the Crucified, a love which so transformed Paul into Christ when he *was carried up to the third heaven* (2 Cor. 12:2) that he could say: *With Christ I am nailed to the cross. I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me* (Gal. 2:20). This love also so absorbed the soul of Francis that his spirit shone through his flesh when for two years before his death he carried in his body the sacred stigmata of the passion [*Itin.* Prol. 3; pp. 54–55].

As with Francis, so for the "true worshipper of God and disciple of Christ" who reads the *Tree of Life*, the goal is to "feel in himself what the Apostle said" in Galatians 2 (Prol. 1; p. 219).

This correspondence between Francis and the disciple is further extended by Bonaventure's description of the latter as one "who desires to conform perfectly to the Savior of all men crucified for him." In the Prologue to the *Legenda*, Bonaventure says of Francis that "even while he lived among men . . . he was held up as an example for those who would be perfect followers of Christ" (LM Prol. 2; p. 181), and that such people can "be taught by his example . . . to live in conformity with Christ" (LM Prol. 1; p. 179). This theme is developed more fully in the chapter on Francis's death:

> In all things he wished to be conformed to Christ crucified, who hung on the cross poor, suffering and naked. . . . O, he was truly the most Christian of men, for he strove to conform himself to Christ and to imitate him perfectly—while living to imitate Christ living, dying to imitate Christ dying, and after death to imitate Christ after death [LM 14.4; p. 318].

Likewise when the disciple of the *Tree of Life* is advised that he "should, above all, strive with an earnest endeavor of soul to carry about continuously, both in his soul and in his flesh, the cross of Christ," he is being urged to follow the example of Francis, who "paid great attention to the mortification of the flesh so that he might carry externally in his body the cross of Christ which he carried internally in his heart" (LM 1.6; p. 190).

The culmination of this series of parallels which opens the *Tree of Life* is found in the text from Canticles which concludes this first section: "*A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me: he will linger between*

my breasts." Through contemplation of Jesus crucified, the disciple will be able to make these intimate words of the bride his own. But in doing so, he will again be following in the footsteps of Francis: "Jesus crucified always *rested like a bundle of myrrh in the bosom* of Francis's soul (Cant. 1:12), and he longed to be totally transformed into him by the fire of ecstatic love" (LM 9.2; p. 263).[3]

The effect of reading this opening section of the *Tree of Life* in the context of the *Legenda* and the *Itinerarium* is to find strong support for the idea that here too Francis is Bonaventure's model for the true disciple.[4] But the point is not merely to stress the obvious, the pervasive influence of Francis on Bonaventure's entire spirituality, but to suggest what a study of the work as a whole will confirm, that for Bonaventure the aim of meditation on Christ's life, death, and glorification is not limited to developing the affective and moral dimensions of the Christian personality, though it encompasses these as legitimate and necessary. Its ultimate goal, as the experience of Francis demonstrates in a preeminent way, is nothing short of the heights, or depths, of mystical union, to be "transformed . . . into Christ" (*Itin.* Prol. 3; p. 54), "to be totally transformed into him by the fire of ecstatic love" (LM 9.2; p. 263).

This sense of total identification with Jesus, which is suggested even in the opening quotation from Galatians, might appear to conflict with Bonaventure's application of the text from Canticles, where the bride and the Beloved are two distinct figures. But in fact Bonaventure has included in this opening section, as he will throughout the treatise, examples of two contrasting types of scriptural imagery, which may

[3]This application of the Canticles text also provides some hint of the date of the *Tree of Life*. One of Bonaventure's sources for his lives of Francis, the *Vita Secunda* of Thomas of Celano, had already used this verse to describe Francis in somewhat the same way: "Indeed there was always *a bundle of myrrh* with Francis; he always looked on *the face* of his *Christ*, always touched *the man of sorrows* who was *acquainted with infirmity*" (2Cel 85; *Omnibus*, 433). It is therefore most probable that Bonaventure first used the verse in the *Legenda Major* and later in the *Tree of Life*, rather than vice versa, so that the *Tree of Life* would have been written sometime shortly after, or even simultaneously with, the *Legenda*, which was commissioned in 1260 by one general chapter of the Order and delivered to the next three years later.

[4]It is noteworthy that in the painting of the tree of life attributed to Thaddeo Gatti, now in the Museum Sanctae Crucis in Florence and reproduced in *Decem opuscula*, Francis is depicted embracing the foot of the cross, while Bonaventure sits to the right, his gaze focused on Francis, writing on a long scroll held on his knees.

be called "body" and "bride" and which have existed in fruitful tension throughout the history of Christian spirituality. Taken together, the pair affirms both unity and difference between Christ and the believer: the body model emphasizes that the Christian is invited to be a partaker in the divine nature (2 Pt. 1:4), the "eternal life" which is that of the Trinity. The bride model is a reminder that this union of love does not consist in a monistic absorption into the Godhead, but in a transcendent affirmation of personal identity. The complementary nature of these models is evident in that each contains elements of the other, since the body image often includes the distinction between head and members, and the bride image is ultimately grounded in the text: "the two will become one body" (Eph. 5:31; cf. Gen. 2:24). Properly understood, these key images exemplify a theology of "mutually affirming complementarity," characteristic of Bonaventure's thought,[5] in which neither absolute absorption nor absolute distinction can be considered an adequate description of the human person's relationship with God.

The use of the Canticles text also serves to situate the *Tree of Life* in relation to other aspects of the Western mystical tradition. According to Bonaventure, the disciple is able to internalize the words of the bride only by meditating on Christ crucified with "vividness of memory," "sharpness of intellect," and "charity of will." This application of the three powers of the soul of course looks forward to the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*, but it also reminds us that the roots of these practical methods lie in Augustine's presentation of the soul as an image of the Trinity, which Bonaventure had brilliantly summarized in the third chapter of the *Itinerarium*. The whole purpose of the *Tree of Life*, Bonaventure goes on to say, is to reform the powers of the soul so they will be truly capable of reflecting the divine presence: "To enkindle in us this affection, to shape this understanding and to imprint this memory . . ." (Prol. 2; p. 119).

But mention of the bride of Canticles recalls even more immediately the greatest spiritual writer of the previous century, who had made this book of Scripture peculiarly his own. At the very outset, Bonaventure's series of meditations is being placed in the context of Saint Bernard's soul-mysticism, the topic of the fourth chapter of the *Itinerarium*. While the influence of Francis on the *Tree of Life* is ap-

[5]The term is that of Ewert Cousins, in *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites: The Theology of Bonaventure* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978), p. 20.

parent in Bonaventure's focus on the incarnate Christ rather than the eternal Logos as Bridegroom, as in Bernard, the difference is still one of emphasis only, since for both writers it is the uncreated Word made flesh, now risen and glorified, who is the subject of their devotion: "the one Spouse of the Church, Jesus Christ, who is at the same time our neighbor and God, brother and Lord, king and friend, the Word Uncreated and incarnate, our maker and remaker, the *Alpha and Omega*" (*Itin.* 4.5; p. 91). In fact Bonaventure is actually developing a strand of thought already present in his predecessor, as a brief look at Bernard's forty-third Sermon on the Canticles makes clear. Bernard uses this same verse (1:12) to describe the way in which meditation on the sufferings of Jesus can strengthen the Christian to endure his own afflictions. Direct influence on the *Tree of Life* is evident in Bernard's comment that the bunch of myrrh "was culled from all the anxious hours and bitter experience of my Lord . . . that are multiplied in the Gospels, like trees in the forst,"[6] which becomes in Bonaventure, "I have endeavored to gather this bundle of myrrh from the forest of the holy Gospel, which treats at length the life, passion, and glorification of Jesus Christ" (Prol. 2; pp. 119-20).

This dependence of Bonaventure on Bernard for his phrasing also indicates a key difference in their respective treatments, however. Where Bernard identifies the bunch of myrrh only with Christ's sufferings, Bonaventure widens the application to encompass all aspects of Christ's eternal and incarnate life. The reason for this discrepancy can be found in the need to view the passion in the context of the resurrection and return to glory, in order to guard against the very real danger of this type of spirituality becoming a cult of suffering for its own sake.[7] Bernard was able to accomplish this by complementing the image of the myrrh with that of the bunch of grapes from the following verse of Canticles: "My Lord Jesus is a myrrh-tree for us; risen, a cluster of grapes; . . . the bitterness of myrrh has been changed into the wine that gladdens men's hearts."[8] Though perhaps less logically consistent, Bonaventure's broader application of his text serves as a transition to an image which can appropriately signify all aspects of the mystery of Christ. The myrrh, taken from "the forest of the holy Gospel," is replaced by, or rather absorbed into, the figure which provides both the title and the organizing principle of the entire work, the tree of life.

[6]*Works of Bernard of Clairvaux*, vol. 3: *On the Song of Songs II*, trans. Kilian Walsh, O.C.S.O. (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1976), p. 222.

[7]Bonaventure's sensitivity to this issue was perhaps heightened by the exaggerated emphasis placed on suffering by some elements in the extreme spiritual party of the Order.

[8]*On the Song of Songs II*, p. 225.

7

THROUGH THE MULTIVALENT richness of the tree symbol, Bonaventure is able to bond together many levels of meaning. Most basic is the paradoxical recognition that the tree of life is first the tree of death: it is the "cross, salvation-bearing tree" (Prol. 3; p. 121). But the salvation it bears is Jesus himself, who is organically united to the tree as its fruit, and is therefore in some sense to be identified with the tree itself, as Bonaventure had explicitly done in the *Itinerarium*: "Therefore, if we wish to enter again into the enjoyment of Truth as into paradise, we must enter through faith in, hope in, and love of Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and men, who is like *the tree of life in the middle of paradise*" (*Itin.* 4.2; p. 88). Rooted in the earth, in the human dimension, with its branches lifted to heaven, the tree is a particularly apt image for the incarnate Son, who reconciled God and humanity through the cross, and was himself both sign and source of a renewed world, a return to paradise. For the tree is also to be identified with that found in the Garden, as the reader is challenged to shun "the example of unfaithful Adam who preferred *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* (Gen. 2:17) to the tree of life," and encouraged to prefer "the sacred cross of Christ to all carnal feeling or wisdom of the flesh" (Prol. 5; p. 122). It is also the tree of life in the last chapter of the Book of Revelation, "with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:1), an image of final restoration. Thus the cross, or rather the crucified Savior, is located at the very center of salvation history, which reaches back to Eden and forward to the New Jerusalem.[9]

[9]The tradition of identifying the cross with the Tree of Life is of course not original to Bonaventure. Perhaps already implicit in the association of the Tree's leaves with the healing of the nations in Rev. 22:2, it can be explicitly traced all the way back to the early second century, when Ignatius of Antioch, warning the Trallians against docetists who denied the passion, contrasted the tree of death with the tree of life: "Flee for your very life from these men; they are poisonous growths with a deadly fruit, and one taste of it is speedily fatal. They are none of the Father's planting; if they were, they could at once be known for true branches of the Cross, and there would be no corruption in

The spiritual significance of the tree of life is further elaborated in description of its various parts, which appear to be correlated with the traditional stages or phases of the spiritual life, a favorite Bonaventurean pattern.[10] As in Revelation 22, "the leaves are a most effective medicine to prevent and cure every kind of sickness" (Prol. 3; p. 120). They are particularly suited, therefore, to those on the way of purgation or purification. The "radiance" and "sweetness" of the flowers are especially attractive to zealous seekers after truth, the "men of desire" (Prol. 3; p. 120) who are also described, at greater length, in the Prologue to the *Itinerarium*:

> For no one is in any way disposed for divine contemplation that leads to mystical ecstasy unless like Daniel he is a *man of desires* (Dan. 9:23). Such desires are enkindled in us in two ways: by an outcry of prayer that makes us *call aloud in the groaning of our heart* (Ps. 37:9) and by the flash of insight by which the mind turns most directly and intently toward the rays of light [*Itin.* Prol. 3; p. 55].

While "the groaning of our heart" suggests purgation, "the flash of insight" is characteristic of the illuminative way: as usual with Bonaventure, the successive stages are not rigid or exclusive, but incorporate and build on what has gone before.

More detailed attention is given to the fruit, since it represents Christ more directly. It is both "one and undivided" and "offered to

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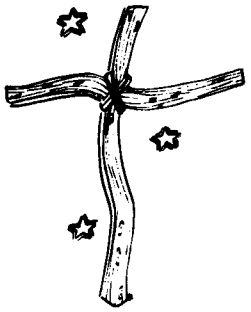
their fruit. It is by the Cross that through His Passion He calls you, who are parts of His own Body, to Himself. A Head cannot come into being alone, without any limbs; for the promise we have from God is the promise of unity, which is the essence of Himself" (Trallians 11, in *Early Christian Writings*, trans. Maxwell Staniforth (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 98; see also Ignatius to the Smyrnians, 1 (p. 119), and the Epistle of Barnabas, 11 (pp. 209–10). St. Bernard applies the Tree of Life image to Christ in Sermon 48 on the Song of Songs; see *Works of Bernard of Clairvaux: On the Song of Songs III*, trans. Kilian Walsh, O.C.S.O., and Irene M. Edmonds (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1979), p. 16; and particularly in *On Loving God*, 7–8; *Works: Treatises II*, trans. Robert Walton, O.S.B. (Washington: Cistercian Publications, 1974), pp. 99–100.

[10]Bonaventure's treatise *De Triplici Via* (The Triple Way) is based on this three-fold pattern, as is the fourth chapter of the *Itinerarium*. For a discussion of the structure of the *Legenda Major* as having this same pattern, see Cousins's Introduction to his translations, pp. 42–46, based on the interpretation of Regis J. Armstrong in "The Spiritual Theology of the *Legenda Major* of Saint Bonaventure" (Ph.D. dissertation, Fordham University, 1978). In the *Tree of Life*, Bonaventure explicitly mentions this pattern in §39, on the Pentecost experience (p. 163).



our taste under twelve flavors on twelve branches" (Prol. 4; p. 121) which correspond to the description found in Revelation 22 and represent the "varied states, excellences, powers and works" by which Christ makes himself present to his people. In the incarnational, redemptive, and eschatological associations which Bonaventure develops, the pattern of the entire work is foreshadowed: it is "the fruit that took its origin from the Virgin's womb," an echo of Elizabeth's greeting in Luke 1 which is incorporated in the "Hail Mary"; it "reached its savory maturity on the tree of the cross," and will be served "in the garden of the heavenly paradise—God's table" (Prol. 3; p. 121). This last phrase also carries sacramental overtones, found as well in the scriptural allusion to manna, "*having every delight and the sweetness of every taste* (Wis. 16:20)," applied in the liturgy to the Eucharist.[11] The reference to tasting and eating of the fruit by "God's servants," who "may always be satisfied, yet never grow weary of its taste" (Prol. 3; pp 120–21), as well as the eschatological context, indicates that partaking of the fruit who is Jesus leads ultimately to the depths of contemplative union with God, the perfective way in Bonaventure's terminology. Yet it is available, as Jesus himself is, even to those taking their very first steps on the road to God. Thus the one fruit is presented under many (i.e., twelve)

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[11]See the note on the passage in the Jerusalem Bible, as well as Bonaventure's own explicitly eucharistic use of the passage in the meditation on the Last Supper (16; p. 139).

aspects: humility, power, piety, patience, etc. These become the divisions of the body of the treatise, which is likewise intended to apply to readers at whatever stage they may find themselves and draw them into a deepening awareness of God's love.

This distribution of material into segments corresponding to the fruits of the tree of life is only part of a much more elaborate formal structure. The treatise is actually organized as a commentary on a poem consisting of fifteen rhymed quatrains, presumably composed by Bonaventure himself. The Prologue, particularly the section we have just been examining, is an expansion of the first of these stanzas:

> O cross, salvation-bearing tree,
> Watered by a living fountain,
> Your flower is spice-scented,
> Your fruit an object of desire [Prol. 3; p. 121].

Likewise the two final stanzas, quoted at the conclusion of the Prologue, will be developed point by point in the prayer for the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit which brings the entire treatise to a close: the first verse, "Feed us with these fruits" (Prol. 6; p. 122) is associated with the Gift of Wisdom: "that we may taste the life-giving flavors of the fruit of the tree of life, which you truly are" (49; p. 174); the next verse, "Shed light upon our thoughts," with the Gift of Understanding, "by which the intentions of our minds are illumined," and so through the remaining verses until the two final lines, "Be a peaceful way of life/ For those who fear Christ," which match the description of the last of the Gifts, Fear, "by which we may draw away from all evil and be set at peace by submitting in awe to your eternal majesty."

The twelve intervening stanzas are correlated with the twelve fruits, and according to Bonaventure were originally inscribed on an actual drawing of a tree, in three groupings of four stanzas, corresponding to the three major divisions of the work: "in the first or lower branches the Savior's origin and life are described; in the middle, his passion; and in the top, his glorification" (Prol. 2; p. 120). Each verse of a given stanza becomes in turn the title for one of the four subsections of its respective fruit. For example the headings under the first fruit, "His Distinguished Origin," are as follows: Jesus Begotten of God; Jesus Prefigured; Jesus Sent from Heaven; Jesus Born of Mary (p. 123). In Latin, they form the rhymed quatrain:

> Iesus, ex Deo genitus,
> Iesus, praefiguratus,

> Iesus, emissus caelitus,
> Iesus, Maria natus.[12]

Emphasizing the fact that all the fruits are indeed "one and undivided," each verse of these twelve stanzas begins with the name of Jesus. While the first and third verses of each stanza rhyme only with each other, the second and fourth verses of all fifteen stanzas have a common rhyme, "-atus," which further unifies the entire poem.

The functional value of the poem as a pattern for the work as a whole should not be underestimated. It provides a framework, flexible but effective, which draws the individual meditations, which have a certain completeness of their own, into a coherent overall structure, and prevents the type of diffuseness to which many later meditations on the life of Christ to some extent fall victim. While no claims can be made for the literary significance of the poem considered independently, it can be argued that it is an indispensable part of a larger whole which does deserve to be called a masterpiece of spiritual literature. Ω

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[12]*Decem opuscula*, p. 140. There is no reason to think that these twelve stanzas are not identical with the chapter headings of the 48 meditations in the body of the treatise, though the contrary is implied by Cousins (p. 121, n. 5) and explicitly stated by José de Vinck, the other modern English translator of the *Tree of Life*, who calls the stanzas in the Prologue "a quotation from a long poem found in many different forms in the various manuscripts of St. Bonaventure's works," and adds, "Since none of these versions seems genuine, we are not translating the poem in full, but only the few lines actually quoted in the Quaracchi edition. See 'Opera Omnia,' Tome VIII, p. 86" (*The Works of Bonaventure*, vol. I [Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1960], p. 99). This statement is based on a misunderstanding of the "Additamentum" appended to the *Lignum Vitae* in Bonaventure's *Opera Omnia* (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1882–1902), vol. 8, pp. 86–87. Here the editors do give an example of subsequent manuscript additions to Bonaventure's poem, but neither there nor elsewhere do they imply that the authentic text of the poem is not extant. The only textual problem was that in many mss. and early printed editions, when the verses were placed on the illustrated tree and distributed to the various chapters, they were no longer written at the head of the work, and consequently the last two stanzas, corresponding to the seven Gifts, were often omitted totally. There is no question, however, that we possess the poem as a whole. See *Opera Omnia*, vol. 8, p. 69, n. 7 for a full discussion. The confusion is increased by Cousins's (and de Vinck's) translation of "supremis et postremis versiculis" (*Decem opuscula*, p. 139), referring to the stanzas on the seven Gifts, as "first and last verses" (p. 122; de Vinck, vol. I, p. 100), when "supremis" and "postremis" clearly should be translated either synonymously or, more probably, as "second-last and final."

Reflections on Working at an Infirmary for Sisters

SISTER DOROTHY KLAAS, O.S.F.

LOOKING BACK NOW, I see that working at our infirmary was one of the greatest blessings of my life. Each day I was led to a deeper understanding of what philosophers mean when they speak of "the human condition." There I was forced to meditate, to acknowledge my own powerlessness before the reality of sickness and pain, mental anguish and failing strength, old age and death. Never before had it been so evident to me that creation is groaning for a new rebirth in Christ. There at Holy Family Hall I watched our elderly Sisters passing through the last stages of purification before the Lord's coming. At times, I was saddened by my inability to stop the stripping process that goes on relentlessly during the final years of life. However, I recognized that in the providence of God, He was readying them for the next life. Many times I was consoled and gladdened when I saw how wonderfully grateful those Sisters were for small kindnesses shown to them. We who had come to serve their needs were reminded that the day will come when we in turn will be walking with canes, sitting in wheelchairs, or confined to bed, and we, too, will be dependent upon others to assist us. None of us likes to think of that day, but at Holy Family Hall the lesson was brought home to us daily; we simply could not escape it.

In the morning when the alarm dragged me out of bed, my reluctance melted away when I reflected: "How many Sisters in this house would be beside themselves with joy if they could do what I am doing—if they could rise and dress and go to chapel with the community! They are prisoners, but I am free. Dear Lord, help me to use my years of freedom in Your service and in the service of your people.

Sister Dorothy Klaas, O.S.F., is a member of the Sisters of Saint Francis of the Holy Family, at Briar Cliff College, Sioux City, Iowa.

On the way up the stairs, I sometimes prayed: "Thank you, Father, for knees that still bend and for strength to climb. By tonight my bones and muscles may be weary, but tomorrow morning they'll be in fine shape again. There are many here who have no such hope."

As my eyes followed the printed page of the Divine Office and as I listened to the rise and fall of the chant, I wondered: "What must it be like to pray the Office when your eyesight is poor and your hearing is almost gone? If the day comes when I am stripped of these marvelous senses in my old age, will the Lord alone suffice? Merciful Jesus, be kind to those who are now living in a twilight world where faces are blurred and hard to distinguish, in a world of muffled sounds where one feels isolated, barricaded behind a glass wall. It must be hard to be deprived in that manner for months, even years."

The cooks who prepared the meals at Holy Family Hall were culinary artists. Yet when I observed our older Sisters going through the cafeteria line, how many times I saw them passing up one tempting dish after another; often they chose soup, jello, or cold cereal. I realized: "No compensation here. If one is diabetic or has no appetite, what good is the finest food? Lord God, it seems you are taking from these Sisters even the smallest pleasure in order that the earth will no longer hold any attraction for them."

Day after day, I watched and listened and learned. Strangely enough, instead of being depressed, I experienced a new feeling of peace, for I marveled how the human spirit is able to change bitterness into sweetness by the power of love and resignation. One Sister confided to me: "We know that we're in a condition where no one can do much to stop our pain."

That's right, Sister; we wish we could. But you gave me a glorious example of Christian fortitude and patience I'll treasure all my days. I thank you and so many others like you. Most of all, I thank God for the hope that shone forth in your lives. The suffering Christ indeed is destined for resurrection. Ω

God's Gardens

"You shall be like a watered garden" (Is. 58:11)
(based on the four familiar underlined lines)

The Lord God planted a Garden in Eden,
Well watered, the Garden of the Lord.
And there He put the man He had formed,
To till it and to keep it.
And Adam and Eve heard the sound
Of the Lord God walking in the Garden
In the cool of the day.
But in the Garden of Eden
They—we—first disobeyed God.
Therefore the Lord God exiled us
From the Garden of Eden, His Garden.

In the Garden of Gethsemani
Jesus prayed and prepared
To suffer, die, and redeem us,
To teach us to overcome sin.

In the Garden of the Empty Tomb
He rose from the dead
And appeared as a Gardener,
To teach us that in overcoming sin
We overcome death and win
Here and now Eternal Life
In the Garden of this Life.

Here in the Garden of this world,
With the rays of the sun for warmth,
And *the kiss of the Son for pardon,*
And *the songs of the birds for mirth,*
And some hard work in the good earth
(which may also reduce girth),
We are nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth—
In that loveliest of gardens
(Image of the beauty of the Christian soul)
The Sacred Garden of Santa Barbara's Old Mission—

Or in a wilderness or desert or mountain,
In Big Sur (where I write) or the Grand Canyon,
In Assisi or His Galilean Lake—
Or right in our own backyard
Where God placed us
To cultivate our own garden
And to flower where planted—
Anywhere in the beauty-drenched Garden
Of His vast earth-creation
Whose Beauty He planned and designed
As a sample-image-icon
Of His Paradise Kingdom
To help us rejoice and know Him,
To praise and thank Him,
Where, as Saint Bonaventure wrote,
"Every creature is a word of God,
Because it proclaims God,"
And where, as Saint Francis said,
"Every creature calls out:
'O man, God made me for your sake!' "

But above all in the garden of the soul,
The Inner Garden of our heart,
Which God made and gave us
To weed and seed,
To sow and hoe,
To water and trim,
And in and with His Grace
To sprout and grow
Into something beautiful for Him:
One of the countless ever-blessed souls
He will make to flower and bear fruit
In His New Garden of Eden,
Amid the River of the Water of Life
And the fruit-filled Tree of Life,
In the Holy City, the New Jerusalem,
Where God the Gardener will dwell within us,
In our renewed beauty-filled Inner Gardens.
For then our "souls will be like watered gardens."

Raphael Brown, S.F.O.

Book Reviews

The Roots of St. Francis: A Popular History of the Church in Assisi and Umbria before St. Francis as Related to His Life and Spirituality. By Raphael Brown, S.F.O. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981. Pp. 236. Cloth, $9.50.

Reviewed by William R. Cook, Ph.D. (Medieval History, Cornell University, 1971), a member of the History Department of the State University of New York at Geneseo.

This book is a "popular presentation for the general public," and as such is a lovely contribution to Franciscan literature. It sketches the history of pre-Roman, Roman, and medieval Umbria and Assisi, always with an eye toward discovering the origins of St. Francis's ideas, mentality, and spirituality. Often the links are tenuous, and sometimes the desire to find such links leads to farfetched hypotheses. Mr. Brown is writing a sequel, *Forefathers of St. Francis*, where he will discuss such important figures as Romuald, Peter Damian, and Ubaldus of Gubbio. In some ways, I think that will be a more valuable book for students of St. Francis than the one under consideration here.

Raphael Brown's style is informal and sometimes episodic. I rather like it when he gives directions to a particularly isolated spot in Umbria which lovers of St. Francis would profit from seeing. However, his love for certain spots makes for an imbalance in his book. For example, about one-sixth of his book is a discussion of the Clitunno Springs, including several nineteenth- and twentieth-century descriptions of it. I find this distracting both because it turns us away from the topic of St. Francis's roots and because Brown admits that there is not even a specific mention of this place in the sources for the life of St. Francis, although he is right in saying that Francis must have visited the site.

Even more puzzling is the fact that two of the four appendices really have nothing to do with the subject of the book. One concerns Goethe's visit to Assisi (a nice story and a significant one, but why as an appendix to a book about ancient and medieval Umbria?) The other is a reprint from *Way of St. Francis* of the author's review of Edward Armstrong's *Saint Francis: Nature Mystic*. It is a good review, although I do not share Mr. Brown's enthusiasm for the book; but why is it here?

Certain passages of this book are quite illuminating. I found the discussion of St. Felician of Foligno valuable. A description of Charlemagne's visits to Umbria—real and fictional—is quite helpful in interpreting some of the chivalric material in the Franciscan sources. I was particularly enlightened by the discussion of Francis describing demons and God in terms of "gastald" and "podesta."

There are a few places where Mr. Brown's lack of knowledge of the details of medieval history is apparent. He seems vague when he tries to describe the rise of commune. A book such as Lauro Martines' *Power and Imagination* would have been helpful in writing this section of the book. Less excusable is his twice describing Paul the Deacon, a Latin-writing Lombard, as a Byzantine writer.

The bibliography is good. As a scholar, I would like to have had footnotes; but this is not a book addressed to scholars. I am happy that Mr. Brown gives translated excerpts from sources not previously available in English. Since there is a lot of description of sites throughout Umbria, it is almost inexcusable that there is no map.

This is a nice book, written by a man whose life has been deeply touched by Francis of Assisi. It is pleasant to read a book written with such love and passion. Its weaknesses are those to which scholars are sensitive. Its virtues will cause many to thank Raphael Brown for still another contribution to Franciscan studies. Scholars and non-scholars alike await its sequel, *Forefathers of St. Francis*.

Speak, Lord, I'm Listening. Thirty-nine Liturgies for High School Students. By Dennis Huse and Geralyn Watson. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1981. Pp. 175 (8½x11 inches). Paper, $7.95.

Reviewed by Father Francis de Ruijte, O.F.M., M.A. (Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University), team

Amator Noster

O Love! My Love, O peerless Lover!
Jesus, Savior, tender passion flower,
all bruised, broken, rent apart
to distill the nectar of Your Heart!

All hail! Chalice of Reparation!
I offer You my heart's devotion.
O perfumed Name as honey sweet—
Fili Mariae! Sacrifice meet!

Hosts of angels tend to You at dawn;
vested virgins drink of You each morn—
earth's Cup of Consolation!
Amator Noster! You love me?
O my Love, my life, all, I give to You!

Sister M. Colette Logue, O.S.F.

member of the Burning Bush Prayer and Renewal Center, Lennoxville, Quebec, in charge of Franciscan prayer meetings and as such publisher of several Franciscan prayer booklets.

This book comprises 39 Eucharistic celebrations, one for every week of the school year, planned for high school students, but easily adapted for other groups, even for the parish congregation, especially when youthful hearts are participating. Homiletic outlines are included along with the readings, the prayers, and the songs. Use them "as is" or make them a base for your own creativity. Four celebrations have a tear-out section for easier duplicating of some parts.

> In the beginning there was nothing—
> no plants, no people
> no animals, no oceans
> nothing . . . except for God.
> He was alone, but not lonely,
> He was love, but not loved.
> So God decided to create the universe
> and to fill it with things good and
> beautiful.

This sample of the theme Creation (p. 19)—which I like most of all—shows the style. Similar themes cover about three fourths of the book, while the rest follows the liturgical year. The theme Road to Calvary uses meditations written by students, incorporating the fifteen stations of the Way of the Cross into the Liturgy of the Word. Likewise, the Seven Last Words of Jesus are embodied into the Word Service (p. 112). A negative theme—and treatment—is, in my opinion, Judgment.

The scriptural readings are generally short and well selected; Is. 52:4-7 (p. 111), however, seems to me a strange division; perhaps 53:4-7?

A list of 124 songs and the 21 addresses of the music publishers enhances the book's usefulness. But the song "All the Earth" (p. 61) is to be added to the list, and seven titles listed are not matched in the Liturgies ("But then comes the Morning," "Eyes of Jesus," "Friends, Friends, Friends," "Into your hands," "Roll the Stone away," "Sing praise to the Lord, Alleluia," "We've been to the Mountain"). Some traditional songs and Negro spirituals have no reference indication. Besides, the publisher's address is missing for a number of readings (pp. 24, 74, 92), while it is provided at other times (p. 134).

The following can be slightly improved. Ash Wednesday's introduction finds no application during the service. The address "Father" of a Prayer over the Gifts (p. 110) should be directed to the Lord Jesus; similarly, on the same page, the Communion Prayer confusingly links the Way of the Cross to the Father.

Beautiful is the Communion meditation "It is finished" on p. 114, and so is the Prayer over the Gifts on the same page:

> Father,
> It is easy for us to give you these gifts
> because they cost us nothing.
> It is hard for us to give you ourselves
> because that will cost us everything.
> Today, as you change these gifts, we
> ask that you will change us, too, so
> that we can put our hands and hearts
> into yours.

Depression and the Integrated Life: A Christian Understanding of Sadness and Inner Suffering. By Richard F. Berg, C.S.C., and Christine McCartney. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1981. Pp. ix-183. Paper, $5.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard J. Mucowski, O.F.M., Ed.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology, Siena College, and Director of Formation, Holy Name Province.

This brief book, written for lay people of a Christian persuasion, uses ten chapters to present a total picture of depression—its origin and its debilitating effects on our thinking, our emotional life, our spiritual life, and even our physical condition.

Berg and McCartney are good synthesizers of the psychological theories of Aaron Beck, Albert Ellis, and P. M. Lewinsohn, but, at times, their writing from chapter to chapter seems uneven. There is not always a consistent use of non-sexist language, and—in an attempt to present a case to help clarify a point—the reader is drawn into the example which the authors have given without being furnished the experience of the weekly sessions and struggle which brought the person out of the depression.

The use of Scripture in a self-help book, such as this, seems appropriate, and the authors clearly encourage a person with depression to work along with a counselor or spiritual director. But there is also the chance that people from a charismatic persuasion might take their information and completely spiritualize it, never dealing with the multi-dimensional level of the disorder which they write so well about.

In particular, the chapter on Medical Aspects of Depression puts in a simple fashion the present thinking on the causes of depression from a biological point of view. The chapter on Exercise, Nutrition, and Depression is very important in such a book as this because it encourages the depressed person to look at the kinds of food and vitamins which he/she puts into his or her body. The self-help strategies can be most effective if a person is serious about following through on them and is willing to be honest with him/herself and another individual.

Sometimes the authors seem to focus on one aspect of a problem, such as the need for spiritual healing. They also allude to the breakdown in other systems but are not as clear in their explanations with regard to how these systems interact in their destruction as well as their healing.

Finally, this book contains a table of contents but no index of authors or subjects. Each chapter lists notes at the end with some sources for the material presented. Interspersed throughout the text are quotes from Scripture and diagrams which help clarify the authors' explanation of various theories. By and large, this is an effective little book for those involved in the pastoral care of the depressed wherever they may be found. It could also be used effectively as part of a course in Pastoral Counseling or Spiritual Direction. Despite its uneven style, it has great value, and I recommend its use.

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Books Received

Clark, Keith, O.F.M.Cap., *An Experience of Celibacy: A Creative Reflection on Intimacy, Loneliness, Sexuality, and Commitment*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1982. Pp. 176. Paper, $4.95.

Collins, David R. (text), and Mary Beth Froehlich (illustrations), *Thomas Merton: Monk with a Mission*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1981. Pp. iv–44. Paper, $1.95.

Hayes, Zachary, O.F.M., *The Hidden Center: Spirituality and Speculative Christology in St. Bonaventure*. New York: Paulist Press, 1981. Pp. x–225, including index. Paper, $7.95.

McGinn, Bernard, trans. and introd., *Apocalyptic Spirituality: Treatises and Letters of Lactantius, Adso of Montier-en-Der, Joachim of Fiore, the Spiritual Franciscans, Savonarola*. New York: Paulist Press, 1979. Pp xviii–334, including bibliography and index. Paper, $7.95.

The illustrations for our March issue have been drawn by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, F.F.S.C., who teaches at St. Joseph's in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

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A translation with scholarly introduction by Zachary Hayes, O.F.M. Pp.280 (1979), paper, $10.00 plus postage and handling.

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The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

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The drawings for our April issue were furnished by Mr. Louis Padro, an artist who resides in Chicago.

Standard Abbreviations used in **The CORD** for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy
[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Flor: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

Franciscans and Instant Solution

IF SOLUTION MEANS loosening bonds, releasing fast holds, supplying answers to problems, solution itself often enough has been one of our biggest problems. Finding the ready explanation, seeking a way out, groping for an exit, paradoxically looking for light at the end of interminable tunnels; all this has exercised us for ages, and does not cease to be one of the chief job descriptions of human endeavor. How is it that when Solution Personified did come, there still remained the human problem, the moral problem, the religious problem, and so many others? For this is true, is it not? That when God intervened in human history and Christ came, he came as our Solution (salvation?): he was our *solution of continuity* in our away-from-God trajectory; he dissolved our solidarity in sin and death. He was the crucial solvent brought in the nick of time (*and* "in the fullness of time") by which our callousness melted into a graced and free-flowing stream. All that.

So, then? The course has surely been altered, victory has been decisively achieved, salvation (solution?) is not only a past act, but a present reality and a future sure hope. Yet the snag lies in the human feebleness of grasp; our forgetfulness, our lethargy, our poor cooperation, our non-receptiveness also our incredulity ("we can't believe it!").

Franciscans, like others, have sought to bring their graced ingenuity to bear upon the solution of human problems. They did so from the beginning; it is we who must do so now, and under inspiration from the efforts of earlier Franciscans. Not because they did it *in the past*, but because they *did it* in the past. They worked towards solutions in areas like peace and reconciliation, hardship alleviation, moral and religious formation of the popular mind, and especially in the winning of trust in an *affective* spirituality, as against any fear-gripped ethos. And yet, Franciscans, like others, get depressed, dejected, over seemingly fruitless attempts to find answers, or, over the frustration of their proffered answers. They may, at the time, spiritualize all this (to do so is valid) and see it as their self-emptying, the experience of poverty and of nothingness, and the strength of God invisible in human weakness. The one thing they should not do is seek the "instant solution." Modern people might be expected, tempted, to seek this—do they not belong to the age of "instant potato," "instant coffee," and whatnot? And their demand can easily shift from the material to the spiritual!

Yet the instant solution is not all that modern; it is cited as a possibility in the gospels (*Vis, imus et colligimus ea*), though in fact ruled out. No, it is for us to champion the silent protest, the small, still voice; for us to foster the dynamics of simple presence. It is an alternative made feasible by belief in "spiritual radiation." Its conditions are long-term vision and endurance and, above all, simplicity and humility. It is therefore consistent with the Franciscan spiritual tradition. In this approach, the emphasis is upon *being* rather than *doing*, although the "being" is, in the end, the "doing." In our world, impatient and strident as it is, the humble and longanimous approach to problems can be highly significant, a good witness, although its forum would always be hard-won.

I do not suggest that mere theorizing is our allotted portion; nor indeed that a Franciscan is precluded by charism from taking practical steps in the face of difficult situations. We have always been known to be practical. (I hope this is because, like the small and poor man, the pilgrim and stranger, we had to be as wise as serpents and not miss a move.) All of us would want to be effectual at the point of greatest need. I think what is important is the methodology we adopt.

What could be more unlike an "instant solution" than Saint Francis' method (when you examine it attentively) of reconciling the mayor and bishop of Assisi? O yes, others had done nothing, and Saint Francis had worried a lot over this and over the scandal, and had spoken to the friars about it. But, in the end, what does he come up with? Two friars are sent to sing a song in a public place in the name of a poor little man who was too innocent to hold a conference, write out placards, or proclaim a demonstration. It worked. It worked because the *gesture* spoke louder than even the words. It was the silence of the gesture, the simplicity of it, and the *risk* involved in it, that made it into both an act of faith and a spiritually powerful gimmick. But the gesture, even though it had immediate effects, had no aura of instant solution about it; it pertained to an altogether different calculation.

Still, there will be those of us who worry about not *doing* enough. We rightly worry if Franciscans do not lead the field in rehabilitating the marginalized, restoring the broken peace, preserving the natural balance of creation, ceaselessly preaching "the charity that is God." Would that the singing of a canticle in the squares of Belfast or Salvador or the Middle East, restored the lost harmony! We should ourselves want to be innocent to dare it; we should want to be simple enough to risk it, faith-full enough to bring it off. Meanwhile we ought to derive consolation from the belief that the Francis solution is already long in operation, working imperceptibly in the field of the world and in the hearts of men (as Clare might have put it). Whenever we try to be, and grow into, the Love that God is, and that Francis knew, we inevitably produce a workable solution, although it be long awaited. Ω

Gregory Shanahan, Ofm.

The Mountain as Symbol in The *Sacrum Commercium*

JO THERESE FAHRES

THE *SACRUM COMMERCIUM*, as the reader doubtless knows, is an allegorical mystery play portraying the love Saint Francis had for poverty and describing how the early community of brothers lived in the spirit of poverty. The story concerns itself with the brothers' desire for salvation and their journey toward the Father.

In the present article, I would like to explore the use of *the mountain* as a symbol of central importance in the *Sacrum Commercium*, but before doing so, I would like to present in summary fashion the biblical roots of the mountain-symbol—roots with which the anonymous author shows himself thoroughly familiar and with which he presupposes his readers are also familiar.

The Mountain in Scripture

THE MOUNTAIN has been a significant symbol to mankind since the beginning of Salvation History. It is the place where heaven and earth meet in clouded mystery. It was on Mount Sinai that Moses received the divine guidelines for life. The Prophet Elijah, while waiting and watching on a mountain, heard the Lord speak in the gentleness of a breeze (cf. 1K 19:8). A person would often climb the mountain to offer worship to El Shaddai, who would thereupon grace him with His Presence (1K 3:2). For the Psalmist the mountain stands as a figure of stability and power (cf. Ps. 121), assuring us that, even though the hills may topple and the earth quake, the mountain shall stand as a sign of God's omnipotence. Those who flee from evil find in the mountain a place of refuge and protection (cf. Ps. 10). During the exile of the Israelite people, the mountain represented a place where God

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would reveal himself. In Jeremiah (50:6), the mountain is a place for those who wander about like lost sheep without a shepherd. And finally, we read in the Book of Proverbs that God raised his voice "at the crossroads," and at the city gates "on the top of the heights," appealing to the "children of men" to accept his gift of Wisdom (cf. Prov. 8:1-11).

But El Shaddai was more than a God of the mountain. He was also a God who walked in the valley and longed to draw all his sons and daughters to himself. Lovingly, through the prophets, he called all of his people out of their darkness into the light of the mountain top so that they might behold the glory of creation. He became God to those who responded, and they became his people.

Jesus, of course, knew his Scripture well and availed himself, as no other, of the symbolism of his day. Not only was he familiar with the role of the mountain in Salvation History, but he himself was often to be found on a mountain top communicating with his Father. The New Testament writers show us Jesus atop a mountain tempted by the devil, praying, teaching, and being transfigured.

The mountain, then, was deeply significant for both the Old and the New Testament people. It was on a mountain that the God of love declared his fidelity to his people and jealously claimed them as his own. The mountain became known as the dwelling place of Wisdom because Truth was revealed there (Wisdom, of course, came to be understood as a growing awareness of the love God has for us). And finally, it was on the side of a mountain that Jesus taught the way to fulfill the Covenant.

The biblical symbol of the mountain continued to be passed on from generation to generation. Its scriptural importance was common knowledge to the people of the Middle Ages, who were familiar with the use of biblical imagery in both written works and oral presentations. And so it is understandable and fitting that the Sacrum Commercium contains some sixteen references to mountains or high places.

The Mountain as the Dwelling Place of God

THE FIRST OF THESE appears when Francis and his brothers receive word from two old men (Isaiah and Paul) that Lady Poverty, whom they are seeking, has "gone up into the mountain where the Lord directed her to go" and that "she dwells in the holy mountains because God loves her more than any dwelling of Jacob" (SC 10; *Omnibus*, 1555). It is significant that the first mention of the mountain appears in this context, because the brothers have just begun their search. Their knowledge of Jesus and their desire to follow in his footsteps establishes in their hearts a profound love of Poverty. They seek her because she is the key to salvation. God loves Wisdom, true, and places her above all other gifts because it is Wisdom that communicates his longings to man. But that he loves Poverty more than any other virtue is seen in that it was through and in Poverty that salvation came into the world. It was Poverty who invited Jesus, the Wisdom of the Father, to descend from the mountain of the Lord in order to proclaim good news to the people in the valley of sorrows. When Jesus was born, Poverty wrapped his naked body with her simplicity. In the temple when he was misunderstood, Poverty rested in his heart. When he was rejected by his own people, Poverty listened to his hurt, and on the cross, when all had forsaken him, Poverty, his Bride, faithfully stayed with and embraced him until he was home again. God loved Poverty more than any dwelling because in and through her, he, the Omnipotent, became incarnate.

In this passage, the mountain is the holy dwelling place of God. It is a place where God keeps his most precious gift, Wisdom—where Poverty, God's best loved virtue, resides. It is a place where God can express his love by bestowing on those who walk toward him the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The mountain stands to be climbed by those who seek the Lord. Those who desire salvation have no choice but to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and seek to embrace Lady Poverty.

But how does one go about entering into the way of salvation? What must one do to enlist Lady Poverty's assistance in this venture? The author of the *Sacrum Commercium*, speaking through the two old men, suggests this: ". . . if you want to get to her, remove the garments of your rejoicing, and put away every encumbrance and sin entangling you, for unless you are stripped of these things, you cannot go up to her who dwells so high above" (11; *Omnibus*, 1556).

The brothers are instructed to do penance. They are asked to put away everything that might be holding them captive. They are to discard past failures and guilt, that they may look with hope to the Lord. To ascend the mountain of the Lord, one must freely begin the climb. The ascent, moreover, is presented precisely as a continuous growth in that freedom, which enables God to embrace us in our sinfulness and enables us to embrace God in his holiness. The wise person knows that this is the meaning of Redemption.

The Mountain as the Growing Community

GROWING INTO FREEDOM, however, doesn't happen in a vacuum. A person grows only in relationship with others. So Francis, in his search for Wisdom and in his desire to embrace Poverty as a means to salvation, is warned not to journey alone: "Take with you some faithful companions that you may listen to their advice as you go up the mountain and be strengthened by their help, for woe to the solitary man! For if he should fall, he has no one to lift him up" (ibid.).

The road to Wisdom is not an easy one. It is a road that demands honesty, a road on which Poverty challenges man to strip away the mask he wears. It is very difficult to stand naked alone and see the truth of one's self. It is difficult, too, to stand in our nothingness before our God as well as to stand naked before and with others. That is why we need "faithful companions." Faithful companions are those who care for us, support us, and eagerly long to travel with us along the road to Wisdom. In a word, they are the community.

The mountain in this passage therefore stands as the symbol of the growing community. It is as a fraternity that the brothers are to grow in their understanding and assimilation of the Good News. It is in the community that a brother is to find the support of the other brothers if he should fall from the path or become exhausted from the climb. Similarly, the mountain can stand as a symbol of accountability, for it is only in the honest, daily living of communal growth that one brother can lovingly challenge another to be faithful in his pilgrimage. Fraternity strengthens one in living the gospel counsels.

The Mountain as the Place of Covenant

SINCE THE PROCESS of embracing Poverty must be learned, reflection is an indispensable means: "When they had considered the way up the mountain from every angle, for it was extremely steep and rough, some of them said to one another: 'Who can ascend the mountain of the Lord and who can reach its summit?' " (SC 12; *Omnibus*, 1556). This text tells us that there are many ways to look at Poverty. The mountain seems in this instance to represent the formidable challenge inherent in conversion. The brothers question their ability to climb. Reflecting on the challenge before them, they experience fear in their hearts. Their doubts, however, negate neither the worthiness of their desire nor the importance of the ascent. It is important to note the response the author has Francis give them:

> How narrow the gate, Brothers, and close the way that leads to life! And few there are who find it. Be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of his power, for whatever is difficult will be easy for us. Put off the burdens that weigh upon your wills and cast away the freight of your sins and gird yourselves and be valiant men. Forgetting what is behind, strain forward according to your abilities to what is before. I say to you that whatever place the sole of your feet shall tread upon will be yours. For Christ the Lord is the breath of our mouth; he will draw you to the summit of the mountain with the bonds of love [SC 13; *Omnibus*, 1556f].

Fear certainly can drive man away from the mountain where Lady Poverty dwells, so that only a few accept the invitation. Still, although the climb seems frightening, the Lord continues to promise his strength for the journey. It is the Lord's strength and only his strength that lifts man to the mountain. He who travels this path must discard all the unnecessary baggage he has accumulated. He must allow Jesus to be his hope.

The mountain, in this selection, is the place of covenant. As the Old Covenant was established on Mount Sinai; as the New Covenant of Love was sealed on the mountain of Calvary, so the brothers, following in the footsteps of Jesus, are to climb the narrow path up the mountain to seal anew in their lives the bond of God's love. And it is this love that moves them freely to embrace Lady Poverty in all her nothingness. The brothers know that they can ascend the mountain of the Lord because it is not by their own strength that they climb. Now they know by experience the meaning of poverty of spirit and utter dependence on their Lord.

The Mountain as a Place of Revelation

LEAVING BEHIND ALL the worries of this life, the brothers begin the climb. "Climbing toward the summit of the mountain with very easy progress," they see Lady Poverty standing at the mountain top and looking down its slopes (SC 14; *Omnibus*, 1559). Poverty, aloft above all things and aware of the activities of all, sees that the brothers were adequately prepared for the climb. They were vigorous because they were free. So impressed is she with their freedom, with their disposition to listen, with their yearning for Wisdom, with their longing for the message of salvation, that she dares to open her heart to them.

The mountain therefore becomes, at this point, a place of revelation. The text tells us that the brothers have come with haste "from the valley of sorrows to the mountain of light" (SC 15; *Omnibus*, 1560). They have given proof by their perseverance that they have chosen the way of salvation over the way of sin. Before Lady Poverty will speak to them, however, they must first clarify why they seek her and desire to choose her as their Lady.

They are seeking salvation, the brothers reply, and they plead with Poverty to help them: "Only grant us peace and we shall be saved, that he who redeemed us through you will also receive us through you" (SC 16; *Omnibus*, 1560). Thus they clearly see that Poverty is not the *goal* of their journey, but rather the means of salvation. They are conscious of the love Jesus had for Poverty and how he chose her for his Bride. They recount the ways that Poverty has been sought by many, only to be despised and forsaken. But this rejection, the brothers continue, "does you no harm, for you dwell upon the holy mountains by your own free will, in the firm dwelling place of the glory of Christ" (SC 18; *Omnibus*, 1561). The brothers cherish the freedom with which Lady Poverty clung to Jesus and he to her.

The Mountain as Symbol of Nothingness

IN SPEAKING WITH Poverty, the brothers have come to realize that a man who is poor has nothing to fear because he has nothing to lose, that only when one possesses something can he fear its being taken from him. The mountain is now a symbol of the nothingness that must be chosen freely if one dares to attain Wisdom. This "nothingness" is an emptiness that waits to be filled. Just as Poverty prepared a place for the Lord, so too do the brothers desire to empty themselves of all things so as to offer to the Lord of Glory a place to rest and dwell. It is in this discourse with Lady Poverty that the brothers share what has

been revealed to their hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit. It becomes evident to Lady Poverty that the Spirit of the Lord is operating in the lives of these men. The Wisdom that they manifest in expressing their longing for salvation gives proof of the intimate presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Mountain as the Arena of Truth

LADY POVERTY, responding to the brothers' proposal, explains that although people throughout Salvation History have attempted to put on the new man (cf. Eph. 4:24), they refused to strip themselves in the process. She speaks of those who lost faith and enthusiasm before the journey was over. She laments of those who rationalized and tried to make her less than what she is:

> They spoke civil words to me, but they thought treacherously of me. And though the desolation of a city set on a mountain cannot be hidden, they nevertheless bestowed a name upon her, namely, Discretion or Providence, despite the fact that such discretion should rather be called confusion and such providence, the ruinous forgetfulness of all things [SC 39; *Omnibus*, 1576].

In this passage the mountain becomes the arena of truth. Poverty knows that people tend to rationalize when they are not secure in their actions. They call their confusion "discretion" or "providence," and in their continual rationalizing they show their fundamental mistrust of God's eternal providence. Since the message of Wisdom is precisely that God longs to provide for his children, it is only the foolish man who believes that he must provide for his own needs.

The Mountain and Medieval Chivalry

POVERTY IS CONFIDENT of her position in the eyes of the Lord, confident of his love, and ever conscious of the instruction he gave her: "Let your dwelling be in Jacob, and your inheritance in Israel, and take root in my elect" (SC 42; *Omnibus*, 1577). Poverty is to dwell with the chosen people of God. In the *Sacrum Commercium*, the brothers are the new people of God. Poverty's inheritance is the Kingdom, and the brothers, realizing that her task is to lead the chosen there, yield themselves to her guidance. The mountain now takes on the symbolism of medieval chivalry. The brothers have gone to the courts of the Lord and placed themselves at the service of their Lord and his Lady. At the same time, the brothers beg her support before Jesus so that in embracing her they may know him better.

Poverty decides to see for herself whether the brothers are truly following in the footsteps of Jesus. Not that she has any doubt that their hearts are intent on knowing her Spouse, but she wants to see whether they are actually living out their good intentions. They agree to show her their lifestyle, and, "going down from the mountain, they led their Lady Poverty to the place where they stayed; it was about the sixth hour" (SC 58; *Omnibus*, 1590).

It is interesting to note that the brothers "led their Lady Poverty" to their home. In this text we are shown that a pact has been initiated. Poverty has allowed herself to be embraced by the brothers who have climbed the heights in search of her. It is important to notice, also, that it is about the sixth hour, the hour of the Lord's crucifixion, when she descends from the mountain to dine with the brothers and accept their hospitality. During the Banquet Scene, Lady Poverty sees evidence of the poorness in which these men live. Convinced of their desire to follow the Poor Christ, she responds to their overwhelming simplicity and joy: "I beg of you, therefore, Brothers, by the mercy of God, for which you have been made so poor, do that for which you have come, for which you have ascended from the rivers of Babylon" (SC 69; *Omnibus*, 1596).

The brothers have reached the mountain of the Lord. They have traveled through the rough and rocky pathways to knowing Wisdom. They have experienced the joy of the heights and have enlisted the help of Lady Poverty in their search for salvation. By emptying themselves of all unnecessary burdens, they have become free to enter into the process of salvation. By searching together in truth, they have been enabled to grow into freedom as a fraternity of brothers who desired nothing less than to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. They had journeyed together from the captivity of their own Babylon into the freedom of the sons of God. Now they are commissioned by their Lady to go forth to all the world and proclaim the Good News of salvation.

Conclusion

THE AUTHOR OF THE *Sacrum Commercium* thus gives us an allegorical piece of Franciscan Wisdom literature that reflects the life of the early Franciscan community. He uses the mountain as a dominant image in his work. He presents it first as the dwelling place of Wisdom and as a symbol of the process of casting off the old man and putting on the new. He then shows this growth into freedom as a communal venture and presents the purgative nature of conversion in terms of the steep

and rough paths one is asked to walk. He further depicts the mountain as the place where Love revealed itself and sealed a covenant in the Blood of Jesus—a covenant that calls all people to embrace the nothingness of their own person and to prepare a dwelling place for the Lord's Spirit. By living in truth and simplicity of heart, he shows us, man is able to ascend the mountain of the Lord. In sum, he presents the mountain as a symbol of the process of salvation that every person, in virtue of his baptism, is asked to travel toward Wisdom.

The wise person knows that poverty is not an end in itself but a means to salvation. He also knows that Wisdom is not a gift one receives only for onself, that Wisdom demands of him the proclamation of the Good News. No individual must ever become poor for the sake of being poor. Rather, one empties oneself of godless things and senseless attitudes to be filled with the Spirit of God. Once a person accepts the call to climb the mountain, regardless of the risk, he or she truly is on the way to the Father. The brothers accepted the challenge, and the author of the *Sacrum Commercium* invites us to do the same. Ω

The Proof

O genius of the age, you test
the Cloth, examine, analyze
and probe its mystery to wrest
the proof both doubt and faith would prize.

Could I unfold my soul, reveal
what it enshrouds, the marks unique,
the Form and Face my own conceal—
then you would have the proof you seek.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

Saint Francis and Theology

ERIC DOYLE, O.F.M.

IN THESE REFLECTIONS I want to steer clear of the hoary question about Saint Francis' attitude to study. On this score let two remarks suffice. First, we can recall that he was quite happy for Saint Anthony to teach theology to the friars with the proviso that in doing so "he should not extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotion, as is contained in the Rule"; and that in the Rule of 1223 he warns the friars not to let manual work extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion (c. 5). There are snares lying in wait for those who do manual work, just as there are for those given to study. Secondly, Saint Francis explicitly stipulates that we are to honor and reverence all theologians and those who impart God's holy words to us because they administer spirit and life (Test 13). We should note that these words in the Testament follow references to the Eucharist, the holy names of God, and the Scriptures. There is here, I believe, an embryonic theology of theologians!

It is a fascinating characteristic of the Franciscan Movement that it produced a Franciscan theology at all. Yet it is a fact of our history that there emerged quite quickly out of the primordial Franciscan experience a way of looking at God, humanity, and the world which medievalists have insisted on calling the Franciscan School. It says something of significance that in the academe the Dominicans have been identified as members of the Thomistic School, whereas we have been labelled followers of the Franciscan School. With us the founder predominated over the learned doctors; in the Dominican Order the learned doctor predominated over the founder.

The Franciscan School embraces a wide spectrum of thinkers. Though not technically in the School, Saint Anthony cannot be left out. He received some superb training in mystical theology which shows itself in his exposition of Scripture. No matter how far he

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travelled from the literal sense, Vigouroux still included him in the *Dictionnaire de le Bible*. There are the famous and not so famous names of friars to whom Paris, Oxford, and Cambridge will always owe a debt of gratitude: Haymo of Faversham, Simon of Sandwich (two places not too far down the road from us here in Canterbury), Alexander of Hales, John de la Rochelle, Saint Bonaventure, John Duns Scotus, Adam Marsh, Roger Bacon, John Pecham (buried in Canterbury Cathedral), Vincent of Coventry, William of Poitou, Eustace of Normanville, William of Ockham.

The fact of the matter is that Saint Francis has a magnetic attraction for the human intellect, especially *fide illustrata*, the intellect suffused with the light of faith. And had it been otherwise, it would not only have been sad, but very disturbing. The intellect is also part of human nature, as much as the heart, the will, and the imagination. The life and writings of Saint Francis are far too rich to be ignored by the intellect. Anyone with the tiniest glimmer of theological acumen cannot fail to be impressed and inspired by the theological significance of his life and the theological content of his writings. The unity of orthodoxy and orthopraxy in his life is remarkable. Consider for a moment the effect Saint Francis' literal imitation of Christ had on Saint Bonaventure's theology. He saw that this was no mere moral or behavioristic patterning of his life on the model of Christ's, but an ontological conforming of his very existence to Jesus Christ whereby the divine activity becomes effective in the world.

His writings show he had a profound grasp of the meaning and import of all the great saving truths of revelation: the Trinity, Incarnation, creation, grace, the virtues, and eschatology. And having grasped them, he communicated them in drama, poetry, and above all by imitating Jesus Christ. He was a superb exegete. He observed the gospel literally—there was no sacrificing of the literal sense for him. Then penetrating further, he drew from it the message it has for faith, the directions it gives for life, and the hope it holds out for eternal life.

He lived the four senses of Scripture that formed the framework of medieval exegesis: the literal, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical. It would, therefore, have been a truncated development if his inspiration had been restricted to artists and poets. As it is, he inspired a theology whose best representatives became artists and poets in their theology, and of none is that truer than Saint Bonaventure.

Pervading his writings as an atmosphere pervades a room is the sublime theology of the centrality of Christ, which is the distinguishing feature of Saint Bonaventure's theology. In the most surprising contexts one finds the seeds of the great themes of Franciscan theology: the primacy of Christ, the meaning and value of creation, the primacy of charity, the unique dignity of every individual. Let us take one example. He writes in the Admonitions: "Consider with what great dignity the Lord God has endowed you. He created and fashioned your body in the image of his beloved Son and your soul in his own likeness" (V.1). Is this not a seminal expression of the doctrine of Christ's absolute primacy? His words recall a beautiful text in Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*:

> Imagine God wholly employed and absorbed in it—in his hand, his eye, his labor, his purpose, his wisdom, his providence, and above all, in his love, which was dictating the lineaments of this creation, Adam. For whatever was the form and expression which was then given to the clay, Christ was in his thoughts as one day to become man, because the Word, too, was to be both clay and flesh, even as the earth was then. . . . And God made man . . . after the image of God, in other words, of Christ, did he make him [c. 6].

Obviously, I am not maintaining that Duns Scotus' teaching was somehow in the mind of Saint Francis. But it seems reasonably certain that creation without Christ was inconceivable for Francis. It is the self-same love that redeems and heals, as perfects, fulfils, and sanctifies. To say Redeemer is a way of saying Divine Lover.

Saint Bonaventure had a unique understanding of the theological significance of Saint Francis. There is no doctor of the Church on whom the founder of an Order had greater influence. Bonaventure himself drew attention to the parallel between the early development of the Franciscan Order and the history of the ancient Church in his *Letter to an unnamed master*, 13 (*Opera Omnia* VIII, 336). And it is indeed striking that the Apologists presented the Crucified One of Calvary as the very wisdom the Greeks had sought for centuries. Saint Francis was a *locus theologicus* for Saint Bonaventure. It seems

beyond question that Saint Francis was a source of Bonaventure's Christian philosophy wherein reason takes its honourable place under the guidance of faith from the outset. This places natural theology and all philosophical theology in the context of the actual knowledge of the Living God revealed in Jesus Christ. These therefore become a moment in the movement of the mind, illumined by divine light, towards contemplative union with God. It was through the gift of faith and the insights that accompany it, that Saint Francis penetrated the mystery of existence and the meaning of all creatures.

So far from being against study, I fancy Saint Francis is whispering to us in the midst of our celebrations of the eighth centenary of his birth, that we should immerse ourselves in our theological tradition and enter into fresh dialogue with it, until it becomes part of the very air we breathe and forms the structures of our vision of God, humanity, and the world. This tradition has never had more importance than at present.

In an article in *The Tablet* recently on a debate about freedom and authority the author, C. J. Hamson, one-time Professor of Comparative Law at Cambridge, makes a noteworthy comment. I intend no offense to Saint Thomas in quoting Professor Hamson's words. My purpose is to stress the obligation incumbent on us to do all in our power to appropriate and share the rich treasures of the tradition to which we are so often neglectful heirs. Professor Hamson writes:

> It is a pity that St Thomas Aquinas, whom I greatly admire, was so powerful a mind and so destructive a theologian: the world we inhabit today would have been, I think, less ferocious if more of St Bonaventure had managed to survive Aquinas—if some of the music of the spheres had survived Galileo and Newton [17 Oct. 1981, 1014]. Ω

St. Bonaventure University

New Life

The sun just up
it stretches pink-streaked arms of light
high above its mountain bed
and wakes the day.

An orchestra of sound fills up the valley down below.
A million creatures tune their strings,
their music echoes in my ears
a million dancing tambourines.

The birds in chorus take their cue,
their song is full of news;
it travels through the busy rush of telegraphing trees.

The air is warm and fragrant as the sun begins to climb,
wet with dew the grasses shine,
each curling blade blinks back the light
and wakens too.

And now the sun pours down its power;
A murmur from the garden says
the bees have come—they seek the flower.

Swaying gently on her stalk
a bud unwraps her sheltered bloom,
a movement imperceptible,
So silently, a rose is born.

Sister Edmund Marie, C.S.B.

Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* as a Contemplative Work—II

PATRICK F. O'CONNELL

SINCE IT IS OBVIOUSLY neither practicable nor particularly advisable to examine every section of the *Tree of Life* in detail, we will select certain especially significant meditations for reflection, while giving some indication of the nature of the intervening material. We will continue to direct our attention to the contemplative dimension of the treatise, and to Bonaventure's methods for developing this dimension from the more imaginative, affective, and moral concerns which would initially attract many of his readers.

One index of Bonaventure's sensitivity to his audience is the way he includes them in the meditative process gradually and progressively. Rather than taking the reader's commitment for granted, he works to awaken such a commitment where it is lacking and to deepen it where it is already present. The call to divine union in the Prologue is developed almost exclusively in terms of "the true worshipper of God and disciple of Christ," with no presumption that this description does nor does not apply to the reader. The principal demand made upon the audience is to use the imagination ("Picture in your mind a tree . . ."), which constitutes, along with a couple of generalized references to "us" (Prol. 2, 6; pp. 119, 122), the only departure from the third-person format.

Bonaventure does begin the first section in the body of the treatise with a direct warning not to reduce the eternal generation of the Son to a human, temporal level, but to believe and contemplate it as a mystery; but neither here nor in the following section, on the historical preparation for the Incarnation, does he follow his usual

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procedure of moving from a description of the scriptural scene to a more personal application. Not until the third meditation, "Jesus Sent from Heaven," is the reader addressed conditionally rather than in the imperative:

> Oh, if you could feel in some way the quality and intensity of that fire sent from heaven, the refreshing coolness that accompanied it, the consolation it imparted; if you could realize the great exhaltation [sic] of the Virgin Mother, the ennobling of the human race, the condescension of the divine majesty; if you could hear the Virgin singing with joy; if you could go with your Lady into the mountainous region; if you could see the sweet embrace of the Virgin and the woman who had been sterile and hear the greeting in which the tiny servant recognized his Lord, the herald his Judge and the voice his Word, then I am sure you would sing in sweet tones with the Blessed Virgin that sacred hymn: *My soul magnifies the Lord* . . . ; and with the tiny prophet you would exalt, rejoice and adore the marvelous virginal conception! [3; pp. 127–28].

The invitation to share Mary's experience is clearly being given, but only by indirection, lest an uninitiated reader be faced with expectations he cannt meet. Even the sequence of "if" clauses moves from the ideal, an intimate, immediate awareness of the divine Presence (feel the fire, the coolness, the consolation) to an intellectual apprehension (realize) to the more external level of the senses (hear, go with, see, hear), a progression of diminishing intensity and involvement. Yet Bonaventure's images ("fire sent from heaven," "refreshing coolness"—i.e., wind), taken not from the Annunciation account but from the Pentecost scene, the occasion when the Spirit was received by all the disciples, indicate that involvement, intense involvement, on the part of the audience is the aim underlying the imaginative representation. Equally important is the emphasis on participation at the conclusion, where the meditation is completed by an act of praise, by making one's own the words and roles of those who accept and welcome God into their lives.

The meditation on the nativity which follows does use the characteristic imperative, but not to address the reader:

> Now, then, my soul, embrace that divine manger; press your lips upon and kiss the boy's feet. Then in your mind keep the shepherds' watch, marvel at the assembling host of angels, join in the heavenly melody, singing with your voice and heart: *Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will* [4, p. 129].

The appeal here may seem at first to be strictly affective, even sentimental; yet certain peculiarities should alert us to Bonaventure's actual intentions. The progression away from the apparent central focus, the crib, to more peripheral figures: the shepherds and finally the angels, is actually a movement from an initial emotional engagement through an intellectual stance to a more spiritual response. As in the previous section, the act of praise is particularly suited for this first fruit, "His Distinguished Origin." Hugging the crib and kissing the babe are strictly imaginative re-creations of the past, whereas joining the angels in glorifying God is both supremely appropriate in the present and a foreshadowing of eschatological fulfillment, when all will sing "the heavenly melody" forever. Thus Bonaventure takes into account a variety of readers, from those attracted to simple, heartfelt devotion to those more inclined to "watch" and wait like the shepherds, and is able to encourage in them, still subtly and indirectly, a more mature response. Those already more familiar with the contemplative tradition are not neglected either. Earlier in this section Bonaventure had described Jesus as coming forth from the womb "*like a bridegroom from his bridal chamber*" (p. 128). Obviously inapplicable on a literal level, the quotation (from Ps. 19:5) suggests an underlying mystical dimension to the whole meditation, and particularly to the gesture of kissing Jesus' feet, which in Bernard's third Sermon on the Canticle symbolizes repentance and conversion, the first of three steps to mystical communion.[12]

Beginning with the second fruit, "The Humility of His Mode of Life," the meditations are addressed to an unspecified "you," which may be the reader or may continue to be the author's own soul. This ambiguity allows each reader to proceed at his own rate toward iden-

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[12] *Works of Bernard of Clairvaux*, vol. 2: *On the Song of Songs I*, trans. Kilian Walsh, O.C.S.O. (Spencer, MA: Cistercian Publications, 1971), pp. 16–18.

tifying with the author's reflection and prayer and making them his own. Only with the tenth section, specifically written to "the disciple of Christ," does Bonaventure indicate that the audience is to join in the meditation (though for convenience' sake we shall refer to "the reader" in earlier sections as well).

After contrasting the humility of Jesus with the pride and hypocrisy of the sinner in the section on the circumcision, Bonaventure concretizes this opposition by focusing on the nature of true kingship in "Jesus Shown to the Magi." Kings themselves, the Magi must distinguish between "the humble king" Jesus and "the treacherous king" Herod. But as "a companion of the holy kings," who must also choose "not to follow Herod's pride" but to "adore, confess and praise this humble God" (6; p. 130), the reader too is implicitly regarded as a king and challenged to recognize the true marks of kingship. This claim to royalty is finally seen to be founded not on an imaginative identity with the Magi but on a real participation in the kingship of Jesus. The meditation concludes: "You will return to your country in the footsteps of the humble Christ" (p. 131), where the country to which we return is not Persia, or wherever, but the kingdom of God, and we no longer accompany the Magi but Jesus, who alone can properly be said to "return" to that country. His kingdom can be called "your country" only to the extent that his kingship, which is characterized by total humility, is shared by the disciple. Bonaventure is suggesting here what he will proclaim directly toward the end of the *Tree of Life*: "The kingdom of the most excellent King where all the just reign with him . . . is not divided by the number of those who reign; nor lessened by being shared . . ." (45, "Jesus, King, Son of the King"; p. 169).

The section on the presentation which follows once again begins but does not remain on the affective level:

> Rejoice, then, with that blessed old man and the aged Anna; walk forth to meet the mother and Child. Let love overcome your bashfulness; let affection dispel your fear. Receive the Infant in your arms and say with the bride: *I took hold of him and would not let him go*. Dance with the holy old man and sing with him: *Now dismiss your servant, Lord, according to your word in peace* [7; p. 131].

After the conventional expression of emotion, the quotation from Canticles (3:4) breaks through the imaginative construct and signals an entirely different metaphorical milieu, one singularly inappropriate to the literal sense (i.e., "Crazed old woman steals baby in Temple!").

Suddenly it is not the cute infant we are holding, but the Bridegroom of the soul, the Bridegroom of the Church. As he continually does throughout the treatise, Bonaventure has moved from χρονος to καιρος—from historic, chronological time to the salvific moment. The setting of the encounter is no longer an imagined Temple of the first century but the presence of (the risen) Christ, here and now.

After this striking revelation, the reference to Simeon appears anticlimactic and out of order (Simeon precedes Anna in the gospel account). But upon reflection Bonaventure's mastery of his material is again demonstrated. The reference to the old man dancing, not in Luke's account, suggests David dancing before the ark, which here, as later for Dante (cf. *Purgatorio*, canto 10), typifies humility, and is particularly appropriate in the Temple context. Even more significantly, the "Nunc dimittis" betokens a humble confession that even a brief look, a momentary touch, is more than enough, which tempers the passion and apparent possessiveness of the verse from Canticles. It also prepares for the following section's humble awareness that the presence of Jesus is not a right but a gift, that like Mary seeking her lost Son, each Christian must search for Jesus unceasingly.

In the meditations on the public life, the third and fourth fruits, it becomes increasingly evident that the goal of these exercises is nothing less than union with God. In the baptism scene the reader is invited not only to experience regeneration in Jesus (the moral level) but through the opening of the heavens to "explore his secrets so that . . . you will be taken up into God" (9; p. 133). The meditation on the temptation which follows again urges the reader to "search into the secrets of solitude" in order to become "an imitator and sharer" of Christ's testing and triumph (10; p. 134). For Bonaventure these roles are not so much synonymous as sequential: the former, referring to the pursuit of the virtues and the development of the moral life, should prepare for and lead into the latter, a more intrinsic participation in the reality of Jesus, which involves not just a change of habit but a change of identity.

This progression is also basic to the meditation on the transfiguration:

> So the soul devoted to Christ, strengthened in truth and borne to the summit of virtue, can faithfully say with Peter: *Lord, it is good for us to be here*, in the serene enjoyment of contemplating you. When heavenly repose and ecstasy are given to the soul, it will hear *the secret words which man is not permitted to speak* [12; pp. 135–36].

Here the affective dimension, represented by devotion to Christ, and the moral dimension of "truth" and "virtue" are treated not as ends in themselves but as integral stages in the journey to the mountain top of contemplation, to an ecstatic union where the "secret words" are not human speech but God's own self-communication. Though a foretaste of the final goal, the transfiguration scene here, as in the Gospels, is less a climax than an encouragement to perseverance. Even on the mount Jesus "foretold that he would be rejected in his passion" (p. 135), and succeeding sections present him as "the Solicitous Shepherd" who lays down his life for his sheep (13; pp. 136–37) and the "Fountain of all mercy" who weeps for the misery and depravity of mankind (14; pp. 137–38).

Even if less exalted in tone than the transfiguration, the meditation on the Last Supper provides a more satisfactory conclusion to the first major segment of the treatise, "On the Mystery of His Origin," because it brings together the dimensions of communion and sacrifice:

> Here not only the paschal lamb was presented to be eaten but also the immaculate Lamb, *who takes away the sins of the world* (John 1:29). Under the appearance of bread *having all delight and the pleasantness of every taste* (Wis. 16:20), he was given as food [16; p. 139].

The repetition of the verse from Wisdom, already used in the Prologue, signals the close relationship of this sacramental section with the original description of the tree of life, where Christ was also presented as both redeemer and nourishment. Just as the fruits of the tree signified various "states, excellences, powers and works" of Christ (Prol. 4; p. 121), so "the marvelous sweetness of Christ's goodness," "the marvelous example of his humility," "the marvelous richness of his generosity," "the marvelous outpouring of his love" not only shine forth at the Last Supper, but are received by the disciple who receives Jesus in the Eucharist, and who finds them "full of sweetness." Yet as in the Prologue and the preceding meditations, the goal is not only moral transformation but that deep union of persons symbolized by Jesus "offering to John his breast as a pleasant and sacred place of rest." Such intimacy inspires the spiritual journey of the true disciple, "who, having been called to so distinguished a banquet, runs with all the ardor of his spirit so that he may cry out with the Prophet: *As the stag longs for the springs of water so my soul longs for you, O God!*" But these springs, which recall the "ever-flowing fountain" that waters the tree of life in the Prologue (3; p. 120), are finally to be identified with "*the fountain of living water springing up into eternal life*" (30; p. 155) which flowed from the side of the crucified Christ. So we are brought to the Passion.

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THE NOTICEABLY DETACHED perspective which marks the early sections on the passion is emphasized by the impersonal introduction to the first meditation: "The first thing that occurs to one who wishes to contemplate devoutly the passion of Jesus Christ is the perfidy of the traitor" (17; p. 140). This muted tone is continued in the ostensible point of this meditation, the moral lesson provided by Jesus' "marvelous kindness" toward Judas: "This meekness was given as an example to mortal men . . . when exasperated by a friend." Yet in refusing to raise the level of emotional involvement too soon, Bonaventure is of course exercising firm artistic control, even as beneath the surface the groundwork both for the reader's complicity in the death of Jesus and for his redemption through it is being firmly laid. As the echo of the key word "marvelous" indicates, this section is actually the Last Supper meditation rewritten from the perspective of the passion. When Bonaventure says that Judas was so hardened "that he could not be called back from the evil he had conceived by the intimacy of the banquet, the humility of Christ's deference or the sweetness of his words," he is clearly referring to the descriptions of the Eucharist, the foot-washing, and the farewell discourse of the previous section. The quiet horror of the betrayal arises precisely from the realization that it was done by one invited, like the reader, to share in that intimacy of union with Jesus: "here was a man, another self, who seemed to be a companion and friend, who ate the bread of Christ and at that sacred supper partook sweet food with him." Here the phrase "another self" suggests Judas' apparent closeness to Jesus, and perhaps the disturbing similarity between his status and that of the reader as well. Bonaventure concludes the meditation by anticipating the actual scene of the betrayal:

> This most mild Lamb did not refuse to apply with a sweet kiss his mouth *in which no guile was found* to the mouth which abounded in iniquity in order to give the traitor every opportunity to soften the obstinacy of his perverse heart.

Here the emphasis is not, as in the gospel, on the kiss of Judas, but on that of Jesus: the kiss of the mouth, the third step in Saint Bernard's

passage to mystical communion,[13] has no effect on Judas, whose gesture is of course a total rejection of that communion even while conforming to it in appearance.

After sections on the agony and the arrest, which focus on Jesus' humanity and divinity, respectively, Bonaventure concludes the fifth fruit, "His Confidence in Trials," by returning to the figure of Judas. For the first time in the passion sequence there is an appeal to emotional involvement, but it is still indirect: "Finally, who could hear without grief how the cruel executioners laid murderous hands upon the King of Glory . . . ?" (20; p. 143). It is in effect an invitation to share the "sting of grief" which penetrated the hearts of his disciples,

> when they saw their beloved Master and Lord betrayed by their fellow disciple and led to death, hands bound behind his back like an evildoer, and when that impious Judas, driven by remorse, afterwards was filled with such bitterness because of this that he preferred to die rather than live!

The grammatical parallelism both of verbs ("betrayed"/"led") and of clauses ("when they saw . . ."/"when that impious Judas . . .") emphasizes how much the "sting" is caused by their acute consciousness that one of their own number, a "fellow disciple," is the betrayer, so that the overall effect is to stress what Judas had in common with the apostles and by implication with the reader. If Judas is finally seen, in contrast to the disciple who "longs for the springs of water" (16), as "that man who did not return to the fountain of mercy," yet in him is embodied the very real option of refusing the invitation of Christ.

The reader's identification with the disciples becomes explicit in "Jesus Denied by His Own," the next section, where Peter's repentance of his denial is both a contrast to Judas' despair and a model for the reader, who is addressed directly for the first time since the fifteenth meditation:

> O whoever you are, who at the word of an insistent servant, that is your flesh, by will or act have shamelessly denied Christ, who suffered for you, remember the passion of your beloved Master and go out with Peter to weep most bitterly over yourself. When the one who looked upon the weeping Peter looks upon you, you will be inebriated with *the wormwood* of a twofold bitterness: remorse for yourself and compassion for Christ, so that having been cleansed with Peter for the guilt of your crime,[14] with Peter you will be filled with the spirit of holiness [21; pp. 144–45].

[13]Cf. Ibid., pp. 19–20; this sentence is the first of a series of borrowings by Bonaventure from a meditation by the twelfth-century Benedictine Abbot Eckbert of Schonau, later attributed to St. Anselm and circulated under his name. See *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 158, cols. 748–61.

Here as elsewhere in this middle sequence, a focus on the reader's own sinfulness and complicity in the events of the passion is not intended to stir up guilt for guilt's sake. The forgiveness of Peter, whom "his kind Master looked upon . . . with mercy and grace," represents God's steadfast love for all sinners, whose remorse and compassion, signs of genuine repentance on moral and affective levels, respectively, lead them to "be filled with the spirit of holiness," to experience the new life of the resurrection. Even at this early stage of the passion account, Bonaventure uses the figure of Peter, who denied and was restored, to present the full effect of the redemption.

The emotional appeal of the call to tears, repeated indirectly in the prayers which conclude the next two sections, is again directed toward the reader's own culpability in "Jesus Condemned to Death": "And you, lost man, the cause of all this confusion and sorrow, how is it that you do not break down and weep?" (24; pp. 146–47). This accusation of responsibility for Christ's sufferings is the author's condemnation, not merely of the reader, the "other," but of himself as well, as he turns to his own soul: "Behold, he pays back for you *what he did not steal*. And you, my wicked and impious soul, you do not repay him with gratitude and devotion nor do you recompense him with compassion." Here at the very midpoint of the treatise, the affective dimension reaches perhaps its highest pitch, as the pointed contrast between Christ's generosity and the soul's ingratitude accentuates the awareness of guilt. Yet even at this point the basis for a more deeply contemplative approach to the passion is forming. The key word of this entire fruit is "compassion," used first in the section on the denial, then at the conclusion of the next meditation, where the soul's "inner compassion" (22; p. 145) leads to tears, and again at the end of this meditation. While it can and does refer to feelings of sorrow and pity, the root meaning of compassion is "to suffer with," i.e.,

[14]Cousins' translation of "expiatus cum Petro a reatu sceleris" (*Decem opuscula*, p. 157) as "having atoned with Peter for the guilt of your crime" is misleading here. The participial construction is clearly passive, and should be translated "having been cleansed (from)," since the expiation is done not by the sinner but by Christ, and since it is not the guilt but the crime which is atoned for. De Vinck's rendering, "relieved like Peter of the guilt of your crime" (p. 119) is better, but loses the traditional redemptive associations which the term "expiatus" carries.

to share in the passion. This definition, which suggests that feelings of grief are to lead to a death to self, which is also a participation in the death of Jesus, takes us back to the verse from Galatians which began the Prologue, and prepares us for the profound treatment of the crucifixion which is to come.

Bonaventure's psychological acuity is never more evident than in the subtle change of tone in "Jesus Scorned by All," which begins the seventh fruit. After the unflinching imputation of individual responsibility for the passion in the previous section, this meditation is addressed more generally and impersonally to the "pride of the human heart" (25; p. 147). This primal sin, that of Satan and of Adam, is both "the disease" Jesus came to heal and the one cause which can keep the remedy from taking effect. Those who "are lifted high in pride" not only contrast the humiliated Christ, "who is accounted as a *leper and the last of men*," but set themselves up as an alternate sign of salvation, a counterfeit image of the cross and resurrection. Refusing to acknowledge their need for redemption, they choose to align themselves with the tormentors and mockers of Jesus, "*placing on display again the Son of God.*" This focus on pride, then, not only serves to universalize the guilt, but implicitly encourages the reader to admit his dependence on the saving power of Christ by dissociating himself from those who stubbornly cling to their self-righteousness.

If the previous section might be described as exemplifying Jesus' words, "He who is not with me is against me" (Lk. 11:23), the meditation on "Jesus Nailed to the Cross," the thematic center of the entire treatise, reveals just what the decision to be "with me" actually demands. After considering the process of crucifixion in detail, Bonaventure addresses the soul in the first person, a form which by this point functions not to distinguish but to unite author and reader:

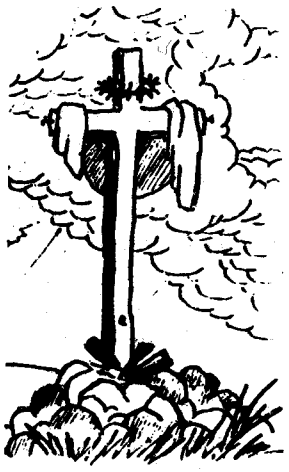
> See, now, my soul, how he who is *God blessed above all things*, is totally submerged in the waters of suffering from *the sole of the foot to the top of the head*. In order that he might draw you out totally from these sufferings, *the waters have come up to his soul* [26; pp. 148–49].

Here the passion itself is shown to typify the traditional baptismal symbolism of immersion and emergence as dying and rising: the physical sufferings ("from the sole . . .") and spiritual anguish (". . . up to his soul") of Jesus lead not only to his death ("totally submerged") but to new life for others ("draw you out totally"). The background for this imagery is obviously Jesus' own reference to his death as a baptism, which in one significant instance focuses on the

disciples' part in their Master's sacrifice: "Can you . . . be baptized with the baptism with which I must be baptized?" (Mk. 10:38); cf. also Lk. 12:50). For Paul as well, baptism is a passage from death to life for each Christian because it represents the passion: "When we were baptized in Christ Jesus we were baptized in his death; in other words, when we were baptized we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life" (Rm. 6:3–4).

Thus Bonaventure's choice of imagery prepares the way for an explicit awareness that the invitation to union with Christ includes, indeed is founded on, participation in his death:

> And then transfixed with nails, he appeared to you as your beloved cut through with wound upon wound in order to heal you. Who will grant me that my request should come about and that God will give me what I long for, that having been totally transpierced in both mind and flesh, I may be fixed with my beloved to the yoke of the cross?



Surely one of the most beautiful expressions of Franciscan passion-mysticism, this passage fuses the bridal imagery of Christ the Bridegroom, whose limitless love reveals him to be infinitely lovable, with the body imagery of being crucified with him. Job's cry of longing for death (Job 6:8) is placed in a totally new and positive context, which signifies that death to self is life in Christ, the soul's Beloved: the moment of crucifixion is also the moment of union. The key phrase "totally transpierced in both mind and flesh" ("totus tam mente quam carne transfodiar")[15] not only applies to the reader the same term used to describe the crucifixion ("transfixed" = "transfossus"), and parallels the dual reference to Christ's own mental and physical sufferings ("totally submerged," etc.); by repeating exactly the wording from the opening section of the Prologue ("tam mente quam carne")[16] it reminds us that in sharing Christ's passion the basic purpose of the entire work, as expressed in the opening quotation from Galatians, is achieved. Yet the meditation ends not with a state-

[15] *Decem opuscula*, p. 160.

[16] Ibid., p. 137.

ment but with a question: this participation is considered not as an accomplished fact but as a goal to be sought, as "what I long for." But if this longing has truly been awakened in the reader, Bonaventure is confident that no obstacle, even death itself, can stand in the way of its ultimate fulfillment.

By situating this crucial meditation closer to the midpoint than to the end of the passion sequence, Bonaventure has created for himself the formal problem of how to keep the succeeding meditations from being anti-climactic. His success in doing so demonstrates once again his mastery of tone and control of his material. By drawing our attention to the thieves crucified with Jesus, the next meditation immediately counters any presumptuous or self-inflating interpretations of the preceding section, since the first person to share the death of Jesus is not a just man but a notorious sinner-criminal, who nevertheless exemplifies that "however great a sinner you are" (27; p. 150), peace and pardon will be given "if you do not shrink from following the footsteps of the Lord God who is suffering for you." This section also moves beyond the fact of death by its triple repetition of the promise of Jesus, "*Today you will be with me in paradise.*"

The concluding meditation of the seventh fruit shifts the focus to Christ's mother in what may appear to be typically medieval misproportion, but in fact the significance of Mary at Calvary lies precisely in her role as sharer in the passion of her Son: "You were present at all these events, standing close by and participating in them in every way" (28; p. 152). Physically seeing the external sufferings of Jesus and experiencing his interior anguish with the "eye" of her mind, Mary is described as being "more deeply pierced by a sword of compassion than if you had suffered in your own body." Here the word "compassion" is unquestionably used in its root sense, and is matched by Christ's own "compassion for . . . his most sweet mother," which adds to his "sadness and sorrow." The Christian's prayer to be "totally transpierced in both mind and flesh" has been realized in Mary: more profoundly than the repentant thief, she is the model for all who desire to share in the redemptive death of Jesus.

The general title of the eighth fruit, "Victory in the Conflict of Death," indicates that Bonaventure's major concern at this stage is to stress not the pathos of Christ's death but its salvific power. Consequently the first of these concluding meditations on the passion shows a relative neglect of realistic physical detail in favor of a more emblematic presentation of the figure of the dead Jesus, described both as the "Fountain of Life," now "dried up," and as "the true Sun of

justice" whose eclipse causes "the visible sun" to hide its rays "out of compassion for its Maker" (29; p. 153). The analogy between the earthquake, in which "hard rocks crack as if out of natural compassion," and the human heart, which should likewise be "struck with terror . . . moved with compassion . . . shattered with compunction . . . softened with devoted love," not only recapulates earlier references to hard-heartedness but suggests the process of transformation, through compassion, by which the old self is destroyed and the new self recreated in Christ.

The rich typology of "Jesus Pierced with a Lance" both reworks the emblems of the previous section and again links Bonaventure's teaching on the passion to the imagery of the Prologue. Jesus "sleeping on the cross" (30; p. 154) is the new Adam from whose side the Church is formed through the sacramental flow of blood and water. This "Fountain of Life" is no longer perceived as dried up, but as the source of living water restoring the cosmic harmony lost in Eden: "Apply your mouth to draw water from the Savior's fountains for this is the river arising from the midst of paradise which, divided into four branches and flowing into devout hearts, waters and makes fertile the whole earth." This association of the Tree of Life and paradise with the Church recalls that in the Prologue Eden itself is identified with the Church: "Picture in your mind a tree whose roots are watered by an ever-flowing fountain that becomes a great and living river with four channels to water the garden of the entire Church" (Prol. 3; p. 120). This association is reinforced by the reference to the Tree of Life in Rev. 22, where it is situated in the midst of the New Jerusalem, again alongside the stream of living water. Thus the image of the Tree is firmly fixed by Bonaventure in an ecclesial setting, which serves to counter an overly individualistic spirituality of the passion. Within the context of this primary relationship between Christ and the Church, the mystical communion of the individual soul with its divine Lover is properly situated: now it is Jesus who is the true rock, which will not shatter, in which the spear-thrust forms a "hollow place" where the soul can take refuge: "Rise, therefore, beloved of Christ, be like the dove that makes its nest in the heights in the mouth of a cleft. There, like a sparrow that finds a home, do not cease to keep watch; there, like the turtledove, hide the offsprings of your chaste love." The imagery suggests not only security but intimacy, both the resurrection and the heights of contemplation, where the virtues engendered in the soul, "offsprings" (or, changing the metaphor, "fruits") of this love, are protected and nurtured. The tone is no longer one of sorrow but of

deep peace and secure hope.

After similar typological treatment of Christ's blood as "the priestly robe of red" (31; p. 156) and the garment of Joseph, sacrificed by his brothers, the final topic for meditation is ostensibly the burial of Jesus, but it is the figure of Mary Magdalene which Bonaventure uses to recapitulate his consideration of the passion. As a reformed sinner who not only "bathed the tomb with her tears" but was also "borne along by such a burning in her heart, moved by such sweetness of piety and drawn by such strong bonds of love" (32; p. 157), she unites in herself moral, affective, and contemplative responses, with the last predominating:

> Ablaze with the fire of divine love, she burned with such a powerful desire and was wounded with such an impatient love that nothing had any taste for her except to be able to weep and to utter in truth those words of the Prophet: *My tears were my food day and night, as they say to me day after day: "Where is your God?"* (Ps. 41:4).

Though the context is one of sorrow, the choice of images indicates that this sorrow is about to be turned into the joy of the resurrection: the wound of love, which suggests Magdalene's own participation in Christ's sufferings, is also the traditional expression of mystical desire; references to food and tasting, now associated only with weeping, are reminders of the true nourishment provided by the tree of life; even the taunting question "Where is your God?" recalls Mary's own words to the angels at the tomb, "They have taken my Lord away and I don't know where they have put him" (Jn. 20:13). The very use of Psalm 41 parallels the quotation from the same source at the conclusion of the Last Supper meditation, which occupied the corresponding position at the close of the first part of the treatise: the suggestion is that Magdalene's desire ("desiderio")[17] makes her the true disciple of that earlier passage, who longs for ("desiderat")[18] God alone.

Here, however, the meditation continues beyond the psalm verse to address Christ directly. The significance of this extraordinary prayer for a proper appreciation of the method and goal of the treatise cannot be overemphasized:

> O my God, good Jesus, although I am in every way without merit and unworthy, grant to me, who did not merit to be present at these events in the body, that I may ponder them faithfully in my mind and experience toward you, my God crucified and put to death for me, that feeling of compassion which your innocent mother and the penitent Magdalene experienced at the very hour of your passion.

[17]Ibid., p. 166.

[18]Ibid., p. 153.

Deliberately distancing himself from the time of the events, the speaker nevertheless asks to experience in himself the same response as those physically present "at the very hour" of the crucifixion. If this petition is taken seriously, as it must be, it expresses Bonaventure's belief that the compassion of Christ's mother and of Magdalene, the sharing in the passion and death of Christ by the innocent and the repentant, is available now, not merely as imaginative re-creation, but as a spiritual experience of the most profound import. Here, in the language of prayer, Bonaventure presents the fundamental theological insight on which the *Tree of Life* is constructed: the grace of redemption is appropriated, is made one's own, as the grace of participation. "With Christ I am nailed to the cross": for Bonaventure as for Francis this is not a metaphor but the divine gift of life in all its richness. Ω

The Seed

"Unless a seed falls to the ground and dies,
it remains a single grain,
but if it dies, it produces much fruit . . . "

My hard round self,
dropped from I know not where,
lands amid the craggy ground of darkness.

Oh heavy darkness!
You invade me from every side and
encircle me in your moist embrace.

What is this sweet attack?
Good God, my being's cracked!
I'm seeping away into this vast nothingness.

I'm little, growing ever less, lying on
and in and through a thousand broken shells,
older than my self.

But now I see,
I'm. . . .

And the brown broken land is bare no more,
a tiny green carpet covers its nakedness and
reveals its hidden wealth.

Philip Bruce, O.F.M.Cap.

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Books Received

Ellis, Marc H., *Peter Maurin: Prophet in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Paulist Press, 1981. Pp. viii-191. Paper, $9.95.

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A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

EDITORIAL

The Inner Eye

EVEN BEFORE FRANCIS was named the patron of ecology he was known by people all over the world as the "saint who loved nature." He was truly a lover of creation, one who felt at home among the beauties of the created world. He felt such a deep bond with all of creation that he addressed each element as brother or sister. He knew intuitively the inherent bonds shared by all creation from the tiniest atom to the image of God . . . the human person.

Celano, his first biographer, tried to convey to us Francis' feeling and gratitude for creation, but in the end he queried: "For who could ever give expression to the very great affection he bore for all things that are God's?" (1Cel 80). So it was not that he found God within the created world, but that it reminded him of God.

In that same biography, Celano demonstrated this through his comment about Francis' reflection upon flowers. "He used to turn the eye of consideration immediately to the beauty of that flower that comes from the root of Jesse and gives light in the days of spring and by its fragrance has raised innumerable thousands from the dead" (1Cel 81).

So everything, every part of creation, led Francis to reflect on the person of Jesus.

This kind of sensitivity which allowed Francis to be drawn toward Christ is born out of his deep contemplation, his own interior union with the Lord. One does not come to see the beauty of the created world as revealing Christ unless by grace. This kind of beauty is seen only by the "inner eye." It is not simply the vision of the trained aesthetic; it is the vision of the mystic whose eyes have been given the gift of sight.

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Francis found God within himself. The Lord made a dwelling place of his heart and filled Francis with a light that illumined his vision. This was his life's work: to make a fitting dwelling place within himself for the Lord. He encouraged all his followers to do the same in chapter 22 of the Rule of 1221: "We should make a dwelling place within ourselves where he can stay, he who is the Lord God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

It was because he met the Lord within his heart that he was able to find signs of God's presence everywhere else in the world, but especially among the outcasts of society. All that he once found bitter was transformed into sweetness once he allowed himself to come under the Lord's influence. He tells us this in his Testament: "When I was in sin, the sight of lepers nauseated me beyond measure; but then God himself led me into their company, and I had pity on them. When I had once become acquainted with them, what had previously nauseated me became a source of spiritual and physical consolation for me." This consolation, or what we have come to call "sweetness," transformed his whole way of viewing life and all of creation. It was this new-found sight that allowed him to see the beauty of persons and things even when they were not that pleasing to the physical eye.

Through this revolution that took place within his heart he realized his own dignity in Christ and, therefore, the dignity of all persons regardless of their physical appearance, their position in society, or their possessions. It was especially in poor people that he always found Jesus, because Jesus himself had a predilection for the poor, for those ordinarily overlooked by others. It was among the poor that God chose to send his Son, and Francis took his example from the Lord himself.

Francis called his community to share in this preference for the poor and to be poor themselves. He gave them this reason for their poverty: "And there is no reason why they should be ashamed, because God made himself poor for us in the world" (RegB 6).

Throughout his life Francis was open to the Lord's inspiration, and the Spirit trained his heart to see traces of the Lord's face in all of creation. But it was in the faces of his brothers and sisters, especially the poor, that the heart of Christ was revealed to him. And so his life became an endless rhythm for the journey within and the journey outside of himself.

Because we share in his charism, we also share in this journey. The witness of his life and the integrity of his words challenge us to be persons intent on providing the Lord with a dwelling place within our hearts so that we may see his love present in the world. Then our contemplation will be more than some aesthetic exercise, and our action will be more than the expansion of our ego. There will be a wholeness in our lives which reveals Christ within us and changes our vision so we can find him everywhere at work in the world. Ω

Madge Karecki, SSJ-TOSF

Becoming Empty: The Core of Franciscan Spirituality—I

SISTER SUZANNE THERESE HALFEN, O.S.F.

I. Indifference and the "More"

KARL RAHNER REFLECTS upon the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius in his own book entitled *Spiritual Exercises*. While Rahner deals extensively with the entire process of the Exercises, this paper will focus on one key aspect of the spiritual journey—the experience of indifference and the "More" (Rahner, p. 23). In studying this concept of the "More," it is apparent that one cannot come to an understanding of it without first grappling with what Rahner refers to as "indifference" (Ibid.). Rahner prefaces his statements regarding the "More" with a fairly extensive explanation of indifference, which he describes as "a kind of removal or distance away from things that makes true vision possible and is required for a proper decision" (Ibid.).

Indifference, then, is that stance in relation to all created things which leaves us in relationship to creation and yet free from it. It exists in the core of our being and is a precondition for any truly radical experience of the indwelling presence of God. This is not to say that indifference is a "state" which we reach in all its totality and, having captured the essence of it, are then capable of moving to the next step in our journey to the Holy. Rather, becoming indifferent is a life-long process in our journey in the Lord. It is a process which demands everything and transforms all that is given. As Rahner states, "Indifferent is what we must become. But this does not come about through good will alone, or by saying that I am indifferent; for indifference is something that must enter into the nerves and the very marrow of the bones" (Ibid., p. 24).

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This indifference is a gradual process of letting go. We begin by identifying those obvious things which hold us "captive" by virtue of our tenacious grasp on them. We begin by emptying ourselves, stripping ourselves of all that does not seem to be necessary. We struggle to free ourselves of those things which have become the focus of our hearts, so that we may begin to focus clearly on the "More" which beckons to us. Rahner speaks of the process of freeing ourselves from our encumbrances when he writes:

> This distance from things is a goal that must always be re-won again and again. . . . We love things, we have confidence in them because of the immediate relationship to our own corporality, we have tasted them in sweetness and in sorrow, we have absorbed them in love or in fear. Therefore, we need the courage to undertake ever new beginnings, and we need the power to break loose from that which holds us [Ibid.].

Yet this indifference is not achieved merely by our own "letting go." In fact, we still possess a great deal when we have the control of our own emptying. As we grow more deeply in the mystery of God's presence within us, we begin to know that we are called to let go of *all*, to give him the reins of our heart, *to allow him to empty us according to his will* or, as Rahner states, "This active indifference is surrendered and protected by man's humble handling over of himself to God's good pleasure" (Ibid.).

It becomes clear, then, that this process of becoming indifferent leaves us more and more acutely aware of and concerned with all things of life. For it is in the dailiness of our lives that the Spirit moves within us to purify and empty us, leaving us ever more ready to welcome him in the space created within us.

Rahner brings us then to his concept of the "More," which is the purpose of indifference. "Indifference does not exist for its own sake, but for the choice of 'what is more conducive to the end' " (Ibid., p. 26). That is, we empty ourselves and allow ourselves to be emptied for the sole purpose of enabling ourselves to enter into a clear and uncluttered relationship with Jesus, who continually calls to us

from the core of our being and invites us to come closer, to enter more deeply, to know more profoundly the fullness of his presence. Because we are creatures, however, the prospect of entering into such a dynamic and penetrating experience of relationship with the triune presence in our own hearts fills us with more than a little fear! We are inclined to cling fast to what we know, rather than risk the possibilities of the Unknown. And so Jesus beckons to us, little by little. He draws us beyond ourselves. He invites us to stretch beyond our present experience. He draws us through the longings of our hearts to make space for the "More" that he is, and to be receptive to the "More" he longs to give. Finally, all this can happen only if we place ourselves in his hands, if we rest in him and allow him to fashion us according to his will. We grasp at nothing, not even ourselves, in order that he may hold us firmly. Rahner describes this experience:

> Essentially, what I am saying is that we have here no lasting city, that God is the always-greater One, that he will respond to us if we remain supple and do not direct ourselves in one way and one way only. We should protect ourselves from that inner hardening that can be observed sometimes in the so-called "patent ascetics." We should remain elastic—always ready for that call of God that will lead us to higher things. The more we love God, the more we will experience his ever greater distance from us, and the more we will want to be in awe at the holy unconditionedness of his demands [Ibid.].

We fall into him with the recklessness of faith through which we are able to lose all for the sake of the "More."

The Dynamics of Indifference and the "More"

Johannes Metz, in his book *Poverty of Spirit*, describes the dynamics of Rahner's indifference and the "More." He speaks about poverty of spirit as being that which is essential if we are to become what we are called to be, and if we are to discover God in the secret of our hearts. He speaks of poverty of spirit in much the same way that Rahner speaks of indifference.

In considering the nature of the human person Metz identifies the invitation of the More as an inherent element of our humanness:

> Man, however, is challenged and questioned from the depths of his boundless spirit. Being is entrusted to him as a summons, which he is to accept and consciously acknowledge. He is never simply a being that is "there" and "ready made," just for the asking. From the very start, he is something that can Be, a being who must win his selfhood and decide what he is to be. He must fully *become* what he *is*—a human being. To

> become man through the exercise of his freedom—that is the law of his Being [Metz, pp. 5–6].

We are, by our very nature, intended for the "More." The experience of entering into relationship with the Holy as God calls us to give more that we may know more of *him* . . . this experience is not intended for the few. It is part and parcel of being human, and fidelity to God as he draws us beyond ourselves is essential to our own becoming. It is in openness to the "More" that we discover the essence of our call to be human. Metz speaks of this, and of Jesus as our model in becoming:

> . . . we are at once so needy and yet so noble that we discover ourselves, with our deepest and intensest potentialities, not by deducing the latter from a static notion of human nature, but by seeing them reflected in the free, gratuitous action of God on our behalf. God did not reject us or stay aloof from us; he treated us with self-sacrificing love. In giving us his Son, he showed us what our existence is; he showed us the true nature of our humanness, and he showed us the proper spirit to have in becoming a human being: the spirit of poverty [Ibid., p. 24].

Not only do we find our *model* for becoming human in Jesus; in addition, it is Jesus and *his Spirit* within us that *makes it possible* for us to realize our full potential. It is God present within us who makes sense of the emptiness in us, and it is he who makes it holy. He is the "More." He identifies with us and in this way becomes Enabler, the Way, the One through whom we know the fullness of our own humanity.

> God has come to us in grace. He has endowed us with his life, and made our life his. In doing this, he did not mitigate or eliminate our innate poverty; he actually intensified it and outdid it. His grace does not cause estrangement and excess, as sin does. It reveals the full depth of our destiny . . . which we could not have imagined by ourselves [Ibid., p. 25].

The more deeply we experience the "More," the more profoundly we know our own poverty. Faith and hope become essential for fidelity in the midst of apparent absurdity. For the irony of God's presence is that we know it most deeply when we are most empty. As Metz says, "A man with grace is a man who has been emptied, who stands impoverished before God, who has nothing of which he can boast" (Ibid.).

It seems that we have a very clear choice. We can choose to embrace

our humanness, and in so doing abandon ourselves to the movement of the Spirit as he empties us for and through the "More" . . . or we can live our lives attempting to deny our very nature. We cannot know and experience fully the depths of our potential as persons without encountering and grappling with this mystery of poverty of spirit (indifference) and the "More." Metz describes the result of our attempts to avoid this encounter:

> He cannot successfully hide for long his mysterious Being. If he attempts this, the truth of his Being haunts him with its nameless emissary: anxiety. This becomes the prophet of the repressed mystery of his Being; with its alienation, anxiety takes the place of the scorned poverty [Ibid., pp. 30–31].

The alternative to this anxiety lies in letting go, in allowing ourselves to be emptied by God, to rest in his arms: "Man is a creature whose being is sheltered and protected only insofar as he opens himself up to intangible, greater realities. He is at peace in the open, unconquerable precincts of mystery" (Ibid., p. 28).

Biblical Expression of the "More"

Since Jesus is our model for becoming most fully human, it is appropriate that we look to the Word for a deeper understanding of the experience of this becoming. The whole process of becoming fully human is found in the context of the life and death of Jesus. It is a process that calls for total involvement through letting go of all for the sake of the "More." Paul describes this process in Romans 8:18–27: ". . . from the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free."

It is the experience of all creation to struggle in the effort to free that life which is within us. We suffer in giving birth, as we stop clinging to those things which are obstacles to Life in us. We let go of what is, to give birth to the "More."

The *fundamental dynamics* of this life-long experience are found in Philippians 2:6–7: "His state was divine, yet *he did not cling* to his equality with God, *but emptied himself*. . . ."

We must recognize those things to which we cling for our identity. We all create our own image of ourselves, with which we feel at home, or at least somewhat in control. Most often it is an image which has been born through many sufferings and which is strengthened by our

own unique defenses. At the heart of our relationship with God is our readiness to empty ourselves, to let go of our deepest sense of ourselves. The image we have grown accustomed to is a distortion of the God in whose image we are created. The "More" bids us lose ourselves in order that we may find ourselves. We realize this most often, not in any huge act of letting go; rather, in the gradual letting go of all those things which support our "self-image," as we discover them in the dailiness of our lives. Therefore, throughout the New Testament we hear the Word calling us to let go, leading us through the same experience which Jesus himself initiated when he "did not cling . . . but emptied himself."

Let us consider a few of the many examples of the Lord's invitation to the "More."

In John 12:20–28 Jesus tells us clearly that we must let go of our very lives if we are to have Life: "I tell you most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain, but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest." Jesus' word is clear. If we cling to ourselves, and to the image which we see, we will never become life that will nourish others. We must let go of what we know of ourselves to become what God knows us to be.

Jesus gives the conditions of following him in Mark 8:34–38: "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake and for the sake of the Gospel, will save it."

The invitation of the "More" clearly involves leaving all . . . not only all possessions which can be sold, but renouncing *self*, that self which we create for our own comfort. We must renounce this self, and we must pick up our cross and be like him. Again, we cannot cling to anything or anyone. We must lose our life if we are to save it.

It is one thing to recognize the call to leave all, to cling to nothing, and quite another thing to recognize *how* this is actualized in our own lives. Jesus focused on this process in the heart of all those he met. In Mark 12:41–44 we hear him tell us *how* he asks us to give: ". . . she from the little she had has put in everything she possessed, all she had to live on." So it is with us. In responding to the invitation of the "More" we are called to give not from our excess, but from our want. It is not in our wealth that we experience being emptied. Rather, when we give from our poverty . . . in those very areas where we feel we have the least to give, this is when we experience the "More." For example, it is a good thing to be gentle with those we love, and in whose

presence we are not threatened. However, the "More" enters our hearts most profoundly when we respond in gentleness to the violence of others. When we ourselves are threatened and feel vulnerable we are most likely to cling to the security of our tried and true defenses. The invitation of the "More" would have us empty ourselves of these defenses and give from the poverty of our vulnerable hearts a gentleness which must come from God.

This same experience is found in 2 Corinthians 12:9–10, where Paul speaks about his own weakness: ". . . but he has said 'My grace is enough for you: my power is at its best in weakness.' So I shall be very happy to make my weakness my special boast so that the power of Christ may stay over me. . . . For when I am weak, then I am strong.

It is the folly of the cross that claims strength in weakness. It is absurd to anyone whose reason is sound! Yet, in emptying ourselves of our own image we let go also of that reason which makes sense of all things and therefore finds the Cross absurd. It is only with the heart emptied of self and filled with the "More" that a person can be at peace in weakness. This has radical implications in terms of our daily relationships with others and the degree to which we can allow others to be *fully* human, not only in their strengths, but most especially in their weakness, neediness, and defenses.

Jesus concretized this invitation of the "More" in Matthew 5:17–48. It is especially clear in verses 20–48 where he advises those who would follow him that it is not enough to abide by the Old Law. There is More. The New Law does not contradict the Old; rather, it draws us beyond the old law to a stance toward life which is beyond what had been expected before. And so the "More" does not rest at living according to the law of the world. It demands a standard of relationship which goes to the heart of each person and requires a conversion of attitude and thought.

. . . as we grapple within ourselves in our effort to become most fully human, we must allow God to touch those parts of us that are most bruised and vulnerable.

As we grow in this "letting go" of ourselves we enter into a more intimate experience of the Word as he makes us more his own. We move from *emptying ourselves* to being probed and *emptied by him*. This necessitates the painful process of touching the hidden wounds of our being—those areas we keep hidden and protected. This experience is shown in Genesis 32:22–32, where Jacob is described as wrestling with God. God finally strikes Jacob at the most vulnerable spot of his hip, on the sciatic nerve. In this way Jacob comes to know his weakness before the Lord, who applauds him for struggling in his weakness and being strong.

Similarly, as we grapple within ourselves in our effort to become most fully human, we must allow God to touch those parts of us that are most bruised and vulnerable. We must allow him to strip us of all the ways we protect our wounded selves, for we cannot be totally open to the invitation of the "More" while we are carefully keeping covered any part of ourselves. The action of the Word in this process is stated clearly in Hebrews 3:12–16:

> The word of God is something alive and active, it cuts like any double-edged sword but more finely; it can slip through the place where the soul is divided from the spirit, or joints from the marrow; it can judge the secret emotions and thoughts. No created thing can hide from him; everything is uncovered and open to the eyes of the One to whom we must give an account of ourselves."

When we feel we have given all we have to give, when we would say to God, "Enough, already!" then the Word penetrates and pierces the most hidden places of our hearts and brings into the light everything hidden there. There is nothing which he cannot touch in the darkness of our secret hearts. There is no part of us left hidden as we grow in our experience of and response to the "More."

Not only are we called to emptiness, but we are also told in what manner we are to rest before God. Sirach 2:4–6 describes the stance we are called to adopt: "Whatever happens to you, accept it, and in the uncertainties of your humble state, be patient, since gold is tested in the fire, and chosen men in the furnace of humiliation." And so we see that it is not in passivity that we are to be given for God's will, to be made empty and uncluttered. Rather, we are called actively to embrace the darkness and uncertainties of becoming humble. We are called to wait and to trust.

Of course we must consider the *agony in the garden* if we are to enter fully into the way of Jesus. For it is here, while we experience the

darkness that tears our hearts and while we know the fear of totally losing ourselves, that the Father asks "More." He asks that we actively choose to drink of the cup of our own dying, and in that choice we enter most deeply into the "More" where we know the heart of Jesus in all his poverty and there see our own heart.

Even at this we cannot say "Enough." In John 21:15–19 we find Jesus confronting Peter with the "More." Here, Peter has walked with Jesus throughout his life. He has proclaimed his love for him and then denied him. He has returned to him and watched him die. Now Jesus says that is not enough. It is not enough for Peter to love Jesus. And it is not enough for Jesus to know Peter loves him. If Peter is truly going to love Jesus, then he must feed his people. Jesus says three times, "Feed my sheep." Peter is called to give himself, broken and weak as he is, to feed those who hunger for Jesus. Metz describes this when he says:

> Poverty of spirit does not bring man from men to God by isolating these components into separate little packages: God-Me-Fellow (men). It operates through the radical depths of human encounter itself. In total self-abandonment and full commitment to another we become completely poor, and the depths of infinite mystery open up to us from within this other person. In this order we come before God [Ibid., p. 36].

Finally, the all-encompassing Word, the most profound experience of the "More," and the purpose of the journey is to know in truth his Word: "Make your home in me, as I make mine in you" (Jn. 15:4, Jerusalem Bible). We grapple with our own insecurities and defenses, we enter into dialogue with the Spirit within us, we wrestle with the angel of the Lord and beg God finally to *empty us so that we may rest in him uncluttered and allow him to make a home*, to find a space, to move freely within us. When we know our poverty, when we have nothing left to lose because we cling to nothing, then we can be totally available for him to move freely within us. And in so doing we become a home for others. We allow the "More" to draw others to himself, at home within us.

Of course this is all a tremendous journey that makes up the "stuff" of our lives. We are always becoming human, and we can never say we have arrived. We can know, however, that we are living authentically the life for which we have been created:

> Our infinite poverty is the shadow-image of God's inner infinity; in it, thanks to God's grace and mercy, we are able to find our full existence.

> We discover in its unremitting demands upon us the unmistakable interpretation of God's will. His is no arbitrary will that sweeps across our being without appeal to our freedom. It is within our very being that the claims of this will find their lettering. That is why the individual guises of this poverty are the possibilities bestowed on us by God, the opportunities enabling us to become real human beings. They are the chalice that God holds out to us; if we drink it, we allow his holy will to work on us [Metz, p. 47].

Thus, in encountering the Word we move from clinging to our self-image and all that protects and enhances it, through the stripping and emptying of indifference, to the embrace of the "More," where we know for the first time who we really are:

> Only prayer reveals the precipitous depths of our poverty. . . . We are so poor that even our poverty is not our own; it belongs to the mystery of God. In prayer we drink the dregs of our poverty, professing the richness and grandeur of someone else, God. The ultimate word of impoverished man is: "Not I but Thou."
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> Only when man commits himself without reserve to the recognition of this "Thou" does he hear himself endlessly called to the full taking possession of that priceless, irreplaceable "I" whom he is meant to be. In the great hours of a man's life this "I" announces itself, not as achieved reality, but as the possibility man is endlessly called to realize. It is when man, in the poverty of his worshipping spirit, treads before the face of God's freedom, into the mystery of that impenetrable "Thou"—it is then that he finds access to the depths of his own Being and worth [Ibid., p. 52].

Through the process of becoming indifferent we thus come to experience and know the "More" who dwells within us, and from whom we take our name. He reveals to us that truth which sets us free: "I have called you by name—you are mine" (Is. 43:1). Ω

References

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I Must Confess . . .

I must confess . . .
Sometimes I reject an inner calm
Anxiously searching for the kingdom
And forgetting it lies within.

I must confess . . .
Trying to achieve justice
By judging the wrongs of others
Or just their "annoying" habits,
Rather than healing their wounds
By loving them beyond the veneer of unlovableness.

I must confess . . .
Allowing myself, indulging myself
In the hurts from not being loved,
Forgetting I am already loved
Infinitely more than I can comprehend.

I must confess . . .
You mean more to me
Than any element of your creation.
Put my sins behind me once again
And draw me more deeply
Into your loving embrace.

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

Our Lady and Saint Francis

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

EVEN A FLEETING ACQUAINTANCE with the writings and work of Saint Francis must impress one with the major place which the Virgin Mother of God occupied in his life. To her he attributed his every grace, in particular the grace of his vocation. Not only was her intercession as the Mediatrix of all grace the reason Christ crucified asked Francis to repair His Church, and conformed him so perfectly to Himself; it was with her help and counsel at St. Mary of the Angels that Francis achieved clear insight into the nature of that new way of life revealed to him by Christ and into the character of his vocation to be the founder of a new Order in the Church. Whether we consider poverty and penance, joy and mercy, devotion to Christ present in the Eucharist and loyalty to the hierarchy of the Church, Francis' central point of reference for purposes of interpretation is neither an ideology nor a romanticized experience; it is always the Mother of God—in Bethlehem, in the Temple, at the foot of the Cross, in the upper room with the apostles awaiting Pentecost.

Celano writes: "To St. Francis, the Blessed Virgin's greatest claim to honor was the fact that she was the Mother of God . . . [he] rendered special praise and poured forth praises and offered his devotion to the Mother of Jesus—how many and in what ways, it is not humanly possible to tell" (2C 198). Francis himself is witness to the exceptional role she played in his life. He writes in the *Antiphon for the Office of the Passion*: "Holy Virgin Mary, there is none like you born in the world among women." In a word she is unique, incomparable, to be compared only to her Son. It is certainly fair to say that her place in his life far transcends that of any other person but Christ's, and that the marian dimension of his vocation and that of his Order can be placed on a footing only with his christocentrism. We are accustomed, when we recall the multiple evidences of this fact, to meditate on the precise nature of Mary's role in his life and what it should be in ours.

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Undoubtedly profitable as such reflections have been and are, there is, however, another, more basic manner of assessing the relation between Francis and Mary suggested by the life, thought, and work of a great contemporary son of Francis, Blessed Maximilian Kolbe. We should ask first, not what place Mary had in Francis' life; rather what place did he occupy in her thoughts, affections, and concerns for her Son and for His Church. Such a point of departure does accord well with that of Francis in explaining his relations to the crucified Lord Christ, with whom alone he compared the Virgin Mother: no man showed me what to do, but the Most High revealed to me that I was to live according to the form of the Holy Gospel (Test). Such a parallel, resting as it does on the complementarity of the New Adam and New Eve at the heart of the history of salvation, instances a principle laid down by Cardinal Newman: that at every critical juncture in the history of the Church and of theology Mary has subtly and firmly intervened to draw attention in some special way to herself, thereby assuring the clarification of her Son and of his will in the Church, and advancing in some significant fashion the "upbuilding" of the Church in view of the final coming of her Son (*Discourses Addressed to Mixed Congregations*, no. 17).

We should ask first, not what place Mary had in Francis' life; rather what place did he occupy in her thoughts, affections, and concerns for her Son and for his Church.

Given the perspective, several facts assume deeper significance in our understanding of Saint Francis and our Lady. First, Francis was deeply attached to our Lady under her title of Queen of the Angels, and at a shrine dedicated to her under that name, and popularly known as the "Little Portion," for as Saint Francis said it had been prophesized of old that this shrine would become the inheritance of those who desired to have nothing of this world, and it had been revealed to him that of all the churches dedicated to her Mary had a special love for this one (2Cel 18–19). Apoc. 12 is the most obvious

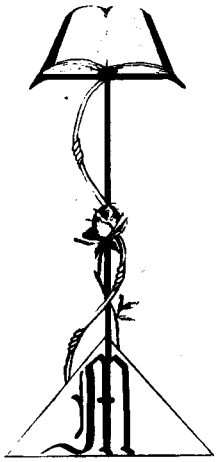
passage of Scripture one commonly associates with this title of our Lady. The woman of Apoc. is without doubt the woman foretold in Gen. 3:15 to crush the head of the serpent, and who is addressed by the Archangel Gabriel with the name "full of grace."

With hindsight one can hardly avoid the rather strong suggestion of the Immaculate Conception. That this is not merely hindsight, that the mystery of Mary's Immaculate Conception is very much at the heart of her concerns in obtaining for Francis his vocation and then enlightening him as to its meaning (1Cel 106; LM 2.8; 4.5), is apparent when we recall that of all the privileges of Mary this one is most characteristically and distinctively associated with Francis' Order, in all its branches and for the greater part of its history.

There is, however, one rather striking piece of evidence, provided by Francis himself, little considered except in the thought of Blessed Maximilian, that does seem clearly to indicate the distinct purpose of Francis and his Order from Mary's point of view. It is found in the same Antiphon cited above, worth pondering in its entirety:

> Holy Virgin Mary, there is none like you born in the world
> among women!
> Daughter and handmaid of the Most High King and heavenly Father,
> Mother of our Most Holy Lord Jesus Christ,
> Spouse of the holy Spirit,
> Pray for us
> with St. Michael and all the virtues of heaven
> and all the Saints
> to your most beloved Son, our Lord and Master!

In this antiphon Francis, who described himself as academically "illiterate," manifests an astounding theological precision and indeed "originality." The uniqueness and incomparability (in respect to all other creatures) is formulated in terms of our Lady's relations to the three divine Persons. In this formulation Christ holds the middle or central position. As Francis often said, her greatest claim to honor is the fact that she is the Mother of God the Son. Thereby she is not wife of the Father; rather she is his most perfect daughter, because most perfectly his obedient handmaid, i.e., most perfectly by her obedient *fiat* actively accomplishing his will. Her *fiat* is the crowning complement to the original *fiat* of creation, bringing to be the most perfect work of God: viz., the Incarnation and redemption. How is it that she is at once handmaid and mother; that she pertains in so unique a fashion to the order of the divine Persons? Because she is "Spouse of the Holy Spirit."



In simple, yet profound fashion Francis has expressed the core of what later scotist mariologists will discuss under the heading of belonging to the order of the hypostatic union in virtue of being predestined to be the immaculate Mother of the Word. Mary in no way belongs to the order of the first Adam; she is preserved from all taint of original sin. She is full of grace, the Spouse of the Holy Spirit. She is the most perfect fruit of the most perfect redemption, without which her Son would not enjoy the most perfect, absolute primacy as firstborn of creation, as firstborn of the dead. And since our Lady is Spouse of the Holy Spirit from the first moment of her existence, her love for God is the perfect complement in creation to the eternal love of the Holy Spirit for the Father and the Son. Blessed Maximilian succinctly states the sense of this title when he writes: "Just as from eternity the Holy Spirit is the purest fruit proceeding from the love of the Father and the Son and in whom they love each other, so Mary Immaculate (*qua* Immaculate) in time is the purest fruit proceeding from the love of the Father and the Incarnate Word and in whom they love each other." In the Immaculate we discover the fullest and most concrete exemplification of that love that for Francis is the very essence of his spirituality, and for which he prayed (with the encouragement of the Spouse of the Holy Spirit): "Grant that I may die for love of thy love who didst deign to die for love of my love."

Although the title has been used with increasing frequency since the days of Saint Francis (sometimes to imply erroneously that Mary is the wife of the Holy Spirit), reputable historians tell us that, however much its meaning is implicitly contained in the earlier tradition, the formulation itself appears to be completely original with Francis. And as the reflections of Blessed Maximilian suggest, the oddness of its formulation stands on a par with the answer Mary Immaculate gave Bernadette at Lourdes as to her name: I am the Immaculate Conception—and not merely immaculately conceived. Both ways of speaking indicate in their subject a unique way of pertaining to the order of the divine Persons. As the name given Bernadette was given in a revelation from Mary Immaculate, is it unreasonable to suppose that Mary revealed the other title to Francis? Whatever the solution, the two titles neatly frame the entire process that culminated in the dogmatic proclamation of the Immaculate Conception in 1854.

What then were our Lady's aims in securing for Francis the grace of his vocation (and ours), and then counseling him in its elaboration? Once again Blessed Maximilian provides a succinct answer: our Lady was first to draw explicit attention to herself as the Immaculate, so as to secure the clear and explicit affirmation of the absolute primacy and kingship of her Son in the Church. In many ways this first end has been achieved. But there is another goal for which the first is but the preparation: to rebuild, to renew the Church as the immaculate spouse of her Son, readied to greet Him on His final return, and properly prepared for that intense struggle with the forces of the Prince of this world that will precede His coming. Far from being limited to the exigencies of the Church in the middle ages the Franciscan way of life, associated so intimately with the Woman who is the New Eve foretold in Gen. 3:15, has a role to play especially in those final days of the triumph of the Church. Herein we can discover the reason Francis received the promise that his Order would last until the end.

The profession of this way of life, then, is aptly described as a total consecration to the Immaculate—that is why our spirituality has always been known as christocentric in a special way; and as an instrument completely at the disposition of Mary Immaculate for the renewal of the Church as the immaculate spouse of Christ. When Saint Anthony describes Mary as the Sanctuary of the Holy Spirit, he is also describing quite aptly what we as Franciscan contemplatives consecrated to Mary Immaculate must aspire to with her help. And when Saint Bonaventure states that the fullness of grace already completely realized in one single person, viz., Mary, is gradually being realized in the Church under her protection, he is not merely anticipating the point of departure of *Lumen Gentium*, c. 8, and the title Mother of the Church; he is enunciating in principle the nature of an apostolic life whose principal coefficient is Mary Immaculate.

In recalling the place of Mary Immaculate in our origins—and what could be more appropriate in the context of the eighth centenary of Saint Francis' birth?—we can gain deep insight into the purpose of our continued existence in a time variously described as the age of the Church and the age of the Holy Spirit. For in coming not only to understand, but to live in union with Mary Immaculate, so uniquely related to our Lord because she is the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, we shall also come not only to understand, but to live more deeply the mystery of the Spirit in the Church. And in this we shall find a powerful motive and stimulus for our own spiritual renewal and that of our

Order. Blessed Maximilian foretold that to the extent that we realize more perfectly the specific marian dimensions of our profession, to that extent all the friars and all branches of our Order, without losing any of their positive charisms, will become more one and more effective an instrument, with Michael the Archangel and the heavenly hosts, in overcoming the father of lies and in winning all for the heart of Christ, so that there will be but one flock and one shepherd, that all believers may be one as the Son in the Father and the Father in the Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Ω

The Chapel

She's a medieval maiden.
  She wears her stone-grey garb in humble beauty.
  Lifting twin spires high in praise
  she greets the sun;
  the day begun.

A sparrow-choir sings her morning service
  and the flanking trees bend reverently in prayer.
A holy pilgrim mounts her steps in rhythmic hope;
  she draws his leaping heart.

Her world within is grace,
  marble cool and altar pure,
  with rainbows flashing on the walls
  and arches framing rows and rows of dim glass lights,
    stars in her celestial dome.

She is God's home; an architectural poem.

Sister Edmund Marie, C.S.B.

Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* as a Contemplative Work—III

PATRICK F. O'CONNELL

AFTER THE INTENSITY of the passion meditations, Bonaventure may seem to be risking an emotional, if not a theological, anti-climax by allotting a full third of the *Tree of Life* to "the Mystery of his Glorification." In fact the tripartite structure might appear to sacrifice content to the requirements of a formal, somewhat artificial symmetry: certainly the details of Jesus' life, and even of his death, are more abundant in the Gospels and more accessible to the reader than any account of the life beyond the grave to which Jesus now passes. The dangers of padding the description, either with the familiar, which would trivialize the mystery, or with the esoteric, which would render it incomprehensible, are quite evident. Yet if the purpose of the *Tree of Life* is precisely to lead the reader to share not only the death of Jesus but his risen, glorified Life, any other proportion would distort the author's intention and misrepresent the fullness of the Christian message of salvation.

Clearly, Bonaventure's task at this stage is to do justice both to the "wholly other" quality of heavenly life, which "no eye has seen, nor ear heard" (1 Cor. 2:9), and to the passage from life through death to Life as a single dynamic movement in which each reader is already engaged. As he suggests in describing Easter Sunday, "which in the cycle of the week is both the eighth and the first" (34; pp. 159–60), the resurrection is at once end and beginning, the completion of Jesus' own earthly life and mission and the start of a process drawing all creation to share the new Life of which he is "the first fruits" (1 Cor. 15:23), the "firstborn" (Col. 1:15, 18). The Incarnation continues, both

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in Jesus' bodily presence at the right hand of the Father and in his spiritual presence as the head and heart of the Church. For Bonaventure these two dimensions, eternity and history, are not merely juxtaposed: in the risen Jesus they are related as fulfillment to promise. Far from being too restricted, the scope of Bonaventure's vision in this final segment must encompass both the depth of eternity and the length of history, until the two merge into one at the consummation of all things.

> [The] . . . final meditations not only represent a convergence of piety and philosophy; they paradoxically restore the intensely personal tone generally lacking in the post-Resurrection segment.

To begin this sequence, Bonaventure literally transports the reader into another world, a transcendent world differentiated from human experience through the use of mythic language. The opening meditation on "Jesus Triumphant in Death" describes the victory of Christ in epic terms, as "the bloody dragon and raging lion" is overthrown in the midst of his presumption by "our strong *Lion of the Tribe of Judah*" (33; p. 159). Despite the title of the eighth fruit, "Victory in the Conflict of Death," this traditional presentation of the passion as a combat between Christ and Satan had been conspicuous by its absence from the middle segment of the treatise, where it would have run counter to Bonaventure's intent by making the reader more a spectator than a participant. By reserving the imagery of battle until now, when the struggle is over, Bonaventure not only diminishes the stature of Satan as antagonist, but evokes that domain of completion, of harmony, of perfection, which is to predominate throughout the rest of the work.

Though this cosmic triumph of Jesus elicits a response of awe and adoration on the part of the reader, rather than any direct involvement in the scene, the communal implications of the event, far from being neglected, are recognized as central: the effect, and in a sense even the cause, of Jesus' victory over Satan is the rescue of "the

prisoners from the pit." Christ descends into hell so that they may ascend, with him. He "broke down the gates of hell and bound the serpent . . . so that he who had no right over the Head which he attacked, also lost what he had seemed to have over the body."

Succeeding meditations confirm what the use of the head-and-body image here suggests, that this act of liberation is a paradigm for the sharing of all the redeemed in the glorification of Jesus. Thus the resurrection of Jesus is first presented as both exemplary and efficient cause of each person's own passage from death to life:

> Christ, *the power and wisdom of God* (1 Cor. 1:24), with the author of death lying prostrate, conquered even death itself and opened to us access to eternity, when he raised himself from the dead by his divine power in order to make known to us the paths of life (Ps. 15:11) [34; p. 160].

But as the "most beautiful *flower of the root of Jesse*" which "blossomed again in the resurrection so as to become the beauty of all" (35; p. 160), Jesus is not only "an example of the beauty destined for the risen human bodies" but the source of that beauty. The marvelously ambiguous conclusion of this meditation, a promise that "you will be truly *happy if there will be remnants of your seed to see* both interiorly and exteriorly that most desired splendor," does not specify whether the reference is to seeing Christ physically and spiritually, or to seeing him both outside the self and within the soul, or to seeing the splendor exteriorly in Christ and interiorly in oneself. But actually these are not distinct alternatives, but facets of one reality, since to perceive the glory of Christ is to be glorified oneself: the risen Jesus, the fullness of glory, is the "beauty of all" in which the just will share.

But combined with the future tense, the conditional form, even the rather peculiar phrasing of the verse quoted from Tobit, the ambiguity also serves to keep the reader at some distance from the fulfillment described. The goal is glimpsed, not achieved; as with the meditation on the Transfiguration, this anticipation of ultimate union with Christ becomes an incentive to responsible activity in the world. The eschatological perspective is immediately complemented by the historical orientation of "Jesus Given Dominion over the Earth." Even as it summarizes the cosmic scope of the ninth fruit by citing Paul's declaration "*that in his name every knee should bend of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth*" (36; p. 161), this meditation makes clear that the apostolic mission of the disciples is also a participation in the life of the risen Jesus, and is in fact the means by

which he establishes his kingdom. Succeeding meditations continue this careful integration of transcendent and temporal, of awe at the glorification of the only Son with love for the human Jesus who invites all to share that glory. Thus the heroic, victorious figure of "Jesus, Leader of his Army" (37; p. 162), who "hid himself from the view of men" as he ascended, is nevertheless familiar and approachable as "so great and so faithful an advocate" (38; p. 162) for sinful humanity, who continues to plead the cause of mankind by showing "to the glorious face of his Father the scars of the wounds which he suffered for us."

This pair of meditations on the heavenly Lord is balanced in turn by two sections on his continued presence to and in the Church, which span the course of history from Pentecost to the Last Judgment. The Pentecost meditation, "Jesus, Giver of the Spirit," is as it should be the key presentation of the interpenetration of eternal and temporal, though the first impression it makes is that of a stylistic *tour de force*. Beginning with the triple effect of the tongues of fire, which appropriately give "speech to the mouth, light to the intellect, and ardor to the affection" (39; p. 163), Bonaventure includes no fewer than five triadic formulas in this one brief section. Yet far from being an instance of the author's uncontrolled enthusiasm for the number three, the meditation is a carefully nuanced teaching on the twofold mission of the Spirit to bring believers into the life of the Trinity and to send them as witnesses into the world. The transformation of the disciples is subtly developed by the shifting grammatical structures of the successive phrases: the Spirit as active subject, "who taught them all truth and inflamed them with all love and strengthened them in every virtue," is followed by the Spirit as agent in a passive participial construction ("aided by his grace, illumined by his teaching, and strengthened by his power"), which modifies the new active subject, the disciples, who establish the Church "partly by their fiery words, partly by their perfect example, partly by their astonishing miracles." In the final, culminating instance of this Trinitarian motif, the Church herself is the subject, the Bride of Christ who journeys to union with her divine Spouse by the *triplex via*, the three steps of the mystical pathway: "Purified, illumined, and perfected by the power of the same Holy Spirit, the Church became lovable to her Spouse and his attendants for being exceedingly beautiful and adorned with a wonderful variety." Here participation in divine beauty, seen earlier from the perspective of eternity, is presented as the result of a process of transformation in time, through the presence and power of the Holy

Spirit.

Yet significantly, Bonaventure's final image of the Church in this tenth fruit is not the perfect bride but the body in need of continued purification. The perspective of eternity is again balanced by the realistic evaluation of history:

> And since sins are cleansed in the fire of tribulation, therefore, just as God exposed Christ, the head of the Church, to the waves of suffering, so he permitted his body, that is, the Church, to suffer tribulation in order to be tested and purified until the end of the world [40; p. 164].

Far from being out of place, this sober meditation on "Jesus Freeing from Guilt" is a reminder that for each generation, for each individual, tribulation becomes a summons to share Christ's death, the only suffering which has the power to remove sin. This reversion from perfection to purgation, by returning the focus to the present condition of the Christian in the world, reestablishes contact with the reader's own experience. As the meditation ends he is invited once again to discover his own place on the common path to God which the most exalted of saints shares with the humblest believer: "as many as have been pleasing to God have passed through many tribulations and remained faithful and so will all the chosen members of Christ until the day of judgment." Finding, or hoping to find, himself among "all the chosen members of Christ," the reader shares with the saints not only present tribulation but the promise of future union with Christ. Here, as throughout the treatise, the cross is the only gateway to glory.

The concluding reference to the day of judgment is also a reminder, though, that this pathway has an alternative, the broad way which leads to destruction. To this possibility Bonaventure now turns. Though the three meditations on judgment in the eleventh fruit, with their emphasis on divine wrath and their rather grisly descriptions of "the reprobate" (43; p. 167), are undoubtedly the least attractive to the modern reader, their inversion of the entire process of identification with Christ makes them an integral and effective

"negative," or counterstatement, to the central theme of the treatise. Thus the terrible irony of judgment for the damned is that the one way the soul now "images" Christ, the fleeting, ephemeral congruence between them, is by "giving similar testimony" (41; p. 165) that it has rejected him. The consequence of this choice is then revealed to be isolation not only from God but from all other creatures: the geography of damnation involves total separation, absolute disunity: "On high the wrathful Judge will then appear; below, hell will open up as a horrible chaos. On the right will be the accusing sins, on the left, countless demons. Thus surrounded, where will the sinner flee?" (42; p. 166). Their destiny is presented as a horrible perversion of the images of divine union, the body and the bride: the lost are described as those who identified with the Beast and "accepted its image" (43; p. 167), and therefore share its fate; they have become prey "of the demons who had seduced them through deceit," the ultimate "consummation" of an illicit union based not on truth but on lies.

After this picture of utter fragmentation, the vision of ecstatic eschatological union which concludes the eleventh fruit is all the more compelling in contrast. Like its title, "Jesus, Adorned Spouse," the meditation combines the familiar body and bride images to suggest the perfect fulfillment of humanity with and in Christ. "Clothed with a double stole," the gifts of the beatific vision and the glorified body,[19] the Church has put on what she sees, has become the glorified image of Christ. In turn, "Christ will be clothed with all the beauty of the elect as if *with a many-colored tunic* in which he will shine forth richly adorned as if covered with all manner of precious stones." That is, the glory of Christ incorporates and shines through the rich diversity of all the members of his body. This metaphor of reciprocal clothing frames the nuptial image, according to which the love of Christ and the Church is consummated "in so intense a covenant that bride and groom will become one *spirit*." By affirming that this covenant relationship has a personal as well as a corporate dimension, that not only

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[19]This identification comes from the seventh part of Bonaventure's *Breviloquium*, chapter 7: "The consubstantial reward is bodily glory, the second robe ("quae secunda stola dicitur": *Decem Opuscula*, p. 175, n. 4) which, when assumed, permits the blessed soul more perfectly to tend "to the highest heaven": de Vinck, *Works*, vol. II (1963), p. 303. There are numerous points of contact between the last section of the *Breviloquium*, Bonaventure's brief summa, and the final part of the *Tree of Life*, though nowhere else is there need for an explanatory gloss. For another example, see n. 24, below.

the Church as a whole but each of "*the virgins who were prudent and ready will enter into the nuptials with the Spouse,*" Bonaventure concludes the meditation by inviting the reader to identify with the bride. In so doing he also suggests the rationale for the *Tree of Life* itself, which is intended to develop in his audience that awareness and sensitivity which would make them "prudent and ready" for the Lord.

This vision of the heavenly wedding feast, echoing as it does the final chapters of the final book of the New Testament, would seem to be not only an appropriate but a necessary conclusion to a series of meditations on the person of Christ. By extending his treatise through four additional meditations Bonaventure again seems to be risking a final letdown; but once more he proves to be master of his material as he synthesizes in these last sections the seemingly disparate elements of speculative philosophy and intimate personal address.

The twelfth fruit is structured first of all according to the divine attributes of power, wisdom, and goodness. "Jesus, King, Son of the King" is described as one "*whose power is an everlasting power that shall not be taken away*" (45; p. 169). But according to the next meditation, "Jesus, Inscribed Book," for the perfection of the Kingdom "there is required not only exalted power but also resplendent wisdom. . . . And this wisdom is written in Christ Jesus as in the book of life" (46; pp. 169–70). In "Jesus, Fountain-Ray of Light," Jesus is presented as the mediator of "*all good and perfect gifts*" (47; p. 170), a description amplified in the final meditation, "Jesus, Desired End," where he is "the fountain and origin of goods that are both natural and gratuitous, both bodily and spiritual, both temporal and eternal" (48; p. 172). In Bonaventure's thought these attributes are not merely generally descriptive of God; they are "the key to understanding how God could create,"[20] and are also reflected in the various properties of all created beings, as explained in the first chapter of the *Itinerarium* (pp. 63–67). In these meditations, the divine power, wisdom, and goodness are seen primarily as characteristics of the Kingdom, the fulfillment of creation in the risen Jesus. Thus Bonaventure unobtrusively provides a philosophical framework for his devotional and contemplative reflections, particularly as these last meditations form a sort of *inclusio* with the very first sections of the treatise proper, where Jesus is called "the power and wisdom of the Father" (1; p. 126), and

[20]Efrem Bettoni, *St. Bonaventure*, trans. Angelus Gambatese, O.F.M. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), p. 47; for further clarification, see pp. 51–52.

where the divine goodness was revealed in the "heavenly mercy" (2; p. 126) given to sinful humanity through the promise of a savior.

In considering Jesus as divine Wisdom, Bonaventure also incorporates into the *Tree of Life* an even more profound and integral aspect of his thought. When he declares that the Kingdom of God is directed "by the brilliant rays of the eternal laws emanating without deception from the light of wisdom," identified with Christ (46; pp. 169–70), Bonaventure means that the order of perfected creation corresponds to and realizes in the created realm the eternal order of the divine Mind. Here, from the perspective of fulfillment, is the essence of Bonaventure's entire system, in which Christ the Logos, perfect image of the Father, is the source, the model, and the goal of all created reality. Each of these dimensions, according to his last great work, the *Collations on the Six Days*, corresponds to one aspect of the Word:

> . . . the key to contemplation is a threefold understanding: of the Uncreated Word by whom all things are brought forth; of the Incarnate Word by whom all things are restored; and of the Inspired Word by whom all things are revealed. For no one can have understanding unless he considers where things come from, how they are led back to their end, and how God shines forth in them.[21]

These same terms are used to describe Jesus as Wisdom in this meditation:

> Therefore, the only-begotten Son of God, as the uncreated Word, is the book of wisdom and the light that is full of living eternal principles in the mind of the supreme Craftsman, as the inspired Word in the angelic intellects and the blessed, as the incarnate Word in rational minds united with the flesh. Thus throughout the entire kingdom *the manifold wisdom of God* (Eph. 3:10) shines forth from him and in him. . . .

Again in the final meditation, the Word is both origin and ultimate fulfillment of creation: "As all things are produced through the Word eternally spoken, so all things are restored, advanced, and completed through the Word united to flesh" (48; p. 173).

Without substituting abstract philosophical terminology for his concrete images of Jesus as book, both eternal repository and eschatological completion of reality, and as light, "*pure effusion of the brightness of the power of the omnipotent God*" (47; p. 171) and source of life and order in creation, Bonaventure has incorporated the essential dynamic of his system here at the conclusion of the *Tree of*

[21]De Vinck, *Works*, Vol. V (1970), p. 42 (*In Hex.* III.2); cf. also *Itin.*, IV.3 (p. 89).

Life. Yet far from being intrusive, these reflections bring the whole movement of the treatise to its proper culmination, the recapitulation of all things in Christ, the "metaphysical Center" on whom, according to a famous passage in the *Collations*, the "sum total" of Bonaventure's system depends: "emanation, exemplarity, and consummation, that is, illumination through spiritual radiations and return to the Supreme Being"; what is seldom noted is that in the same passage "this Center" is also described as "the Truth, that is, the Tree of Life": "the Word expresses the Father and the things he made, and principally leads us to union with the Father who brings all things together; and in this regard he is the *Tree of Life*, for by this means we return to the very *fountain of life* and are revived in it."[22] For speculation as well as for devotion, Bonaventure finds Christ to be "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end" (48; pp. 172–73).

Yet these final meditations not only represent a convergence of piety and philosophy; they paradoxically restore the intensely personal tone generally lacking in the post-Resurrection segment. Now that all the dimensions of Christ's glorification have been described, the stance of the speaker moves from relative detachment to passionate engagement, an explicit consideration of the relevance of this culminating phase of the mystery of Christ to his own life and that of his reader. Thus the meditation on the Book of Life concludes with a fervent personal wish: "O, if only I could find this book," for "whoever finds this book will *find life* and *will draw salvation from the Lord*" (46; p. 170). Despite the conditional form and the first-person address, the implications of this wish for the reader of the *Tree of Life* are quite evident. Among its other referents, the "Inscribed Book" suggests the book the reader now holds in his hands, and he realizes that the one, like the other, lies open before him. The purpose of the *Tree of Life* has in fact been to reflect in human words the divine Word which incorporates all created reality, to serve as an analogue, an image, like that of the tree itself, for the only Book ultimately worth reading. If the author has succeeded (an evaluation he cannot make himself), then the reader, to the extent that he has made the preceding meditations his own, has already encountered the "single Word," "uncreated" yet "incarnate," who is the Book of Life. Though the ability to comprehend this Word will be incomparably enhanced in the Kingdom, the image of Book indicates a continuity between the knowledge of Christ in this life and in the next.

[22]De Vinck, *Works*, V, pp. 9–10 (*In Hex.* I:17).

A similar corrspondence is evident in the penultimate meditation, where the reader, now addressed directly, is urged to "run with living desire to this Fountain of Life and light" (47; p. 171). The imagery recalls the directive to "apply your mouth *to draw water from the Savior's fountains*" in the meditation on "Jesus Pierced with a Lance" (30; p. 155), and particularly the conclusion of the eucharistic meditation, when the soul "called to so distinguished a banquet, runs with all the ardor of his spirit so that he may cry out with the Prophet: *As the stag longs for the springs of water so my soul longs for you, O God!*" (16; p. 139); but now the banquet is not sacramental but eschatological: "From this Fountain flows the stream of *the oil of gladness*, which *gladdens the city of God*, and the powerful fiery torrent, the *torrent*, I say, *of the pleasure* of God, from which the guests at the heavenly banquet drink to joyful inebriation and sing without ceasing hymns of jubilation." Again earthly sign is transposed into heavenly fulfillment; but the goal, and the way, have not altered. In fact the concluding prayer is a request that the eschatological gifts just mentioned may be received now: "Anoint us with this sacred oil and refresh with the longed-for waters of this torrent the thirsting throat of our parched hearts so that *amid shouts of joy and thanksgiving* we may sing to you a canticle of praise, proving by experience that *with you is the fountain of life, and in your light we will see light*." In this *cri de coeur*, spoken by author and reader with a single voice, we hear the authentic note of mystical longing, that "living desire" to experience the presence of the Beloved as fully as possible in this life. This prayer expresses Bonaventure's conviction that rising with Christ is a present as well as a future event: the meditative process which has brought about a progressively deeper participation in the life and death of Jesus, is thus intended to culminate in a deeply contemplative intimacy, by which the believer, through direct personal experience ("experientia teste probantes"),[23] comes to know and praise Jesus as the source of life and light.

To begin his final meditation, "Jesus, Desired End," Bonaventure reverts to the sober tone of the philosopher, but only to provide a firm rational foundation for the concluding expression of mystical desire. Already, in quoting Boethius' definition of happiness as "a perfect state with the presence of all goods" (48; p. 172),[24] he prepares for his

[23]*Decem Opuscula*, p. 178.

[24]*De Consolatione Philosophiae*, III, prosa 2. This same definition is quoted in the *Breviloquium*, Part VII, ch. 7 (de Vinck, *Works*, II, p. 305).

last prayer, since "perfectus" in Bonaventure's terminology describes the final stage of the spiritual journey, explicitly defined in the following sentence as "an ultimate union with him" who is the source of all good. Such a union is made possible only through the Incarnation, "the Word united to flesh" through whom "all things are restored, advanced, and completed." Here of course is epitomized the aim of the *Tree of Life* itself, the conversion, growth, and fulfillment of "the true worshipper of God and disciple of Christ" (Prol. 1; p. 119). This summary leads directly into the final prayer, whose ecstatic rhythms can be appreciated only in their original language: "In te igitur ut finem omnium credens, sperans et amans, *ex toto corde, ex tota mente, ex tota anima, ex omni virtute* ferar, desiderate Iesu; quia tu solus sufficis, tu solus salvas, tu solus bonus et suavis es te requirentibus et *diligentibus nomen tuum*."[25] A remarkable integration of action and passivity, of total commitment and total dependence, this prayer focuses all the speaker's faith, hope, and love: his entire mind, heart, soul, and strength, on Jesus, yet recognizes that it is divine grace—God's action, not his own—which carries him "in te . . . ut finem omnium"—"into you as the goal of all things."[26] Since the verb form "ferar" can be translated both as a subjunctive ("may I be carried") and as a future ("I will be carried"), the prayer expresses at once the speaker's fervent desire for union with Jesus and his confident assurance that his prayer will be answered.

In his final description of Jesus as "suavis"—"sweet"—the author returns to the image used to describe the fruit of the tree of life in the Prologue.[27] This *inclusio* or frame device is made more explicit in the litany which brings this last meditation to a close. Borrowing, as he has not infrequently done in earlier sections, from a meditation by

[25]*Decem Opuscula*, p. 179.

[26]Translation mine. Cousins' version doesn't capture the full richness of this extremely important passage. Besides omitting to translate the phrases "*ex tota anima*" and "tu solus salvas," the translation blunts the dynamism of "in te" by rendering it simply "to you" rather than "into you," which has the same unitive implications as the full title of the *Itinerarium*, which Cousins rightly renders "The Soul's Journey *into* God" ("in Deum"). The same difficulty is found earlier in this meditation, where "per ultimam resolutionem in eum" becomes the weaker "by an ultimate union *with* him."

[27]Cousins' translation of "suavis" as "pleasing" misses the connection with the Prologue, where the noun form "suavitas" is repeatedly used to refer to the fruit of the tree: cf. *Decem Opuscula*, pp. 138–39.

Abbot Eckbert of Schonau,[28] Bonaventure brilliantly grafts onto his own prayer a series of progressively more elaborate descriptions of Jesus, culminating in images which contain all that has gone before: "For you, my good Jesus, are . . . the sublime fruit of the virginal womb, the abundant fountain of all graces, *of whose fullness we have all received*." Here the fountain sums up the final set of meditations, the "sublime fruit" recapitulates the basic imagery and structure of the entire treatise, and the final quotation declares, as it does in its original context in the prologue to John's Gospel, that the fulfillment, the perfection, the ultimate divine union the speaker prays for, is already given in the Incarnate Word: in this simple awareness of Fullness received, of Presence unchanging, the perspective is that of eternity: the "desired end" is reached, and the *Tree of Life* is complete.

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AT THE CONCLUSION of the *Itinerarium*, Bonaventure calls Christ "the *way and the door*" to divine union, and says that whoever "beholds him hanging upon the cross . . . makes the Pasch, that is, the passover, with Christ." He goes on to relate this insight to the stigmatic experience of Francis, who "passed over into God in ecstatic contemplation and became an example of perfect contemplation . . . so that through him, more by example than by word, God might invite all truly spiritual men to this kind of passing over and spiritual ecstasy" (*Itin.* 7:2; pp. 111–13). In considering the divine invitation through Francis as "more by example than by word," Bonaventure seems to be defining not only the vocation of Francis but his own, which is to preserve and hand on the message of his spiritual father by articulating it: his work too is an invitation, but "by word," to "this kind of passing over." This is certainly what he did in the *Itinerarium* itself, with its exploration of the meaning of Francis' vision of the seraph, but we might be permitted to wonder if Francis himself would not recognize his experience more readily in the scriptural reflections of the *Tree of Life* than in the sublime intellectual

[28]See above, n. 13. These borrowings go beyond those indicated in the English translations, and include material found in Meditations 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 36, 38, 47, and 48. Bonaventure's use of Eckbert should be distinguished from two other quotations of meditations attributed to Anselm, a sentence in section 42 taken from a genuine work of Anselm, and a phrase in section 9 from a meditation actually written by Aelred of Rievaulx.

structure of the *Itinerarium*. We can at least say with assurance that the one treatise, like the other, has as its goal not merely a pious appeal to the emotions,[29] but a most demanding, and rewarding, goal: to "be totally transferred and transformed into God" (*Itin.* 7:4; p. 113). The reader of the *Tree of Life* is urged to be, not an observer but, like Francis, a participant in the mystery of the God-man, the crucified and risen Savior. Here, as in the *Itinerarium* and all Bonaventure's work, the same call is heard: "With Christ crucified let us pass out of *this world to the Father*, so that when the Father is shown to us, we may say with Philip: *It is enough for us*" (*Itin.* 7:6; p. 116). Ω

[29]The integration of reason and affectivity, of intellect and will, in the process of sanctification is of course a hallmark of Bonaventure's teaching. See Bettoni's chapter, "Knowledge and Wisdom," pp. 29–36, for a concise summary.

Books Received

Habig, Marion A., O.F.M., *Francis of Assisi: Writer (Supplement to the Omnibus)*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981. Paper, $2.00.

John Paul II, Pope, *Original Unity of Man and Woman: Catechesis on the Book of Genesis*. Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1981. Cloth, $4.00; paper, $3.00.

Line, Francis Raymond, and Line, Helen E., *Man with a Song: Some Major and Minor Notes in the Life of Francis of Assisi*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Image Books, 1982. Pp. 143. Paper, $6.95. **See review in our April, 1980, issue, pp. 125–26.**

Pilch, John, *St. Francis: Model of Wholeness*. Kansas City, MO: National Catholic Reporter, 1982. Five cassettes in vinyl album: *Orientation to Franciscan Wellness* (2 cassettes), *Early Adulthood: Forming the Dream; Middle Adulthood: Integrating Polarities; Late Adulthood: Reconciliation, Wisdom, and Holiness*; $44.95 the set.

Set Your Hearts: A Celebration in Song at the Time of the 800th Anniversary of the Birth of St. Francis. Granby, MA: Conventual Franciscan Publications, 1981. 12-inch LP, $8.00; cassette, $8.00; music book, $5.00.

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504	Life of St. Francis (Pre-req. 502)	3	M-F	Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M.
506	Survey of Franciscan History	3	M-F	Fr. Lawrence Landini, O.F.M.
508	History of Franciscan Thought	3	M-F	Fr. Joachim Giermek, O.F.M.Co
531	Women and the Franciscan Ideal	2	MWTHF	Sr. Mary McCarrick, O.S.F.
520	Spirituality and Writings of St. Francis and St. Clare	2	MTWF	Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap
509	History of Franciscan Spirituality	3	M-F	Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M.
552	The Franciscan Contribution to Justice and Peace	2	MWTHF	Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M.
562	Dynamic Growth in Franciscan Community	2	MWF	Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M.
563	Theological Principles and Techniques of Spiritual Direction	2	MTTHF	Fr. Joseph Doino, O.F.M.
650	Seminar—Franciscan Life: The Modern Challenge	2	MTTHF	Fr. Constantine Koser, & O.F.M.
511	Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts	2	By arrangement	
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The CORD

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The CORD

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

EDITORIAL

A Graduate Gives Thanks

THIS YEAR OF THE 800th anniversary of Saint Francis has, so far, been extremely grace-filled and joy-filled with the promise of more of the same in a heightened degree as we approach October! Personally, for me it has been illuminated by my own solemn profession of vows in March, which sealed my final commitment to the second Order.

Reflecting upon all of this preparation and jubilation to honor the little poor man, I realized that my own personal joy comes from sources outside of myself: i.e., my education in Franciscanism, which had been wanting for many years. I could never have arrived at the great love and devotion I feel for Francis by myself—and now, I would like to acknowledge those to whom I owe thanks for this grace.

In 1972, as a member of the Syracuse Franciscans, I and five others of my community were granted the privilege of attending a new program just beginning at St. Bonaventure University's Franciscan Institute. There were only eleven students in that first summer program—but the genuine devotion, enthusiasm, and love for Francis, of our friar-instructors exploded and electrified each of us to such an extent that ensuing summers seemed to bring the whole Franciscan world to attend the Institute to catch more of the Francis-flame for themselves.

Holy Name Province, well known for its academic standards at the University, had developed a new response in education—a response for Franciscan living—as Francis himself once mentioned to Saint Anthony: "It pleases me that you should teach the friars . . . so long as they do not extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotedness over this study, as is contained in the Rule" (*Omnibus*, 164).

Education in the Franciscan Institute meant studying with and from Franciscans of every type: Capuchins, Conventuals, Friars Minor, Sisters of St. Francis, T.O.R.'s. Such an education proved to me that all Franciscans are one in the spirit of Francis.

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Therefore, it is my sincere desire to express my appreciation to the Franciscan Institute and to St. Bonaventure University for the foresight in producing a program geared to high educational standards plus personal holy living out of the Franciscan ideals—indeed, a combination unknown anywhere else; a combination for which many blessings will be extended throughout the world wherever Franciscans live—and that is *everywhere*.

I would like to ask those of you who have been or are in attendance at the Franciscan Institute to join me in celebrating Francis this year by expressing, in some way, your own deep gratitude to God and Saint Francis for his 20th-century followers in Western New York who "minister spirit and life" to students of the Franciscan Institute.

Sr. Frances Ann Thom,
O.S.C.

Jesu Hostia

My arms raise in adoration—awe
To Him who sits enthroned.
Your mirrored beauty shines concealed
In what is more than bread.

As Bethlehem's Babe of Jesse's line was
Once Incarnate in secret poverty,
So now shielded in sacramental love-gift is
Your Sacred Body of Calvary resurrected.

Thou Bread of Life gathering our scattered lives
As loaves are multiplied before blind eyes.
Jesus, yesterday, today, and forever. You are . . .
. . . You are given to us all, kept whole.

Yester's manna is hope of the morrow
Memoried in today's eternal now.
Break the fast of hunger's shore,
"Give us this bread always!" we cry.

Indwelling Lord who sups with me,
You plant within the wheatseed of Resurrection,
Spreading Your table-white feast of joy,
Pledge of eternal banquet halls.

"Take and eat" were words You said at
Last Supper of many yet to be.
Firstborn of the house of Bread,
Easter in our yearnful Emmaus hearts.
Come!

Barbara Doria

Saint Clare and Prayer

SISTER MARY HELEN, P.C.C.

WHEN THE VARIOUS WRITINGS of our holy mother, Saint Clare, on prayer are gathered together and arranged hypothetically to form a relative whole, a surprising cohesion emerges.

Beyond this intriguing factor, which is rather amazing, since most likely there are lost writings intermingling with what we have, and surely valuable instruction on prayer would be among them, there is seen a style that is eloquent, lyrical, swift, sure, and concise.

In Clare's Rule there are few prescriptions concerning prayer as such, and they are briefly put. Nonetheless, everything that is needed in such a document is covered, and is said to the point (cf. chapters 2, 7, and especially 10).

It is in her letters to Blessed Agnes of Prague, however, that the mind and heart of Saint Clare is most fully expressed. And while the expressions are not lengthy, they are precious gems of the Franciscan ideal and spirituality. In the second letter we read: "Keep your eyes fast on [Christ] who for love of you was reckoned of no account and let your part be to be willing to be held of no account for Him."

Here we catch a glimpse of the soul of Franciscan piety: that simple gaze upon Christ without pretense or shrinking back, and the necessary response that flows from that encounter.

Saint Clare's spirituality is eminently positive. It is always a looking at her divine Spouse and Savior and modeling her behavior on what she sees. In this she is a most faithful disciple of Saint Francis, and I feel certain she knows this. Virtue for Saint Clare is never a negative element, even when that virtue is penance. Rather, it is the response of her love to the love of Christ.

An example of her eloquence is given in the following passage from the same letter: "Your spouse is He Who is of comeliness beyond all the sons of men and who for your salvation became the least of men and despised and smitten and wounded in all of his body and dying under the hard requirements of the cross."

Sister Mary Helen, P.C.C., is a member of the Poor Clare Colettine Community at Los Altos Hills, California.

In this passage, our holy Mother vividly portrays the self-emptying of Christ and brings it down to a very personal level. There follows a passage which sums up in amazing clarity and swiftness of expression the essence of our private prayer: "It is Him you want to see, to gaze upon fixedly, to think upon deeply and with desire to imitate."

This jewel of wisdom is so simply expressed that it may take several readings, even several ponderings, to penetrate into the riches it contains. It seems to me that passages like this one point out the depth of Saint Clare's spirit of silence, a silence that enables her to bring forth the kernel of what she wishes to say in as few words as possible. Surely in this she is a faithful imitator of our blessed Lady.

Clare's spirituality is eminently positive . . . always a looking at her divine Spouse and Savior. . . .

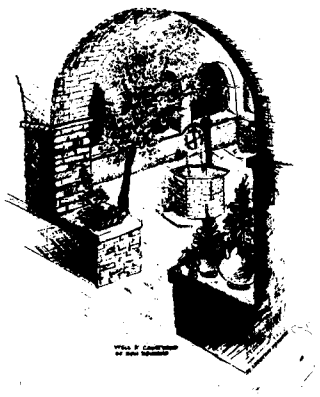
In the third letter, Saint Clare speaks of the prayer of contemplation. Her sureness of approach leads us to conclude that she knew well her subject through personal experience:

> Set your mind on the Mirror of Eternity. Direct your soul to the Splendor of Glory. Fix your heart on the Image of the Divine Substance. By contemplation transform yourself totally into the likeness of divinity itself. Then you will feel what those who are friends feel when they taste a hidden sweetness which God Himself from the beginning has reserved for those who love him.

Here is an unabashed sharing of Saint Clare's own prayer life. Otherwise, how could she advise with such simple confidence and conviction as to the outcome of praying in this manner? And yet, her imagery is sufficiently vague so as to keep hidden "the secrets of the King."

A point that is entirely fascinating is that, though a long passage of time separates the third and fourth letters, the images of the third letter: "Mirror of Eternity," "Splendor of Glory," and "Image of the Divine Substance" blend well with the images used in the fourth letter: "Splendor of Eternal Glory," "Brightness of Everlasting Light," and "Mirror without Spot," thus linking both exhortations into a smooth, flowing exposition on prayer.

It has been said that in these letters, Saint Clare's own thoughts are hidden beneath the style of her century, and that it is necessary to sift through the language in order to unearth her own feelings and expressions. But the more I ponder these letters, and especially Clare's expressed ideas on prayer, the less I can agree with this statement. Rather, I believe that Clare is truly a child of her time and that the romantic imagery she uses, is a recounting of her own lived experience of her dramatic conversion and vocation. I think Saint Clare was very much at home with the images she used and that they express her warm heart quite adequately.



The fourth letter is especially precious to us because it was written so close to the end of her life. Considering how ill she was, we must be amazed that it is such a masterpiece of powerful writing and clarity of thought—so filled with holy challenges for her who is "the half of my soul":

> Now, since He is the Splendor of Eternal Glory and the Brightness of Everlasting Light and the Mirror without Spot, O queen, spouse of Jesus Christ, look steadfastly into this mirror every day. See in it every time you look . . . and look into it always . . . your own face. This will urge you to vest yourself totally, within and without, with adornments of all the virtues as becomes the daughter and most chaste spouse of the highest King.

Does this give us the secret of Saint Clare's own vibrant prayer life and intense motivation? Continuing the image of Christ as Mirror, she says in greater detail: "In this mirror you will find poverty in bright reflection. You will see there humility and love beyond words. You will be able to see this clearly with the grace of God and to contemplate it in its fullness."

These simple and straightforward sentences tell us emphatically the characteristics of Jesus that impressed our holy Mother the most, and in this she follows closely on the heels of our holy Father Francis.

In the ensuing passages, Saint Clare says to "fix your attention" on the poverty of the Infant Savior; to "consider long and carefully" the

humility of our Lord, and to "open your mind and your soul to the unspeakable love" that motivated our blessed Savior to die for us on the cross. Not content with our Lord's earthly life, she bids us to "take a long, loving look also at the delights which cannot be described in words and which He brings to you, and the riches and the honors that have no dateline to end them."

Thus Saint Clare urges Blessed Agnes—and us, by assimilation—to look beyond this life to our heavenly home and the rewards of conforming our lives to the image of our Savior. Moreover, she holds out to us her desire that we respond "with all the fullness of desire of which your heart is capable and all the love that it can summon."

Clare asks that we respond in joy and that, like the Bride in the Song of Songs, we be ever mindful of our dignity and destined glory as spouses of our heavenly Bridegroom.

One further point. Throughout her Rule and Testaments, and in her letters, there is a constant sprinkling of texts from, and allusions to, Scripture and the Divine Office. They are like golden threads woven delicately throughout her design to heighten and underscore the motif, giving it depth and richness. In this we see how Saint Clare made the prayer of the Church her own, and in this also we see in her a bright reflection of our holy Father Francis. Indeed, for both of them, Scripture and the Divine Office formed the very atmosphere in which their souls breathed.

Thus we see the richness of Saint Clare's thought on prayer and the wholesome "method" she left us through her writings. From the sure and concise expression of her writing, may we not conclude that it is the culmination of many years of oral instruction to her daughters, as we read in Celano's *Legenda*? May this thought unite us more firmly and intimately to the heart and mind of Saint Clare, the little plant of Saint Francis, and may it inspire us to turn more frequently to this precious heritage in our search for deeper union with God. Ω

Becoming Empty: The Core of Franciscan Spirituality—II

SISTER SUZANNE THERESE HALFEN, O.S.F.

II. Francis' Experience of Indifference and the "More"

I FIND THAT IT IS DIFFICULT to present a clear understanding of the experience Francis had of indifference and the "More." While his writings and the Sources are replete with evidence of this experience, there is very little written about Francis' consciousness regarding the dynamics of indifference, or even of his actual inner process in choosing indifference. We find in Celano and Bonaventure accounts of his early life and brief references to his conversion process. However, within a year or two of meeting Francis in written history we find him presented as having almost achieved that indifference which most of us struggle for during a lifetime. I think there is a lot of truth to this, in that I believe Francis was uniquely graced for God's own purpose, so that, once he turned to the Holy in his life and tasted a little of the sweetness of God's presence, Francis was driven by a consuming hunger for Him which quickly became the source of all his choices in life. Imitating Jesus, being like Him in all ways, was the consciousness with which Francis related to all aspects of life. I take the liberty of assuming that since Francis was a man immersed in the Word, he most probably experienced much of the process described in the previous section (last month) concerning the action of the Word in bringing us to indifference for the "More."

With this in mind, we can consider the very early life of Francis and recognize some of the elements of the human experience of indifference and the "More."

Sister Suzanne Therese Halfen is a member of the Midwest Province of the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity. This paper was written for a course of study under Father Peter D. Wilcox, O.F.M.Cap., at the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, Summer, 1980. The final part of the paper will appear next month.

Early Life.

In Bonaventure's Major Legend we find a description of the young Francis as a man who "lived among worldly people and . . . was brought up like them . . . although always ready to enjoy himself, he never followed the lure of his passions . . . he himself was quite anxious to make money, but he put no trust in his store of riches" (LM I.i.1; *Omnibus*, 635). He is generally described as being gentle, generous, and pleasant. In short, he was very much like the young men of his time, but with a certain sensitivity to the Gospel even then. Bonaventure tells us that "he refused to turn a deaf ear to the Gospel" (Ibid.). Finally, we find that Francis' focus was very much on his life in Assisi and the immediate tasks of human living:

> As yet . . . Francis had no idea of God's plan for him. He was completely taken up with the affairs of his father's business and his mind was intent on the things of the earth because of the corruption of human nature, so that he had never learned to raise his mind to heaven, or acquired a taste for the things of God [Ibid., §2; p. 636].

In the mystery of His ways God visits Francis first in a dream concerning a palace full of armor. Already Francis responds in obedience and sets out to fulfill the message of the dream as he understands it. So God speaks to him again and calls for him to *let go of his own vision* so that he may see the vision of God. In this we find the first act of indifference, in which Francis begins to remove himself from his ways in order to see more clearly the ways of God.

Having once experienced the distance between his way and God's, Francis commits all of his energy to pursuing the will of God. He prepares himself to hear the call of the Holy by going apart and spending time in prayer. Bonaventure presents Francis as already having a consuming thirst for God such that he is ready to become indifferent at once! He describes Francis' experience briefly as follows:

> He withdrew from the busy life of his trade and begged God in His goodness to show him what he should do. He prayed constantly until he was consumed with a passionate longing for God and was ready to give up the whole world in his desire for his heavenly home and think nothing of it. He realized that he had discovered the treasure hidden in the field . . . and he could think of nothing but how he might sell all that he had and buy the pearl he had found . . . he was forced to conclude that a spiritual venture could only begin by rejecting the world and that victory over himself would mark the beginning of his service of Christ [Ibid., §4; p. 638].

Very quickly Francis had experienced, in solitude with God, that the longing of his heart would be quieted by leaving everything behind, *letting go of all* that defined his life until now, *in order to follow Jesus.*

A second key experience of the invitation of the "More" came when Francis first encountered the leper on the road. This experience was not the radical conversion we find later. Rather, it was a call to *forget himself*. Bonaventure tells us: "One day as he was riding on the plain below Assisi, he met a leper . . . and Francis felt sick at the sight of him. Then *he remembered his resolve* to be perfect *and the need to overcome himself first*. He immediately dismounted and ran up to kiss the poor man" (Ibid., §5).

Very quickly Francis had experienced . . . that the longing of his heart would be quieted by leaving everything behind . . . in order to follow Jesus.

Bonaventure adds that after this act of letting go of himself, Francis experienced deep joy and a gift of praise . . . a taste of the "More." It is important to recognize that at this stage in Francis' journey he is still motivated by *his own purpose*, his own desire. Later he will meet the leper with a poverty of spirit that changes his perception entirely.

The conversion of Francis seems to have been very intense and over a relatively short period of time. Bonaventure tells us that after Francis met the leper on the road he began to seek seclusion for prayer. This experience is alluded to more than described. But from the effects of this time apart it is apparent that Francis grew profoundly in the indifference he was drawn to and in his experience of the "More":

> After that he began to frequent secluded spots where he could mourn for his sins, and there as he poured out his whole soul with groans beyond all utterance, he was eventually found worthy to be heard by God, after long and importunate prayer . . . he became completely absorbed in God in the excess of his fervor. Then Jesus Christ appeared to him, hanging on His cross. . . . "If you have a mind to come my way, renounce yourself, and take up your cross, and follow me." Francis

now developed a spirit of poverty, with a deep sense of humility, and an attitude of profound compassion [Ibid., §6; p. 639].

Francis had entered the cave of his own heart and wrestled with the spirit of the world and the Spirit of God. He saw himself in his utter poverty and sinfulness, so that he "mourned" for his sins. I believe that this time was one of the two critical conversion experiences for Francis. It was in the darkness of his own heart that he saw his true image apart from God. I believe Francis *experienced himself* as a *leper* when he saw himself apart from Jesus, and focused on himself. The culmination of this invitation of the "More" came, not only in the privacy of his own prayer experience, but when he *publicly embraced the leper in himself* while embracing and serving the lepers of Assisi. He could embrace his leprous self and serve the leper in others because he had let go of his own self-image, and, naked before the Lord, had allowed the "More" to penetrate his being so that he was transformed. His perception of self and others was transformed by the presence of the "More" so that he began to see Jesus, the More, in everyone.

Bonaventure tells us that after this Francis served them devotedly and kindly, and "distributed alms among them generously, kissing their hands and lips with deep compassion" (Ibid.).

The second most significant experience of conversion for Francis came when he was faced with choosing his *identity*. This went beyond a conversion of his self-image to the roots of who he was. The instrument of this conversion was his father, from whom he had always claimed his identity. Bonaventure shows us clearly that Francis experienced the depths of his humanness in grappling with this issue of identity. Francis could not belong radically to Jesus while he was still bound by the duty of obedience and by the affections of his heart to his father. Even though he feared his father, it required time alone with his Lord for Francis to see clearly what was asked of him:

> When he heard the threats of those who were looking for him and realized that they were drawing near, Francis hid in a secret cave; he was new to the service of Christ, and he wished to avoid his father's anger. He remained in hiding for a number of days, imploring God continuously in a flood of tears to deliver him from the hands of his persecutors and enable him, in His goodness to fulfill the desires He himself had inspired. Eventually he was filled with overflowing joy and fell to reproaching himself as a coward, lacking in determination. At that, *he laid aside his fear and left his hiding place* . . . [Ibid., I.ii.2—emphasis added].

Following this experience Francis is then enabled to go willingly

before the Bishop, renounce his relationship with his father, and call himself son of the Father of Jesus. Francis now belongs totally to the triune God: lover of Jesus, Son of the Father, and disponible to the Spirit: "And so the servant of the most high King was left stripped of all that belonged to him, that he might follow the Lord whom he loved, who hung naked on the cross" (Ibid., §4; p. 643).

By this point Bonaventure presets Francis as being "free from the bonds of all earthly desires" (Ibid.) and "firmly established in the lowliness of Christ" (Ibid., §7; p. 644). For the most part the biographers of Francis after this time use the superlative, and speak of him as having achieved the indifference required for the experience of the "More." In fact, Francis continued throughout his life to free himself from his own desires in order that he could know Jesus fully. In the reception of the Stigmata the Saint is totally available and receptive to the "More," who penetrates every part of him, leaving His image clearly on the body of Francis as in his heart.

Indifference and the "More" as Reflected in the Writings of Francis

The experience of becoming indifferent and of making a home for the "More" which permeated Francis' life is clearly reflected in his writings. Volumes could be written on this subject, but with present space limitations in mind, let us consider indifference in relation to four pivotal aspects of our human experience: (1) body/senses, (2) power, (3) image, and (4) will. Before we look at these separate aspects, however, let us recognize in his writings Francis' commitment to indifference on the part of the whole person: "No matter where they are, the friars must always remember that they have given themselves up completely and handed over their whole selves to our Lord Jesus Christ . . ." (RegNB 16; *Omnibus*, p. 44).

Indifference of the Body/Senses. The writings of Francis and the Sources are overrun with references to Francis' insistence on indifference in relation to the body. I will point out a few examples regarding his favorite subjects: food, clothing, and shelter.

Regarding food, Francis came to indifference primarily through fasting. Fasting was an integral part of Francis' own life, and he exhorted his brothers to fast regularly. Chapter 3 of the First Rule addresses the regulation of fasting specifically: "All the friars without exception must fast from the feast of All Saints until Christmas, and from Epiphany, when our Lord began his fast, until Easter . . ." (Ibid., c. 3; p. 34). In the Second Rule (chapter 3) Francis sets down the same regulations and then encourages those who can, to fast in addition to those times prescribed.

There are anecdotes throughout the Sources regarding Francis' attitude about food—its preparation, simplicity, etc. The classic story reflecting this stance is the well known one about Francis adding ashes to his food. Though there are many other such examples, it is not necessary to belabor the point.

Regarding clothing: again, we find the Sources and the Writings contain many references to Francis' experience and teaching regarding indifference or poverty of spirit. In the First Rule Francis devotes a chapter to describing the clothing that should be given upon admission to the Order, and what should be worn by the professed:

> . . . [the professed] may have one habit with a hood, and, if necessary, another without a hood. They may have a cord and trousers. All the friars must wear poor clothes and they can patch them with pieces of sackcloth and other material, with God's blessing. . . . They should avoid expensive clothes in this world in order that they may have something to wear in the kingdom of heaven [Ibid., c. 2; p. 33].

This attitude of Francis is repeated throughout the Sources and in his own writing. Not only was the manner of clothing oneself an act of indifference, it was also intended to reflect the inner life of the friar. In this respect Francis would remove a friar's privilege of wearing the habit if the latter's behavior did not reflect a proper attitude of heart.

Regarding shelter, Francis constantly enjoins the friars to consider no place as their own, and to live in humble surroundings. Again, he speaks not only of the physical act of detaching themselves from any place, but also of the attitude of their hearts when he says that "they should occupy those places only as pilgrims and strangers" (Test; *Omnibus*, p. 68—emphasis added). He sums up his stance regarding poverty in fact and poverty of spirit as follows:

> The friars are to appropriate nothing for themselves, neither a house, nor a place, nor anything else. As *strangers and pilgrims* (1 Pet. 2:11) in this world, who serve God in poverty and humility, they should beg alms trustingly. . . . This should be your portion, because it leads to the land of the living. And to this poverty, my beloved brothers, you must cling with all your heart, and wish never to have anything else under heaven, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ [RegB 6; *Omnibus*, p. 61].

Indifference Regarding Power. We find Francis' stance in regard to power most clearly expressed when he speaks about money and position. Regarding money, Francis repeatedly and vehemently exhorted his brothers never to accept money in any form for any purpose. In the First Rule, e.g., we read:

> . . . all the friars, no matter where they are, or where they go, are forbidden to take or accept money in any way, or under any form, or have it accepted for them. . . . We have left everything we had behind us; we must be careful now not to lose the kingdom of heaven for so little [RegNB 8; *Omnibus*, p. 38].

Similarly, ownership of property is strictly forbidden throughout his writings. The friars are not to acquire anything which would give them power or which would not be readily given to anyone in need: "No matter where they are, in hermitages or elsewhere, the friars must be careful not to claim the ownership of any place, or try to hold it against someone else. Everyone who comes to them, friend or foe, rogue or robber, must be made welcome" (Ibid., c. 7; p. 38).

Regarding position and authority, Francis always taught that no friar should seek positions within the community, and whoever did hold one ought readily to give it up when asked to do so (Adm 4; *Omnibus*, p. 80). When the friars are in authority they must act as servants of all the brothers (RegNB 5; *Omnibus*, p. 36). The First Rule extends this admonition against accepting positions of status or authority to all areas of ministry as well (Ibid., c. 7; p. 37).

Indifference Regarding Status/Image. Francis calls his brothers to true humility and poverty of spirit in both Rules, and most clearly in the Admonitions. He speaks of the importance of patience when those around them do not cooperate (Adm 13) as a sign of true humility. He admonishes his brothers that a true humility and poverty of spirit reflects itself when we are threatened and feel we are losing something of our self-image (Adm 14). Finally, Francis touches the heart of humility when he speaks about the attitude of a friar towards the gifts he is given by God, and those given his brothers. He says we are especially not to appropriate the goodness in us, since all goodness comes from God:

> Blessed the religious who takes no more pride in the good that God says and does through him, than in that which He says and does through someone else . . . [Adm 17; p. 84].
>
> . . . and so when a man envies his brother the good God says or does through him, it is like committing a sin of blasphemy, because he is really envying God, who is the only source of every good [Adm 8; p. 81].

Indifference Regarding Will. All of Francis' life was a journey in which he grew daily in the practice of setting aside his own will in order that the will of the Father might be made manifest in him. It is clear that obedience is of central and sacred importance for Francis. It is in obedience that we become indifferent to our own will—we let go of our own way—to act on the will of another. Father Wayne Hellmann describes the importance of obedience in the life of the friars and its intimate connection with poverty: "St. Francis establishes the priority that in obedience one must first rid himself of any and all possessions. In Francis' mind there can be no obedience without poverty. In fact, poverty is fulfilled and completed in obedience" (Hellmann, 340).

Obedience, he continues, is the "active poverty of stripping oneself of possessions. Francis reminds the friars 'that they have renounced their own wills for God's sake' " (RegB 10; *Omnibus*, p. 63). This indifference of the will is most potently expressed in Admonition 3: "A man takes leave of all that he possesses and loses both his body and his life when he gives himself up completely to obedience in the hands of his superior" (*Omnibus*, p. 79).

There are numerous references to the priority of obedience as a means of stripping ourselves from our own wills. It seems this is the most difficult area of indifference, as well as the way in which the "More" opens us most profoundly for the divine Presence. Francis constantly refers to the self-emptying of Jesus and to His obedience to the Father as his model in living a life of poverty. I believe it is in the context of the Incarnation (Phil. 2) and the Cross of Jesus that we come to the deepest and clearest understanding of the meaning of obedience as we seek to die to our own will for the sake of the will of the Father.

Finally, let us turn to the Praises of the Virtues, which were written after Francis' most profound experience of the "More" in which he received the Stigmata of Jesus. The Praises offer a summary of all those aspects of the human condition which must be "shamed," or from which we must distance ourselves, if we are to give glory to God

with our lives. *As we become indifferent* regarding these aspects of ourselves—natural wisdom, greed, avarice, anxiety, pride, etc.—*we begin to experience the* "More" in their opposites: Holy Simplicity, Holy Wisdom, Holy Poverty, Holy Humility, Holy Love, Holy Obedience (SalVirt; *Omnibus*, p. 125). Through growth in this becoming indifferent, we allow within ourselves that which Francis exhorts us to seek above all else: "We should make a dwelling-place within ourselves where He can stay, He who is the Lord God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (RegNB 22; *Omnibus*, p. 49). And, finally,

> We should wish for nothing else and have no other desire; we should find no pleasure or delight in anything except in our Creator, Redeemer, and Savior. . . . Nothing, then, must keep us back, nothing separate us from Him, nothing come between us and Him. *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*. . . . [Ibid., c. 23; p. 52—emphasis added].

This has been a very cursory presentation of the experience of indifference and the "More" in the life of Francis and those who follow him. We can at least, however, begin to understand how Rahner's understanding of indifference and the "More," and Metz's understanding of poverty of spirit can cast light on the heart of our Franciscan life. These realities, properly understood, are at the core of the Franciscan spiritual life, and as such have implications for spiritual direction. In the final section of this paper, to be published next month, we will briefly consider a few of these implications. Ω

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For Saint Francis of Assisi

Circe my cat is sick,
Can only sneeze,
Dream of a kill at dawn,
Croak, make her teeth click-click
At the starlings she sees
Picking seeds off the lawn.

Before Saint Francis taught
These birds Gospel,
They didn't sing at all.
Now, blessed with seed, or caught,
At least they can grackle;
Though a cardinal's call,

Finch's or song sparrow's
Is far sweeter.
Still, Circe's mauled them too.
So all Creation goes—
Scales, bare flesh, feathers, fur.
And I can only do

As Saint Francis, who prayed
Hard and hopeful
That his life showed the Word
Of God's love and was made
Flesh to be eternal.
His sermons made the birds

Sing; so I grackle praise,
Never secure
Or safe from death. I need
More than my animal ways
To live long in nature.
I must make myself feed

On God's bleeding body:
Image I want to love
In each human being,
Creation and in me.
Francis is patron of
Animals, yet seeing

How much he craves
That love Incarnate save
And make Creation new
Helps all mortality
To taste and see
Nature in eternity—
And Circe will get better too.

Charles Cantalupo

Francis and the Leper: Our Conversion to Justice

SISTER MARGARET CARNEY, O.S.F.

As FRANCISCANS ENGAGE IN THE Church's call to internalize the message of liberation and justice for all people that flows from the Gospel, the image that most often surfaces in our conversation is that of Francis' encounter with the leper. We have, in fact, invested the word *leper* with a renewed power to evoke those persons and situations that most often figure in ministry to the poor and oppressed.

It seems, however, that we are in danger of limiting the power of the metaphor. It is easy enough to recall the story of Francis on the plain below Assisi—first startled, then conscience-stricken, then converted to love—when we are describing our need to engage in service to the outcast. Let us be clear: this power is well used if it helps us to strengthen our resolve to be about such direct service whether individually or corporately. Let us also be realistic: we need to acknowledge the fact that many members of our communities will not necessarily have the opportunity to mirror the metaphor in such concrete ways.

Whatever paths our corporate wisdom forges in the near or far future, many of us will be engaged in ministries that are not direct service to the economically poor. A variety of reasons account for this: prior professional training, institutional commitments, advanced age, limits of physical and emotional health, the existence of a clear call to some other aspect of the Church's mission. It would be a terrible pity if such members of Franciscan communities wasted time in unhealthy guilt or self-pity, feeling somehow less Franciscan or less responsible for the over-all mission to the poor.

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It would be equally sad if we failed to re-read the account of Francis' meeting with the leper in order to discover there a crucial element that we can easily overlook. Remember that what Francis describes as the quality of that act of love was the transformation of his inner bitterness towards the very presence of lepers in his society to an overflowing sweetness. The call to conversion to justice for the sake of peace is part of the call to every one of us, regardless of the circumstances of our ministry. If it is difficult to learn through careful examination of conscience where is that bitterness in ourselves that cries out to become sweetness under the guidance of the Spirit, about this, at least, there should be no mistake: the journey towards justice takes each person who makes it through desert lands of bitter and arid inner and outer trials. For instance. . . .

✔ Am I called to break with the middle class patterns of consumption to which I have become accustomed? In my eating habits? wearing apparel? travel and leisure pursuits?

✔ Am I called to deal with political issues intelligently and actively? How much time do I devote to becoming informed? To voting with real discretion? To communicating with elected officials?

✔ Am I called to contribute service to organizations working for justice? Am I willing to commit myself to the asceticism of membership on boards, committees, task forces?

✔ Am I called to give real, not just verbal, support to members of my community involved in direct ministry to the poor? Do I feel "left behind" with corporate burdens because of the options others have exercised? Does this resentment cause me to judge motives and outcomes harshly? Are these feelings the bitterness that needs redemption in me?

✔ What about my witness to justice in my own place of work? Among students? Friends and family members?

The list only begins here.

Let us not excuse ourselves from naming the bitterness of the unconverted comfort, affluence, apathy in our hearts that keep us from becoming the fragrant work of Christ's Gospel.

Francis began with the leper. His ministry did not endure in that form. But he never forgot the impact of those early days of service and longed to return to this ministry even as he neared death (LM XIV.1). Let us not, then, be rigid in our definition of what constitutes the Order's ministry for justice, lest we run the risk of exempting ourselves if our daily task is not a one-to-one ministry to the visibly marginalized person. Let us not excuse ourselves from naming the bitterness of the unconverted comfort, affluence, apathy in our hearts that keep us from becoming the fragrant work of Christ's Gospel that we are to be for others (EpFid II.2–3).

Let us be patient as we find ourselves suffering through the cycle of Francis' journey—at first, startled, then conscience-stricken, and, at last, converted to love. Ω

Perfect Joy and the Presence of God

SISTER FRANCES ANN THOM, O.S.F.

ONE OF THE PRIME factors in perfect joy is the conscious awareness of the presence of God in one's life, in the lives of others, and at all moments in time. While it is true that one cannot ever escape the presence of God, it is not true that one cannot close God off from one's relationship. There seem to be three elements involved in the closing off of this relationship with God. The one we are most aware of is the extreme or deliberate offense against God which we call sin; next is the fact of ignorance of Who God really is and the fact that there should be a personal relationship with Him; and last is the most common, but the hardest to combat—carelessness or inattentiveness in one's relationship.

Today's world feeds the mind with so much tension regarding prestige, equal rights, inflation, insecurity, etc., that the Franciscan concept of perfect joy which is also the old-fashioned Christian concept of turning one's cheek, is a most unpalatable element; in fact, in some quarters, it is totally foreign. The preoccupation with "how to survive" materially in this life creates an atmosphere of carelessness about the next life and allows little time for real attention to the presence of God.

A working definition for perfect joy might be as follows. Perfect joy is an interior love for God which extends itself to others while being fed by the Holy Spirit and does not permit the individual who possesses it to accept anything as an injury or an insult but persuades the individual always to live within the embrace of the Father while keeping one's mind and heart on the crucified Spouse.

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That sounds like a tall order! We know, however, that many holy persons have done just that and that among these are Francis and Clare. It is because of the effort to live with, in, and for the Trinity that both of these saints were able to experience perfect joy—not the kind of joy which produces the ever-present smile on one's face (can one actually picture Francis smiling as the mice crawled over him and stole his food, or Clare, with a grin, as the Sister accidentally kicked her in the mouth?), but the kind of spiritual joy which cannot be seen nor stolen. The kind of joy which is able to wish well to all and lends a helpful hand to those in need.

> Christ's recognition led to his crucifixion. . . . Those who are called to profess Him overtly to a hostile world will not suffer less than He.

Perfect joy contains within it true interior peace which enables one to enter into the daily combat with full knowledge of sure victory. It is the only possession of a Franciscan, and it grows greater by frequent use.

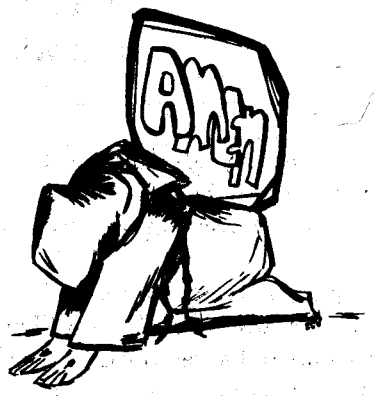
Is it possible to become proud of the fact that one can and does exercise the "use" of perfect joy? Everything is possible. The real test of the validity of its use would be the results: a kinder disposition and a more merciful approach to others.

How is it possible to develop one's ability to make "use" of perfect joy, since such incidents do not occur frequently and would most often occur spontaneously? Many persons cannot be "on the spot" adherents to perfect joy.

Here, let us take heart by realizing that neither Francis nor Clare was an immediate client of perfect joy and its value in their lives. A perusal of the Gospels will show us instances in the life of Christ upon which to meditate, and there should also be a study of the lives of Francis and Clare. The fruit of such meditation and study should be an awareness of step number one: the effort to cultivate an awareness of God's presence in one's life. It is only by a conscious development of that awareness that one can ever learn the total sacrifice entailed in the pursuit of perfect joy.

If we look more closely at the writings of Francis and Clare we are constantly being confronted with God, His Presence, the presence of Mary and of the saints and angels. These were the really real in their lives. It is by a continuous communication with the heavenly personages that one's mind and heart become more sensitive to one's real role in life. Through this sensitivity one begins to understand one's own foibles and those of others better, and also to find it easier to excuse others' lack of sensitivity—as in the case of a perfect joy experience.

Let us look seriously at the instances of the awareness of God's presence in the lives of Francis and Clare. In the very beginning of Francis' conversion, even before he realized what was happening to him, a reference is made to a sensible feeling which "filled [him] with such divine sweetness, as he himself said, that he became speechess and was totally unable to move from the place" (*Omnibus*, p. 367).



By using these sensible consolations, God was drawing Francis tao Himself—allowing him to see the emptiness and the vanity of the world as opposed to the beauty and simplicity of those natural things which God had created. This was yet an early stage in Francis' awareness of God's presence. As the saint faithfully responded to each new grace, God changed the presence which he experienced so that it would not be just the consolation needed by a weak youth, but the strong support of a mature man who would suffer much for daring to live the Gospel.

Less and less Francis depended upon these sensible manifestations of God's presence as he grew to know and understand Who it was Who visited him. Often, we are told, he was caught up in a rapture or ecstasy and was given the gift of knowing the "secrets of the hearts of others" (*Omnibus*, p. 270). The extraordinary appearance of the Infant Jesus to him is well known; yet this was but a side-effect, as it were, of his complete and continuous practice of the presence of God. He would at times draw up his hood and place his hands within his sleeves as if to be alone with his heavenly Visitor.

Clare, too, must have found the close living at San Damiano rather difficult when she felt the Spirit of the Lord come upon her. Somehow she was able to grow beyond the exterior of things and allow the Lord to take over, such as the time when she was not aware that an entire day had passed. Another instance of the Lord's care for her occurred when the others had gone to the oratory for Matins on the Feast of the Nativity and she was left alone in her illness:

> . . . she began to think on the little Jesus and grieve sorely that she could not be present at His Praises, she said with a sigh: 'Lord, God, behold I am left alone with Thee in this place.' And lo! suddenly the wondrous music that was being sung in the Church of San Francesco began to resound in her ears; she heard the glad voices of the friars at their psalms, she listened to the harmonies of the singers; and even perceived the sound of the organ. Yet the place was by no means so near that she could have heard all this in a purely human manner [*Legend and Writings*, p. 39].

In essence, Clare and Francis, being counterparts of the same ideal, filled up what was lacking of love within the mystical body of the thirteenth century. In each period of time, it seems, God raises up certain persons from among the many thousands He has called, for special recognition, for a definite work, and for the edification of the faithful. This can be and often is a dangerous, though a privileged position. History testifies to the fact that even during Francis' day there were others who began, as he did, living Gospel poverty and simplicity, but, succumbing to the adulation of others, eventually fell away from Christ's precepts.

What of the rest of the thousands who have been called? In particular, what of those who have remained faithful to their unassuming vocations? They should, indeed, thank the Lord for the grace of anonymity and, further, pray intensely for those whose lives must be manifested to the world. Let us remember that Christ's recognition led to His crucifixion. Surely those who are called to profess Him overtly to a hostile world will not suffer less than He! Perfect joy finds its dwelling with such souls. Ω

Book Reviews

Saint Francis of Assisi. By Dennis Stock (photographs) and Lawrence Cunningham (text). San Francisco and New York: Harper and Row, 1981. Pp. 128, including Chronology and Color Plate Captions. Cloth, $20.95.

Reviewed by Brother Bill Barrett, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province who lives and works at Saint Francis Inn, a soup kitchen and house of hospitality in Philadelphia.

The 800th anniversary of Francis' birth has awakened, reawakened, and enlivened interest in him in all quarters. From new scholarly researches to dramatic scripts, the various new publications of the year continue to reflect the influences of Assisi on each generation. But not every effort deserves our unabated applause; Francis is such a complex person that he is as likely to be misunderstood as to be appreciated.

There is no doubt that both collaborating authors of *Saint Francis of Assisi*, Dennis Stock and Lawrence Cunningham, hold Francis in the highest regard. The intensity of their esteem is genuine, but the accuracy of their portrait could use a few minor adjustments.

It is interesting that the book seems designed to a large extent as a vehicle for the color photographs of Dennis Stock, interesting especially in that his are a minority (19 of a total 50) of the color photograps beautifully reproduced in the book. A member of the French photographers' collective Magnum, Dennis Stock is perfectly capable of sustaining a book like this. His romantic interpretations of Francis' world through contemporary photographs are able to hold their own alongside reproductions of important frescos and artworks on Francis, Clare, and their story. But Stock fared better in his fine illustrations for the original hard cover edition of Mario von Galli's *Living Our Future: Francis of Assisi and the Church Tomorrow* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1972), and was as evocative of the romantic side of Franciscan spirituality in his beautiful *Brother Sun: A Photographic Appreciation* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1975).

The four groups of photographs, which surround the three essays of the book, are well enough edited, but do not have the impact they promise. The power of Francis' life, which the medieval reproductions try to evoke, is so understated that it is lacking in the visual portion of the book. Nor are these reproductions entirely accurate in their captions. For example, the famous fresco in the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi (p. 21) is attributed to Cimabue, but the wood panel painting in the Portiuncula (p. 20) is of highly uncertain attribution and is perhaps a copy of the fresco by a student of Cimabue; in the present volume both are attributed to Cimabue. The reader needs to bring some background to the reading of this medieval artwork, for there is little help provided to appreciate the tremendous significance of these works. Not many of the works are unfamiliar, though there are some real gems, such as an anonymous fourteenth-century fresco of "Francis with the Wolf of Gubbio" from Pienza (p. 45).

Stock's photographs, intended more as evocative than illustrative, can simply be savored. It is nonetheless unfortunate that the last photograph in the book, which also serves as its cover picture, entitled "A Franciscan monk [sic] in meditation in the hills of Assisi in springtime," seems to steer Francis back to the birdbath from which he has been emerging in recent years. (The confused reference to monasticism comes as no great surprise since the only other contemporary photograph in the book of a person in a religious habit precedes this one by three pages. Titled "A priest in Assisi," it shows a Benedictine monk!

Lawrence Cunningham has also published testimony to his affection for Francis before, perhaps most notably in his 1972 anthology, *Brother Francis*. In this latest book, he offers his own translations of the Canticle of Brother Sun, the Rule of 1221, and the Testament of Saint Francis as well as essays on his life, "Lady Poverty and Mother Earth" and "The Franciscan Revival."

Cunningham's versions of the three documents seem to suffer from a parallel to what has been called Francis' "bad Latin." They can be accused of bad English. There is no real reason for mixing usage of "thee" and "you" for the second person singular familiar, as Cunningham does in the Canticle (p. 11). (An archaic usage in a contemporary translation is a curious device in itself, but inexcusable when done incorrectly.) Similarly, "brethern" [sic] used alongside "brothers" in the same paragraph of the Rule of 1221 (p. 13) is entirely out of place. But still more unfortunate is the rendition of a verse of the Testament on p. 14. When the Lord gave Francis brothers, according to Cunningham, "Nobody told [him] how to treat them"; this has a quite different ring from "There was no one to tell me what I should do." (The Latin reads: "Et postquam Dominus dedit mihi de fratribus, nemo ostendebat mihi, quid deberem facere. . . .") "We remained with alacrity in the churches," as Cunningham puts it, does not much improve on "We were only too glad to find shelter in abandoned churches" ("Satis libenter manebamus in ecclesiis"). But perhaps most significant is Cunningham's translation of the Latin "cingulum" as "belt" instead of "cord" in Francis' description of the brothers' clothing. The Legend of the Three Companions, the *Expositio super Regulum* attributed to Saint Bonaventure, and other thirteenth-century sources make it specifically clear that unlike everyone else, the friars did not wear belts, which

customarily held both moneypurse and a knife or sword; the knotted cord was an unmistakable sign that the Franciscans were unarmed and poor.

The biographical essay that really opens the written portion of the book has several notable insights, despite some minor inaccuracies. Cunningham will not allow a Francis "meant to nestle innocuously among the backyard rosebushes near the birdbath" (p. 25). He correctly insists that Francis' "life was not charming; it was prophetic" (p. 39). It is good that he mentions the ivory horn Francis received from the Sultan Melek-el-Kamel, now one of the most valuable relics of the Saint preserved at San Francesco in Assisi. That Francis, who renounced every possession, kept this carved horn with him until he died shows how much he cherished this reminder of his contact with Islam. The thorough treatment Cunningham gives Francis' 1223 Christmas celebration at Greccio is emphasized by his very insightful description of the Canticle of Brother Sun: "A highly complex work that echoes the canticles of the Bible, Francis' own profound sense of God in the world, and his deeply felt conviction that the world, in its own manifold beauty and variety, is itself a hymn of praise to God" (p. 36).

It is not very critical that Cunningham mistakenly reports that when Francis received Clare, he immediately established her at San Damiano (p. 30); the Chronology at the book's end correctly notes (p. 117) that she first lived with some Benedictine nuns. Nor is it of major importance that he reports Francis as dying at the Bishop's palace in Assisi (p. 38), since the Chronology, p. 123, corrects this error, telling us that the dying Francis asked to be taken to the Portiuncula and did die outside Assisi's walls.

This leads to two interesting questions: Who wrote the epilogue Chronology, and who took its photographs? If the text of this section corrects several (albeit somewhat technical) flaws of the book's opening essay, its dozen black and white photographs are reproduced too small and too poorly to stand in comparison to Dennis Stock's work of quality. For those interested in the flavor of the life of Francis, the brief essay by Cunningham will suffice. The Chronology can serve as a corrective to his occasional lapses of fact.

But do not too quickly conclude that this book is fatally flawed. It is not. The prophetic Francis has many sides, and the second and third essays of this book offer some good insights into them. This is where Cunningham is at his best, and that is very good. A substantial essay on voluntary Gospel poverty goes to the heart of Francis's life, "the basic desire to live completely under the aegis of God's care and providence" (p. 58). Cunningham explores the way Francis' poverty influenced his view of the world as total gift of God—and how that view burst into song in the Canticle. Indeed, he realizes that it is only alongside the Praises of God, written at La Verna, that the theological depth of the Canticle can be experienced: "We learn from creation and Christ" (p. 80).

Cunningham fully realizes that Francis was a "God-haunted man," whose meek side cannot be known

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Weiss, Gerald, *On Becoming Married: The Art of a Loving Marriage*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1982. Pp. x–96. Paper, $2.95.

★

"without getting the suffering one," for both are qualities of the Christ. "To put it another way: saints like Francis are a reproach (in the deepest biblical sense of that term) to those who would live as Christians without seriousness" (p. 73). That should be repeated again and again for Franciscans.

In his final essay on the revival of Franciscanism since the nineteenth century, Cunningham points out the Franciscan influence on Jesuit theology in later years. Oddly, he mentions Bonaventure and William of Ockham, but forgets Duns Scotus. It is appropriate that he quotes Gerard Manley Hopkins' "God's Grandeur" as a "premier example of the Franciscan notion of God's detectable presence in the world of creation" (p. 100), but it is unfortunate that the poem is marred by a typographical error in line 11 ("through" for "though"). A similar mishap calls Raphael Brown's 1967 bibliography of the Saint "a biography."

Unfortunately, this final essay is just a bit unfocused, and it wanders

from an overly brief discussion of Paul Sabatier's biography of Francis to the fictionalized (which is not to imply untrue) views of Herman Hesse, Nikos Kazantzakis, and Ignazio Silone, before it settles into some considerations of where Franciscanism flourishes today. Although he gives full due to the official branches of the three Orders that exist in the Roman Catholic Church today, Cunningham also applauds the charism of Anglican Franciscan men and women and asserts the Franciscanism of the Catholic Worker Movement "with their strong tradition of pacifism, their identification with the poor, and their simple insistence on Gospel values" (p. 108). His testimony for the vitality of the Franciscan spirit is strong.

Saint Francis of Assisi is an easy book to explore. It is a very beautiful book, an expression of love for its namesake. Sometimes that is enough.

God Is a Sea: The Dynamics of Christian Living. By David Walker. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1981. Pp. 144, Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., a counselor in the Counseling and Career Development Center of St. Bonaventure University.

David Walker, a priest of the Archdiocese of Sydney in Australia, has written a series of beautiful reflections on various images of God, images suggested by different spiritual writers of the Christian tradition. His reflections, taken as a whole, express what he calls in the subtitle of his work, "the dynamics of Christian living." In each of twenty-one chapters, the author begins with a spiritual writer's image of God and then goes on to develop that image in a practical way for the spiritual direction of the reader.

In the presentation of these images of God, the author draws from the writings of fifteen spiritual writers. Ten of these writers Father Walker quotes but once: John Donne, Johannes Eckhart, Walter Hilton, Jean-Pierre de Caussade, Denis the Areopagite, Hannah Hurnard, Julian of Norwich, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, Jacob Riis, and Henri de Tourville. Of the remaining five spiritual writers, John of Ruysbroeck and St. John of the Cross are each drawn from twice; St. Teresa of Avila is cited three times; John Cassian has five of his images used. The most often quoted writer is Evelyn Underhill, an Anglican spiritual writer who died in 1941; nine of her images are used.

The title of the book is derived from a quotation from John of Ruysbroeck, a fourteenth-century Flemish mystic: "God is a sea that ebbs and flows. . . ." Father Walker's development of this image is capsulized in his statements that "this ebbing and flowing is the very nature of Christian existence . . . [and] just as it is the nature of the tide to flow in and to draw out again, so it is the nature of the Father not only to reach out in love but also to draw all things to himself" (p. 15).

Throughout his book, the author repeats his theme that the spiritual life is basically a combination of the Father's action and the soul's response to the Father's love. The three main divisions of the book are "The Christian Life," "How to Proceed," and "Prayer." In the first part, the author uses ten images to explain the life of the spirit. The second part, eleven chapters, presents a practical application of the principles of spiritual life to the individual soul, that is, the soul's response to God's action. The soul is not passive to the Father's action upon it, but strives to become aware of itself and of its possibilities in opening itself to the Father's love. The last ten chapters, on Prayer, present images emphasizing the soul's need to be prayerful lest the Christian life be confused with Christian practice: "Christian behavior without interior prayer can lead to a style of religious living that is divorced from the heart, a religion that focuses solely on morality" (p. 100). The author concludes that "life itself is communion with the Father and life itself is service of the Father" (p. 137).

God Is a Sea is a splendid little book for anyone striving to understand the need of a spiritual foundation for the living of a Christian life. Using as stepping stones images presented by diverse spiritual writers from John Cassian of the Fifth Century to Evelyn Underhill of the Twentieth Century, the author takes the reader on a spiritual journey into the dynamics of the spiritual life. This reviewer believes that anyone interested in the Christian tradition of the spiritual life will gain much from this book for the nourishment of the soul.

Experiencing Jesus: Scripture, the Witness of Saints and Mystics, and a Life of Prayer Show the Way. By John Wijngaards, M.H.M. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1981. Pp. 176. Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Father Francis de Ruijte, O.F.M., M.A. (Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University), team member of the Burning Bush Prayer and Renewal Center, which has biblical, charismatic, and Franciscan spirituality thrusts, located at Lennoxville, Québec.

Every Christian—or simply every sincere believer—can and should experience a tangible awareness of God in his life. Prayerfully reflecting on God's word shows this. It is also discernible in the lives of outstanding saints and believers. "Believing in Christ means a living encounter with him, a discovery of the Holy Spirit in one's life, a growth in personal love for the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity" (p. 63). Just as a pregnant woman feels new life stirring within her, so we too should be aware of the divine life moving in us (p. 64). But instead of a living, personal encounter with Jesus, our faith may have gotten locked up by tradition, routine, and culture (p. 63). We then need a change in our life, a conversion, a turning-about of our heart to God. The ways to realize this are lovingly reflecting on Scripture and prayer, especially silent prayer.

The main body of this book shows how this was concretized in the lives of Jesus himself, Symeon of Constantinople, Francis of Assisi, Teresa of Avila, Francis de Sales, Thérèse of Lisieux, Charles de Foucauld, Mahatma Gandhi, and Simone Weil. What they did we are all called to do and

we can do it.

Let us, in this Franciscan spirituality review, examine one chapter in detail; we opt, of course, for Francis of Assisi. On the feast of the Apostle Matthias, February 24, 1208, the reading of Mt. 10 brought about a turning point in the life of Francis of Assisi. After hearing this Good News, Francis exclaimed: "This is what I desire with all my heart" (1Cel 22). It was a decisive moment for him. Francis took Jesus' words literally (p. 89), and the Good News transformed his life. Ever afterwards, Jesus poor and humble permeated his thinking and guided his decision-making (p. 160). Sacred Scripture played an important role throughout his life. As Francis said in an autobiographical text, "The Most High himself revealed to me to live according to the Holy Gospel" (Test 14). Many of Francis' "revelations" resulted from a prayerful listening to the word of God (p. 88). With his first two followers, at St. Nicholas Church, he opened the Gospel three times to know God's will (L3S 27; 2Cel 15). In these words he experienced Jesus talking to him and his brothers directly (p. 87). He was not only a hearer but also a doer of the word (Js. 1:23, RSV—pp. 89–92): he and his friars pledged to observe the Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ (RegB 1.1; 12.4).

The author deals with the other testimonies in a similar fashion. Some persons have indeed experienced Christ, and this vital, dynamic way of living Christ is open to all of us. To the Apostles Jesus said: "*I will make you . . .* into fishers of men" (Mt. 1:17, JB). To each one of us he repeats: "*I will make you . . .* into a truly spiritual person" (p. 106). This is possible through internalizing God's word and through prayer. What the author of this book did not say, yet is true, is that reading this book can be an experience of God. And therefore I recommend it. Although the book never mentions the charismatic renewal or prayer groups, it can be particularly beneficial for such Christians.

Franciscan Note. I believe both I and this publication owe it to ourselves to add a note. Even a casual reader will notice the two omissions with regard to Francis of Assisi. Francis appears as the only ahistorical person—i.e., without any biographical account whatever. In addition, he is the only one whose own words or writings are not cited, but who must be content with "stories" about himself. And these stories were compiled respectively 92 and 164 years after his death (SP in 1318, and Fior in 1390), dating not from the 13th Century, as the author affirms (p. 84), but from the 14th. Even Bonaventure's LM (1263) can and should be traced back to Thomas of Celano, whom he often copies. We admit, with the author, that the facts described are historical and reliable; but Wijngaards finds it difficult to undo them from their "fanciful medieval elaborations" (p. 84). Why such a label for Francis? The author did not relegate Symeon to the "Dark Ages" or banish Thérèse of Lisieux to the "degenerating 19th century"—which would have been just as unfair. And Masseo is four times misspelled as "Maffeo" (p. 85).

To Wijngaards conclusion: "If we examine Francis' life in the way I have done above . . . ?" (p. 91), I add: it can be done much better. A commendation for the book, and a recommendation for rewriting the chapter on Francis of Assisi.

Following Christ in a Consumer Society: The Spirituality of Cultural Resistance. By John Francis Kavanaugh. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1981. Pp. xx–167. Paper, $6.95.

Reviewed by Father Raphael D. Bonanno, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province who spent 16 years in Brazil, four months in Jerusalem, and now is Commissary of The Holy Land in Washington, D.C., and editor of the Holy Land *magazine.*

This book is thought-provoking. Kavanaugh follows his title and subtitle very closely. He penetrates deeply into the problem of the relation between Gospel and life, Gospel and culture, and Gospel and American consumerism. It is a heady trip, but he seems right on the mark.

He divides his subject into two parts: the Commodity Form and the Personal Form. The first concentrates on things and objects; the second on persons, humanness, knowing and loving, freedom. His better chapters in Part One on the Commodity Form are on Idolatry, Culture as Human and Inhuman (or American Culture as Graced and Disgraced), the Body as Commodity (or Sexual Mechanics), Human Interaction Commodified (or Violence). In Part Two on the Personal Form, the author starts with a Christian philosophical anthropology, re-reads the life of Christ, then sets up Christ over against the idols of capitalism and concludes this section with concrete Christian practice in community, prayer, the sacraments, marriage and celibacy, and the vowed life. Chapter Twelve, the conclusion of the book, is on Revolutionary Holiness. Kavanaugh makes the point of how counter-cultural our living of the Gospel really can be. He shows disturbingly how our "world" can even enter the cloister and unconsciously distort our Christian values.

Reading along in this book I felt a reminiscence of Martin Buber's *I and Thou*: the emphasis on persons over against "thingified thinking." Finally on pp. 66–67 Kavanaugh quotes Buber. Then in the Bibliographical Appendix, when he cites important seminal works from the various religious traditions influencing the Personal Form, he writes: "In the Jewish Tradition, one book which I cannot fail to mention as having enriched my own life is Martin Buber's *I and Thou* (Scribners, 1958)."

Kavanaugh's comments on the commodified gospel focus on even our own language when we talk about salvation: i.e., "earning salvation, winning salvation, proving that we are good," etc. It is amazing to realize how consumeristic our treatment of "holy *things*" has become. We fall into thing-knowledge, thing-willing, and thing-behavior without being aware of it.

What then are the foundations of the Personal Form? It is God himself "who is radically personal and communal in knowledge, love and freedom . . . God is within and beyond us, calling us to ourselves

but only on the condition of freelv centered covenantal life. God is consequently Absolute Being—or better, Absolute Personhood—in whom we partake by the exercise of our personhood, to whom we are beckoned by the exigencies of our being human" (p. 94). From God Kavanaugh moves to Christ and demonstrates how the Lord not only unveils God to man but also reveals man to man. "The Incarnation, as well as the entire life of Christ, is a testimony received in faith that we are redeemed by a God-made-vulnerable in loving creation, and that we are fulfilled only in our irreplaceably unique self-donation. 'Man only is Karl Rahner has said, 'when he gives himself away' " (p. 94).

On p. 96 Kavanaugh has an excellent resume of the radical differences between the Commodity Form and the Personal Form. One section centers on thing-behavior and person-behavior. The first is characterized by violence in the following modes: domination, manipulation, retaliation, punishment, defense, devaluation of life, demand, competition, and retention. The second is characterized by peace in the following modes: acceptance of weakness, respect of freedom, forgiveness, healing, defenselessness, exaltation of the least person, invitation, sharing, and giving. The Person-Reality emphasizes Being over Having and What we can be over What is.

When Kavanaugh discusses the Church, he says: "The Personal Form is not reducible to the Christian Churches and the Christian Churches are not exempt from the Commodity Form." This is another way of saying we of the Church do not have a monopoly on salvation nor can we deny the fact that the "World" is very much with us.

Kavanaugh's critique ends with a specific program for Christian practice involving sacraments, vows, prayer, and community. In each area he points out the possibilities of growth in human personhood up to the fullness of maturity in Christ Jesus our Lord. He issues a call to radicality in the name of the Gospel. "In a culture which portrays life-commitment as impossible and undesirable, which inhibits the flowering of true intimacy, which deems a suffering love and sacrifice to be negative values, men and women who enter into a personal covenant by mature and free consent are taking a radical stance" (p. 132). It sounds like the Gospel and like Vatican II: "You are in the world but not of the world."

Frankly, I found this book very comforting, in the sense that after being outside the United States for almost twenty years, I have come to question many so-called American values. When we Americans go on mission either to the Third World or to the Old World, how much of what we transmit is American culture, and how much is pure Gospel? This book asks the same questions, not only for missionaries but also for Christians within our milieu. Except for some repetitiousness in the early chapters, there is little else on which I would fault this book. In fact, I would recommend it to all who have ever questioned whether being a superpower politically and economically affects us Americans spiritually.

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504	Life of St. Francis (Pre-req. 502)	3	M-F	Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M.
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509	History of Franciscan Spirituality	3	M-F	Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M.
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The CORD

A Monthly Franciscan Spiritual Review

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Our July-August issue has been illustrated and laid out by Brother Gregory J. Zoltowski, O.F.M., M.F.A. (Catholic University of America), Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.

Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

Contemplative Life vs. Contemplation

THE CALL TO CONTEMPLATION is as old as the first living creature into whom God breathed life—a life intended for God's praise and glory! Sometimes we forget this aspect of creation; after all, what is the praise and glory of God if not contemplation: an intimate relationship with Him? Sometimes we hear people say that contemplation is only for those who are in monasteries: for "THE contemplatives." While it is true that the very life of the monastery is such that it is conducive to contemplation, that does not mean that everyone in the monastery is deeply contemplative. The *gift* of contemplation, while one may strive to acquire it, is truly a gift. As a gift—free though it is—it must be *earned, desired, and responded to* by the receiver.

• *Earned.* How can one earn the gift of contemplation? God wills that we contemplate Him. We must also will to contemplate Him. We must dispose ourselves by intention, purity, good works, and attentiveness to God—frequently, if not at all times.

• *Desired.* Doesn't every religious desire contemplation? Contemplation requires time, effort, and self-giving. With the gift also comes a reponsibirlity to be open to what God requires. Those, even though they are religious, who would rather fill their lives with material matters and secular goals will not have time nor make the effort really to contemplate God.

• *Responded to.* How can one respond? Like all gifts, contemplation can be shelved, given away, or ignored. If it is shelved, the individual probably hopes to acquire it at a later time—when he or she has more time. If it is given away or ignored, the gift will most probably be withdrawn from the recipient.

Francis and Clare both knew, earned, desired, and responded to the call. Neither one has left any erudite works nor written tradition of mysticism for the Order. But neither did Jesus do so for the Church. Other than the Our Father and the example he set, Jesus did

not set down any real code for prayer. By their life styles—by their living example, both Francis and Clare gave evidence of their conviction that each one must be free to contemplate God as the unique person he or she is. They both taught that the "unique call" of God must be uniquely earned, desired, responded to, on a one-to-one level. God does not have pattern for our relationship with Him, any more than we have a pattern for our relationships with others.

Perhaps Francis and Clare felt that a written treatise would limit the contemplative aspect of their followers' lives. They wanted their followers free, as they were; flexible, as they were; loving God as only each one can; not copying, but discovering.

Francis proved that in the midst of activity he still maintained an intimate relationship with God. Sometimes, we are told, he was so overpowered by this relationship that he withdrew his head into his hood and his hands into his sleeves and remained immobile for long periods of time. What was Francis doing?

A similar story is told of Clare. She lost an entire day in the joy of God's presence as He spoke to her soul. She experienced the timelessness of eternal contemplation. What was Clare doing?

Neither Francis nor Clare was doing *anything*. God was accepting their response to His invitation, and He was responding to each one's unique relationship with Him.

In monasteries, where work is rather routine—housework, garden work—where there is not an intense mental strain nor any striving to obtain material goods, the life-style produces the right atmosphere for uninterrupted contemplation. But even here, amidst this peaceful and serene climate, difficulties in contemplation arise. Each person must constantly be on his/her guard against complacency and relaxation in spiritual matters. One must ever be aware of God's gift and constantly and energetically strive to earn, desire, and respond to God's wishes for contemplative awareness. As Clare so aptly stated: "Know your vocation." Ω

Sr. Francis Ann Thom, O.S.C.

MONTHLY CONFERENCE

The Service of Loving Obedience—I

REGIS ARMSTRONG, O.F.M.CAP.

ENTWINED IN THE VERY FABRIC of the history of religious life is the thread of obedience. From the earliest days of those men and women seeking experiences of God in the desert wastes of Egypt to the more settled days of Carolingian monasticism during which the faith experiences of men and women produced magnificent expressions of the mysteries of God, the "labor of obedience," as the Rule of Saint Benedict calls it, formed the keystone of religious life (Prologue; Schnitzoher, p. 57; cf. Leclercq). Our contemporary age has brought the profession of this virtue into serious question. "The ideas of freedom and of self-determination, of human development and the right of man to choose his own work have no small influence on our opinions," the retiring Minister General, Constantine Koser, O.F.M., told his brothers during his address on the state of the Order in 1979 (Koser, p. 77). Indeed, the values of autonomy, self-fulfillment, and democracy have substituted for the traditional concepts of docility, self-sacrifice, and common life (Cf. *Documents.*, pp. 29–36). Historians may well look back at this period with curiosity, but we who are living through it must regard it as a time in which we are challenged to purify the traditions of religious life of the encrustations of history in order to express vividly and authentically the dynamisms of the spiritual life from which obedience springs.

No other religious family within the Church has struggled more with the tensions of obedience than the Franciscan. While he was alive, Saint Francis held the friars together by the sheer magnetism of his peresonality. Yet even during his life, he sang the praises of obe-

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dience, wrote about its lived experience (Cf. SalVirt; RegNB 4-6; RegB 2, 7, 10; Adm 2-3), and envisioned it as the binding force of brotherhood (RegNB 5.14-15). Nonetheless, the perspectives of monasticism and the later apostolic movements have influenced the Franciscan understanding of obedience and the contributions which have been made to its theology through the tradition of Saint Francis.

> [Obedience] . . . became the means of establishing and fortifying the bonds which exist not only between God and the human person but also among all the brothers.

What follows is an attempt to discover the Franciscan perspective on obedience through an examination of the writings of the Little Poor Man of Assisi. These considerations must be studied in their twofold dimensions of a vertical expression, which may well be interpreted as the obedience offered to God through a human instrument, and a horizontal expression: that ministry exercised in loving obedience which builds the fraternity established by and in Jesus Christ.[1] In both instances, obedience may be seen as an expression of love and service offered to God for the revelation of the mystery of Christ and the development of his kingdom on earth.

The Life of Saint Francis Formed by the Word of God

MANY BIOGRAPHERS of Saint Francis touch on the haunting refrain of the last years of his life in which the Saint expressed a desire to return to the beginnings of his spiritual journey (cf. 1Cel 103; Julian of Speyer, *Life*, 67; LM XIV.1). Indeed, it is difficult to examine any basic aspect of his vision without reflecting upon those first beginnings in

[1]These considerations attempt to present a view of obedience based primarily on the writings of Saint Francis. The author used the biographies of the early Franciscan tradition only when necessary. Because of the depth of the subject the treatment will be considered in two parts. Part One considers the vertical dimension, and Part Two, the horizontal dimension.

his spiritual life. This is particularly true in a consideration of obedience. Saint Bonaventure characterizes the early years as a period in which the man of God was "ignorant of God's plan" and "awaited God's will" (LM I.3; Cousins, pp. 187-88). Celano describes these days in a similar way and tells of the long periods of solitude and prayer in the caves of Monte Subasio during which Francis "was so exhausted with the strain that one person seemed to have entered and another to have come out . . . " (1Cel 6). The ecstatic moments in prayer at San Damiano were certainly among those means used by the young man to discern God's will, but Saint Bonaventure highlights the scene at the Portiuncula in which Francis heard the missionary discourse of Matthew's Gospel as the decisive moment of his loving response to God's plan. "This is what I want," Bonaventure places on his lips, "this is what I long for with all my heart." And, as many authors have noted, the remainder of the Saint's life was lived in compliance with that pattern of the Gospel (Cf. Conti; Cardaropoli and Conti).

The Latin roots of the word "obedience," *ob-audire*, i.e., to listen or to give ear, enhance the spirituality of the Judeo-Christian tradition which shows profound respect for the contemplative acceptance of the Word of God as a necessary requirement of discipleship. Saint Francis is firmly rooted in this tradition, as so many incidents in his life indicate: the discovery of an apostolic manner of life, the confirmation of the way of poverty which would be embraced by his brothers and sisters, the unfolding of the events on Monte LaVerna, etc. Once more Saint Bonaventure provides an insight into this aspect of Francis' spiritual development: "Through divine inspiration [Saint Francis] had learned that if he opened the book of the Gospel, Christ would reveal to him what God considered most acceptable in him and from him" (LM XIII.2). Thus the writings of Saint Francis form a collage of scriptural quotations and allusions, almost five hundred and sixty of which are suggested in Esser's critical edition of the 38 texts. This clearly indicates his desire to obey the will of God as manifested in his Word. The First Rule begins quite simply: "This is the life of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which Brother Francis asked the Lord Pope to be granted and confirmed for him. . . ." The same sentiments are echoed in its first chapter: "The rule and life of these brothers is this: . . . to follow the teaching and the footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ" (RegNB Prol.1; Armstrong and Brady tr.). And an exhortation to center one's life on the Word of God is found once more in the

twenty-second chapter of the same Rule: "Now that we have left the world," Francis writes, "we have nothing else to do except to follow the will of the Lord and to please him." Then, quite simply, the Seraphic Father presents a series of quotations from the Synoptic teaching on the Word of God as a seed. Even a casual observer of the writings of Saint Francis will see that the entire spiritual life of the Saint was a gradual growth and unfolding of that seed of the Scriptures. He listened attentively to the biblical teachings, sought to understand them fully, and then responded immediately.

The Discovery of the Word within the Church

THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE, though, Saint Francis never seems to have overlooked the simple fact that he first discovered the Word of God in the Church. Saint Bonaventure's description of the events at Our Lady of the Portiuncula certainly highlights this, but it only confirms what is present in the writings of the Seraphic Father: his devotion to the Church which is the privileged vessel of the Word of God. The Definitive Rule, which was officially approved by the Church in the papal bull *Solet Annuere* (29 Nov. 1223), opens with a statement of the Gospel life of the brothers and immediately proceeds to develop the theme of obedience to the Church through the person of the Pope. The same document concludes with a call to be steadfast in the Catholic faith so that poverty, humility, and the holy Gospel may be observed. In both instances, Saint Francis clearly associates obedience to the Gospel with obedience to the Church; in doing so, he identifies them as one and the same.

What is remarkable about this devotion to the Church is the manner in which the Saint responded to the teaching of the Fourth Lateran Council and the post-conciliar decrees of Pope Honorius III. Men and women of our contemporary Church know how difficult it is to be conciliar and post-conciliar. In this period after the Second Vatican Council, as after the Fourth Lateran Council, all Christians are called to look upon the Church and the world in which it lives and, from this reflection, embark upon new and frequently challenging paths which demand inner strength and conviction. The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 has been called the "Great Council," since its twenty-two decrees influenced so many aspects of medieval religious and devotional life (cf. Schroeder). Some of the Eucharistic and sacramental teachings of this ecclesial event affect the practice of the Church to this day. Furthermore, the pontificate of Pope Honorius III, a canonist with strong

convictions about the direction of the Church, is characterized by many prescriptions aimed at implementing the teachings of the Fourth Lateran Council.

A careful examination of the writings of Saint Francis indicates how thoroughly the Saint studied these conciliar and post-conciliar teachings and shaped his ideals according to them. Thus it is not difficult to discover in the First Rule many conciliar themes. Chapters 18, 19, and 20 are clear reflections of decrees 12, 3, and 21 of the Council (cf. Flood and Matura, pp. 40–44). Some authors have suggested that the original ideal of the brotherhood, which did not concern itself with the tensions of clerical and lay brothers, took a decided turn in responding to the directives of the Council concerning the education of preachers and the confessions of religious. More obvious, though, is the continual underscoring of the liturgical teachings of the Council and the decrees of Pope Honorius III in the writings of the Saint. The series of letters which he wrote to the clergy, custodians, and rulers of the peoples contain passages from the Conciliar decrees and the papal bull *Sane cum olim* (22 Nov. 1219), and aim at deepening the liturgical sensitivity of the friars and people (Cf. EpCler, EpCust, EpRect, EpFid II, EpOrd). A number of contemporary authors have portrayed Francis as a man at odds with the institutional Church (Mockler, Moorman, Sabatier, Smith), but an examination of his writings manifests a contrary view and indicates that he was attuned to the teachings of the Church and obedient to its directives.

Saint Francis' practice of obedience is, then, rooted in his love of the Word of God and, because of It, the Church. Indeed, his writings do not indicate any hesitancy in the exercise of this virtue because the Saint regarded the Bible and the Church as primary sources for discovering the will of God and the direction needed for the guidance of his brothers and sisters. What strikes any student of his writings is his unusual grasp of the mysteries of the Incarnate Word and, in light of these, their practical application to daily life. Saint Francis emerges through his writings as a man in awe of the revelation of the Word-made-flesh, eager to conform his life to the pattern presented in Christ and content to follow simply the paths of the Gospel. Thus obedience to the Word takes on a deeper dimension in the surrender of his

will to the brothers the Lord had given to him, for this was the way Christ had taken in obedience to his Father. Moreover, Saint Francis seems to have perceived that the exercise of this virtue was the only way in which the human person could reach the fullness of the vocation to which he had originally been called.

The Biblical Foundations of Obedience

TO PERCEIVE THE FOUNDATIONS for the Franciscan understanding of obedience, one should reflect upon the biblical anthropology which is presented in Francis' Second Admonition:[2]

> The Lord said to Adam: "Eat of every tree; do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (cf. Gen. 2:16–17). He was able to eat of every tree of paradise since he did not go against obedience. For the person eats of the tree of the knowledge of good who appropriates to himself his own will and thus exalts himself over the good things which the Lord says and does in him; and thus, through the suggestion of the devil and the transgression of the command, what he eats becomes for him the fruit of the knowledge of evil. Therefore it is necessary that he bear the punishment.

Clearly, Saint Francis sees the right of the Lord to permit Adam, the work of His hands, to eat and enjoy every tree in the garden and, at the same time, to prohibit him from tasting of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. On the one hand, the permission invites Adam to a rich, contemplative condition enabling him to delight in the good things created for him; on the other, the prohibition contains the test of the inner attitude of the human person. Through obedience to the command, Adam is called to acknowledge God as the Lord of all, as the true Proprietor of everything that is created. In the idyllic state of the Garden, Adam was called to remain bound to God, to be His possession, and to be His servant in caring for the things entrusted to him. Through this obedience, then, Adam was created to glorify God.

In this simple description, it is important to underscore that obedience is an expression of the basic relationship, the foundation of all

[2]There is a dearth of commentary on the Admonitions of Saint Francis. Yet authors throughout the centuries have seen them as "The Franciscan Sermon on the Mount," "The Franciscan Mirror of Perfection," a perfect commentary on the Rule of Saint Francis, etc. In many ways, the Admonitions provide followers of Saint Francis many startling insights into the richness of their tradition.

relationships between God and the human person, as well as between the human person and God's creation. The Creator of all cannot renounce the right to impose a command upon Adam, the work of His hands, without relinquishing His identity as Lord. In the same vein, the human person is unable to turn his back on the commands of God without upsetting the balance of the most important of his relationships. Thus man's obedience acknowledges that God is Lord of all and maintains the harmony intended by the Creator in the very beginning.

Saint Francis understands the sin of Adam not only as an objective transgression of a command or an encroachment of the law, but much more as the fracturing of that personal relationship between God and the human person. Adam infringed upon the right of the Creator to command, and in so doing denied His supremacy as Lord. The sinful person desired to be his own lord and master; he did not want to be commanded or restricted. Therefore he denied the true origin and goal of all good. The glory of God which filled creation in all its beauty and wonder became that which man desired to secure and praise for himself. Through this unjust appropriation, Adam attempted to assert his own self-possession. Francis, then, sees the sin of disobedience as a claim of the will to a piece of personal property with the natural result that any good which is said or done derives from the human person and not from God.

It is important to note that the Saint introduces this Second Admonition by centering on the figure of Adam and by using the past tense. In the third line of the text, however, he shifts to an impersonal pronoun and to the present tense. The implication contained in these shifts is that unending continuance of the sin of Adam in which all men and women of every age are involved. In the heart of each human person, then, Saint Francis perceives the same tendencies of Adam: clinging to one's own will and exalting oneself over the good things which, in reality, the Lord says or does.

The revelation of the Word-made-flesh, however, contains the lessons necessary for the undoing of this sin. In the first place, this is clear in the example of Christ himself, as the second version of the Letter to the Faithful suggests:

> Though *he was rich* beyond all other things in this world (2 Cor.8:9), he, together with the most blessed Virgin, his Mother, willed to choose poverty. . . . He placed his will at the will of the Father, saying: "*Father, let your will be done* (Mt. 26:42); *not as I will, but as you will* (Mt. 26:39)." And the will of the Father was such that his blessed and glorious Son, whom he gave to us and [who] was born for us, should,

through his own blood, offer himself as a sacrifice and oblation on the altar of the cross: not for himself through whom all things were made (cf. Jn. 1:3), but for our sins, leaving us an example that we should follow in his footprints (cf. 1 Pet. 2:21) [EpFid II.5–13].

The Third Admonition, furthermore, resumes the theme of disobedience contained in the Second, by reflecting upon the teachings of Luke's Gospel:

> The Lord says in the Gospel: *He who does not renounce everything he possesses cannot be my disciple* (Lk. 14:33); and: *He who wishes to save his life must lose it* (Lk. 9:24). That person leaves everything he possesses and loses his body who surrenders his whole self to obedience at the hands of his prelate.[3]

In both instances it is clear that obedience is seen as an integral part of that poverty embraced by the Son of God, to which Saint Francis was so deeply committed. Indeed, the exercise of obedience is at the very heart of poverty since it is a letting-go of the most prized possession of the human person, his self-will. The initial sin of appropriation, in other words, can be undone only by assuming the condition of poverty, particularly in its most demanding form, obedience, after the example of Christ. Once more Saint Francis emerges as a man awed by the *kenosis* of the Son of God and eager to follow Him in every detail of his life.

Saint Bonaventure introduces the consideration of the Saint's practice of this virtue by highlighting his desire to profit from every possible opportunity:

> In order to profit in many ways like the merchant in the Gospel and to use all the present time to gain merit, [Saint Francis] wanted to be a subject rather than a superior. Therefore he used to always promise and observe obedience to whatever friar went with him on journeys [LM VI.4].

The wise son of the merchant, Pietro di Bernardone, never lost the sense of making good investments so that he sought every occasion to profit from the practice of this Gospel virtue. In his Testament the Saint states that he never wanted to be without a friar who would be

[3]Adm 3.1–3. It is helpful to note that the Latin word *prelatus* is translated as "prelate," not "superior." The use of the word "superior," which is commonly used in translations of the writings of Saint Francis, betrays the concept of a brother who is called to be set over or before the other brothers as a minister and servant. Saint Francis never uses the word "superior" to describe such a brother.

above him, that he would obey a novice of an hour if he were given to him as a guardian, and that he would behave as a prisoner in his hands and would not go anywhere or do anything if it were against his will (Test 27–28; cf. LM VI.4). His biographers marvel that he resigned as Minister General of the very Order he founded in order to be the servant of another friar (2Cel 143; LM VI.4). Even on his death bed, the Saint had to be commanded under obedience (2Cel 214; LM XIV.4).

In each of these instances, it is important to realize that Saint Francis extends his prayerful listening and responding to the Word of God by professing obedience to his brothers with their imperfections and differing interpretations of events and situations. It is not sufficient for the Saint to respond to the Word alone; he needs to express obedience within the fraternity. Thus his brothers become the recipients of his sacrifice so that he may deepen his conformity to Christ, who subjected himself to human beings even to the point of death. Indeed, Saint Francis perceives that obedience to the Father, which reconciles man with his Creator, has to be expressed to another human being so that peace, harmony, and order can be brought about in our dealings with one another. The vertical expression of obedience, in other words, demands a horizontal expression. When these two perspectives are seen together, they readily focus on the mystery of the Crucified Christ, in whom they are rooted.

The Practice of Loving Obedience

OBEDIENCE, AN EXPRESSION of this *kenosis* of Christ (cf. Phil. 2:6–9), is such an essential part of the life of the brothers that Saint Francis describes the profession of a candidate in these words: "When the year of probation is ended, let him be received into obedience. . . ." This profession of obedience follows an embrace of material poverty, a prerequisite for a candidate's entrance into the Order, and is consistent with the Saint's eagerness to have his followers live without anything of their own and to cut deeper and deeper into the appropriations which hamper spiritual growth.

The unfolding of the basic attitude of obedience can be found in the Third Admonition, as the Saint reflects upon the teachings and example of Jesus. The first of his thoughts flows from his conviction that obedience is at the very heart of the life of his brothers: ". . . whatever [a person] does and says, which he knows is not contrary to his [prelate's] will, provided that what he does is good, is true obedience" (Adm 3.4). Every dimension of a brother's activity, in this view of Saint Francis, is expressive of the fundamental virtue of obedience. It

is a conscious effort to remain in union with a prelate by reflecting upon the moral value of an action and its conformity with his intentions. The Third Admonition, then, envisions maturity on the part of the subject which determines his actions and deeds. It prescribes an active obedience which is exercised with a degree of freedom and of responsibility. Obedience, therefore, is exercised not only when a directive is given by a prelate. It is an all pervasive attitude which reflects a bond of unity between two brothers (cf. *Documents*, pp. 31–34; this document treats of practical matters in this regard).

Saint Francis, however, develops this fundamental ideal of obedience with an understanding of the weaknesses of human nature. The Third Admonition continues:

> And should the subject sometime see that some things might be better and more useful for his soul than what the prelate may command him, let him willingly offer such things to God as a sacrifice; and, instead, earnestly try to fulfill the wishes of the prelate. For this is loving obedience because it pleases God and neighbor [Adm 3.5–6].

The Saint specifies a response of obedience to a command which may well affect the spiritual well being of a subject. This flows quite logically from the first attitude which presumes that a brother has reflected upon the value of his action and its conformity to the will of the prelate. This directive, therefore, envisions a situation in which the judgment of the subject and the command of the prelate are at odds. The implication of these lines of the Third Admonition is that Francis believes it is more important and valuable to obey than to follow one's own opinion and understanding. In other words, to do good in obedience is better and more profitable for spiritual well being than to do better without obedience.

Once more, the spiritual motivation for this difficult response is made manifest as the Saint encourages his brothers to offer it willingly as a sacrifice to God. Obedience becomes "loving" because it is pleasing or satisfying to God and salvific for others. Such a sacrifice of one's will restores harmony and peace to the disorder caused by sinful disobedience, for it reconciles its practitioner to God and neighbor. Thus "loving obedience" is motivated by the awesome example of Jesus, who willingly sacrificed his entire life and became obedient for the salvation of all. By the exercise of this demanding form of obedience, Saint Francis maintains, a brother will continue that work of redemption and promote the harmony and peace which flows from it.

Furthermore, the Saint develops the tensions of this obedience as he

reflects upon the responsibilities of the mature brother who is confronted with a difficult situation:

> But if the prelate should command something contrary to his conscience, although [the subject] does not obey him, still he should not abandon him. And if in consequence he suffers persecution from others, let him love them even more for [the love of] God. For whoever chooses to endure persecution rather than be separated from his brothers truly remains in perfect obedience, for he lays down *his life* (Jn. 15:13) for his brothers [Adm 3.7–9].

The attitudes which are described in this section of the Third Admonition presume the conscientious brother who strives to discern the dictates of his soul and their conformity to the will of his prelate. They reflect a situation in which the subject and his prelate may be at odds, once more, not because of a more or less desirable path, but because of the moral obligations of the subject's conscience. Both the First and the Second Rules refer to these situations and provide grounds for believing that there were definite abuses which led Saint Francis to guide his brothers in such circumstances. In the First Rule (4.3) the brothers are directed to obey the ministers "in those matters which concern the well-being of their soul and [which] are not contrary to our life." In other words, the prelate may not command anything which would be against the salvation of the soul of his subject, that is, against his life in the plan of God. The Saint, then, presumes that all commands and directives given by a prelate are directed to God.[5] If this is not the case and the prelate commands something that would be detrimental to the spiritual well being of a brother or that would be sinful, the subject would not have to obey. "That is not obedience," the Saint writes, "in

[5]This conception of obedience is also found in the teachings of Pope Paul VI. "If obedience signifies the offering of one's will, yet it ought to be demanded only within the limits of charity and with regard to the dignity of the human person." Cf. Pope Paul VI, "Allocutio ad summos Moderatores quarundam Familiarum Religiosarum earumque sodales, qui Romam convenerunt ad sui cuiusque Instituti Capitulum Generale (May 23, 1964)," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964), 565–71.

which a fault or sin is committed" (RegNB 5.2).

Nonetheless, if this situation does arise, Saint Francis advises the subject not to separate himself from his prelate, which might be tantamount to breaking his ties with the brotherhood. In the days of the primitive fraternity these words had great significance, since it was not difficult for an itinerant brother to separate himself physically from his brothers. But the tendency to respond to this difficult situation by separation is natural and may easily be undertaken in a physical or psychological way.

Saint Francis further suggests the attitude which a brother should assume in the situation in which he suffers from others because of his seeming disobedience. Such persecution is also a very human phenomenon and may express itself by neglecting, disregarding, slighting, or discriminating against a brother. Yet the Saint encourages the brother who may suffer in these ways to suffer patiently and not to succumb to the temptation to separate himself from his persecutors. Once more, Saint Francis proposes the example of Christ as the motivation for such actions. Such endurance, he implies, forms the perfect expression of obedience because it deepens a brother's conformity to Christ and strengthens the bonds of love which the Lord established by his own suffering.

There can be little doubt that Saint Francis recognized the weakness of human nature emerging in certain commands of the prelates who were called to serve and minister to the brothers. Nonetheless, he uses strong language to describe a brother who wishes to cling to his own will because his own judgments might be better than those of his prelate. He writes at the conclusion of the Third Admonition:

> There are many religious who, under the pretext of seeking something better than what the prelate commands, look back (cf. Lk. 9:62) and *return to the vomit* of their own will (cf. Prov. 26:11; 2 Pet. 2:22). These are murderers who cause many souls to perish by reason of their bad example [Adm 3.10–11].

Saint Francis uses the words of Proverbs referring to dogs who return to their vomit, an image which the author of the Second Letter of Peter uses to refer to the person who has come to knowledge of Christ and then returns to his evil ways.[6] Moreover, he continues his description of such religious by calling them "murderers" who cause many

[6]This passage was quoted frequently in the reform literature of the Middle Ages. Thomas of Celano uses it to describe the people of Greccio; cf. 2Cel 35.

souls to perish—that is, who snuff out the life of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is the basis of the brotherhood so loved by the Saint.

A study of the Third Admonition, then, elaborates upon the simple statement of Saint Francis in the tenth chapter of his Second Rule:

> . . . the brothers who are subject to [prelates] should remember that they have given up their own wills for God. Therefore, I strictly command them to obey their ministers in all those things which they have promised the Lord to observe and which are not against [their] conscience and our Rule [RegB 10.2–3].

It is consistent with the traditional spirituality of obedience which flowed into the thirteenth century through monasticism. Yet it is firmly rooted in an incarnational theology of the Word of God which accentuates the necessity of the exercise of obedience so that the brotherhood established by Christ may be strengthened. Thus the "labor of obedience" became for Francis the "service of obedience." It became the means of establishing and fortifying the bonds which exist not only between God and the human person but also among all the brothers. Ω

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A Sermon

Nest of virtue
Fledged by the weaving
of her presence
Clare-Francis
Timeless center of ageless daughters
waits.

Francis-Clare
lark ever wigned
from nowhere alights.

Silent
Ave's and Magnificat's
greet one another.
His burning songs
clench themselves still
To learn of her gaze,
Then breach
his lantern body
her reflectance
their blaze
about to consume all.

"Miserere"
a plea for mercy
from the One
whose beauty is unbearable.

as smoke
made fragrant from resinous kindling
fills a room
and is gone
Francis-Clare
is wafted
along the whorl
of needy highways;

and in the circle
of sanctified ashes
Clare-Francis
Phoenix of Light
forms with ember glow
a
Nest of virtue.

Hugoline A. Sabatino, O.F.M.

Becoming Empty: The Core of Franciscan Spirituality—III

SISTER SUZANNE THERESE HALFEN, O.S.F.

III. Indifference and the "More": Implications for Franciscan Spiritual Direction

I WOULD LIKE TO PRESENT briefly some of the implications which the process of indifference and experience of the "More" has for spiritual direction and for directors. This is not intended as a thorough treatment of the topic, but I do hope to identify some key elements of the spiritual journey described in this article in relation to spiritual direction.

General Dynamics of the Experience.

Any person who hopes to grow in the spiritual life must encounter in some form the process of indifference and the "More." We cannot enter deeply into relationship with Jesus or hope to participate in the Paschal Mystery without the "emptying and being filled" by Him which is the substance of indifference and the "More." Let us consider some aspects of this experience:

1. *Disposition*: As a starting point, those who begin this journey must have some *sensitivity* to the presence of the Lord in their own life. There must be some level of openness and receptivity if we are to recognize the quiet stirrings of the invitation of the "More." This disposition is itself a gift, and it must be nourished in some way in our human environment so that it matures to a readiness to serve us on our way.

2. *Awareness*: As we begin to respond to this invitation we begin a journey into the mystery of our own hearts. This is a process of self-knowledge consisting of three necessary elements:

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• recognizing those areas of resistance in us which act as obstacles to the self-emptying necessary for conversion. These obstacles find their roots in our own sinfulness, and in the darkness of our woundedness. They include areas of faith, psychological need, defenses, patterns of life, and sin.

• sorting through our inner experiences in such a way that order is formed from our chaos. This does not indicate healing has taken place; rather, it helps bring about an inner quiet and readiness to deal with basic issues which are unresolved within us. This is a process of naming what we discover within us to some extent.

• encountering and coming to peace with our personal history, and coming to recognize it as salvation history. This involves the long, painful, risky process of grappling with the secrets of our heart, discovering their sources, recognizing their impact in our lives, and giving them to the Lord for healing. It is a process of confrontation and reconciliation with ourselves, in which we come to peace, hopefully, with our humanness as we experience it in the daily realities of life. It is a time for recognizing how God has worked and how He is working now.

The purpose of spiritual direction is . . . to facilitate the growth of the directee in openness to the movement of the Holy within. This . . . is the core of our human existence.

This "awareness" is most intense at the beginning of our journey, as we begin discovering ourselves in God's light. It continues, however, throughout our life as we grow more deeply in Him.

3. Conversion: The heart of the conversion experience is indifference or poverty of spirit, in which we "let go" of our resistances, of our false gods and false self-images, and of our securities. We even let go of our woundedness, with all the security that it can sometimes bring us, in order to be totally emptied. We surrender our very being to Jesus, who is the Lord of history. Part of this surrender to the Other involves a surrender in obedience to our spiritual director. This conversion is a time of dying, with all the darkness involved, and we must rely on the knowledge and wisdom and discernment of our director. We become like clay in the Potter's hands. In short, we become *vulnerable*, and it is a risky, frightening, and painful time. The role of the director is crucial at this time, when we will find it most difficult to see clearly or to be faithful.

4. Consolation: As we grow in poverty of spirit, as we are emptied and stripped of all that is not Holy, we are able to receive more and more deeply the presence of the Holy within us. He shows His face in many different ways, on many different levels. It is the sweetness and joy of this presence that makes conversion worthwhile! A few moments of this consolation can make months and years of dying seem like a small price to pay. We experience this consolation in many ways, and we sometimes need a director to help us recognize all the ways in which the "More" comes to us, so that we do not miss any of the subtle nuances of His presence.

5. *Fidelity*: We must be faithful to our relationship with God if we are to build upon the new foundation He is beginning within us. This takes root in us as we are consistent in coming to be with Him in personal prayer and as we begin to act more and more consistently on the Word within us. *We internalize our experience of the Word drawing us into More of Himself as we concretize it in our behavior.* We have been called to new attitudes and values, and to regard all of creation in the light of His presence. This fidelity becomes difficult when the "glow" of our consolation is replaced by the humdrum of daily life and the aridity of the desert.

6. *Indwelling*: This is the experience of being still before, and at peace with, the presence of the Holy within us. We come to *be with* God in a silence made possible by our emptiness . . . but for Him. We experience anticipation at being with Him and assurance in His presence even when it is not a felt presence. This is a deeply graced experience.

7. *Stirrings*: In the silence of God's presence we begin again to be aware more deeply of all that is within and around us. We begin once more to discover with new eyes our humanness and that of those around us. The journey continues.

Clearly, these are not clear-cut stages which follow each other in the proper order! However, I do believe they describe some of the most common experiences of this journey with God.

Role of the Spiritual Director.

The spiritual director is truly a gifted person. Certainly he or she is gifted in terms of the ability to direct; but even more, the privilege of directing another person is itself a tremendous gift. The director is invited to participate in the most intimate experiences of another person's life. He or she is entrusted with knowledge of the most sacred places of another's heart. To be a director is to be in a unique relationship with another—a relationship which must be seen as gift and as sacred. In keeping with the sacredness of the gift, the director has a sacred responsibility to be faithful to the call to direct. He or she must nourish the spiritual gifts received, through consistent presence to and with the Lord. Also needed are a deep respect for the person under direction and reverence for the presence of the Holy at work within that person. The director can be faithful to his or her ministry only if he or she is faithful to God's call to indifference for the sake of the "More" and places no claims on the person under direction. It is not the director's work, vision, or will that is being done in the heart of the directee. The director must in fact "become less" so that Christ can become "more" in the journey of the directee. This does not mean that a director should have an attitude of unconcern about the directee; rather it means he or she must be *indifferent* in relation to the directee—must not *cling* to anything of self in that relationship. Even the director's own insights must be given into the hands of Jesus so that the director does not become too concerned to "prove" or establish his or her own insights and in the process become blind to the actual movement of the Holy. In short, spiritual direction is a ministry which draws the director into the experience of the ministry of Jesus as He probed the hearts of those He met and showed them how to become free. If we are to share His ministry, we must also share in His self-emptying. This is the primary responsibility of any director.

I would like to consider now four aspects of the role of the director in relationship to the directee's experience of indifference and the "More." 1. *Enabler.* The director helps the directee grow so that the directee becomes able to hear and respond to the "More." This happens as the director leads the directee through the experiences outlined above—primarily in the awareness and conversion experiences. The director does this by

- clarification: helping the directee sort out feelings, experiences, etc., and
- interpretation: helping the directee recognize and understand

what the Lord seems to be doing, discerning His movement.

2. *Focuser.* The director helps the directee to see more clearly the patterns of behavior in the latter's own life, as well as the patterns of God's movement and the directee's response. This involves helping the directee come to a perspective regarding his or her life and experiences within the context of the faith-experience, and vice versa. The director focuses the attention of the directee on the interplay between faith experience and life response.

3. *Facilitator.* The director facilitates the growth of the directee in three key ways: *through support* both on a human level in giving understanding and encouragement, and on a faith level by confirming the presence of the Lord in the directee during times of darkness and desolation; *through challenge* when the directee's resistances are impeding growth in the Lord, or when the directee continues to avoid grappling with his or her resistances—also, the director challenges on the level of fidelity to the Word that the directee has already experienced, in terms of time in prayer and in light of the choices affecting the everyday living out of God's call; and *through reconciliation* when the directee experiences his or her sinfulness, the darkness of his or her woundedness, lack of fidelity, etc.—the director facilitates moving beyond this point when he or she serves as an instrument for healing and forgiveness for the directee. Having been challenged by some aspect of truth in him/herself, the directee also experiences acceptance, forgiveness, and renewed invitation to continue on the journey—all these, through the director.

4. *"Midwife."* In all this, the director helps give birth to the Lord in the heart of the directee. He or she does this through the above functions, but even more importantly in his/her own person, by

- caring: becoming the instrument for God's "birthing" by "loving Him into being" in the other. This is really the love of redemption,

since the director has witnessed the naked poverty of the directee, and responds with the love of Jesus . . . not *in spite of* but *because of* this poverty.

• fidelity: in his/her faithfulness to the direction relationship, the director becomes an intrinsic part of the Lord's birth in the other. Faithful through the pain and uncertainties of conversion, he or she supports the directee in making a "space" for Him within.

• trustworthiness: because of his/her fidelity and caring, the director becomes a person whom the directee can trust, and to whom the directee can *entrust* the secrets of this journey and the reality of the directee's experience of his/her own inner poverty. This is a trust which cannot be broken without violating a sacred commitment.

• personal commitment to Life: the director's deep conviction of the presence of the Holy within him/herself as well as within the directee, and their mutual commitment to that Life constitute a source of strength for the directee.

The dynamics of this relationship between director and directee occur in the ordinariness of life, in ordinary common people. It is not some experience found in the lives of mystics alone. We are all invited by the "More" to walk with Him in the company of another through whose guidance He will reveal the mystery of His love for us.

Francis the Spiritual Director.

We can see clearly the role Francis played in the life of his friars as a spiritual director. His whole life with them centered in growth in knowledge of Jesus and in conforming his life to the life of Jesus. Let us consider three aspects of Francis' *general* spiritual direction of his friars.

1. *Primary responsibility*: Francis provides us with the clearest model of a director who is faithful to his primary responsibility of entering into the ministry of Jesus by following Him in His self-emptying. Francis became indifferent for the sake of the "More," thus becoming receptive to the movement of the Spirit within him which enabled him to be a guide and companion for others in their journey.
2. *Facilitator*: Francis facilitated the growth of his friars constantly by calling them to give themselves in fidelity to the Gospel of Jesus. He challenged them to stand before God and focus their lives on the life of Jesus. He encouraged them in their growth, recognizing with delight the smallest signs of the movement of God within them.
3. *Focuser*: Francis applied the Gospel to the concrete human experience of his friars, exhorting them to reflect in their behavior the

presence of the Word within them. When he challenged them, it was not on some lofty plane removed from reality. Rather, he penetrated to the heart of their freedom, calling them to act the same way Jesus would act in the dailiness of their human experience.

These general qualities in Francis as a director can be seen throughout the Writings and the Sources. Francis was a man whose purpose was to point the way to Jesus and prepare a place for Him in the hearts of those he directed.

Characteristics of Francis' Spiritual Direction.

The manner of Francis' direction is expressed most clearly in his Letter to Leo, in which he describes his relationship to Brother Leo: "as a *mother* to her child, I speak to you, my son" (*Omnibus*, p. 118, emphasis added). This does not mean that Francis looked upon Leo as childish. Rather, he saw Leo as entrusting himself to Francis for guidance in his formation, learning, and "growing up" in Jesus. Most importantly, Francis considered his responsibility in this relationship to be that of a mother. And so he did the things of "mothering":

1. He *nurtured life* in Leo in every aspect of their relationship. He encouraged Leo in the steps he learned to take in following Jesus. Mostly, he nourished him by sharing with him the life of the Word in his own heart. Francis did not hold the life Jesus gave him within himself. He gave it freely as food for others.
2. He was *teacher* for Leo and all the friars, as he explained the meaning of the Gospel for their lives, and helped them come to understand the message they were to bring to the world. He taught them about themselves as human beings, and the ways in which their human condition served either to hide or to manifest the life of Jesus.
3. He *loved* Leo, and he loved all of his brothers. In this way he was able to anticipate their needs, to give himself, and to help them to be at home with their own poverty. The neediness of others was a manifestation of that poverty which Francis loved because it made them "little" and open to Jesus. His love gave him deep compassion, which "gentled" his friars' experience of encountering and accepting their own sinful and poor hearts.

Francis not only gave himself "as a mother" to his friars—he also exhorted them to be mother to one another. They were to *create an environment for contemplation* for one another:

> Two of these should act as mothers, with the other two, or the other one, as their children. The mothers are to lead the life of Martha; the other two, the life of Mary Magdalen (RegEr; *Omnibus*, p. 72).

In addition, as mothers they were to be sources of comfort and companionship to one another, available according to the needs of those they served: ". . . and, after Tierce the silence ends and they can speak and go to their mothers . . . the friars who are sons are not to speak to anyone except their mother or their custos . . ." (Ibid., pp. 72–73).

Francis' spiritual direction also involved the discernment of light and darkness in those he directed. He had an awareness of our human experience of sin as we try to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. The obedience of Jesus is the way we come to freedom from the power of sin that is within us.

Francis called his brothers to be cautious of the action of the evil one in their lives and to be alert for the subtle ways he tries to keep them from God. In the Rule of 1221 he specifically deals with the power of the evil one in three aspects (ch. 22; *Omnibus*, 48):

1. *Intent*: "We should beware especially of the malice and the wiles of Satan; his only desire is to prevent man from raising his mind and heart to his Lord and God. He goes about longing to steal man's heart away. . . ."
2. *Method*: "By the anxieties and worries of this life he tries to dull man's heart and make a dwelling for himself there. . . ."
3. *Result*: ". . . we must all keep close watch over ourselves or we will be lost and turn our minds and hearts from God, because we think there is something worth having or doing, or that we will gain some advantage."

To live in the Light the friars must focus totally on God and cling to Him:

> . . . I entreat all my friars, ministers and subjects, to put away every attachment, all care and solicitude, and serve, love, honor, and adore our Lord and God with a pure heart and mind; this is what He seeks above all else. We should make a dwelling place within ourselves where He can stay [*Omnibus*, pp. 48–49].

We do this when we "hold fast to the words, the life, the teaching, and the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ibid., p. 49). To enter into this way of the "More," we must become indifferent by being purified of the darkness within us. Francis writes:

> Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God, grant us in our misery that we may do for your sake alone what we know you want us to do, and always want what pleases you; *so that cleansed and enlightened interiorly* and fired with the ardor of the Holy Spirit, we *may be able* to follow in the footsteps of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and so make our way to you, Most high, *by your grace alone* [EpOrd; *Omnibus*, 108; emphasis added].

Francis sums up his advice in his Letter to Leo, as he gives himself according to Leo's needs:

> . . . In whatsoever way you think will best please our Lord God, and follow in His footsteps and in poverty, take that way, with the Lord God's blessing and my obedience. *And if you find it necessary* for your peace of soul or your own consolation *and you want to come to me, Leo, then come* [EpLeo; *Omnibus*, 118–19].

Finally, there are three additional qualities which Francis seems to point to for a spiritual director. He must have a deep interior life, by immersing himself in Scripture so that he may "grasp the wisdom of God" (2Cel 102; *Omnibus*, 446). He must have common sense and be in contact with life, understanding human weakness. This is seen especially in the Admonitions, where Francis addresses himself to those things within us which hide the presence of Jesus, and those concrete ways we manifest Him in our lives. Finally, we may draw a summary of the qualities necessary for a Franciscan spiritual director from Francis' description of a minister:

> . . . a man to whom zeal for prayer is a close friend; a man who sets aside certain hours for his soul and certain hours for the flock committed to him.
>
> . . . after his prayers he should make himself available to be stormed by all, to give answers to all, to provide for all with kindness. . . . Above all else it pertains to him to examine the secrets of consciences, to bring out the truth from hidden places [2Cel 184; *Omnibus*, 509–10].

The purpose of spiritual direction is fundamentally to facilitate the growth of the directee in openness to the movement of the Holy within, allowing the unfolding of God's presence in His unique manifestation of Himself within the life of the directee, bringing him or her to know the fullness of God. This process, which is the invitation of the "More," is the core of our human existence. Ω

The Second Franciscan Order

By holy inspiration
the blessed Francis knew
that imitating the Gospel
was just what he must do.

Our holy Mother, likewise
St. Clare, of Eucharistic fame,
followed Francis' challenge
with Sisters who bear her name.

An Order for contemplation,
including community prayer,
four vows, daily Eucharist,
confidence in God's loving care.

Our Father in heaven
will never be outdone
by those whose generosity
is pleasing to His Son.

Poverty should empty
all vain and worldly show;
Enclosure restricts one
to create heaven here below!

Obedience is much needed
to match the loyal One:
Chastity is our protection
as spouses of His Son.

Charity is but an outgrowth
of a life of dedication
whose constant watchful heart
is ever absorbed in adoration.

As living prayer for others
each moment ticks away;
the canonical hours we offer
in our journey day by day.

Humble, detached, reverent,
patient, kind, and mild—
the Poor Clare strives to develop
the virtues of God's child.

Maturity, too, is an aspect,
increased daily with her peers;
embracing others lovingly,
dispelling any fears.

No unkind word, no harshness,
only the gentle Christ she sees
as a living praise and sacrifice
her unseen God to please.

The world is hers to conquer
by her apostolate of prayer;
from within her cloister walls
she offers mankind a heavenly share!

Sister Frances Ann Thom, O.S.C.

A Really Big Year for Francis

FR. JOSEPH ROFF

The International Year of St. Francis of Assisi, commemorating the 800th anniversary of his birth, is (as readers of this periodical are well aware) a world-wide success. In this country all kinds of celebrations are being held everywhere. These include such activities as lectures, seminars, workshops, prayer vigils, religious functions, and exhibitions. Scores of new books on Francis have already appeared on the literary scene.

Postmaster General William F. Bolger has confirmed reports that the U.S. Postal Service will issue an October commemorative stamp honoring St. Francis of Assisi.

In the realm of comic books, Marvel Comics has published *Francis, Brother of the Universe*, by Father Roy M. Gasnick, O.F.M. Over half a million copies have already been sold. It has been translated into Japanese, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Spanish (three editions), and Zulu.

Franciscan Music

A new musical play, *Francis*, had a run at the theater of St. Peter's Church, Citicorp Building, in New York City. Music does play an important role in any celebration today, and this Franciscan anniversary as no exception.

Just to mention a few Franciscan musical highlights, I would give the medal of honor to Sebastian Temple for his setting to music, for unison voice, the *Peace Prayer of St. Francis*. This is to be found in most missalettes in use in our Catholic churches.

The text itself, we are told, was not necessarily composed by St. Francis at one setting. It is probably a sort of collage, put together by his faithful disciples, of thoughts expressed by Francis on various occasions in his sermons and writings. At any rate, this prayer, as well as his other writings, focus our attention on the threefold secret of his spirituality: love of God, love of human beings, and love of nature. No wonder he has been officially designated as the Patron of Ecology!

Sebastian Temple always has a flair for melody. He is the "Neil Diamond" of contemporary church music. His setting of the *Peace Prayer of St. Francis* is simple, unsophisticated, and very singable. Unlike some of the songs of the early years after Vatican II which have not stood the test of time, *The Peace Prayer* has done so and has proved to be one of the most popular songs with our congregations.

Music for Choirs

Turning now to music for choirs, and at the risk of appearing to give myself a plug, I might mention briefly two compositions of mine bearing on the subject of Franciscan music.

In 1965, on the occasion of Pope Paul VI's visit to the United Nations, I set to music for choir (S.A.T.B. and organ) the *Peace Prayer of St. Francis* under the title of *Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace* (Volkwein Brothers, 117 Sandusky St., Pittsburgh, PA 15212; available at fifty cents a copy).

Then, two years later, I set to music (S.A.T.B. and organ) *The Song of the Creatures* of St. Francis. The magnificent translation I used was of that giant of English literature, Matthew Arnold (1823–1888). The work was first published by the H. W. Gray Company of New York. Then last year Thomas House Publications (P. O. Box 6023, Concord, CA 94520) republished the work with a 1981 copyright under the new title of *The Canticle of St. Francis*. This mini-cantata bears the following dedication: "In Commemoration of the 800th Anniversary of the Birth of St. Francis of Assisi (1182–1226).

The cover alone, in gorgeous technicolor, is worth the $1.00 price for the octavo and its 19 pages of music.

In case choirs might be looking for some appropriate material to perform during this Franciscan Year, may I suggest they drop me a line, c/o St. Patrick Church, 9511 Fourth Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11209, and I shall be delighted to mail, cost free, a copy of one or both of these musical offerings.

Society of the Divine Attributes

We think our readers will be interested and gratified to know of a new association, the Society of the Divine Attributes, which has begun an outreach program to Christians interested in contemplation in daily living. The Society is based in Holy Name Province and has been in the process of formation for eight years through Secular Franciscan Miss Mary Malmberg. It emphasizes praise of God's goodness and beauty specifically through the various divine perfections or attributes. Basic requirements for membership include daily short prayers of adoration, daily Mass when possible, and spiritual, prayerful interest in the Church's missions. There are no dues or membership meetings. Members receive periodic aids by mail to deepen their contemplative praise of God. The current membership of over 500 includes several bishops, and many clergy and religious. The chaplain is the Vicar Provincial of Holy Name Province, Father Leonard D. Perotti, O.F.M. For information, write The Society of the Divine Attributes, St. Anthony's Shrine, P. O. Box 2278, Boston, MA 02107. A stamped, self-addressed number 10 envelope would be appreciated.

Book Reviews

Apocalyptic Spirituality. Treatises and Letters of Lactantius, Adso of Montier-en-Der, Joachim of Fiore, The Franciscan Spirituals, and Savonarola. Translation and introduction by Bernard McGinn. Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1979. Pp. xviii–334. Paper, $7.95.

Reviewed by Father George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Catholic University), Associate Professor at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University.

In this age of secularist thinking, it would still be possible to set up a debate as to whether apocalyptic ideas are alive. To prepare such a discussion one would not need to scan the works of the obscurest of theologians. On the pro side, one could consider some horror movies that have succeeded in the last few years. *Omen I* and *Apocalypse Now* are examples. One could also consider science fiction classics, such as *A Canticle for Leibowitz* or *The Martian Chronicles*, that conclude with the earth becoming a holocaust created by human ill will and scientific ingenuity. One could review theologian preachers of the Daniel Berrigan class, pleading for unilateral disarmament and for world peace. What is the point of building first strike nuclear capability and calling it a self-defense arsenal, unless one is intent on destroying the earth? Or, what is the point of adding thousands of new nuclear warheads when we already have twenty-five thousand and more? On the negative side of the debate, the argument could be that these are not apocalyptic ideas in the narrow sense. Who today seriously talks about the threat of Antichrist? Or, who foresees "the stars falling out of the skies like figs from a fig tree when shaken by a high wind" (Apoc. 6:13)?

The concern of the masterful *Apocalyptic Spirituality* is not reflected in the above. Its concern is rather to make clear that apocalyptic beliefs were alive in the third to the fifteenth centuries. This book is one more excellent publication in the series, *Classics of Western Spirituality*. The Paulist Press series was of high quality from the start, and this book does not lower the standard in the least. The book has well selected material from the apocalyptic tradition; it offers readable translations and excellent introductory notes.

When dealing with apocalyptic literature, could one get a better set of editor-writers than Bernard McGinn and Marjorie Reeves? This reviewer doubts the possibility. But even if the point were challenged, knowing McGinn's *Visions of the End* (Columbia, 1979), one would have to acknowledge his command of the field of medieval apocalypticism. And of course, no one with any knowledge of the subject would question the propriety of having Marjorie Reeves, author of *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages* (Clarendon, 1969), write the preface.

To achieve the purpose of showing the existence and variety of apocalyptic ideas, Professor McGinn in this book has selected five areas, so to speak: Lactantius (240–320), Adso (910–992), Joachim of Fiore (1135–1202), the Franciscan spirituals Peter Olivi and Angelus Clarenus, of the late 13th century, and Savonarola, the Dominican (1452–1498). In each case, the selections are long enough to be fully expressive of the author's perspective; and together they show the variety of apocalyptic images as one changes from one politico-social setting to another.

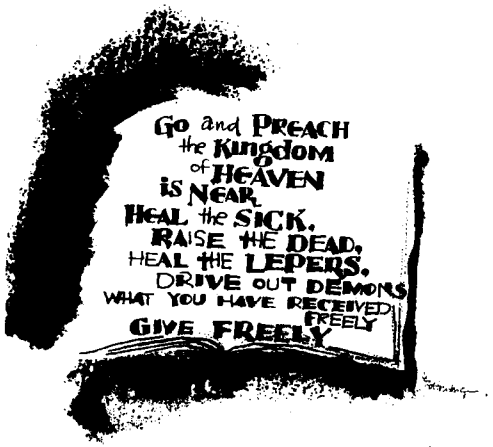
The author has achieved his goal. But having said that, one still has the right to speculate and consider possible improvements.

I have no difficulty whatsoever with the first three selections. In fact, I have great admiration for the way in which Joachim is presented. It is interesting to compare McGinn's more serene presentation of Joachim in *Visions of the End*, which is broader in scope and more tightly defined, to this one, which is more powerful and colorful, done as it is with some of Joachim's pictographic work. The general reader should have an easier time understanding Joachim as presented here.

In the 13th century section, I can't help speculating on other possibilities. If Joachimistic ideas had to be presented, which I question, it seems to me that Ubertino of Casale in Book V of *Arbor Vitae* offered greater promise. In fact, Bonaventure would have been fine too, though his principal text in the *Hexaëmeron*, collation xvi, was already available in English. On the other hand, so many other authors could have been chosen, though not necessarily in the main stream of Joachimism, such as commentators on the fourth book of Peter Lombard or medieval commentators on the Apocalypse itself.

It is good to have Savonarola's entire *Compendium of Revelations* available in English, although it is not clear what it achieves. I seriously think the painting of Antichrist preaching (p. 182) does as much as the Savonarola text itself does.

The above critical notes are not meant to detract from the book. If I say that other selections would have illustrated the apocalyptic tradition as well or better, that need not take from the fact that the selections are good and expressive ones and that they are presented well, with good translations and good introductions. In fact, it would be fair to say that anyone, myself included, who is in the slightest way interested in apocalyptic ideas, owes Bernard McGinn a debt of gratitude for bringing together in *Visions of the End* and in this more popular book so many important texts and for having thrown light upon them.



Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Staying Faithful. By Alfred McBride. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1981. Pp. v–143. Paper, $3.25.

Father McBride offers six insightful essays on the concept of fidelity. Rooting his themes in a chapter on God's fidelity, he proceeds to examine what fidelity to self implies, fidelity to others in friendship, community, and marriage, and fidelity to celibacy. An abundance of examples from the Bible and contemporary books, plays, TV, and movies make his points clear, and discussion questions after each chapter offer a review. I thought the author was at his best in the essays on marriage and celibacy. *Staying Faithful* is not only inspiring but also informative, containing some excellent source material for conferences.

Healing the Hidden Self. By Barbara Leahy Shlemon. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1982. Pp. 128. Paper, $3.50

"Heal me, Lord, and I shall be healed." These words, which the Church puts on our lips in the Lenten Office, express the premise on which this informative and careful book is written: that Jesus, the Lord, is a healer—a healer of sin, but also a healer of the wounds that life has inflicted on us. With case histories the author illustrates how psychological blocks to love and joy in God and people can arise even prior to birth, in birth, in infancy, in childhood, in adolescence—at every stage of life. She follows each history and explanation with a prayer to Jesus for healing. Most aptly, she concludes by reminding the reader that service is the path to growth.

Francis of Assisi, Writer. By Marion A. Habig, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Prss, 1981. Pp. 68. Paper, $2.00.

This brief supplement to the *Omnibus of Sources* has at least four items of interest to all Franciscans—a discussion of the Canticle of Brother Sun, a discussion of the Peace Prayer, the letter of Brother Elias written after Francis died, and an annotated bibliography of the ten best books on Francis. Of interest too are an analysis of various Praises of Francis and a new letter of Francis very recently discovered. A Franciscan library without a copy of this little book is lacking.

Books Received

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A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

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Volume 32, No. 8

The CORD

A Monthly Franciscan Spiritual Review

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Our September issue has been illustrated by Sister Jo Casey, O.S.C., of the Poor C Monastery in Minneapolis.

Standard Abbreviations used in **The CORD** for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

Experience Isn't Everything

ONE OF THE HOUSEHOLD PROVERBS I grew up with was this: "Experience is the best teacher, but fools learn no other way." Learning from the teaching or experiences of others—whether received by written or spoken word—is intelligent. Such learning, however, involves an attitude akin to faith in the transmitter: parent, teacher, peer, expert. There is, I believe, a deep lack of that kind of faith in our culture, and accordingly in our thinking about and our living of religious life. Let me take the areas of formation and house chapters as illustrative.

The operative word in much formation thinking and writing seems to be *experience*, the *experience* of prayer, the *experience* of community, the *experience* of ministry. There seems to be an impression that somehow or other praying, caring and sharing, and serving can get into the blood and marrow of a person and thereby vitalize him or her for life. What seems forgotten, in my judgment, is that experiences of prayer, community, or apostolate are all *faith* experiences, dependent on the *supernatural gift* of faith. Concentration on the human feelings involved in such experiences may well foster an "I give because I get" mentality. Negative experiences in and with prayer, community, and ministry are real and have a way of counting ten or a hundred fold in any calculus of feelings. Emotionally one Judas makes us feel worse than eleven Johns make us feel good. Religious life is based on a commitment, a choice made in faith in God's goodness. That commitment becomes operative when conscience directs us to what religious life demands of us here and now—regardless of past or present feelings or experiences. Accordingly, it seems to me that formation of conscience must be the priority in formation.

Recently one friar described a discussion at a community chapter as an attempt to have the friars "own" the decisions which the local minister and his council thought necessary. It sounded to me like

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manipulation. Worse, it seemed to be wanting to build community on everyone's doing what he wanted to do—a view which is not only utopian but faithless. Where is the appeal to my conscience? To my willingness to obey as I have vowed? Mature adults don't have to feel good about doing what they have to do. Who can feel good about correcting papers, changing bandages, visiting hospitals, or attending wakes—let alone turning off lights and saving on gasoline? Seeking consensus—the experience of "ownership"—through community discussions will at times result in dissent, the experience of alienation. And again, negative experiences seem to override positive ones. Cynicism and apathy too often result.

The psalmist tells us, "Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain." The axiom "grace builds upon nature" doesn't mean we develop communities and maintain them in holiness by concentrating on the best techniques contemporary psychology can offer us. Abbot Marmion's terse admonition, "Supernaturalize," an appeal to conscience, responsibility, and divine faith, is one religious need to hear again today. Ω

Fr Julian Davies ofm

The Liturgy of Life

The Christmas crib, the Easter candle—
  Dim lights in the mist of time;
Lenten ashes, prayers that pass—
  Almost more than I can handle.
I am no rock in a stormy sea;
  Nor mighty ship ploughing the deep;
I know the chance, the stress of life;
  May God reward me when I sleep!

Joyce Finnigan, O.F.M.

MONTHLY CONFERENCE

The Liturgy of the Hours in the Writings of Saint Francis

JOHN WALLENHORST, O.F.M.

> Scarcely at all, or really never, did they let up in their praise of God and in their prayers; but recalling by constant discussion what they had done, they gave thanks to God [1Cel 40].

FROM THEIR FIRST DAYS together, Saint Francis and his brothers prayed, and their prayer was not unique in words or phrasing, but in its fidelity to God's Word, to the Church, and to their brotherhood. Prayers ranging from spontaneous songs of praise to more formal celebration of the Hours could be found in this faith-filled group. But prayer, above all, was the soul's food, a food characterized as "God himself" (2Cel 96). The Liturgy of the Hours, as one of these life-giving sources, played an important role in the development of the early Franciscan community. In the writings of Saint Francis, the place of the Divine Office reflects a dedication both to the Church's common prayer and to the dynamism of a spirit-filled renewal through prayer.

Francis's faith, and its expression in prayer, was enriched in the presence of brothers. As a young community, these men were not well versed in the ecclesiastical office. But, following the example of their first brother, they said the Lord's Prayer and Francis's special prayer of adoration (1Cel 45). As the fraternity grew and attracted not only laymen, but clerics as well, the brothers' life became influenced by the more formal structure of the Office (Test 18). This development represented not simply a conformity to the tradition of monastic or secular clergy, but rather an adaptation of ancient prayer to an evolving form of life.

Brother John Wallenhorst is in the Formation Program of Holy Name Province, at Holy Name College in Washington, DC. This conference is part of our special series in commemoration of the eighth centenary of St. Francis's birth.

It is clear, though, that in the early days, the Office would not have been celebrated by the friars in the most orthodox way. The *Mirror of Perfection* relates the story of a poor beggar who was given the single New Testament which the brothers at the Portiuncula had for common prayer. At that time, the friars had no breviaries, but only a few psalters for their use (SP 38). There is also the lesson from the *Fioretti* (9) which has Francis and Brother Leo rising for a rather improvised Matins. They had no breviary at hand and, almost playfully, prayed as best they could. So, we see that though the tradition of praying the canonical Hours was taken up by Saint Francis, it was amended to serve the brotherhood and the practical demands of daily living.

> In celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours . . . we at once confirm our identity as a praying community and our membership within the Body of Christ.

As brotherhood became Order, the ideals and expectations of the members changed, and with that came the need to adapt and to set down in writing their common understanding. With expansion into cities and universities, more and more clerics were being admitted to the Order, and with them certain expectations regarding life-style. One of these expectations was, of course, the recitation of the Divine Office.[1] The use of spontaneous and familiar prayers was still common within the fraternity, but increasingly their prayer was structured along more formal lines. Though initially the form was not rigid, Francis did continually reiterate the obligation of praying the Office, and the brothers were not at all haphazard in celebrating prayer together. Since public celebration of the Office was commonplace during the Middle Ages, the friars more than likely gathered to pray with the local Churches, or at least at the time when prayer was celebrated

[1]J. P. Van Dijk and J. Hazelden Walker, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy* (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1960), 184–85.

locally.[2]

Thus the Liturgy of the Hours was an important facet of the early fraternity. It became explicitly incorporated into the third chapter of the First Rule. Applying Mark's Gospel (9:28–29), Francis presents the Office as a way of prayer that will purify his followers of evil and open them to God's will. All the brothers, both cleric and lay, are called to celebrate the Hours. But a distinction in prayer-style is also introduced. Clerical brothers are to pray the Office "according to the custom of the clergy" (RegNB III.4). The non-ordained brothers, if literate, are permitted to use a psalter. But it seems clear that the standard Office for the laymen becomes here a prescribed recitation of the Lord's prayer.

Remembrances for the dead and for sinners within the community are set down as a special part of the friars' prayer. This inclusion, though not out of line with the "custom of the clergy," is significant in its emphasis. The friars are to remember each other in a concrete and regular way. Francis presents common prayer not simply as a source of spiritual purification, as Mark 9 might imply, but as the ground for spiritual development within the brotherhood. We see, then, that the brothers are to sanctify their private and communal life each day by partaking of God's Word as a community.

It is in the Rule for Hermitages that the canonical Hours are spelled out and that the notion of horarium is stressed. The friars are to pray each hour faithfully and are urged twice to celebrate "at the proper time" (RegEr 4, 6). Here, rather than focusing on the type of Office to be said, Francis calls for regular prayer throughout the day. As the first friars prayed constantly, so those that follow are prompted to a spirit-filled awareness of the entire day. And this openness to God's Word does not, even in a hermitage, imply the dislocation of community; rather, it is the very expression of life with God *in* community. After all, though retiring from the world, the hermit does, as prescribed in the Rule, seek a very special kind of solitude. Each member of the hermitage contributes to the spiritual life of all the others. The contemplatives provide opportunities for grace to their more active counterparts, and the active members, through service, enable the others to seek their union with God. This is, in fact, a solitude of brothers ministering to one another within the context of prayer.

[2]Ibid., pp. 180–81.

In articulating his ideal of the life of prayer in the definitive Rule, Francis clearly concedes to those helping him write the text. Much more legalistic in tone, the third chapter on fasting and prayer omits even the rationale for prayer which had been quoted in the earlier Rule. The distinction between clerical and lay brothers, too, is simplified. The clergy are to celebrate the Hours according to the "rite of the holy Roman Church," and nonclerical brothers are to say the Office of the "Our Fathers." The Rule of 1223 makes no distinction between the literate and the uneducated brother. This simplification reflects not only legalistic influences on Francis at the time, but also the increased demand for stabilization among the friars.

The role of the Church, and specifically of Rome, with regard to regulations concerning the Office is significant. In the First Rule, the norm for celebrating the Hours is the "custom of the clergy." Since the brothers would have attended public celebrations of the Office, they would have been familiar with the custom of the local Churches. By the time the Rule of 1223 was polished up, however, the wording had changed, and the text called for celebration "according to the rite of the holy Roman Church." This change is consistent with the legal tenor of the reworked document. As the line between clerics and laymen was drawn more sharply, so the form of the Liturgy of the Hours was more clearly specified. The friars were to pray, not simply accorading to the custom of the clergy, but specifically according to the rite of the Roman Church. Despite Innocent III's reform of the breviary, the Hours would not yet have been uniformly prayed throughout the Church. Consequently, a viable interpretation of the "rite of the holy Roman Church" refers directly to the practice of the papal court.[3] This would have been an outstanding, if not universal, form of the Office at that time. Furthermore, the liturgical practice of the papal court would have been known and practiced in the churches of Assisi. Though a distinct change is evident in the tone of the precept, it embodies no radical movement away from the sense of the First Rule. The custom of the clergy is now legalistically spelled out as the rite of the Roman court.

In prescribing these norms for celebrating the Hours, Francis was responding to the changes within the Order, and he was doing so according to the conventions with which he was most familiar. It is plausible, too, that an attempt is involved here to ensure papal confirmation. But I think there is more to it than that. Francis's primary concern seems to be with a sincere communal celebration of the Hours. He simply wanted his friars to pray throughout the day, and not alone, but in union with each other and with the Church. And though his concept of Church was broad, it was also sensitive to the teaching authority of Rome. This can be seen throughout his writings. In addressing the Order on the Eucharist, Francis calls for celebration "according to the form of the holy Roman Church" (EpOrd 30), and he speaks of his great respect for priests "who live according to the manner of the Roman Church." In matters of form, then, Francis looks toward the Lord in his teaching Church. "We are bound to observe all of these matters above everything [else] according to the precepts of the Lord and the constitutions of holy mother the Church" (EpCler II.13).

But fortunately, Francis did not limit his counsel to the formal aspect of prayer. Though the style of liturgical prayer was important to him, it certainly was not central. Throughout the early biographies and in the writings of Saint Francis himself, the outstanding characteristic of prayer is authenticity. For prayer to be genuine, it must come from a reverent and sincere heart. Francis tells us in the Fourteenth Admonition that the person who is poor in spirit, accepting even the ridicule of others, is the person of prayer. There are others, he continues, who though they "perform prayers and obligations," are not really poor, are not really pray-ers. The implication is that these actions and austerities are fruitless if unaccompanied by the proper disposition of heart. Francis calls his community to conform the words of prayer to an inner attitude. And in encouraging a life of penance, a true conversion, he expresses the desire to change people's hearts—that is, not only their way of *living*, but their way of *feeling*. Francis calls his followers to go beyond a narrow view of the person. In living out our conversion of heart, we are challenged to an interior life which is in tune with our exterior observance.

In his Letter to the Entire Order, Francis urges his brothers to celebrate the Hours that they "might please God through purity of heart" (EpOrd 42). He warns against a recitation of the Office which concentrates merely on external form. Harmony of voice, therefore, is contrasted with the harmony of a mind directed to God. Beautiful harmony is an empty show if not the partner of a sincere heart. In addressing this issue at all, Francis really points beyond the form of the Office to an essential truth about this prayer: that individuals sincerely in relationship with God move beyond themselves to join voices in

[3]Ibid., pp. 205–06.

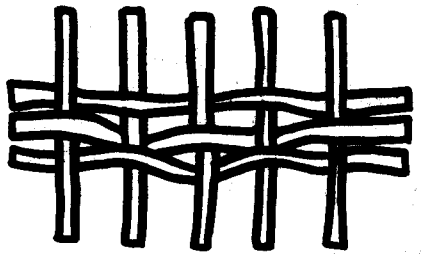
a common celebration of belief. The friars, then, are called to common prayer in such a bold and single-minded way because it is the very essence of their life together.

But why did Francis call his brothers to this type of common prayer, to this sometimes formal expression of a very personal relationship with God? In the Testament (14), I think he indicates an answer: "And when the Lord gave me some brothers, no one showed me what I should do, but the Most High revealed to me that I should live according to the form of the holy Gospel." Those who followed Francis divested themselves of all that they were and sought to live according to the Gospel. In accepting such a life together, they were pledging their fidelity to the Word of God and, importantly, to each other in that Word. So, the first facet of liturgical prayer centers on the expression of personal commitment.

The friars pledge themselves to the Word of God—and to one another. The depth and intensity of this pledge was understood and lived by Saint Francis in a way that reflects his call to others. He himself sought God's will and left the world of "military glory" for the "knighthood of God" (2Cel 6). Those who follow are commissioned to a similar way of life and to the fidelity which it entails. And this call to faithfulness is a serious commitment. If you are pledged to God, you will accept and keep his Word (RegNB XXII.42), and in the purity of your commitment, God will make his home with you (Frag I.16). Acceptance of this Word is spelled out with simplicity: listen and respond to God (EpOrd 34). Francis made it clear that he was a sinner, and that his faithfulness to the Lord had been incomplete. "I have offended in many ways by my serious faults, particularly since I have not observed the Rule which I have promised to the Lord" (EpOrd 39). In admitting his weakness, he gives us, his followers, a very real picture of the immensity of our own call to fidelity. But this awareness does not lessen our responsibility. In fact, in some ways, this recognition of weakness lightens the burden. In openness to God's Word, and in perseverance, we allow God to work through us. For Francis, this was the Gospel message. In imitating Christ's poverty—in admitting our weakness—we become strong, we are filled with God's Holy Spirit, and then like Mary we bear God himself in our hearts. And in prayer, we are given just such an opportunity to emulate the poverty of Christ.

We see prayer, then, as a personal expression of faithfulness. But we have still not uncovered the importance of this particular type of prayer—the Office. Again in the Testament (14), where Francis tells us

that God gave him some brothers, we are given a clue. These companions were not called followers, or students, or even friends. Their bond to Francis, and to each other, was much different. They were related, not in blood, but in a brotherhood which was grounded in a common vision and expressed, at least in part, through prayer. The very legitimacy of their life together was measured by its expression in prayer.



The brothers' response in faith to the poverty of Jesus, we are told, cannot be an individual one. Paradoxically, this most intimate relationship between Father and child is expressed, in our fraternity, through common life. Our commitment to one another as brothers is rooted in God's relationship with his Son. Those who are emptying themselves become full again, not in isolation, but together. Jesus prays for his followers, and Francis reiterates the prayer that "those who will believe in me through their words . . . may be made holy by being one" (EpFid I I.18). This unity of spirit is emphasized again in the First Rule, in which Jesus is quoted, praying "for those who through their words believe in me, so that they may be completely one" (RegNB XXII.53). This theme of unity is spelled out in the seventeenth chapter of Saint John's Gospel and is often cited by Francis. Jesus is commissioned by the Father to make his name known, and in proclaiming God's Word Jesus reveals his own identity with the Father. The message and the expression of the message are the same. Jesus is called to proclaim his unity with the Father, and in the Incarnation he does just that. So, by analogy, in our imitation of Christ Francis and his followers proclaim their unity.

In calling the brothers to common prayer, Francis is not insisting upon a peripheral, or even a devotional aspect of their life. He is urging them to a radical expression of their life in penance—the commitment to a change of heart. Through the Liturgy of the Hors, the friars not only fulfill the scriptural call to pray without ceasing, but they affirm the gift of their life together. So, for instance in his Rule for Hermitages, Francis demands more than private mental prayer and the work of the day. He calls for an expression of solidarity precisely through the prayer of the Church. In a very real way, then, Francis recognized that our personal salvation is intertwined with that of all

our brothers and that we are obliged to give voice to this, our conscious interdependence.

Just as prayer has a private and a fraternal aspect, it is also an expression of the entire Church. The celebration of the Office is an outward sign of our life as brothers and of our salvation, to which the Church bears witness. Francis seems to have felt this identification with the Church very strongly. His many references to the teaching authority of Rome and to his reverence for the clergy have been touched upon already. It is important, I think, to consider Francis's vision of the Church. Basically, he seems single-minded on the subject, and his simplicity reflects a paradox. It is possible to discern both a broad and a narrow view of the Church in his writings. Maybe it would be better to say that he viewed the Church as a whole. He did not exclude.

The clerical abuses of the thirteenth century were well known, and yet their prevalence really does not color the writings of Francis. His interest was in reorienting people's hearts through example rather than polemic, and so he called his brothers to revere the clergy as ministers of the Lord and to respect the authority of the organized Church. In adopting the liturgical customs of the papal household, the friars showed their unity and common discipleship with that of Rome. And in drawing up his definitive Rule, Francis dramatically underscored his love for the Church. He begins and ends this document with a promise of obedience to Rome, recognizing that in fidelity to the Church, the friars would give witness to the Gospel of Jesus. Francis was enamoured of the Church because in it he saw Christ.

Needless to say, all people were for Francis a reflection of Christ, and so partook of the Christic reality of the Church. The human race was for him a community of faith. And it was through the prayer of the Office that he saw an expression of the inner unity, not only among his brothers, but among the entire people of God. As Francis was conformed to the poor and crucified Christ, so he was bound to those whom Christ united in salvation. In celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours, the hymn of the Church to God, we at once conform our identity as a praying community and our membership within the Body of Christ. We are called back to the fullest dimension of the Church, and we enrich our own prayer beyond measure.

In looking at Francis and his concern for the Liturgy of the Hours, we are presented with a small picture of the saint's spirituality. We see this man promise to divest himself of everything which holds him back from God. We see others who follow. And we then realize

together their call to receive and give birth to God's Word in the world. These people expressed their life together and their identification with all God's children through common prayer. They celebrated the Hours in order to joyfully praise God and to fulfill their promise. And they strove to do this with sincerity—making real the joy and fidelity which their words implied. Francis continues to call us to pray together, that we may listen to the Word of God and, in that listening, recognize one another as children of one loving Father. Ω

Francis

Lighting the Rieti Valley
with the dynamics of your soul.
Not holding the birds
and hugging the wolf,
but holding the child
and hugging the lepers.
Romping in the snow.
Dancing barefoot in the briars.
Shouting the praises of God
to the wind on a hillside.
Loving not a few—
Loving all deeply.

You are Francis.
You are troubadour to the Lord.
Loving the Father,
loving the Son,
loving the Spirit.
Dying as you were born,
Living the Word, you touch lives. . . .
You touch mine.

Sister Kathleen Eve Farrell, O.S.F.

The Call and Promise of the Cross

JO THERESE FAHRES

FRANCIS OF ASSISI had an altogether special devotion to Jesus Christ crucified. From the beginning of his conversion at San Damiano to his death at the Portiuncula, Francis looked to the cross of Jesus as the sure path to the Father. He saw in it, of course, the pain and suffering of Jesus, who, though he longed to be with his Father, suffered to the end in loving obedience to the Father's call to transform humanity with his divinity.

> All Francis's efforts, whether they were known to others or made in secret, were directed towards the cross of our Lord. The seal of the cross had been impressed upon his heart from the beginning of his religious life, and he was anxious to carry it in his body too. So he clothed himself with the cross and put on the habit of penance which was in the form of the cross. He had put on the person of Christ crucified in his heart, and now his body was clothed with the armor of the cross; God had routed the powers of evil in the sign of the cross, and now his army would do battle for him under the same standard [LM II.i.1; *Omnibus*, 747].

For Francis, then, as for Jesus, the cross opened a pathway through death to life. It provided direction for his own life and enlightenment for himself and his brothers seeking to embrace, understand, and fulfill their own humanity. From the earliest days of his conversion, Francis saw that the Lord intended to teach him through the cross what he was called to do for the Church of his time. Like Jesus, Francis wanted to be obedient to God's will. But he needed to discover what God desired of him. "Filled with a new and singular spirit," therefore, he "would pray to his Father in secret" (1Cel 6; *Omnibus*, 234). In prayer, he came to understand that "the eternal and true God would direct his way and teach him to do his will" (ibid.). Desiring to be faithful to God as he had newly encountered him, Francis often left the bustle of his everyday world to pray in "solitary places" (2Cel 9; *Omnibus*, 369).

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One of these solitary places was a little abandoned church called San Damiano. Although the church was in ruins, Francis nonetheless,

> led by the Spirit . . . went in and fell down before the crucifix in devout and humble supplication; and smitten by unusual visitations, he found himself other than he had been when he entered. While he was thus affected, something unheard of before happened to him: the painted image of Christ crucified moved its lips and spoke. Calling him by name, it said: 'Francis, go, repair my house, which, as you see, is falling completely to ruin' [2Cel 10; *Omnibus*, 37].

From that moment on, Francis became a different person. "It is not to be thought that it was to repair a church that would perish and was falling down that Christ spoke to him from the wood of the cross" (2Cel 204; *Omnibus*, 525), but rather, like Isaiah, Francis was commissioned to "become an example to all of conversion to God" (1Cel 2; *Omnibus*, 231). Like the prophet Ezekiel, he was to "mark the brows of those that weep and wail with this sign of the cross" (LM I.iv.9; *Omnibus*, 660). Now Francis realized that he shared the mission of Jesus: that as Jesus was sent to bring back the house of Israel to the one God, so too was Francis being asked to build up the house of the Lord. With this sense of direction from the crucified Jesus, Francis was resolved first of all, by renewing his own life, to bear witness to the fact that only in the cross is redemption.

The story of Francis's literal interpretation of the command from the Lord is well known. Because of the simplicity of his actions and his sincerity of heart, others from Assisi were attracted to him and his way of life. "When God gave me some brothers," Francis tells us in his Testament, "there was no one to tell me what I should do; but the Most High himself made it clear to me that I must live the life of the gospel" (Test; *Omnibus*, 68). Francis, who knew his Scripture well, knew too that if he was to go to the Father, he must learn the way. He therefore spent time away from the active life acquainting himself with his Lord, and he shared with his brothers the fruits of his meditations and prayers. He frequently instructed his brothers to live the gospel without compromise, to take up the cross and follow in the footsteps of Jesus (ibid.).

One of the gifts that Francis shared with those who followed him was the true sense of devotion to the cross. Whenever a brother visited a church or even saw one in the distance, he was to pray, "We adore you, Christ, here and in all your churches in the whole world, and we bless you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world" (ibid.). This prayer, of course, reveals Francis's profound realization

of the central importance of Jesus's sacrifice on the cross and of the gift of redemption offered not only to the brothers but to the whole world. Celano tells us that "wherever they saw a crucifix or the mark of a cross, whether upon the ground or upon a wall or on trees, or in the hedges along the way, they were to do the same thing" (1Cel 45; *Omnibus*, 267).

[The brothers] were to proclaim the Good News to all people, and Christ's Cross was to be their book. . . .

In his Letter to a General Chapter, Francis reminded the brothers that "God deals with you as with sons" (Heb. 12:7—EpOrd; *Omnibus*, 104). He was deeply concerned that his brothers know they were not being sent into the world unprepared or alone, that the Holy Spirit was with them. The cross was to be their armor, and Jesus Christ their Lord. Francis sent his friars out to preach in different directions in the form of the cross (LM I.iii.7; *Omnibus*, 650). They were to proclaim the Good News to all people, and Christ's cross was to be their book, which they were to study day and night after his example (LM I.iv.3; *Omnibus*, 655). Even on his deathbed, he taught his brothers the same important lesson. As they gathered about him, "he stretched out his arms over them in the form of a cross, because he loved that sign, and blessed all the friars, both present and absent, in the power and in the name of the Crucified" (LM I.xiv.5, *Omnibus*, 740).

In the cross of Jesus, Francis saw the Son of God longing for his Father and for his heavenly dwelling. He understood that by completely emptying himself for the love of mankind, Jesus enabled his humanity to be glorified—filled with the Holy Spirit (cf. Phil. 2). Francis understood, moreover, that Jesus's journey to the cross began as soon as Jesus became aware of his real home, his real Father, and the power of the Spirit in his life. All of mankind's hurts, trials, and longings were thus given to Jesus to sanctify. Even in the hardest moments, Jesus continued to say YES to his Father, and when the time came for his earthly life to end, Jesus was crowned with the Resurrection as a seal of the covenant made by his Father with redeemed humanity. Jesus was given fullness of unending life with his Father and the Spirit, and enabled to communicate that life to all who would

receive him (Jn. 1:12).

It is one thing to know all this theoretically; but Francis was not a theoretician. He experienced the intimate love of the Father when, in the little church of San Damiano, the message of the cross penetrated his heart with all its power so that "his eyes were full of tears" (LM I.ii.1; *Omnibus*, 640; cf. 2Cel 11; *Omnibus*, 371). And as he became more aware of his sinfulness, so much the more ardently did he long to be "wholly transformed into Jesus by the fire of love" (LM I.ix.2; *Omnibus*, 699). His love grew as "the memory of Christ Jesus crucified was present in the depth of his heart like a bundle of myrrh" (ibid.).

Francis wanted to change; he wanted to follow Jesus as closely as possible. But what did it mean for him, Francis of Assisi, to take up his cross and follow Jesus the Nazarene? If we watch his spiritual progress in the concrete, we see a young man gradually discerning that the values he wishes to live are not the values of his society. We see him discovering new values in the gospel of Jesus Christ and, in choosing to follow his Lord, realizing that there are impediments. He sees himself, with newly experiential vision, as a sinner, and his sinfulness nauseates him. (cf. 1Cel 17; *Omnibus*, 243). But he also experiences God's presence and healing power; that is, he recognizes the redemption he can claim in the cross of Jesus. In more and more frequent moments of deep prayer, he comes to understand and accept God's challenge to renew his life. And at the same time he experiences a sweetness that he cannot fully articulate.

Francis therefore feels alienated from the world. After tasting the delights of intimate union with God and entering into mystical experiences of prayer, he finds it extremely difficult to return to the world. "He prayed constantly until he was consumed with a passionate longing for God and was ready to give up the whole world in his desire for his heavenly home" (LM I.i.4; *Omnibus*, 638). The world was no longer anything to grasp onto; it had utterly lost its glamour for the man from Assisi who had once so enjoyed its frivolities. Now, "all the pleasures of the world were a cross to him because he carried the cross of Christ rooted in his heart" (2Cel 211; *Omnibus*, 531). And it was precisely this heart that the Father desired

as he offered the cross to Francis as a challenge of obedience. How great was Francis's capacity to love?

We may glimpse at least dimly the answer to this question as we reflect on his singular esteem for poverty. Francis chose a life of utmost poverty for love of Jesus, as he knew Jesus had chosen it out of love for us (cf. RegB 6; *Omnibus*, 61). His literal observance of poverty thus gave witness to God's Fatherhood and loving Providence. It gave witness, too, to Jesus, who had no place to rest his head, who associated with the poor, who preached to the poor and loved the poor (cf. Lk. 4:16; Is. 61). Francis, wishing to follow Jesus and realizing that poverty frees one for the work of the Spirit, left behind both temporal and spiritual baggage to prepare a dwelling place for the Lord (cf. 1Cel 8; *Omnibus*, 236).

This surrender to God was not an easy endeavor for Francis. He had to work hard to be open to the grace of the Spirit operating in his life. As he experienced the love of God, however, he was "so deeply moved and inflamed that it seemed as if the deepest chord in his heart had been plucked" (LM I.ix.1; *Omnibus*, 698). Soon he began to become aware of his capacity to love. Gradually he learned to offer the pains and sufferings of loving to the Father. This was *the* gift, par excellence, that Jesus had come to give, and Francis now saw that it was likewise his own gift he was called to give.

One day, while praying at La Verna and contemplating the sufferings of Jesus crucified, Francis entered into a mystical experience of God's presence. He saw in a vision "a man standing above him, like a seraph with six wings" (2Cel 94; *Omnibus*, 309). Even though he could not understand the vision, "he was filled with happiness and rejoiced very greatly because of the kind and gracious look with which he saw himself regarded by the seraph, whose beauty was beyond estimation; but the fact that the seraph was fixed to a cross and the sharpness of his suffering filled Francis with fear" (ibid.). He was perplexed, but as the mystery continued to unfold, "the marks of the nails began to appear in his own hands and feet just as he had seen them a little while before in the crucified man above him" (ibid.). As a sign of the Father's pleasure in his loving and obedient heart, Francis was given the stigmata. His response to the call from the cross to "rebuild the house" of the Lord revealed his desire to follow literally in the footsteps of Jesus. Like Jesus, Francis received from the Father the deepest wish of his heart in return for the offering of his heart: he became physically identified with Jesus crucified. "The stigmata shone forth exteriorly in his flesh, because interiorly that deeply set root was

sprouting forth from his mind" (2Cel 211; *Omnibus*, 531). "The seal of truth itself" was impressed upon his body (LM Pref. 2; *Omnibus*, 632).

Even though Francis's life seemed consummated in his reception of the Stigmata, he was not immediately called home to the Father. Rather, he was asked to live out in his body the agony of the cross that he first accepted in spirit at San Damiano. He still had a call to witness to God's mercy and goodness. He was to live out the Stigmata as part of that witness—not so as to call attention to himself, but rather in a fashion that would nourish the Church and give glory to God.

Francis led a very active life. Thomas of Celano tells us that

> his body had had little or no rest while he traveled through various very large regions so that that willing spirit, that devoted spirit, that fervent spirit that dwelt within him might scatter everywhere the seeds of the word of God. He filled the whole earth with the Gospel of Christ, so that often in one day he made a circuit of four or five villages and even cities, preaching the kingdom of God to everyone; and edifying his hearers not less by his example than by his word, he made a tongue out of his whole body [1Cel 47; *Omnibus*, 311].

Now, however, life was different for Francis. In the months that followed the reception of the Stigmata, "that most precious vessel in which the heavenly treasure was hidden began to break up and to suffer the loss of all its power" (1Cel 98; *Omnibus*, 312). The cross began to assume for Francis the form of serious sicknesses, which made him more aware than ever of his continual need for God's healing Spirit. Offering his brokenness to the Lord, Francis found that in response the Father allowed him to experience consolation "while still in the flesh" (1Cel 106; *Omnibus*, 320). "The knowledge of heavenly things was given to him" (ibid.), and he realized that when one accepts the mystery of one's brokenness, one opens one's heart fully to having "the saving unction poured upon" oneself (ibid.). Francis was living proof that the Lord embraces most dearly those who learn to embrace themselves.

Francis continued to preach by the very life that he lived. In the cross of human suffering, he was given the grace to be a peacemaker between the created world and the Creator. During this period of illness, he wrote the Canticle of Brother Sun, in which he called on all of creation to offer continuous praise to God. And, when asked by one of the brothers if he would rather suffer severe martyrdom than the burden of the lingering illness that he was asked to endure, Francis replied:

> My son, that has always been and still is most dear to me and more sweet and more acceptable which pleases the Lord my God most to let happen in me and with me, for I desire always only to be found conformed and obedient to his will in all things [1Cel 107; *Omnibus*, 321].

And so it happened that Francis died loving and obedient to the will of the Father. He had been faithful to the challenge of the cross that was first implanted in his heart at the little church of San Damiano. He had given witness with his life that embracing the cross of Jesus, emptying oneself, opens one's deepest self to God's fullness. In responding to the cross of his Lord, Francis had opened himself to the power of the Holy Spirit, and so, he has become a model for all who truly desire to follow in the footsteps of Jesus crucified. Ω

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Bear Her Hither

I would wake her, My Mother—
Angels of Light, Lift her gently
and quickly bear her hither.
Soul and body bear her hither—
I would feast My eyes upon My Mother!

Can I forget I was her little Boy?
Or that she cradled Me?—
In her beauty all shall joy
and drink to her purity,
Sweet Wine of Love, without alloy.

Speed you, My angels, speed you!
O! swiftly bear her hither!
Soul and body, bear her hither!
This her Assumption Day!
Come, My Mother, come!
Caress your little Boy!

. . . listen to the soft music
. . . fill your soul!

Sister M. Colette Logue, O.S.F.

Francis: Model for Christian Ecology

BRIAN J. LOWDEN, O.F.M.

PERHAPS THE BEST KNOWN and most widely loved feature of the life of Saint Francis is his love for birds and animals. Many people know him exclusively for this aspect, and it is doubtful that they regard him as anything more than an early version of Doctor Dolittle. In reaction to this many recent biographers have tended to play down this aspect of Francis's life and to place more emphasis on the spiritual and human values to which his words and actions give testimony. But, as we shall see, Francis's relation to creation is fundamental to his whole spirituality and so forms the basis for his view of life. For Francis, respect for nature is derived from his view of God and his particularly vivid understanding of the radical way in which God revealed himself in the world. Essentially, this approach of Saint Francis is the result of undifferentiated theological reflection; it is subsequently used by Francis as a way to get to God—that is, through His revelation in the world, in creation itself. As we shall see, creation is not viewed by Saint Francis in a narrow sense but is seen to include all things, both inanimate and animate, material and spiritual, the lower forms of life and man himself. For Francis this is not merely a background philosophy, but a way to approach the world, to become involved in it, to immerse oneself in its living vibrant beauty, and in so doing to come ever closer to God—a God who creates, sustains, and reveals himself in all things.

Man's view of creation is dependent on the meaning he gives to the world, the way he sees himself, and the aspirations he has for the future. At any time this would basically be a "religious" question, but it was particularly so at the time of Saint Francis, when the whole culture was shaped by a religious world view, a philosophy which saw

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everything in terms of the Christian message. In the Judeo-Christian tradition it was accepted that man had been given dominion over nature. In the Book of Genesis God told man: "Be fruitful, multiply,

> . . . creation has a special dignity of its own . . . and consequently man has quasi-religious duties towards it.

fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth" (1:28). This subsequently became the central text used by man to justify his authority over other creatures. In the second account of creation a slightly different view is given; God is said to have taken man "and settled him in the garden of Eden to cultivate and take care of it" (2:15). So man's dominion over nature is not an arbitrary authority but exists for a definite purpose. Man is to be God's steward, using the earth but also caring for it, conserving and preserving it. In other words, as the crown of creation man has duties as well as rights over the rest of creation. It is interesting to note in passing that the garden in mythology is an archetypal symbol of a small, ecologically balanced system in which man plays his part as the gardener (Allsopp, 42). As long as man acts as a creature, as a steward of God, harmony exists in creation, but once he claims the prerogatives reserved for God (as the story of the Fall shows), he is out of harmony with the rhythm of the created order. The consequences of this are already shown in Genesis; man's relation to creation changes and becomes one of conflict rather than cooperation (Fackre, 123).

It is always important to avoid sentimentality when discussing ecological questions, and certainly Francis should never be accused of it. He was a brother to creation, but this did not mean that he remained passive to everything he experienced in creation. We see him silencing the swallows who were disrupting his sermon (1Cel 59; *Omnibus*, 278–79) and fully approving of the cultivation of flowers in the garden (1Cel 81; *Omnibus*, 297). This was because Francis realized that man, made in the image of God, was the crown of creation. Thus man has a right to use all creation, which was provided as the context in which

man was to live out his life with that same creation. Yet creation has a special dignity of its own, because of the identity of its Creator, and consequently man has quasi-religious duties towards it. Not only is man made in God's image, but God also entered the world as a man. This, as Barth recognizes, gives a special place to man: "God did not become a stone or a star or even an angel. He became a man. Man, therefore, enjoys a unique status within creation. He is the 'apple of God's eye' " (Fackre, 117). As all development and utilization of creation comes from the mind of man, we are forced to recognize that it is man who provides the primary resource in creation (Schumacher, 1973, 64). It would appear that the way to come to understand and sympathize with creation is through knowledge of man. Self-knowledge would seem to be a precondition for an understanding of creation, and such self-knowledge is itself the foundation of religious consciousness (Schumacher, 1977, 102). It is only on this basis that one can hope to give creation the respect it deserves.

Francis viewed creation in a number of distinct yet interconnected ways, all of which are vitally important to any understanding of his total view of man's relationship with both God and the world. Francis possessed an unusual freedom towards natural things, a freedom which allowed him to use them while at the same time continuing to respect their integrity. He never saw this integrity as entirely autonomous, as completely separated from God, or from the divine plan for creation as a whole:

> In every work of the artist he praised the Artist; whatever he found in the things made he referred to the Maker. . . . In beautiful things he saw beauty itself; all things were to him good. 'He who made us is the best,' they cried out to him. Through his footprints impressed upon things he followed his beloved everywhere. . . . He embraced all things with a rapture of unheard devotion, speaking to them of the Lord and admonishing them to praise him [2Cel 165; *Omnibus*, 494–95].

First, creation is worthy of respect because it is created by God, who also made man in his own image. Bonaventure wrote that it was compassion

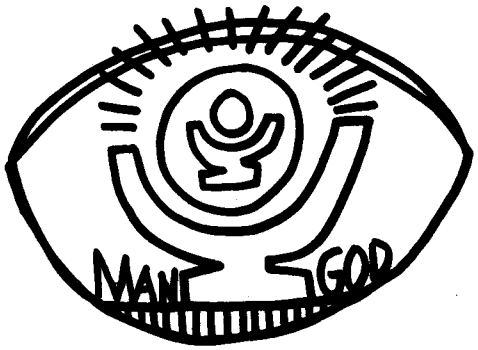
> which led [Francis] . . . to devote himself humbly to his neighbor and enabled him to return to the state of primeval innocence by restoring man's harmony with the whole of creation [LM VIII.1; *Omnibus*, 688].

In this way everything became a sign which pointed to God. So if Francis saw a lamb, he rejoiced in the lamb as created by God and also as a symbol of *the* Lamb of God.

For Francis creation was also a symbol in that it always represented another reality which was accessible only through the symbol (Leclerc, 27). Bonaventure indicates this clearly when he writes that

> Francis sought occasion to love God in everything . . . of all creation he made a ladder by which he might mount up and embrace Him who is all desirable [LM IX.1; *Omnibus*, 698].

Francis also seems to see creation in a quasi-sacramental way, in that with it communion with God is possible. Francis's mysticism is founded on this ability to discern God's presence in creation and so be constantly reminded of that love which was the only explanation of his life (SanFelippo, 141).



Perhaps it was because of this theology of creation that Francis could remain so much in awe at the primary, superabundant, and unique sacramental presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The fact that the Lord of the universe appeared in the world in the form of the ubiquitous elements of bread and wine was for him a most beautiful and fitting miracle. It was beautiful because it filled creation with the fullness of its Creator, and it was fitting in that it confirmed Francis in his radical incarnationalism. Francis did not theorize about either creation or the Eucharist. He accepted both realities and lived them to the full. But in his case this familiarity did not breed contempt; rather it increased the awe he felt (EpOrd; *Omnibus*, 105). Despite his closeness to God and his mystical reverence for all creation Francis could still write: ". . . in this world I cannot see the most high Son of God with my own eyes, except for his most holy Body and Blood . . ." (Test; *Omnibus*, 67). Francis did not view the Eucharist simply as a devotion; rather he saw it as the culmination of all the symbols which he had discovered in creation. It was the source and inspiration for his whole relationship with creation. For Francis was interested in creation only as creation (that is, as having been created by God), and not as base matter. It is in the Eucharist, though, that creation is most evidently and unambiguously divinized; and it is also in the Eucharist that the constant

presence and interest of the Godhead in creation is most emphatically recognized. For Francis, however, the Eucharist was not in the same order as the sacramentality of cration—but then, neither did Francis appear to regard it as at the same level as any of the other sacraments. In the Eucharist we have the highest point of communication between God and man; in the world another form of communication exists, which is natural in the sense that it is directly built into the natural order. In the sacraments something is added to the natural order so that it can unambiguously form a locus of interaction with the supernatural order.

The amazing respect which Francis had for creation was without any discrimination; for him all creation was worthy of respect and could be used as a way to God. At times he has particular preference for elements associated with the mysteries of the faith, but he excludes no part of creation from his love and respect. Everything is worthy of honor, as it is made by God: "Every creature proclaims, 'God has created me for you, O man' " (LP 51; *Omnibus*, 1029). This is in contrast to the sentimentalists of our own day, who perhaps find it easy to see God in the higher, more attractive forms of life, but are all too ready to dismiss the more basic forms of life and those considered dangerous or repulsive. All too often we can accept the beauties of creation but react violently if a creature impinges upon us or our territory. Yet we read that Francis had such respect for Brother Fire, who lightened up the night, that he would not extinguish it even when it took hold of his clothing (SP 166; *Omnibus*, 1255). For Francis, to enjoy creation meant that one must be prepared also to suffer with it and even from it. In the same way that man has rights and duties in regard to creation, so creation has rights and duties towards man. There is, in other words, a harmony and a unity throughout the whole of creation.

This whole subject is very closely connected with Francis's concept of universal or cosmic brotherhood. From Francis's central experience of brotherhood in relation to Jesus, the foundation was laid for an interconnected brotherhood with the whole of creation. The brotherhood revealed in the Incarnation and continually reaffirmed in the Eucharist gave Francis the inspiration to become a brother to all men. Francis did not withdraw from people—he did not substitute animals and plants for human society—rather, he attempted to restore that original unity which gave coherence to creation and to the spiritual and physical components in man. As we have seen, it was through self-knowledge that this empathy with others, with creation

and with God, was possible (Schumacher, 1977, 148). Brotherhood, for Francis, extended to the whole of creation, from the elements to vegetation, to animals and to the earth itself. All are worthy of praise, as they have been created by God, created for man—not for him to dominate, but for him to use with brotherly sympathy (Leclerc, 11). This brotherhood implies a unity of mutual dependency, in that man is present in the world, and so creation is not something outside him but is intimately linked to his consciousness as his "larger being"—as the environment in which he has his being (Cuthbert, 49). Gone now is the old notion of domination, of conquest, of control of a potentially dangerous and ever threatening nature. Now all creation is a brotherhood, and all is seen as a way to God and a revelation of God.

Without developing too extensively these basic insights about Saint Francis and his relationship with creation, it is useful to see the ways in which this is relevant for us today. Man today is probably more divorced from nature than he has ever been in the history of the world. Man has the capacity, and in many cases also the technology, to control nature, to bend it to his will, and even to destroy and annihilate it. Man can exist, at a purely physical level, without nature; he can physically survive within the antiseptic conditions he creates for himself. But this very possibility poses certain questions for men and women who care about the earth, who have a conscience about the way in which they treat the environment. As we have seen earlier, what people do about ecology depends ultimately on what they think about themselves in relation to the things around them. This is conditioned by our beliefs about our nature and destiny—in other words, by religion (White, 1205). It is because man emerged from the earth and through evolution has been adapted, both biologically and mentally, by the earth (an earth which feeds and supports him) that it is necessary to say something about the theology of the earth. This is of particular concern today, when man can shape and modify the earth to the extent of determining his own future evolution (Dubos, 53–54). Francis gives us an example of how this may be attempted. It does not involve regression back to nature, an abandonment of the cities, or a return to the caves. It does mean giving respect to all things, a respect not primarily for their utility but because they have been created by God. One can then see them as ways to God, as ways in which God is revealed in the world which he has created—in the sense that they are traces of God the Creator. Yet such a view must never neglect man, who must be given his proper place within creation, who, as created in God's image, is his steward on earth. So man must respect and use

things in such a way that they retain their integrity and always continue (both in themselves and through others) to give praise to God. This is the way in which Francis responded to creation. As such, it can form the basic framework in which to develop a theological response to the ecological dilemmas of the present day. But we must always remember that with Francis the world was not an empty museum or a picture book; it was a living entity in which all things were directed towards union with God. If this principle is forgotten, there can be no lasting answer to that religious question which finds its expression in ecological problems. Ω

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Book Reviews

The American Franciscan Missions in Central America: Three Decades of Christian Service. By Leonard Bacigalupo, O.F.M. Andover, MA: Charisma Press, 1980. Pp. xx–484. Cloth, $14.50; paper, $9.95.

Reviewed by Father Cyprian J. Lynch, O.F.M., Archivist of Holy Name Province, former Editor of its Annals, and a member of the staff of the Franciscan Institute at Saint Bonaventure University.

Because in our day nothing is judged more newsworthy than violence, Central America has recently become one of the mass media's principal preoccupations. The complex problems that have generated violence in that sector of the hemisphere, however, have been the preoccupation of North American Franciscans for almost forty years.

In 1944, in answer to an appeal of the Central American hierarchy, the Province of the Immaculate Conception sent four of its members to work in the priest-poor nation of Honduras. Subsequently, the province extended its activity to neighboring El Salvador and Guatemala, and by 1980, thirty-one of its friars were engaged in a variety of programs aimed at promoting the spiritual enrichment and material betterment of "a large segment of Christians struggling for survival in an atmosphere of poverty and neglect" (p. xvii). These programs were not executed without their promoters encountering the kinds of opposition, harassment, abuse, and expulsion that have recently received such wide publicity.

The author of the volume under consideration, himself a veteran Central American missionary, has chronicled the first thirty years of his province's evangelizing venture with admirable candor and thoroughness. After describing the efforts of Franciscan missionaries during the colonial period, he carefully traces the development of each of the twenty-eight missions founded or taken over by the friars of his province between 1944 and 1974. Coverage of the subject is more than adequate, sources judiciously handled, and the text accurately documented. The narrative, however, is marred by frequent repetitions, and readers not conversant with Spanish will be annoyed by the numerous and lengthy quotations in that language that are left untranslated. The volume's usefulness is also somewhat limited by the omission of an index.

The author's account of his confreres' missionary accomplishments is both credible and inspiring, because he records their failures and well as their successes. Many of the problems encountered were the result of opposition from without, others had their origin within the fraternity. Readers will be impressed by the tenacity with which the friars struggled with the former and the candor with which the author describes the latter. Heroic actions and dramatic incidents are given the attention they deserve, but the tensions which inevitably arise when highly-motivated but humanly-limited individuals pur-

sue projects of high purpose are neither ignored nor left without comment. Balanced presentation of the facts makes the book both readable and believable.

The period of mission history discussedf lends itself to a threefold division. The first decade (1944–1953) is several times described as the "brick and mortar stage." During these years, churches and chapels were constructed or repaired; schools, convents, and friaries built; clinics and soup kitchens established; cooperatives and credit unions set up; and lay associations organized or, in the case of the Third Order, reorganized. Franciscan enthusiasm and American ingenuity combined to achieve results that can be described only as amazing. None of these accomplishments could have been realized, however, without the unstinted financial support of the mother province.

The second decade (1954–1964) might be described as a period of examination and evaluation. Friars proved themselves equal to the challenge posed by the hard questions they felt obliged to ask themselves. How could the inculcation of spiritual values and the improvement of the material conditions of life be simultaneously pursued? How could the individual missionary keep a balance in his own life between the demands of work and the need for prayer? To what extent were local religious customs and practices to be encouraged, adapted, or opposed? How well did North American methods suit the Central American situation? How could the activities of all units of the Franciscan family laboring in Central America be better coordinated? Discussion of these and other pressing questions was encouraged and stimulated by documents emanating from the newly-founded Council of Latin American Bishops (CELAM) and the Episcopal Secretariat of Central America (SEDOC).

The principal endeavor of the final period (1965–1974) was implementation of the enactments of Vatican Council II, particularly the Decree on Missionary Activity. This task was not initiated or carried forward in Central America with less pain or strain than in other sectors of the Church. By 1974, however, the friars had made impressive progress in conforming their missionary efforts to the mind of the Church and the needs of its members. Comprehensive pastoral plans, which in many areas of activity involved extensive lay participation, were carefully constructed; programs of continuing education geared to local conditions and the real needs of the missionaries were initiated; efforts to recruit native vocations were intensified; a federation of the five jurisdictions of Friars Minor active in Central America was founded; a common formation program for candidates for the Order was begun.

The Province of the Immaculate Conception should be proud of its missionaries, who so admirably exemplified Franciscan zeal for souls, and grateful to Father Leonard, who so painstakingly recorded their achievements.

Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life. Text by Donald F. McNeill, Douglas A. Morrison, and Henri J. M. Nouwen. Drawings by Joel Filártiga. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982.

Reviewed by Father Dennis E. Tamburello, O.F.M., M.A. (Washington Theological Union), currently working on his Doctorate in Systematic Theology.

This is a sensitive, honest, and compelling book about the true meaning of compassion. Compassion is not, according to the authors, "general kindness" or even a sense of pity for the afflicted, but its root meaning is "to suffer with." Thus, real compassion is not a natural response—on the contrary, we flee from it, and seek to avoid entering into the suffering of others. Our primary frame of reference is not compassion, but competition.

The call to be compassionate, therefore, is at the heart of the conversion experience. The authors see it as a radical call rooted in the compassion of God himself. They develop this insight in the first part of the book, "The Compassionate God," referring to the biblical notions of God-with-us, servanthood, and obedience.

Jesus was not just physically "with us," but entered deeply into people's lives. We, on the other hand, would rather keep our distance, and not get hurt. The authors rightly point out that Jesus calls his followers to a new life (Gal. 2:20) centered in God's self-giving and not competition for success. Jesus embodied in his life a "downward movement"—the opposite of what we tend to strive for. His radical servanthood was expressed in a solidarity with the needy, whereas we tend to fall into an elitist attitude which defines the needy as "them" rather than "us." Thus, we are content with serving them on our terms, while Jesus, the obedient Son, was always attentive to God's terms.

In the second part of the book, the authors discuss "The Compassionate Life." They describe discipleship as a task lived out in community, not in isolated acts of heroism. In an excellent section on the media (pp. 52–55), they illustrate how the bombardment of our senses does not really lead to compassion but only to numbness and anger in the face of human suffering. We end up feeling powerless and alienated rather than in solidarity with others. As a Christian community, we can overcome these fatalistic responses through our faith in Christ and each other. The authors' stress on discipleship as intrinsically communal is an insight that cannot be repeated often enough in a Church that is still steeped in a "privatized" approach to Christianity.

The chapter on displacement (Ch. 5) is one of the book's most successful. It speaks of the Christian community as people gathered in voluntary displacement, i.e., people who are willing to be different for the sake of the Kingdom. Displacement means to disappear as an object of interest—to seek not our own status but to serve others. Francis of Assisi is presented as a model of this aspect of the compassionate life. The authors also present a provocative insight: that we do not have to search for a displacement experience as much as we need to listen to God's call in the midst of the displacements that come naturally in our lives. We are called to do this together (Ch. 6);

there should be no "spiritual elite" (priests, religious, etc.) who are seen as the only ones really equipped to serve. Each and every member of the community has a unique gift to share—but to see this, we must move from a posture of jealousy toward others to one of gratitude for them.

The third part of the book discusses "The Compassionate Way" as a way of patience, prayer, and action. We are called to move beyond "clock time," where everything is safe and scheduled (and we therefore get impatient when we are interrupted). While I agree that we can be slaves to the clock in the worst sense, I feel the authors' stress on allowing for "graced moments" must be balanced by a realistic sense of limits—sometimes, we simply must be unavailable in order to renew ourselves. They seem to recognize this, at least implicitly, in their discussion of prayer as an important use of time. Prayer reminds us that stressing our own game plan is not the compassionate way. God is not a last resort to turn to when our own resources run out. Rather, God is the source and heart of our compassion, leading us to solidarity with others. Prayer is rightly seen as both a personal and a communal exercise. There is an excellent section on the Eucharist as expressive of human solidarity (pp. 112–15).

Of course, the ultimate criterion of compassion is action. Without prayer, action becomes activism, where we burn out and become bitter, forgetting God's presence in our ministry. But neither is action a sentimental, meek kind of sharing. To be compassionate at times means to confront evil squarely, to be willing to change the *status quo*. This must be done humbly and not with an air of self-righteousness. Thus, part of being compassionate is being prophetic. This is a theme that is getting much attention in the Church lately, and rightly so, as it is deeply rooted in our biblical and historical tradition.

The text of this book, while a bit repetitious at times, is well written and reflects a deep reverence for the biblical tradition. It definitely poses a number of healthy challenges to the reader. The illustrations by Joel Filártiga are magnificent, portraying the struggle and pain of a man who suffered because he dared to be compassionate in a competitive society. I heartily recommend this book as a fine contribution to a theology of spirituality.

I, Francis. By Carlo Caretto. Trans. Robert R. Barr. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982. Pp. xiv–125. Paper, $5.95.

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

Most of the readers of this periodical are familiar with the basic facts of the life of Saint Francis of Assisi. If another biography of the saint is to be of interest to the reader it will be because of its unique presentation or because of some new insight into the meaning of the life of Saint Francis. The Saint Francis Comic Book, published by Marvel Comics and distributed through the Paulist Press, was certainly a novel and unique way of presenting the life of Saint Francis of Assisi. It was almost like a birthday present on his eight hundredth anniversary. Now we have another new and unique presentation of the life of Saint Francis by Carlo Carretto entitled *I, Francis*. Its uniqueness is partly due to the fact that it is written in the first person and reads more like an autobiography than a biography. In fact, I found myself asking, "Is that really the way you felt about that incident in your life, Francis, or is that how you feel about some contemporary problem?" when I realized I was listening to Carlo Carretto speaking and not Francis.

While the book is brief—a mere 124 pages—it could be divided into two books: a biography and a prayer book. In the latter, the author has "for each canonical hour [of the divine office] set down a psalm, a Reading taken from his work, and a Prayer. This could serve as a welcome Breviary for the busy Franciscan Tertiary or other lay person who would like to recite the canonical hours (Matins, Lauds, Prime, etc.) without the time consuming length of the Roman Seraphic Breviary.

The biography part has 12 short chapters covering such topics as poverty (three small chapters); Clare, My Sister; The Eloquence of Signs; The Primacy of Nonviolence; etc. Almost any one of these chapters contains statements that are thought provoking, if not a direct challenge to our life style as Christians and especially as Franciscans.

No one will read the chapter "Clare, My Sister" without a deepening appreciation of the relationship between Francis and Clare. No one will end the chapter without sharing Francis's appreciation of woman "as sweetness, goodness and delicacy." The reader cannot but be impressed by the delicacy with which the author handles the founding of the Second Order—the Poor Clares. He has Francis tell how on Palm Sunday in 1212 Clare went with her family for the last time to the church of San Rufino in Assisi to receive the palm. She was so frightened by what she was about to do that Bishop Guido had to go down to her pew to place the palm in her hand. The reason for her concern, Francis tells us, was that she and her cousin, Pacifica di Guelfuccio, planned to leave their homes in the dead of that night and join Francis and his little band of companions at the chapel of Our Lady of the Angels. Francis and his companions received them with joy and witnessed their vows. They then took them to the Benedictine nuns for temporary shelter until they would have a convent of their own. The author then puts in the mouth of Francis some remarkable statements about the place of women in the Church today. I guess it could all be summed up with this quote from the author placed on the lips of Francis: "Strange, I have asked myself many times how it is possible that, in spite of personages as remarkable as Clare, as Catherine, as Teresa, you in the Church are still so antifeminist." He then points out that Mary of Nazareth is the model for all women and urges women "to dig out something of the mystery of Mary in prayer." He ends the chapter with the beautiful legend of Francis and Clare and the roses blooming in the dead of winter.

Surely a timely chapter for a world fearful and apprehensive about nuclear armaments and concern for peace and justice is the one entitled "The Primacy of Nonviolence." In it Carlo Carretto admits to his love of *The Little Flowers* and most effectively uses the story of the wolf of Gubbio to drive home the point that "the miracle of that morning in Gubbio was not the conversion of the wolf, it was the conversion of the people of Gubbio—who for a fleeting instant believed it was possible to overcome a wolf armed only with food to give him instead of weapons to bloody him (p. 80).

Finally, no tale of Saint Francis would be complete without Mount della Verna and the Stigmata. With Christlike dedication Francis proceeds to the mountain with three companions: Leo, Masseo, and Angelo—much as Jesus did to Mount Tabor, to be transfigured in the presence of his three Apostles. But the vision of the seraph comes only after Francis has divested himself of his last attachment: the government of his Order, which is now in the hands of Brother Elias. Francis says: "But now I had understood that I was to live, within myself, the very sacrifice of Abraham. 'Sacrifice your child,' my conscience kept repeating." When he does so, Francis sees the vision of the six-winged seraph and is marked with the wounds of Christ's passion. The final surrender was not to action, but to love.

Those who have read *Letters from the Desert* or *Love Is for Living* by this same author are well aware of the touching simplicity and marvelously poetic language of these previous writings. The same flavor permeates this biography of Saint Francis of Assisi. Sometimes his mysticism gets in the way of the facts, as presented in earlier biographies by Celano or Bonaventure, especially in a footnote concerning the crucifix at San Damiano or the reception of the Stigmata. But both those familiar with his writings and those new to them will find this book, *I, Francis*, delightful reading.

★

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OCTOBER, 1982

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Our October issue, devoted exclusively to a series of commentaries on the proposed Third Order Regular Rule, has been edited by Father Thaddeus Horgan, S.A., one o Consulting Editors, and illustrated by Lois Jansen, who resides in Indianapolis.

Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Franci
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

The Proposed Third Order Rule: Information to Reformation

"WRITE THE VISION DOWN, inscribe it on tablets to be easily read. Since this vision is for its own time only: eager for its own fulfillment, it does not deceive; if it comes slowly, wait, for come it will without fail" (Habakkuk 2:2-4).

Since the close of Vatican II, members of the Third Order Regular of Saint Francis have committed themselves to this prophetic injunction to "write the vision down." The "vision" in this case is a re-appropriation, a re-articulation of the proper charism of their branch of the Franciscan family. This development has taken many forms which have, at last, crystallized into a single project that has compelled the attention of hundreds of TOR congregations. This project is the revision of the Third Order Regular Rule. Once completed, this will be the fourth such revision in the Order's history.

This monumental task reached an historic turning point in March, 1982, when a world-wide assembly of superiors general of the Order's congregations gathered in Rome. During the Assembly, the superiors present amended and affirmed the text of the proposed Rule which has been developed in the past two years, culminating research and renewal efforts since the Council's close.

The proposed text has been translated and published. Commentaries have been written. With this issue of **The CORD**, English-speaking members of the Franciscan family now have an "omnibus" of commentaries on the proposed Rule. And with this publication we see the Rule project enter a new phase of its history.

Sister Margaret Carney is the Assistant Superior General of the Franciscan Sisters of the Providence of God (Whitehall), Pittsburgh, PA and a Consulting Editor of this Review, and was a member of the Working-Group of the International Franciscan Commission which composed the proposed TOR Rule Text.

Until now, publications about the Rule project and texts were calculated to inform. A great deal of information was needed to engage the support and participation of the members of the Order in the task of Rule revision. A great deal of education was needed to insure a solid basis for choosing the values to be preserved and the method for redaction of the text. Now we have a text which has received strong affirmation from the superiors voting in the Rome Assembly. This text will become the focus for study and the consultation of the General Chapters of the congregations of the Third Order Regular.

Information has been plentiful and productive. We have labored to form a Rule that will recapture the plan of Francis for the evangelical life of the Order and will give authentic expression to our charism of conversion to God and neighbor manifested in poverty, minority, and contemplation. Now, with the text before our eyes we must ask the crucial question: Can this Rule form us? Does it possess the power of charism and Spirit-presence to become our "forma vitae"? Will it engender a life-form or will it become another comforting "formula" to be quoted dogmatically as if it were a magic charm?

The biographies and the writings of Francis demonstrate that the development of his Rule for the First Order was a life-long preoccupation and responsibility for him. For the members of the Third Order Regular alive at this time, the same preoccupation and responsibility weighs heavily. It is the burden we shoulder at this moment in our history. It is the blessing given to us because this, and no other, is our "hour," our καιρος. It is the benediction we will leave to future generations of Franciscans.

The great test of this proposed Rule is not whether it defines in the best possible words the dynamism of our charism and our mission. The great test of this Rule is whether or not it unleashes the power of the Gospel to reform our Order and our lives.

We have labored to form this Rule. We will continue to labor to understand it and, if need be, to refine it further before final disposition by the Holy Father. Now we must pray to be converted by the laboring of the Spirit forming us as Francis was formed to follow the footsteps of Christ reconciling all things and all persons to the Father. Let us test our proposed Rule and be tested by it. Let us ask if it brings "a message with the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Word of the Father, and of the Holy Spirit, whose words are spirit and life" (EpFid II). But the only way to answer this question is to live what we have written. So, then, brothers and sisters, "let us now begin. . . ." Ω

Margaret Carney, OSF

Led by the Lord

SISTER KATHLEEN MARIE MOFFATT, O.S.F.

"AND WHEN ANYONE ASKS US we will tell them, 'We are *penitents* and we come from Assisi' " (L3S; *Omnibus*, 925). Typically direct and simple, Francis presents his followers to the world. At the same time he reveals for us *today* the friars' initial experience of Christian formation in the Church's *penitential* tradition. We, too, seek to discover the meaning of the gospel life of continuous conversion. (For a thorough study of *penance* as the fundamental virtue in Franciscan life, see Esser and Grau [1962].) This article will attempt, briefly, to address that teaching as it has evolved through the centuries. It will also identify Francis of Assisi within this tradition and consider his directives to the penitents of his time, while bringing us to the present moment of grace as we welcome the 1982 proposed Rule text for our Third Order Regular.

When we speak of "conversion," we are immediately aware of an action of God, an "engagement in the Lord's will (Faley, 89), which continually redirects our energies toward fidelity to his designs. This understanding is capsuled in the *Shema* of the Hebrew Scriptures:

> **You shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart,**
> **with all your soul, with all your strength [Deut. 6:4–5].**

It is deepened by our own lives of faith and repentance as we strive to respond to Christ's kenotic teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. This self-understanding of today's penitent (Mt. 16:25; Mk. 1:15; Jn. 12:24–25) testifies to the dynamic action of the Spirit of the Lord.

Early in the Church's history, one who desired reconciliation for serious sins publicly "confessed" or praised God for his mercy and goodness, and sought forgiveness. The Christian entered the "Order of Penitents," a specially recognized class in the Church characterized by deeds of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Sorrow was often ex-

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pressed externally by the penitent's service to the poor and the sick, the restoring of churches, the hardship of long pilgrimages, and the wearing of simple, coarse clothing—some signed with the *τ*, Ezechiel's symbol for the call to conversion (Vorreaux, 17). This penitential group came to be venerated as a special link between the whole Christian assembly and the communion of Saints.

The Father's Call sends us like the penitents . . . of old into the modern world as messengers of peace and proclaimers of His Kingdom.

In time, a person's "being in the state of penance" involved serious consequences for one's private and professional life. Fasting, exclusion from public office and military service, continence for the married as well as unmarried penitents, pilgrimage, and even exile describe some specifics of the penitential practices. Gradually, as penances became more harsh and prolonged, importance seemed centered more on the exact fulfillment of the imposed penance than on the interior contrition of the penitent. Fewer and fewer members of the Christian assembly presented themselves for the "Order of Penance."

However, the notion of Christians intensely seeking to redirect their lives according to the Lord's will was not lost! Members did come forth. Although they had not seriously sinned, and therefore were not obliged to enter the Order of Penance, they nonetheless sought admittance because of their genuine desire to live the Gospel life. This "voluntary" penitential movement took on a distinct spirituality, one that could later be easily recognized in the Saint of Assisi. These penitents demonstrated a profound devotion to the humanity of Christ and the maternity of the Virgin. They modeled their lives on the Gospel life of the Apostles, which was characterized by poverty, mobility, service, and the preaching of penance. The penitents dedicated themselves especially to works of mercy in hospitals, hostels for pilgrims, and leprosariums. Their movement was spontaneous and close to the people, deeply motivated by the human needs which surrounded them.

Many embraced an eremitical life-style in reaction to the

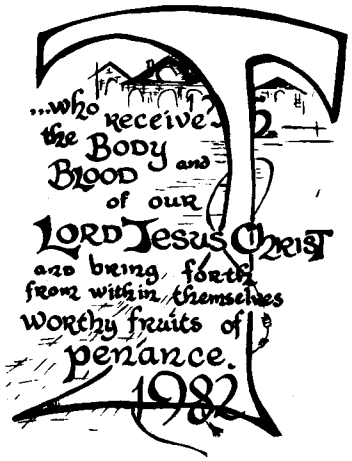
materialism of their age and as witness to their desire for peace. Prayer, a deep regard for the Sacrament of Penance, manual labor, and solitude became the identifying marks of those seeking perfection in the Order of Penitents.

The witness of the hermit's life in time gave way to itinerant preaching. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the gathering of disciples as followers of the poor Christ became common. Poverty was viewed as a summary of the Gospel lived! This poorness was concrete, and it was clearly a measurable aspect of living the *penitential* life. The mendicants came of age! The link between this penitential style of gospel living and the little poor man of Assisi is evident. At the beginning of his God-centered life, Francis became an integral part of the penitential movement of his day (Esser, 206).

"This is how God inspired me, Brother Francis, to embark upon a life of penance" (Test; *Omnibus*, 67).

It is hardly possible to read Francis's Testament, that most significant document in which he describes the action of the Spirit of the Lord upon him, without realizing how genuinely Francis considered himself a *penitent*. The *Chronicles of Jordan of Giano*, #1, testifies, "Francis, a professional merchant, moved in his heart by the Holy Spirit, began a life of penance. Wearing the clothing of a hermit, he presented himself as a penitent" (Hermann, 20). It is even more obvious as we listen to his early biographers. A glance at *The Legend of the Three Companions* confirms that Francis embraced the "form of true religion" as his bride (§7), prayed long hours in solitude (§§8, 12), helped to adorn poor churches (§8), was bent on attending to the poor (§9), traveled on pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint Peter (§10), fasted and shed abundant tears in memory of the Lord's Passion (§§14, 17), sought refuge under ecclesiastical law (§19), preached simply of penance (§25), and gave the message of peace like John the Baptist, model for the penitential life (§26). Two years after his conversion, several companions, "drawn to follow his example of penitence" (§27), joined Francis. Pope Innocent III determined their purpose, directing them, "Go with the Lord, brothers, and preach penance to all people" (1Cel 33; *Omnibus*, 255). Once the first friars were tonsured (L3S 52; *Omnibus*, 936; LM III.10; *Omnibus*, 653), the essentially lay character of the "penitents from Assisi" ceased. However, the inspiration to be *penitent according to the ideals and aspirations of Assisi's Saint* continued with vigor. Many sought to follow Christ after Francis's example (1Cel 37; *Omnibus*, 259; LM III.6; *Omnibus*, 649; L3S 54; *Omnibus*, 937).

Francis guided these penitents faithfully and wholeheartedly. The *Volterra Letter*, the first part of which is the Prologue of the proposed Rule text, is treasured as a beautiful and pointed instruction from Francis revealing the foundations of his penitent spirituality: faith and repentance. In his Letter to All the Faithful, or *Words of Advice and Encouragement*, Francis's *forma vivendi* for a special group, he details in a vivid and remarkable manner the characteristics of the penitential life, stressing as always the freeing of one's heart from self-interest as the only way to worship the Father in spirit and in truth (see Brandl, *passim*). The *Memoriale Propositi* of 1221, the Third Order Rule, juridically codified the spirit of Francis as reflected in his Letter to All the Faithful. This Rule bears the imprint of the legal workmanship of Cardinal Hugolino.



Franciscan penitents were called the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order of *Saint Francis* by Pope Gregory IX in a papal decree of June 4, 1230 (Temperine, 78). The Third Order Regular received official recognition on August 18, 1289, when the Franciscan Pope Nicholas IV issued them their own Rule: *Supra Montem*. This Rule allowed for religious tertiaries, that is, for persons who publicly profess the three vows and live in community. Some scholars believe that the Papal Bull, *Cupientes*, of Pope Boniface VIII, 1295, contained an *implicit* elevation of the Third Order to the *Regular* state (Scocca, 198). It was not until 1447, however, that a more communitarian and explicitly religious form of life finally called *tertius ordo regularis* was recognized by Pope Nicholas V in his decree, *Pastoralis officii*.

From that time, Pope Leo X's Rule, *Inter Cetera* of January 20, 1521, and Pope Pius XI's Rule, *Rerum Conditio* of October 4, 1927, provide the clearest description of our Order's spiritual evolution. With Vatican II's call to congregations to return to their original spirit and fidelity to the founder's ideal (*Perfectae Caritatis*, §§2, 2b; *Ecclesiae Sanctae*, §16.3; *Evangelica Testificatio*, §11), the Third Order Regular today finds itself challenged and called again to renewal by the proposed Rule text which was affirmatively voted for by our superiors general (188–2) and presented to the Holy See on March 16, 1982.

Since 1967, intense study and evaluation have been happening internationally. Meetings in Madrid, Assisi, Grottoferrata, Reute, Brussels, New York, and Rome map out the sites of a collaborative effort never before experienced in the Franciscan Third Order Regular family, now numbering 427 congregations in the world. The present text represents reflection, analysis, and replies from 30 countries in ten languages.

The Document is before us. This work of the Spirit is a reverent, simple testimony to Francis's spirit and life pulsating even in our times. Eight short chapters encourage us to be led by the Lord, continuously faith-filled and repentant as we strive literally to follow in the footprints of the Lord. We remember God's great Goodness to us (RegNB 23; *Omnibus*, 52) and celebrate our TOR heritage. The Father's Call sends us like the penitents, pilgrims, and preachers of old into the modern world as messengers of peace and proclaimers of His Kingdom (L3S 58; *Omnibus*, 941). We will continue to seek to be transformed as our Third Order Regular Rule penetrates to the very heart of our life. "See, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Ω

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Always Accepting Conversion

SISTER ROBERTA CUSACK, O.S.F.

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF OUR PROPOSED Rule is a marvelous summary statement of our identity as Franciscan Sisters and Brothers in the Church. The second chapter tells of Francis's notion of formation and how we cultivate, treasure, secure, and deepen that gift within ourselves each day of our lives. It also includes some definite, simple but profound direction for those the Lord sends to share our life.

We discover many of the driving concepts which fired the heart of Francis in these first eight articles:

- Observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (art. 1).
- Repent and persevere in doing good . . . the Kingdom is at hand (art. 2).
- Obey and respect the Lord Pope and the Holy Catholic Church (art. 3).
- Reverence and honor each other (art.4).
- Test them for a true faith and instruct them in our Gospel way of life (note the emphasis on the Franciscan Scripture texts, Mt. 19:21; Lk. 18:23; and Mt. 16:24: If you want to be perfect . . . sell all and give to the poor . . . deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me (art. 5).
- Let us begin a life of penance (art. 6).
- Be concerned only to serve, honor, love, and adore the good God (art. 7).
- Always create a dwelling place for the Trinity (art. 8).

We identify with all of the above. Like Francis we wish to work daily at being open, that the passionate love of the good God may consume us. In the Third Order tradition, we acknowledge as our shared charism this life-long process, "conversion," or being deeply and forever concerned with letting the Lord turn us around to shape our lives according to his Word in us. All in the Church, all in the world, are called to conversion, but as a special gift to be lived by us, we view it as a call to develop and grow in an ever more free, fresh, creative, and imaginative Christian life-style, so that we too may be branded with that same foolishness which typified a Paul and a Francis. Adolph Holl's insightful work, *The Last Christian*, emphasizes Francis's disturbing, stubborn, and radical way of seeking reconciliation with all by literally living God's Word. Francis understood God's way. For him it was temporally foolish yet lived in freedom. His persistent exercise of responsible freedom climaxed in a spiritual maturity that witnessed to Jesus Christ more completely than most achieve.

> . . . we must create the attitude of always accepting God's image via conversion . . . which better enables us to be absorbed by and to reflect our God.

I find the dramatic impact of the Word of God in the life of Francis most challenging and exciting. It speaks of relationship, and it conspicuously figured in every other relationship of his brief but active life. Much of Francis's written legacy as well as his lived example is devoted to these relationships with God as creature to Creator and as creature related to all other creatures. Francis in his transparent expression simply had to address all others, significant and less significant, as "sister" and "brother." He was so sensitive to the "holy operations," the radiations of God's presence in and around him, that he was very impatient to be consumed by them. Francis dwelt longingly, too, on the Kingdom image. He urges us to pool our gift-energies, enabling the needful radical transformation of ourselves and the world to God's Reign. He simply expects us individually and corporately to become a reflection of the Trinity—we are to birth and cradle our God!

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The first chapter of the new Rule text challenges us to observe the Holy Gospel as our foundation by living the vows as religious of the Church. Francis demonstrated how to live this ideal intensely according to our unique charism as penitents or "conversi," i.e., those ever involved in the double dynamic of turning away from sinfulness and turning toward the good, our God. I consider four favorite words of Francis (these do recur more frequently in his writings): "love, honor, adore, and serve the good God . . . " as the foundation of his faith, which motivated his behavor and gave it that genuine quality of ongoing conversion. He really attempted the literal living of Jesus' Word as he related to the Church and to the unchurched of his day. Literal Gospel living is the key notion of Francis's inspiration. In its dynamic one is ever involved in the burden of sinfulness, a movement of falling but of rising anew into the freedom of God's goodness.

Francis exemplifies well for us what it is to let God take hold of us and grasp us—do we creatures ever really know God, our Creator? Francis does show us how to remove our sandals and stand helpless and naked and in awe—for do we creatures ever properly worship our God, our Creator? Francis certainly exemplifies how we are to continually empty ourselves after the manner of Jesus—but does any creature ever measure up to serving as Jesus did and asks us to do? This exciting challenge of charism forever draws us into the momentum of God's vibrant and creative love, where we come to desire to know God, to adore him, and to serve him. Our lived response should bear some of the enthusiasm and inspiration of the Spirit's gifts so that we, with Francis, may exclaim: "THIS IS WHAT I WANT (to be a living prayer of praise), THIS IS WHAT I SEEK (to love and to know), and THIS IS INDEED WHAT I LONG TO DO (to truly be servant) WITH ALL MY HEART!" (1Cel 22).

I believe Francis encountered the fidelity of God as a mighty power which forever calls us to more. Francis's experience of God's faithfulness certainly was

- a fidelity in which he willingly embraced the cross of the dreadfully painful events of darkness, coldness, dryness, fear, loneliness, isolation, and all that may groan within the human heart.
- a fidelity which masters disbelief and melts our sinful nature which ever threatens to control.
- a fidelity which affords all the healing one needs for self and the millions of broken sisters and brothers.
- a fidelity which the following of Jesus calls us to address in the ongoing process of interior conversion, "every day in every way."

- a fidelity which tells of the fruits of God's Spirit in us.

From the minute one knocks at the convent or friary door and seeks admission to the Order, until the embrace of "sister death," it is ordinarily in a community where we are gifted with the means and the insights for growth and development in our particular charism. It is in this believing community that we have the advantage of best mediating God's action in order to facilitate ongoing conversion. So the impact of community is most important in the radical transformation process by which we grow to a changed and ever new way of being at each stage of our formation. Every new discovery, each new insight and outlook must be affirmed by the community in which we build on the basic structure of faith. Once in the formation process, one must want to grow in that way of life we call "Franciscan." This somehow must persuade us that relating to God in this way makes so much sense that we continuously, consciously, and deliberately choose to identify with a specific congregation in the Franciscan tradition which is made up of those who profess Francis's basic beliefs. A congregation and its individual members, however, can lose sight of the founding moment. This is why every member should always try to seek afresh, to remain resilient in the challenge of his/her initial call, and to live out his/her congregational variation on the theme of being "Penitents of Assisi," as the first brothers and sisters were called. God's Word, the founding charism, the signs of the times, are inflamed by the sparks of God's Spirit. These beckon us to quality living in witness to the Kingdom.

Initial as well as ongoing conversion must be the work of God within the community context. Our shared testimony is the significant factor in the transmission of our Franciscan identity in our Congregations. This witness disposes all in the congregation, not just new members, to accept the challenging concepts, values, attitudes, and beliefs of our shared Franciscan tradition that should constantly be coming to new life in us all. Likewise, the quality of our daily lived experience of faith should make us apostolically effective in the various services we render. This is why it is so important to have vibrant and meaningful liturgical experiences that come from the hearts of all in

the community and not only from programs prepared by a liturgist, musician, chaplain, or liturgical committee. The same must be said for every other area of our lives. If our community is lacking, our ministries will also be deficient. In a word, I'm suggesting that everyone in the Franciscan movement must be responsible and credible by his or her life, not just formation personnel.

Of equal importance in our journeying along the path of evangelical conversion is a ready and willing heart, open to the Word of God. Frequent reflection on how God spoke his Word to Francis and the early movement would challenge our styles of life and ministry. We can be inspired by the Legenda in our Franciscan heritage, which witness to what is small and weak and crying and often silent and very oppressed; as well as to what is of truth, goodness, wonder, and beauty in Francis's experience. There we learn of the efforts of Francis of Assisi and the brothers and sisters of our tradition to know, to adore, and to serve the Lord. In this dynamic our God also urges us, "Come, you belong. Be faithful and grow and speak your commitment in love and in freedom. Don't be afraid; I am here. I do love you! Trust my love, as I make you new each day." Because the Lord treats us in this way we too must create the atmosphere for each brother and sister to be affirmed and empowered to grow in self identity, sharing all one is and is yet to become, because of our mutual trust centered in the Lord. The glory of God should be manifest in each of us, even in our faces. Our God has told us he made us in his own image and likeness. He expects us, therefore, to become so by living as fully as possible the newness of life he holds out to us. Caught up in the splendor of God's life, we are grasped (Paul tells us) by the mystery of God's nature, which is love. To experience this mystery is, as Francis's life shows, life's greatest joy as well as its deepest pain. Our call, then, is one of constant turning—turning in the way of God's love, the origin and ground of our being as well as its fulfillment. The Lord is never finished with us; nor we with the Lord!

If we really believe in Franciscanism, we must create the attitude of always accepting God's image via conversion, a turning process which better enables us to be absorbed by and to reflect our God. May the quality of our lives tell the truth of God's Word in us! May the Spirit of God's Son, who makes such marvelous sense of our lives, burst in each of our hearts as we are freed up in the process of always accepting conversion. Ω

The Spirit of Prayer

M. GERALD GORDON, T.O.R.

THE FRANCISCAN WHO STUDIES the life and writings of the Poverello must become impressed with his intensity to bring himself and his followers before the Lord. Though Francis wrote little on the topic of prayer, what he has left us is of inestimable value.

Prayer is the medium in which God becomes most eminently present to us. It is a moment through which we enter into the realm wherein time and space are shattered, and we become AT-ONE with the Lord. The heart, rightly disposed, is seized by Divine Goodness, and the mind is enraptured with the conscious awareness of its Creator. The core of one's being, steeped in fervent praise, is raised above human distractions. And so communion with the Lord is created or nourished.

But this communion had a horizontal dimension, too, for Francis. Prayer is communal. It is what we do before the Lord. For this reason, the Third Order tradition, from its very beginning, regarded the Liturgy of the Hours as the prayer it would observe in common (*Life and Rule* [Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974], c. IV, p. 53). Perhaps the most convincing need to enter into the universal prayer of the Mystical Body was evidenced in the spirit which Francis himself imparted to his followers:

> . . . the clerics should say the Office devoutly . . . 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 . . . [EpOrd; *Omnibus*, 107].

As Article 9 of the proposed Rule puts it, "Everywhere and in each place, and in every season and each day the brothers and sisters are to have a true and humble faith. . . ." Where does Faith become enlivened, except through the ministration of God, who is its source? Francis called his family to relive Salvation History. In remembering the

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abundant goodness of God they are to find the reason for their entering into prayer. To Francis, a Christian was a person who went before the Lord with a frequency that need not—could not—be counted, to be filled with Divine Wisdom and inspiration as he or she went about the usual mundane tasks. As one recalled the selfless deeds of God, one became inundated with a spirit of thankfulness. Remembering equalled "presence" to those experiences that Christ, in obedience to his Father's will, endured out of love for our love.

As one recalled the selfless deeds of God, one became inundated with a spirit of thankfulness. Remembering spelled "presence" to those experiences.

The life of conversion is daily coming before God and becoming intimately engaged with him. Francis's life and experience point to the source of this spirituality. His meditation centered on God present to humanity and on the Lord's drawing us to a transformed life through the Paschal Mystery. This reflection impresses on us the abundant gratuity of God's gifts to us. Is it any wonder that Francis would recommend reflection on God's Word as well as the Liturgy of the Hours? The inspired Word is spirit and life and our spiritual food. Like Francis we should seek both common and personal prayer opportunities to encounter God (cf. 2Cel 99; *Omnibus*, 443).

To insure that he and his company of Penitents might be totally steeped in God, Francis further required a reverent devotion to the Eucharist. He took to heart the invitation made by Jesus, that to know the Lord one must "eat my flesh and drink my blood" (Jn. 6:56).

All prayer must lead to the altar. It is a call to manifest and witness to those interior bonds with the Lord deepening within us. The Franciscan should feel it a distinct privilege to gather all his or her daily experiences and present them in this way before the Lord in the Eucharist. Through this public act of worship we enter more fully into the thanksgiving, the perfect act of love, the selfless sacrifice of Jesus, as Francis said, in which the Lord "shows himself . . . just as he once appeared to his apostles in real flesh" (Adm 1; *Omnibus*, 77). The Lord is known to us through Word and Sacrament. The more one

avails oneself of these sources of life, the more the heart knows the compassionate God, who creates within us a spirit proclaiming Jesus to the contemporary world. When we come with a hungry spirit and are fed by the Lord, a transformation takes place. Not only is the Lord food to brighten our minds, but also food to sustain us wherever we find the Lord leading us. Eucharist weaves one common spirit among us. Our prayer, then, has a distinctly missionary character to it.

The Franciscan's prayer must have a certain elasticity if it is to reflect our commitment to μετανοια. Not only do we bring the situation of society and our times to intercessory prayer, we also have place for the prayer of quiet because of our origins and tradition.

The Franciscan Penitential Tradition is rooted in the hermitage experience. This is why totally contemplative congregations are integral to the life of the Third Order Regular and why the Ritiro, Poustinia, or House of Prayer experience should have a prominent place in our congregations. While this is true, it does not exclude common prayer that expresses a local community's "giftedness"—be that for charismatic-type prayer, shared prayer, traditional devotions, or parish-community centered prayer experiences. The last of these is of great importance, because what we bring in prayer to God's People is itself enriched by God's People.

Jesus is the model of our prayerfulness. Francis perceived the Lord in the solitude of the desert, with his neighbors in the synagogue on the Sabbath, spontaneously teaching his followers how to pray along the wayside and in one's room, as well as offering solemnly his great High Priestly Prayer. Francis saw whom Jesus taught to pray: herders, fishermen, mechants, sinners, and saints. Prayer is any way and all ways to raise up one's heart in praise of the Lord. Francis says with the Lord that we should pray always. It is conversion *par excellence*. It is always possible. To the Poverello, God is present to guide, to enlighten, to assure, to heal, and to re-create. Our prayer is openness to this all-abiding presence. The reality of God's life among us must mold our life-style and permeate our service among his People.

Finally, the proposed Rule text (art. 14) concludes the chapter on prayer by pointing out those attitudes of devotion necessary for

prayerfulness. Devotion is not the pious practices of our day, but for Francis "what all have promised the Lord" (de voto). Essential and fundamental is a healthy and realistic acceptance of our sinfulness in the light of God's pardon. Like this is the purpose of fasting: to make us literally feel the need for God in our lives. What is important to Francis about our Gospel life is that we do it. Something as concrete as fasting demonstrates this. Before the Lord we cannot be other than we really are—as the Lord knows us. Instead of pretense and image-making simplicity and honesty are necessary for authentic purity of heart before the Lord.

And what is the objective of prayer for the Franciscan? ". . . [we] should desire nothing else but our Savior who offered himself in his own Blood as a sacrifice on the altar of the Cross for our sins, giving us example so we too might follow in his footsteps." Ω

Resource Packet for the Canonization of Blessed Maximilian Kolbe, O.F.M.Conv.

October 10, 1981

We regret that because of summer scheduling requirements, our September issue was already in press when we received this resource packet. It contains abundant material for use during the two months prior to the Canonization on October 10, which, of course, it is too late to bring to your attention.

But the packet also contains suggested observances and resource materials for a two-month period of prayer and thanksgiving after the event, a novena in honor of St. Maximilian, material on his theology, and a bibliography of printed and audiovisual materials available on him.

For copies of the packet or further information, contact

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Life according to the Holy Gospel

THADDEUS HORGAN, S.A.

THE FINAL ARTICLE OF THE PROPOSED Third Order Regular Franciscan Rule summarizes the link between the specific character of our Order (μετανοια = evangelical conversion) and the overall charism (living the Gospel literally) shared by all in the three Orders of Saint Francis. It begins: ". . . let the brothers and sisters always be mindful that they should desire one thing alone, namely the spirit of the Lord at work within them." Since conversion to God is not a single event in one's life, but continuous, Saint Francis advises that our commitment to it is preserved by being ". . . always obedient to the Church" (see arts. 2 and 5). And faith is nourished and deepened by prayer, reflection, and the sacraments of the Church (see Chapter 3). These enable the Spirit of the Lord to be at work within us. That work has one sole purpose: to conform us totally to our Lord, Jesus Christ (see art. 11). This is the orthodox teaching of the Church. What is specifically Franciscan is the manner in which we are urged to conform ourselves willingly to God's creative and creating Word expressed in revelation and in the Church's sacramental deeds which efficaciously turn us to God. The Franciscan way is living "according to the poverty and humility and holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ which [we] have solemnly promised to observe" (RegB XII.4). For Francis there is only one way to live evangelical conversion, and that is by living the Gospel literally.

Literal Gospel Living

THE RULE TEXT SETS FORTH in four chapters what Francis understands by Gospel life. The sequence of ideas follows Francis's thought in the Rule of 1221 (RegNB) and in the Testament. These ideas, though not

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in the same sequence, are also found in his other writings, which give his complete view of what is meant by literal Gospel living (see the Admonitions, the Rule of 1223, and the first and second Letters to the Faithful). Topically these ideas, or more properly stated, these Gospel values are minority, poverty, and loving obedience. Since our life in Christ's body is corporate, Francis put special emphasis on that life shared by his followers. This is fraternity. But it would be completely misleading to point to values or ideas alone. For Francis these can be appreciated and understood only as they are incarnated in Jesus Christ. Gospel life is Jesus Christ. Literal Gospel life is walking in Christ's footsteps. To do Gospel is to do what Jesus did. For Francis conversion can be complete only when we have put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

> For Francis there is only one way to live evangelical conversion, and that is by living the Gospel literally.

To put on Christ is not just imitating the Lord. Francis's insight into Gospel living is more profound. He appreciated that the total person could be transformed into Christ only if that person assimilated the attitudes and values of the Lord. Conversion is this process in so far as it is continuous and total throughout life. When one's heart is set on the Lord it may happen that conversion again may mean turning from sin (see art. 14). But as the lived charism of persons consecrated to God and committed to observing the holy Gospel "which [they] have solemnly promised to observe" (art. 29), conversion primarily implies living the Gospel literally.

Loving Obedience

IN THE WRITINGS OF FRANCIS, apart from conversion itself, and prayerfulness which is considered in the previous article, two other values/attitudes are central to his inspiration. These are "the poverty and humility [minority] of our Lord Jesus Christ." Francis's realism is also manifest in those writings in another way. No one commits oneself to change one's values or attitudes without proper motivation. What should be our motivation? Once again Francis does not theorize but points to Jesus Christ. We should have that mind in us which was

in Christ Jesus (Phil. 2:5). What was the Lord's motivation should be ours. Jesus explains his reason for being among us in John's Gospel many times, but explicitly in 5:30. Jesus came to do the will of the Father: to be obedient. The will of God is our salvation. God in Christ first loved us (Jn. 4:19). Out of love the Lord redeemed us. We are to love too (Jn. 15:12) as Jesus did because he left us an example (Jn. 13:15) to follow!

Francis calls this motivation "the obedience of charity" (cf. Adm. 3.6). Chapter 7 of the text demonstrates Francis's weaving the example of Christ's life into our own. Note how he points to Jesus who concretely obeyed the Father's will, in fact united his will to the Father's. The Lord loved men and women with God's love mediated through his humanity. So, says Francis, should we mutually obey one another and encourage one another in Gospel living and in seeking first God's Kingdom and its justice (art. 22). This is walking in Christ's footprints. Francis also singles out those called to the special obedience of service: the ministry of leadership and encouragement. Leadership's role is to stir up and excite our motivation so that we will do what "all have promised the Lord." In this Francis achieves a harmonious blend between shared responsibility and the role of leadership with authority. The motivation for all, however, is the same: the loving obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is why concrete obedience to the minister and to one another amount to the "true and holy obedience of our Lord, Jesus Christ."

Fraternity

NEW MEMBERS ARE RECEIVED into obedience (art. 7), which is Francis's phrase for profession. It does not refer to the vow of obedience, but to the style of religious life Francis initiated vis-à-vis monastic life. It is a life structured not on a monastery but on our relationship to each other in Christ. That relationship is fraternity (Chapter 6). When we consider religious community today our focus is on our gathering together. This is not so for Francis. His—and our—Franciscan focus is on Christ who became *Brother* to us in the Incarnation. We are gathered in Christ our Brother; hence "fraternity." Our sense of relatiionship one to another is based on us all being gathered in the Lord's name and in his body. All else that can be said about community life has to be filtered through this insight.

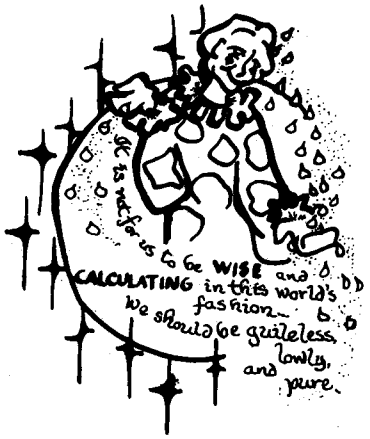
Our fraternity is the circumstance in which we realize our living conversion, or Gospel life, together. Through the lived relationship of fraternity we should witness to the fact that authentic Gospel life is

possible for all of God's people. Whether we live together or not—remember that the first followers of Francis did not all live together—we must be credible signs of the efficaciousness of the Incarnation, first among ourselves (note art. 5 and the formative character of fraternity) because we are corporately redeemed, and then before God's people among whom we live and to whom we are sent. The primary place of fraternity in the mind of Francis is perhaps best expressed in his brief but splendid Siena Testament (1 Test) whose total emphasis is on love and respect: for one another, for each one's commitment to Christ's poverty, and to the Church, Christ's body, represented in its prelates and clerics.

Regarding fraternity, the Rule text is faithful to Francis's approach to all things spiritual. A treatise is not presented. Doing fraternity concretely is presented positively. Francis's style of preaching and teaching (very manifestly expressed in the Volterra Letter—EpFid I)—ordinarily is to address an issue positively, then negatively. For this reason the Rule text must be considered only as an introduction to Francis's thought on fraternity. A study of the complete texts of the Rules of 1221 and 1223 is recommended, but especially of the Admonitions because of their common theme of dying to self in order to live for God. The self-emptying Christ is our Brother. Our living as he did and with his attitudes, especially *κενωσις*, is the way to live Franciscan fraternity.

Holy Poverty

WITHOUT DOUBT, TO LIVE THE GOSPEL literally meant one thing above all others for Francis: to live like our Brother, Jesus Christ. One author has rightly said that for Francis the Gospel must become flesh where the Lord became flesh: among the poor. Only from the perspective of the Incarnation of the self-emptying Christ did Francis see the love of God working in people, in this world, indeed in the cosmos (see art. 11). Only when people, the world, and the cosmos are emptied of all "self-filled-ness" can they become filled with God. This is the importance of poverty. With the simple directness of Francis's words (art. 18) the poor Christ is pointed out. "Do you want to know what poverty is?" "It is the self-emptying Christ who chose to be poor, to be with the poor, and to bring good news to the poor." Evangelical poverty is nothing less. This is Franciscan poverty, and this is the reason why Article 15 says "sicut pauperes." We are to be as poor as the poor Christ.



Francis was so concerned that this be so that he enjoined on his immediate followers, the Friars Minor, the requirement of appropriating nothing in this world as their own. This form of absolute poverty has not practically been part of the Third Order Regular tradition. It has been and is (see art. 19) an ideal. Because of the tradition of works of charity one can appreciate—especially in today's world—why *sine proprio* would only create problems. Those forms of practical poverty set forth in articles 16 and 18 show how Francis himself was realistic about material poverty. But we should not reduce poverty merely to its material aspect. It further implies our renunciation of status and power as well as of wealth. These are what Jesus rejected in his temptations at the beginning of his public ministry. It further implies "putting on" the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:1–11) who totally trusted the Father and entrusted himself to the Father. It calls us to live the life of the redeemed (being in Christ). In a word, it requires us to live the Beatitudes (see art. 17). And doing this is living literally the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ. That was total conversion for Francis, the source of his joy despite the setbacks he experienced in the latter part of his life. Gospel poverty was Francis's way to respond to God's love for humanity. When humanity loves God in a like manner the Kingdom will come. This was Francis's vision. Poverty is the key to turn vision into reality.

Minority

BUT EVANGELICAL POVERTY, as Francis understood it, is impossible unless our fundamental attitude is one of littleness or childlikeness before the Lord. Littleness is the joyous awareness that one is the object of the pure love and favor of God. Recall the high point of Francis's conversion experience—his trial before Assisi's Bishop. The great moment of grace present then was Francis's awareness that God indeed was a loving, compassionate Father. From that time on Francis knew the Lord who loves us in Christ and who sees in us what Christ is before God: God's child, his beloved Son. The way of poverty was

Francis's response to this love (see art. 16). But minority, the Franciscan term for littleness, is a Gospel value in itself, too. In fact, it is the one thing necessary for entrance into the Kingdom (Mk. 10:15; Lk. 18:17; Mt. 18:13; Jn. 3). In this sense minority is deep faith and confidence in the Lord which makes us spontaneously and continuously turn to God, be present to God (see art. 9) and trust absolutely in God even in our own Gethsemani moments. Because the Lord is with us we can be peaceful, joyful, and happy (art. 17) before God and others!

In our Third Order Regular tradition of works of charity, minority or littleness also means servanthood. In this sense minority means developing in ourselves, with God's grace, who Christ is "for us" because we are "in Christ." Jesus is the servant of God sent into the world showing us how to be gentle, meek, humble, compassionate, peaceable, patient, and singlehearted. Like Christ we are to be impelled by the attitude of minority to love the world, the place of redemption. It is where we do God's redeeming will for and with our brothers and sisters. Minority implies going into the world as efficacious servants of redemption bringing good news to the poor, proclaiming freedom to captives, giving sight to the blind, setting the downtrodden free, and announcing the Lord's year of favor (cf. Lk. 4:17–19).

For Francis life according to the Holy Gospel is Jesus Christ. Total and continuous conversion is to be "in Christ" and to have the mind of Christ. The Good News is that we and all others can live this life of the Lord. What Francis's life and our Rule text try to capture is not a lot of theory about turning to the Lord through Gospel living, but the actual experience of the Saint and his practical guidelines to *do the Gospel literally*. The Franciscan way to do this is "according to the poverty and humility and holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ω

Poor Man of Assisi

Poor man of Assisi:
Your voice cried out against the injustices of your time.
You cried not in judgment—
but as a messenger of peace.
You stirred the hearts of thousands—
not by your magnificence,
but by your simplicity.
You took not from the rich to give to the poor—
but gave only what you had to give.
And your truth still holds today.

One poor man—
Illiterate
Sickly
Never having been ordained.
Yet you brought
Knowledge to thousands
Strength to myriads
As minister of God's Word.

You attracted followers—
Not by how you looked,
or what you did,
or when you spoke;
But by the fact that your life mirrored Christ's—
You were honest
You were true
You believed
You loved
You knew who you were,
Simple, poor man of Assisi.

You kindled a fire that has touched the entire earth!
And you live on today in the minds and hearts of millions.
See what you have done—
Minister of God,
Follower of Christ,
Poor man of Assisi!

Sister Rebecca Rutkowski, O.S.F.

Pilgrimage: Doing Justice and Making Peace

SISTER MARIAN BOBERSCHMIDT, O.S.F.
AND
BROTHER THOMAS GRADY, O.S.F.

THE FRANCISCAN CALL to be peacemakers is clear from the original Rule of the Third Order. In those days, when some called wars "holy," tertiaries refused to bear arms or take oaths. They rejected the feudal system's demand to fight the lord's fight, defend his things, or hand him their consciences. As remarkably encouraging as such a stance was then, or is today, Francis proposed an even more profound conversion to peace. He admonished his friends to have peace on their lips, but also in their hearts, and to move others to peace by their gentleness (art. 27; cf. L3C 58).

A Franciscan vision of Gospel peace embraces the imperative of ceasing war and adds to it the challenge of living in peace. In this article we would like to presume the commitment of Franciscans, and all people of good will, to the work of ceasing war and preparations for war, and emphasize here the call to live in peace. That call is enriched and clarified in our time by our Church's heightened awareness of the bond between justice and peace; in the words of John XXIII: "Peace is not the absence of violence, but the presence of justice."

This understanding of justice recalls the Franciscan belief that living in harmonious relationships with all creation produces abundant peace. Our belief is based on the Incarnation of Jesus and our sharing in its continuance as sisters and brothers made in the image and

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likeness of the same Father. As such, all Franciscans share the activity of living in just and peaceful relationships regardless of how the call to announce God's peace with all his creatures is specified in our particular orders or communities.

> Making peace requires developing the works of justice into a state of living in relationships of equality with one another in God's universe . . . [our] Franciscan gift. . . .

Justice requires relationships of equality, in the sense of fraternity in the one true God, Creator of a harmonious universe. In him we are one and equal. By his Son's cross all of creation is reconciled to this same living Giver of Life. We experience this relationship "in the world," where justice is to live. Justice is social; it is based on relationships. A Franciscan approach to justice is not so much a study of issues as a response to issues, a response that requires continuous conversion to the one God through whom we understand just relationships. Blessed will we be if, by our own conversion, our lives invite the world to restoration in the original harmony God intended for his creation.

The Rule text develops these ideas in Chapter 8, the final chapter. It presents the work of living in peace as an outgrowth of the first seven chapters, as a response to our Franciscan vocation. Chapter 8 can be summarized in three components: pilgrimage, doing justice, making peace.

The Franciscan penitent is a person in a state of continual conversion (μετανοια), in transition, on pilgrimage trying to know what God wants to happen in his or her own history. That person is a pilgrim "seeking first the Kingdom of God and his justice" (art. 82), turning to God as the source of all good, and journeying "in the world" with the poor. The poor are our companions on the way who help us see relationships in a just perspective, to learn equality from a position of dependence. The cry of the poor is a prophetic cry for equality under God. It reveals for us the greatest evil, deifying temporal power. The idolatry of worshiping status and money precludes our faithfully im-

aging God. The poor cry out for us to change, to let go, to transform our selfishness and self-centeredness to openness and sharing.

Equality under one God is basic for justice. Our faith and deeds reflect our belief that we can love God only by loving our neighbors concretely in the world (art. 25). To be on pilgrimage, in a state of conversion, requires continually adjusting our relationships so that we are able to live our Gospel vocation to love all. Such love is possible for those who believe in the One through whom the world community is liberated, reconciled, and restored to peace. Loving God and neighbor, and adjusting relationships according to that universal, fraternal love manifests the active/contemplative synthesis (art. 9) which focuses on reconciling all people and all creation in harmony under God.

Doing justice is the response of Franciscans who have internalized the values stated throughout the text. These include working for interior and exterior reconciliation through humility, simplicity, and generosity (art. 13); surrendering claims to power, status, and money in order to work joyfully in the world with a non-possessive, non-judgmental attitude (art. 16); being brothers and sisters to all by valuing human life and rejecting classism in all its forms (art. 17); refusing to defend things (art. 18); and carrying the surrender of power and status into our community lives (art. 24). These attitudes allow us to turn more completely to God and his ways by doing deeds of love in justice. Oppression and its consequent violence are the results of deifying temporal power, possession, prestige. Worship of these false gods produces the evil we can confront only if we believe in a God of love. A conversion which strengthens us to work in hope and with courage is based on the belief that love surpasses evil "in each place, in every season and each day" (art. 9). Transforming evil to good, healing alienation in ourselves and in the world, is the work of justice prerequisite to peace. This is the stance of Articles 26, 27, and 28.

Making peace requires developing the works of justice into a state of living in relationships of equality with one another in God's

universe. Such peace-making is a Franciscan gift to our Church's renewed commitment for justice and against war. Christians today need the witness of our prayer and ministry, word and work, vision and conversion to the Christ who imaged God's justice in the world by healing every obstacle to personal dignity. By responding in justice and mutuality to human needs, God's love comes upon us together. God is revealed to us and through us as we share peace and all things good.

Continuous conversion, expansion, growth is our Rule and life. Conversion frees us to announce peace as we journey in faith, to renew our commitment as poor and happy pilgrims, to reach out of ourselves in service, to replace economic barriers with just relationships, and to believe we can shape a future in peace. To receive this gift from God and continue growing in his love we make ourselves ready to be led by him. We walk in openness to experience him everywhere. Faithful to his love, we are vulnerable for the sake of his Word to every opportunity, good or evil, and to every person, friend or foe. We expose ourselves freely, even to the point of martyrdom (art. 26). Journeying in this way, we rejoice that we continue the co-creation of God's Kingdom, realizing that it is He who brings justice through his servants. As equals in Him we can be brother and sister on pilgrimage in his world. This belief is the beginning of justice and ends in making peace: "Justice will bring about peace—right will produce calm and security. My people will live in a peaceful land" (Is. 32:17–18). Ω

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Book Reviews

Gospel Poverty: Witness to the Risen Christ. By Michael D. Guinan, O.F.M. New York: Paulist Press, 1981. Pp. 95. Paper, $3.95.

Reviewed by Father Paul C. Eckler, O.F.M., M.Div. (Washington Theological Union), Campus Minister at Siena College and member of the local Committee on Peace and Justice.

Can the fullness, the richness, the profundity of gospel poverty be captured in a book that is eighty pages in length? In all honesty, no. But Father Guinan's exposition of biblical themes pertaining to the meaning of poverty in the twentieth century is a fine place to begin one's understanding of this issue. Although the author points out in the beginning that there is no single biblical teaching on poverty, he considers many of the essential elements that contribute to a mature vision on the meaning of the poor in scripture and in contemporary life.

The length of the chapters (averaging eight pages each) and a fine bibliography for each aspect raised make this book a useful guide for a community's discernment of the meaning of poverty in its life. The book raises questions that, while giving thought provoking seeds for reflection, are not definitively answered so as to preclude further discussion. Of particular value is the chapter on royal theology and the wisdom literature. Its presentation of an understanding of poverty from the standpoint of the powerful, the strong, that is, the "haves," is a message any "first world" inhabitant could profit from.

Meditations of a Hermit. By Charles de Foucauld. Trans. Charlotte Balfour. London: Burns and Oates; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1981 (reprint of 1930 edition). Pp. xx-186. Paper, $7.95.

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., M.A. (English), Assistant to the President for Community Relations at Saint Bonaventure University.

Meditations of a Hermit contains excerpts from the writings of Charles de Foucauld. Born in Strasbourg in the Alsace in 1856, and left an orphan at the age of seven, young Charles was raised by his maternal grandfather in France. While a teenager in a Paris boarding school, he became indifferent to his religious beliefs and gradually gave up any semblance of being a Christian. After finishing his studies in geography, he made two exploring expeditions to Africa, where he was able to observe the Moslem way of life. Returning to France after his second expedition, the young man made the acquaintance of Henri Huvelin, Vicar of the Church of Saint Augustine in Paris. Under Abbé Huvelin's influence, he experienced a sincere reoigious conversion that led him to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. After several spiritual retreats in the next few years, Charles entered the Trappe of Notre Dame des Nièges in Nazareth in 1890. After making his religious profession, he edified his companions by his religious fervor both at Notre Dame des Nièges and at Akbes in Syria. Seeking greater solitude than the Trappist life seemed to offer him, he left the Order and remained in the Holy Land, where he became gardener and handyman for the Poor Clares in Nazareth. It was during this time that he became a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis (now called the Secular Franciscans). Encouraged by Abbé Huvelin, Charles returned to France to study for the priesthood. Ordained a priest in 1901, he sought solitude in Africa, where he desired to bring the message of the gospel to the Moslems. He lived the life of a recluse in the Sahara, first at Beni-Abbes and then at Tamanrasset until he was killed by a band of savage Senoussi as he prayed in his cell on December 1, 1916.

The present book includes selections from de Foucauld's "Meditations on the Gospel" and from his letters and his retreat notes. The passages chosen for this volume reveal the spiritual insights of a true contemplative. Most of these writings had not been published before the appearance of the book's first edition in 1930 because they were considered so private and so personal that they would be of little interest to others. But they do reveal a great deal about the spirituality of this Frenchman who longed to be the "apostle to the Tauregs."

The selected passages from "Meditations on the Gospel" portray a man who had no interest in worldly things as he strove to unite himself to his Master and as he affirmed his acceptance of the Master's will in his life. Selecting extracts from his reflections penned while he was serving the Poor Clares at Nazareth, the translator presents the inmost thoughts of this deeply spiritual man as he meditates on the life of Christ and writes knowingly of the places where the Lord lived and walked.

Any religious or cleric, any serious Christian, will be moved to compassion and admiration for the Hermit of the Sahara as he or she discovers Charles de Foucauld immersing himself into union with Christ, who daily draws him with his graces ever closer to himself.

Celebrate with Song . . . Every Parish Can. By Charles J. Matonti. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1982. Pp. 144. Paper, $3.95.

Reviewed by Mrs. Margaret E. Clarke, Director of Religious Education and Liturgical Music at St. Edward the Confessor Church, Clifton Park, New York, for the past 13 years and a Charter Member of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, an Organization of Musicians and Clergy devoted to the improvement of music at the parish level.

Celebrate with Song . . . Every Parish Can, recently published and highly publicized, is an easy reading paperback which delightfully highlights portions of the 1972 Bishops' Committee's document entitled *Music in Catholic Worship*, with the intent of providing practical hints in implementing this document at the parish level.

The book commences with an im-

pressive foreword by Eugene Walsh, S.S., a noted liturgist, author, and lecturer, and it ends with the complete text of the official document mentioned above. It contains 22 short but interesting chapters of humorous anecdotes incorporating many aspects of liturgical music which relate to direct quotes from the document, followed by practical suggestions.

The author, highly qualified in his field through experience at the parish level, college professor and composer, demonstrates his practical thoughts through the vehicle of witty storybook names and parishes; in the process he seems to bring alive actual experiences all too familiar to many of us who have been in similar situations.

The most significant and prevailing theme weaving throughout the book is the emphasis on praying through music—or singing Prayers of Liturgy. What a unique thought for many parishes that still consider singing an added dimension to worship rather than an integral part of it!

Worth mentioning are the illustrations, which capture the author's humorous titles to the various subjects, as well as capturing the reader's attention.

For parishes that have not as yet adopted the idea that singing prayers is the norm at liturgical celebrations and a refreshing enrichment to those who are attempting to implement this concept, this book would serve well as a pastoral resource for Celebrants, Directors of Music, Members of Liturgy Teams, and all persons involved in the celebration of praying through music.

An Experience of Celibacy: A Creative Reflection on Intimacy, Loneliness, Sexuality, and Commitment. By Keith Clark, O.F.M.Cap. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1982. Pp. 176. Paper, $4.95.

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

In this book about celibacy, Father Clark first establishes the place of celibacy in relation to God. Dedicated celibacy is a way of entering into life's moments of loneliness as a way of giving oneself to the Lord, even as Christian marriage means giving self to God through intimacy with another human person. And the non-genital that occurs in the life of celibates is an opening to God even as the loneliness of married people is. Finding God through selflessness is what life is all about. Furthermore, as the Paschal Mystery is a threefold movement—Jesus' acceptance of humanity, his death, his rising to new life—so the celibate commitment involves accepting one's sexuality, dying to the craving to have full and perfect joy here, and experiencing God.

In the light of these theological reflections and drawing on his experience, the author treats of the nature of an evolving commitment—making an important distinction with regard to "falling in love" that what is a normal course for a relationship is not inevitable. He offers an excellent definition of celibate friendships, according to which everyone is better off for having come together, no one worse off for parting" (p. 107). He stresses the import of a loving community for the safeguarding of religious celibacy and notes the need for celibates to be able to let others minister to their human needs. He discusses "falling in love," and suggests seven skills that will help us develop our celibate commitment and keep a contrary commitment from developing. He adds reflections on fidelity and on celibacy as a gift.

Though occasionally a little too down to earth, Father Clark offers a worthwhile book on celibacy which religious, particularly but not exclusively men religious, can profit by.

Peter Maurin: Prophet in the Twentieth Century. By Marc H. Ellis. New York: Paulist Press, 1981. Pp. viii–191. Paper, $9.95.

Reviewed by Father Paul C. Eckler, O.F.M., M.Div. (Washington Theological Union), campus minister at Siena College and a member of the local Committee on Peace and Justice.

Marc Ellis presently teaches at the Maryknoll School of Theology, where he is also Director of the Institute for Justice and Peace. His previous publication, *A Year at the Catholic Worker*, is a diary-like recollection of time spent in the Catholic Worker community in New York City. With these credentials, one could suspect a rather sympathetic reading of Peter Maurin's life.

But more than that, the present work is a thought-provoking biography and thematic presentation of the somewhat intense parent of the Catholic Worker movement. Ellis sets his scope with a quotation from Georges Bernanos' *Diary of a Country Priest*: "How little we know what a human life really is—even our own. To judge us by what we call our actions is probably as futile as to judge us by our dreams." In truth, the mystery of a human life is only superficially unfolded by a stilted, step-by-step exposition of the individual's actions. What is the inner life, the background that moves an individual to choose certain responses over others? It is to uncover this deeper mystery that Ellis writes. And it is by his blending of the chronological events and the compelling values which made up the life of this Roman Catholic Frenchman that Ellis gives us an account of the workings of the Spirit in a man consumed in service of the poor.

The chronological history, however, is much less fascinating than one might suspect. Maurin's personal pilgrimage from France through wanderings in the United States to the development of the Catholic Worker movement is a story with which many are familiar. Therefore, I choose to focus my attention on two forces which have deeply influenced Peter Maurin's life: Saint Francis and Personalism.

Maurin's contact with the legacy of Francis came early in his life. While still a young man in France, Maurin learned of Leon Harmel, a businessman whose thoughts on industrial cooperation attempted to address what Harmel felt was the primary evil of industrialism, the creation of an irreligious proletariat. The vehicle for this cooperation was the Third Order of Saint Francis.

Maurin was deeply impressed by the role that the Third Order played in helping organize and solidify the charity of management and workers. Later, during the late 20's, Maurin would be disappointed with the Franciscan Order's failure to become the vanguard of social reform. For him, the Franciscan model of personal and communal poverty, as embodied in the Poverello, was the road to the Spirit and to freedom. In poverty competition for profit was replaced by cooperation and the common life. It was only this vision of life that could break through the social constraints of history and institutions and, thereby, become truly eschatological.

Maurin's commitment to personalism was another focal point in his thought. From the initial stages of his contact with Dorothy Day, Maurin's duty was to show her that the locus of power was found, not in centralized political organization, but in local, personalized activity. The only viable response to the domination of culture by the machine was, Maurin felt, in the personalist democracy that began with the moral dignity and worth of the individual human being.

This dominating personalist stance led him to conflicts within his own community. On the occasion of the Seamen's Strike of 1936, Dorothy Day wanted to come out in support of organized labor. Maurin's response, in accord with his fear of collectivism, was simple: "Strikes don't strike me." Needless to say, he was shouted down, and the Catholic Worker came out in support of the strike.

My critique of Ellis' effort would run as follows: He has introduced us to a man who has been overshadowed by the legacy of Dorothy Day. While she has been studied closely and painstakingly, he has been largely overlooked. Ellis remedies that situation by writing a clear, well researched biography of a man who has greatly influenced the whole of the Catholic Left. Ellis has filled a void and done so successfully.

Nevertheless, there are two weaknesses that I observed in my reading of the book. The first lies in Ellis' exposition of Maurin's thought. It is difficult at times to discern the chronological development involved. Whereas the actions of Maurin's life are presented as they occurred temporally, his thought is offered thematically. As a result, the blend between his personal history, the development of his thought, and the historical situation is sometimes obscure to the reader. The second weakness lies in what seems to be the excessive influence of Maurin on the author. Ellis writes: "Maurin was in a certain way a prophet, and a prophet always remains a mystery. . . . Though I have struggled to remain outside, inevitably I have been drawn into this mystery and have been changed by it" (p. 2). Indeed he has been drawn into the mystery. One must wait until well past the half-way mark in the book (p. 101, to be exact) before one finds the first criticism of Peter Maurin. And that criticism is rather minor.

Despite these minimal shortcomings, the book is a fascinating portrayal of a man whom few know, but whom many ought to know.

IPC Reports

Volume 29

(A Publication of the Conventual Franciscans of North America)

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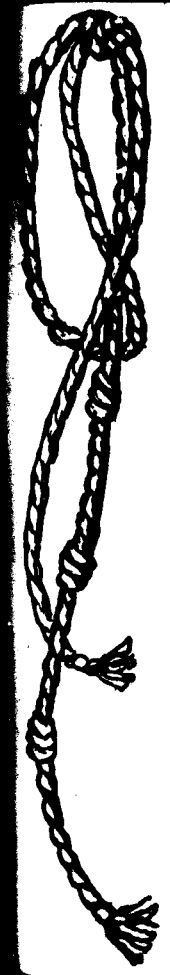
The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW



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The CORD

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The illustrations for our November issue have been drawn by Sister Kay Francis Berger, a Joliet Franciscan.

Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

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PERIODICAL DEPT.

Those "Outmoded" Old Classics

IN OUR NOVITIATE DAYS, longer ago than I care to admit, we had this *list* posted, in the novices' library, of Franciscan classics we were expected, somehow, sometime before year's end, to have read and assimilated. David of Osuna comes to mind, along with David of Augsburg, Celano, the Fioretti, and of course Bonaventure's *Lives* and the writings of Francis himself.

Few people, asked to accompany a friend to a Metropolitan Opera performance (assuming, of course, that they can stand opera at all) would be likely to reply, "But I saw *Aida* already." More to the point, few Christians would counter the recommendation of a spiritual director that they read Scripture regularly, with "But I read that already." Yet one does speak with Franciscan religious who make that very point regarding the early sources of their ideals. What is one to make of this attitude?

To begin with, one may frankly admit that the Franciscan classics are not *invariably* sparkling literary gems, and one certainly would not want to push the comparison with Scripture to the point of claiming for them divine inspiration and inerrancy. But there is not a complete disparity among the cases cited. For instance, there is a genuine, valid, and important analogy to be drawn, and appreciated, between the New Testament, on the one hand, as the sometimes on-the-spot and alternately immediately after-the-fact record of the lived experience of Christianity's birth, and, on the other hand, the earliest records of Franciscan life, doctrine, and spirituality.

In fact, there is even some validity to the aesthetic comparison drawn above. Scarcely a theologian in Christian history (St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and St. John of the Cross do come to mind) has wielded a pen with Bonaventure's artistry—and again, one thinks of the poetry of Jacopone da Todi.

A second important factor involved in the widespread inattention to the Franciscan classics may be the archaic language of the available translations, a drawback easily enough remedied given the requisite motivation (market?), as witness the number of biblical translations in English.

A final word: to recommend the tried and tested is *not* to slight or disparage the new. Each serves a different, and equally important purpose in the spiritual nourishment of the contemporary Franciscan. Both types of literature are to be made more widely available, we understand, in the Franciscan Institute's new *Franciscan Pathways* series just inaugurated in commemoration of our Holy Father's Eighth Centennial. *Auguri!* Ω

Fr. Michael D. Meilach, Jr.

IPC Reports

Volume 29

(A Publication of the Conventual Franciscans of North America)

Every year the Conventuals of North America meet to discuss some of the central issues of their Franciscan vocation. The talks are then published in the *IPC Reports*. Nine articles appear in Volume 29, touching on Franciscan approaches to such topics as the Eucharist, prayer, missions, Conventualism, the *Sacrum Commercium*, ecumenism, and evangelization. Volume 29 of the *IPC Reports* should prove a valuable resource to those interested in Franciscan studies.

Copies are available at $9.00 apiece, including postage. Make check payable to "IPC Reports," and send to

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The Evangelical Basis of the Rule

DERMOT COX, O.F.M.

WHAT IS IT THAT distinguishes the Franciscan way of life? How do we differ from other Orders which also follow the Gospel? The opening words of the Rule that we now profess tell us that "the life of the Friars Minor is to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, by living in obedience, without property, and in chastity." Here we can distinguish two statements: (1) observance of the Gospel is the *substance* of our life; and (2) the three vows are the concrete means we use. In effect this means that the vows form the structure of all religious life, and there was no other way Francis could form a religious order. The truly Franciscan insight is found in the first part: "to observe the Gospel." Yet what does this mean? Francis tells us in his First Rule: The life of the brothers is "to follow the doctrine and footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ" (RegNB I.1). So it seems that by "Gospel" Francis means the life and activity of Jesus himself (cf. G.C., O.F.M., I.1).

Jn. 14:6–7: Christ, "The Way, the Truth, and the Life"

THE LORD JESUS SAID to his disciples: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man comes to the Father but by me" (Adm. 1). This short citation could be called the nucleus of John's conception of Christian discipleship. It is taken from the first of Jesus's farewell discourses to his disciples. Already, in 13:34–35, Jesus has given them a new way of life: "Love one another as I have loved you." This, for John, is not a casual exhortation. It is his summing up of the mission Christ himself had received from the Father, and it contains the essential message of his life, teaching, and death. "As I have loved you" is

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the key. What Jesus is offering is a fellowship with himself *in a particular kind* of love. He is concerned with a mission he has received, a task he has to accomplish. So what he is leaving the disciples in this new "commandment" is a task, just as what he himself has received from the Father is a task: to spread the revelation of God's own love. That is, to preach the fact of salvation. From this mutual love and fellowship of Jesus and those whom he has called comes a turning outward towards others, a concern for others that they may share this love. Christ is essentially the revelation of the Father's love, planned since the beginning of time. This is the love the disciple is to share with others. Christ reveals the Father, and the disciple in collaboration with him carries on this revelation.

This, then, is what Jesus warns Thomas of in the specific verses used by Francis. He, Jesus, is the only means to salvation,[1] and this itself is the end of discipleship. He alone is the norm, the definitive revelation of God's plan of salvation. So it is immediately clear that there is no moral implication in Jesus's claim to be the "Way." He is not setting himself up as a leader to be followed, nor is he establishing a way of life for the disciples to imitate. *He is declaring what he is.* He is presenting himself as the one road to universal salvation and inviting the disciples to share with him the task of preaching and effecting this salvation.

> Gradually [Francis] came to understand the full implications of poverty: stripping oneself totally, so as to . . . meet the challenge of the Gospel.

Now, this invitation is a gift of faith. We are told here that "no one can come to the Father but by me," but we have already been told that "no one can come to me but by the gift of the Father" (Jn. 6:65). All vocation is a gift of faith. But faith implies Baptism; so we see how vocation to discipleship is rooted in Baptism (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, ¶44). Therefore the vocation of the disciple is to preach by his life the

[1]In v. 6 εγω ειμι η οδος, the definite article is significant.

same thing that Christ preached by his: "The time has come, salvation is at hand." We can see, then, from the text of John's Gospel used by Francis, that two points are made regarding the one who follows Jesus in discipleship: (1) he enjoys fellowship with Jesus; and (2) this is fellowship in a task to be accomplished.

Mt. 10:6–10: "Go forth and preach: The Kingdom Is at Hand"[2]

> Preach as you go, saying, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without pay, give without pay. Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals nor a staff.

ON THE MORNING of the 24th of February, 1209, in a small wayside chapel somewhere near Assisi, Francis heard the Gospel read at Mass, and the whole tenor of his life was changed. It was the Gospel of Matthew, the great Ecclesiastical Gospel, and it spoke to the point: "Go forth and preach, the Kingdom is at hand" (1Cel 14ff; 2Cel 12; LM II.4).

Celano tells us that Francis understood the global meaning of this text. Whether he did or not, it is up to us to understand it, because it is the foundation stone of the Rule. If we can say of any text, "This is the basis of our life," then it is Mt. 10:6–10. What do these verses mean?

If the Gospel of John gave us fellowship with Christ in a common task, Mt. 10 (and its parallel text Lk. 14) gives us the means by which we can accomplish it, the basic conditions for the following of Christ. These texts contain, in very simple terms, the challenge of the apostolate: only those who have broken all human ties are able (not worthy, *able*!) to function as co-workers of Christ in preaching the Kingdom. The text of Matthew is what Francis called his "vocation to most holy poverty"; yet in fact it could be more fittingly called a mandate of *efficiency*. There is a job to be done. What is the best way of setting about it?

In this chapter the apostles are given the terms of their vocation. They are authorized to preach the Kingdom which has been inaugurated by Jesus, and their powers are accordingly determined by a precise historical event. They are rooted in the History of Salvation

[2]The Vulgate edition, used by Francis, has the words, "euntes autem praedicate dicentes: Quia appropinquavit regnum coelorum."

(cf. G.C., O.F.M., I.3). This is borne out by vv. 6–8: "Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons." These are the usual signs of the advent of the Messianic times.

What follows, therefore, in vv. 9–10 is not an ascesis, a voluntarily accepted form of motivation or renunciation, but a professional code. If you join the army, the uniform is not something you can opt to wear as a disciplinary extra—it goes with the job. The disciples are not given poverty and renunciation as a special extra call, as a supplementary discipline to make them holier. These are geared to their professional task. The work is already begun, the alert has sounded, the action stations are already determined.[3] Verses 9–10 merely specify the necessary conditions of existence that make the preaching of the Gospel possible.

This, then, is the text that became Francis's inspiration for a new way of life, the basis of a new rule of Gospel poverty (cf. Hardick, 15). Therefore, if he was inspired by God as he tells us in his Testament, we can reasonably take our concept of poverty from this text; and poverty, both here and in related texts, is a form of life conditioned by the needs of the apostolate. It is therefore neither a "virtue" of poverty nor a "counsel." It is a man stripping to do a *job*, a discipline that is a necessary corollary to the urgency of the Gospel. I suggest that if a friar is doing his job *effectively*, he is practicing Gospel poverty. For poverty here in Matthew means availability.

Furthermore, this vocation can function only within the Church. The mandate of Mt. 10 is specifically addressed to "the Twelve." Almost certainly this is meant to remind us of the "twelve tribes of Israel." The new "Twelve," the apostles, are called to a special function within the new People of God. Their vocation is to form the New Israel, and so it can be realized only in an ecclesial context.

Thus we can conclude that according to Mt. 10:6–10 there are two necessary characteristics of Gospel "poverty": (1) what Gabriel Marcel calls *disponibilité*, i.e., availability for the preaching of the Gospel; and (2) functioning in and for the Church.

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[3]The use of εγγικεν in v. 7 is determinative.

Mt. 10:37–39: He Who Loves Father or Mother More Than Me . . .

THE TEXT OF MT. 10:6–10 that we have just seen does not stand on its own. It is related to a companion text at the end of the chapter, vv. 37–39:

> He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.

This is a summary of Christ's mandate to his apostles as Matthew sees it. While the preceding part of the chapter dealt with the apostle's public function, this tells us about his personal involvement with Christ. Commitment to the preaching of the Gospel is also an internal hazard, a dangerous private adventure as well as a public risk. If you give yourself to Christ, be prepared for him to take all you have!

This warning occurs in both Mt. 10 and Lk. 14:26–27, with only minor changes (Luke has "hate" in place of Matthew's "love more"). Let us take a look at both texts.

Both insist on a total availability and a total giving of self by all who accept the apostolic vocation. But this leaving of home and family, this renunciation of goods and possessions, is seen in terms of sharing the mission of Christ. Perhaps this can be clarified by taking a look at Lk. 14:26. What does the Evangelist mean here by "hate" (μισειν)? With this word we are in the context of Old Testament Wisdom, particularly Qohelet, where the Hebrew term *sán'a* means a voluntary *evaluation* of things, a weighing of the relative worth of temporary values and permanent ones. When we add to this the fact that for the Old Testament "temporary goods" are also divinely created, we see just what is involved. Man must be willing to put even worthy things into second

place so as to be free to answer the pressing needs of the mission.

The call to "take up your cross" is a plain historical statement: be ready to face even death "for my sake." Readiness to give up even the ultimate good (life itself) means a total commitment, a total availability.

To be prepared to "lose one's life for my sake" in the context of Mt. 10:39 has an apostolic connotation. The qualification "for my sake", is clarified by Mk. 8:35, where it is seen to mean "for the Gospel." This is the purpose of our self-emptying. But equally clearly in these texts we can see that this service of the Gospel, which makes such radical demands on the disciple, is a co-service with Christ, who is no longer "Master, but Friend." It is a shared task and a shared life. By placing ourselves thus radically at the service of God's saving plan we draw closer to the Lord, who was himself totally committed to this task.

Conclusion from the Gospels

FROM OUR ANALYSIS of texts in John, Matthew, and Luke, we can conclude that the whole mission of Jesus himself is seen in terms of *what he is*: Messiah and Saviour. This gives its character to what he does. All his activity must be interpreted in the light of this fact. The call to follow him as a person is therefore seen to be a call to share in this activity, and the following of Christ is rooted in the History of Salvation. We are called for a purpose, and the implications of the call are determined by this purpose. (The opening of the Markan narrative places the whole story of Jesus in this context.) Thus the leaving of home and family and the renunciation of possessions are seen in terms of sharing the mission of Christ.

This conclusion we have reached is not just the fruit of two or three isolated texts. It has been made abundantly clear throughout the Gospels. For instance, in Mk. 1:16, where the call of Jesus to Simon and Andrew is put in categories of their old function (fishermen)—"fishers of men"—the old profession with its way of life is replaced by a new profession and a new way of life (an idea found also in Lk. 5:10). In Lk. 9:59 we see how even the most basic human piety is dispensed with so as to enable men "to preach the Kingdom":

> To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me go first and bury my father." But he said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the Kingdom of God."

So it is clear that within the Gospel perspective the *fact* of following Jesus necessarily involves taking part in his mission. The call to

"follow Jesus as shown in the Gospels" (*Perfectae Caritatis*, ¶2; G.C., O.F.M., I.2) is a call to collaborate in the building up of the Kingdom. Therefore the exigencies of this call—to which Francis gives the general title "most holy poverty"—must not be interpreted as calls to asceticism, nor as virtues or counsels. They are imperatives, part of an essential connection between vocation and mission. The tools of the trade, you might say.

Is This the Way Saint Francis Interpreted the Texts?

WE HAVE SEEN what the following of Christ means in the Gospels. Did Francis realize all this when he wrote that the Rule of the Brothers was to "observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ"? He used the basic texts, but did he understand them as we now do? We have a certain amount of evidence from his own writings and from contemporary documents to show that he had quite an adequate knowledge not only of the letter, but especially of the spirit of the Gospels.

- In his First Rule the words he uses are much more in line with what we have seen: "The Rule and life of the Brothers is this: namely, to live in obedience and chastity, and without property, and to follow the doctrine and footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ." He immediately adds the Gospel texts from Matthew and Luke that deal with following Christ, taking up one's cross, and hating father, mother, and family.
- In the ninth chapter of the same Rule, speaking of poverty, he reminds us that Christ became poor "for our sakes."
- In the *Vita Prima* Celano makes two interesting statements: (1) that Francis understood the "global meaning" of the text of Mt. 10; and (2) that he "founded the Order of Friars Minor . . . and consecrated himself unreservedly to Christ to follow the life and footsteps of the apostles."

Conclusion: The Franciscan Intuition

HOW DID FRANCIS SEE the friars following Christ in practice? At the time of which we speak the idea of a radical Gospel poverty was common enough, and Francis had many rivals. But he differed in one essential way from these other "poor men" of the Thirteenth Century. To him it seems that the Gospel was not primarily a teaching. It was the revelation of the life and work of Jesus the Messiah, who to him was specifically "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (Adm. 1; cf. Esser,

111). As we have seen from the Gospel of John, this insight is the summit of the theology of the apostolate. The apostle, sharing in the mutual love of Father and Son, turns outward to the world so as, with Christ, to glorify the Father. This love is essentially mission-oriented, and demands a total availability, a total stripping of self so as to be able to preach the Gospel unhampered by worldly goods or loyalties. This is why the monastic life held no attraction for Francis and why he refused to accept any other rule, "whether that of Saint Augustine, or that of Saint Benedict, or that of Saint Bernard" (*Verba S.P. Francisci*, 5). With the structures demanded by their special concerns for worship, manual labor, and contemplation, they lacked the flexibility he wanted in his Order. So he wrote a new rule that would represent more truly the life of the apostles, and that would be free enough for the friar to answer the needs of the Church, wherever these might occur and whatever type they might be. Within fifty years of the writing of the Rule friars were everywhere, doing everything—teaching, preaching, travelling, on the missions, praying—even lecturing in the university!

In the Gospel texts of Mt. 10:19 and Lk. 14, Francis saw the way to achieve such availability. At the beginning it was probably the external poverty of Jesus that appealed to Francis, as it did to many others at the time. Gradually he came to understand the full implications of this poverty (Esser, 155) and saw it for what it was: stripping oneself totally, so as to be totally *disponible* to meet the challenge of the Gospel—to go freely on this private and public adventure. Ω

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Poverty in an Egg Shell

SISTER MARY FRANCILENE VAN DE VYVER, C.S.S.F.

PERHAPS IT'S THE 800th anniversary year that keeps causing me to reflect more on poverty. I find myself repeatedly asking the questions, "What does it mean to be a Franciscan in the 20th century?" or "What is there about the radical gospel life of the Lord and the simple uncluttered style of the Poor Man of Assisi that is viable today?"

So, here I am again—these questions, as so often in the past—suddenly appearing at a most unexpected time. The community evening meal has just ended, and I'm waiting in line to deposit the garbage. Here and there an orange peeling drops into the can. The crunch of egg shells sounds crackling as they slip off the used plates. All of these things were once living, and I begin to wonder about their brokeness.

Before his death in 1971, Father Raymond Ellis, a priest of the Detroit Archdiocese, liked to speak about a "theology of garbage"—the residue of life poured out. I can't recall all of his thoughts, but I remember the basic premise that in accepting the gospel challenge of poverty, we simply acknowledge the usefulness and purpose of all things, people, and events of life for their intrinsic goodness and for their availability to further the kingdom of God.

Jesus did just that. He freely poured out his life. He was cracked open, bruised, crushed, and became the garbage of a dead, battered body as a symbol of a life constantly given to His Father for the sake of us all. Jesus on the cross is a broken body—"the residue of a life poured out."

There's something reverent about the theology of garbage. Those cracked egg shells once held life-giving nourishment; and those coffee grounds were living beans crushed for liquid sustenance. The orange peelings surrendered their color and cool sweetness so I might live another day. All material garbage reminds me of some type of life having been poured out for my sake: that of an animal, a bird, a fish, or a plant.

The only garbage that is not symbolic of life poured out is the psychological garbage of accumulated layers of jealousy, greed, undue

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anxiety, and fear that denies the goodness and positiveness of acknowledging all things for their value.

These reflections lead me to consider my life, my death; what garbage will I leave behind? Probably dust. Dust, too, is a symbol of life. It is not nothingness. Dust of the human body is the result of an inhabited house—a life poured out. The only houses that don't have much dust are the uninhabited ones—those where the chairs and tables are all covered up and the shades drawn to exclude light and life. But, in pouring out my life, I want to be an inhabited house with a lot of life, activity, sharing, giving; pouring myself out and creating a lot of dust with the opening and closing of doors. Let the dust come in from the streets and the neighborhoods; from people entering and leaving my life. I believe dust is part of the theology of garbage, and that the "dust you shall return to" is the residue of a full life broken open before the Lord.

So, I walk back from the garbage pail and feel somewhat more related to the egg shells, the coffee grounds, the apple seeds, and the orange peelings. I look back at the table and see "new wine skins" (Mt. 9:17), a "few ears of corn" (Lk. 6:1-5), and five fresh "loaves of bread" (Mt. 14:17). On the dining room wall a crucifix overlooks the scene; and I'm a little more sure of the meaning of poverty in my life. Ω

A REVIEW ARTICLE

Life in the Spirit and Mary

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

THE FACT THAT almost no theological literature dealing with the relations between the Virgin Mary and the charismatic movement yet exists is a sign of serious defects in contemporary theology. This modest volume, however, has not been written to supply for these. The author's goal rather is to meet a more pressing need: to provide an orderly guide for reflection on the far-reaching implications of Mary's relation to the Holy Spirit for anyone else's sharing therein. He makes no pretense either to exhaustive treatment or to scholarly depth. Nonetheless, his exposition is such as to be of benefit to anyone, scholar as well as general reader, concerned with the charismatic movement and with our Lady.

The contemporary charismatic movement is not an exclusively Catholic phenomenon. It is a movement cutting across ecclesial boundaries, whose first contemporary manifestations, it may plausibly be argued, occurred "outside the Catholic Church." Among Catholics the movement is not much more than fifteen years old, and from the first entailed prayer meetings with other Christians, many of whom had no special devotion, and sometimes a decided antipathy, toward the Virgin Mary. Occurring as it did at a time when interest—devotional and theological—in Mary had suddenly lessened among large numbers of Catholics in the United States and western Europe, it is not so surprising that the beginnings of the movement among Catholics were in fact marked by a strange absence of Mary, and under the impact of a very emotional enthusiasm accompanied by a strong temptation to doctrinal indifferentism.

Life in the Spirit and Mary. By Christopher O'Donnell, O.Carm. The Mary Library, 3. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1981. Pp. 126. Paper, $4.95.

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What is surprising (for the casual observer at least, not familiar with Mary or with marian devotion) is the very rapid appearance of Mary (if indeed she was ever really absent) at the heart of this movement among Catholics. Precisely those Catholic groups who have recognized, accepted, and with joy revered and celebrated Mary in their midst are those who have successfully resolved, after the passing of the more sensational experiences of enthusiasm, the problem of perseverance in the Spirit of Christ without loss of fervor and have avoided the pitfalls of doctrinal indifferentism without loss of ecumenical contact. If on the one hand the presence of Mary within the charismatic movement introduces therein a soberly doctrinal and unambiguously catholicizing factor, on the other hand it is clear from the event that far from being divisive, anti-ecumenical, and anti-spiritual, it is precisely this presence of Mary which saves the best of the charismatic and enables it to contribute to the long-term renewal of the Church and of believers—i.e., of their ultimate unity in faith and practice within the one true Church. A remarkable coincidence, deserving and stimulating reflection.

In a study intended not so much for scholars as for believers, to be read and pondered in conjunction with life in the Spirit, and hence ecumenical in intent as is the charismatic movement, the choice of approach is a particularly critical one. Father O'Donnell has courageously and wisely rejected the "lowest common denominator" approach (that which would mention during a prayer meeting only what is acceptable to all present, a method which *de facto* would be silent not only about Mary and her fullness of grace, but eventually about the Spirit as well), and opted to speak simply but frankly in terms of what is known to be true by faith, even if not accepted at once by all moved by the Spirit. Whatever limitations this study may have, it remains for this reason an essentially sound and useful one.

. . . no charism of the Spirit is bestowed, within or without the visible limits of Christ's Church, nor is the Spirit himself given, except at the prayers . . . of the Virgin Mother.

The author's thesis, then, is as follows: unless Mary's authentic role in the charismatic movement is recognized and accepted, this movement will neither be of the Church nor renew the Church, and will in fact cease to be of the Spirit of Truth. Hence his objective is to show how Mary is a model for charismatic renewal. Once this is made clear, it should not be difficult for those sharing the gifts of the Spirit to give Mary her due honor in their gatherings and in their lives, at once doctrinally sound and ecumenically sensitive, or to discover what new insights charismatic renewal brings to marian devotion.

This Father O'Donnell does, first by sketching the spirituality of the Catholic charismatic movement, and then in a series of reflections on Mary as presented in the New Testament, illustrating how for every essential feature of the movement Mary is the model par excellence. Though brief, citations from the patristic and liturgical tradition of the Church help to confirm this portrait as a true and realistic one, even if in some ways it is an incomplete one.

Completeness is not what the author intended, nor is it necessary to the attainment of his aim: viz., to demonstrate that Mary is the model for those who live in the Spirit. At several points, however, further clarification and/or distinction would more effectively underscore the value of this insight.

The first of these touches the concept of model for life in the Spirit. Every saint by definition in some way can provide a model for life in the Spirit. In what way is Mary the model par excellence, in such wise that wherever are found gifts of the Spirit, there she is found as well, at the very center of this life in the Spirit? I believe the answer is to be found in our Lady's title: Mediatrix of all graces. She is this unique model, because she is a "dynamic" model: no grace, no gift, no charism of the Spirit is bestowed, within or without the visible limits of Christ's Church, nor is the Spirit himself given, except at the prayers and intercession of the Virgin Mother, and with her presence, however silent, unobtrusive, and unnoticed at first. She has been so constituted by her Son the "Advocate of sinners" because, full of grace, she is utterly unique, the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, conceived without stain of original sin, the perfect fruit of a perfect Redeemer. Father O'Donnell touches on this when he stresses the crucial and immeasurable importance of the Immaculate Conception for all spiritual renewal and for the charismatic movement in particular. To be fruitful, further reflection on the theme of this book must take more explicit account of that title, Spouse of the Holy Spirit, first addressed to

Mary by Saint Francis of Assisi, and of its close relation to her role as Mediatrix of all graces, a point so admirably developed by a great contemporary contemplative, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, in his theology of the Immaculate.

This clarification accords well with the overall thrust of Father O'Donnell's thesis, except at that point where he discusses the relative perfection of Mary's theological understanding (the only proper kind) of Revelation while on earth. In view of that fullness of grace basic to her position as the central model for life in the Spirit one would have expected a portrait of the Spouse of the Spirit of Truth as that of the profoundest theologian ever to have lived. Instead she is described as the most pious of Christians, yet for her position as Mother of God incredibly lacking in understanding of the central mysteries of salvation. The distinct impression is left that humility and ignorance are directly proportionate, that sanctity has no direct and intrinsic bearing on the quality of theology as a whole, and where such is attempted the results are unfortunate.

The occasion of this disappointing piece of theology is the author's concern with the proclivity of charismatic groups, especially those stressing the more sensational, but strictly secondary gifts of the Spirit to indulge the vice of private judgment, often with absurd and tragic consequences, practical as well as theological, in the interpretation of Sacred Scripture. This concern is a very necessary one, but there are ways of dealing with this without having recourse to an intellectual version of private judgment, just as bad if not worse than the pietistic kind. This is what Father O'Donnell does when on principle he restricts all spiritual interpretation of Scripture to the accommodated sense, and on the other hand after identifying the inspired sense simply with the literal leaves its interpretation wholly in the hands of professional exegetes. The rationalism underlying these oversimplifications mistakes (1) the nature of theology as simply another human science, failing to acknowledge the place of faith and ecclesiastical authority and hence the Spirit of Truth in the cultivation of this discipline; (2) the nature of the intellect, making the understanding of

truth directly proportionate to and in practice identical with the human effort expended in its grasp; and hence (3) precludes the possibility on principle that someone untrained in the schools, e.g., Saint Francis, or in a particular discipline such as exegesis, e.g., Adrienne von Speyr, might without that training but with the grace of contemplation attain the same or even higher understanding of the word of God than that which the scholarly theologian can achieve, and thereby contribute to the overall progress of theology and exegesis. Very simply the discernment of the inspired sense of Scripture, even the literal sense, as inspired, requires something more than human effort.

I do not say that all or even many contemplatives actually do this; certainly I do not say that charismatics who are not contemplatives do it. I merely note the possibility and the fact that such has occurred and does occur, and observe (1) that such has never rendered the work of scholars in theology useless any more than the divine omniscience does; and (2) that it makes very plausible indeed the traditional view of Mary's wisdom in matters pertaining to God. Nor is there any need to fear the arrogance of private judgment. The solution is perfect obedience to Christ and his Vicars by intellectuals and charismatics alike, an obedience more perfect in proportion to the understanding and wisdom, not the ignorance of the subject. In this the Mother of God has given and continues to give the perfect example of "doing what he tells us to do"—perfectly.

This naturally reinforces the importance of an observation of the author that the permanent value of any charismatic renewal, not only for the uneducated, but for the intellectual as well, will be measured, not by the intensity of emotional experiences or even the frequency of the ministerial charisms, but rather by the use of those gifts which contribute to prayer and interior sanctification.

Strangely, Father O'Donnell makes no mention of the seven gifts of the Spirit that are, and have always been seen by such theological giants as Saints Thomas and Bonaventure as standing at the heart of contemplation. And it is Saint Bonaventure in particular in his magnificent conferences on the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit who repeatedly underscores the inseparable activity of Mary and the Spirit in the distribution and deployment of these gifts, and whose use will ensure at once the soundness of theology and piety in believers, as well as their unity in the one true Church. For with these gifts, says Bonaventure, they will come to realize what it is to have God as their Father and the Church as their Mother. What could better express the

author's aim in writing an interpretation of life in the Spirit, theologically sound, spiritually humble, and ecumenically sensitive?

None of the foregoing should be taken as a denial of the utility and substantial soundness of this stimulating study, but only as an attempt to define more exactly the inspiring insights Father O'Donnell offers into the mystery of the Immaculate Mother of God. Ω

A Reflection on the Death of Saint Francis

A little poor man
watches his life ebb away.
Knowing who he was—
a sinner—
one dependent
totally resting in the Father,
He gave his final breath—
the waning moments of his life
to praising his God
and the world He had given him.

Poor blind man,
your eyes could see things
no one else saw.
You suffered in your body
and struggled in spirit
to rest in your Father
and He did not leave you
orphaned.

Gently, steadily
He reassured you of His love—
and the reward awaiting you.
Joyfully
you sang out his mystery—
and no one understood the fragrant light
that flooded your spirit—
only you,
and your God and Lord.

My Father Francis,
bring me to your God of surprises.
Teach me
how to listen in silence
during times of pain and blindness.

Help me to accept all the gifts
the Father gives me.
I stretch out my open hand to you—
Gently place it in the Father's.

Were you afraid, Father Francis,
as I am?
Were you fearful
when you plunged into the darkness
of the cave
or the forest?

Your spirit breathes a pain-filled "yes"—
and it touches me deeply.
Was it your spirit
that has been trying
to come to birth within me?
Is it your life
that still dwells
in the shadows of my life?

Father,
pray Jesus to let it come out—
into the open,
breathing freely,
exuding your love
your joy
your peacefulness
to all men.

God, my Father,
my Beloved Jesus,
my Spirit—Spirit of God
fill me,
gently grace my life
with joy—
deep love—
and the challenge
Your Presence brings.

Hold me when I tremble,
Steady me when I am fearful.
Consecrate my mind—
my memory—
my heart—
my will—
to You, my gentle God.
I place myself into Your hands.

Sister Mary Cecilia Jackowski, C.S.S.F.

The Song of Blessed Mother

By the shores of troubled waters
by the massive Iron Curtain
stands a chapel of our Lady,
Mother of the Christ, our Lady.

Within, the lovely Blessed Virgin
packages the world's petitions,
ties them with a radiant ribbon,
stills our anxious thoughts by saying,
"Hush, His Sacred Heart will bless them."

Through the night she prays with fervor
til the gift shines fair as moonlight
til the gift is far from finite
coupled with the Cross of Jesus.

All the world at dawn is lighted
made brighter by the Sun of morning,
made brilliant by the Son of Mary.

Who among us hears her whisper,
"Prayer and penance saved my people."

Who can fail to call her Pure-Heart
Hail her Queen of Ransomed Russia.

Sister M. Mercedes, P.C.C.

John Duns Scotus

The Principal Representative of the Franciscan School

BARNABA HECHICH, O.F.M.

"OF HIS PRAISEWORTHY LIFE, of his excelling knowledge, of his most subtle genius, and of his other outstanding qualities, I am completely informed, partly by long personal experience, and partly through his fine reputation which has spread everywhere." Thus wrote the then Minister General of the Order, Father Gonsolvo of Spain in 1304 about the Franciscan John Duns Scotus, candidate for the Laureate at the University of Paris.

THE GREAT FRANCISCAN MASTER was born about 1265 at Duns, in Scotland; he was ordained a priest in the Order of Friars Minor March 17, 1291; he attended English universities in the years 1291 to 1293, where he audited well known Masters, among whom was William of Ware; in the years 1293–1297 he was at the University of Paris, where, among others, one Master was the above mentioned Gonsalvo of Spain.

Scotus taught in the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford, and Paris. For his allegiance to the See of Peter, in 1303 he was expelled from Paris by order of Philip the Fair and returned to Oxford. Later he was able to set foot in Paris, where from 1306 to 1307 he ws the "reigning Master." In 1308 we find him at Cologne as the "principal lector." And at Cologne he closed prematurely his days on November 8, 1308. He was buried in what is now the Minorite Church, where he still lies.

The scientific production of Duns Scotus is immense. In the brief span of his university teaching career he wrote numerous works of philosophy (for the most part commentaries and questions relating to the Aristotelian "corpus," among which the main work is his tract "De primo rerum omnium principio," a veritable jewel of human contemplation of absolute Truth); he composed besides many philosophical-theological works, and outstanding among these are the

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The present article, translated from the Italian by Father Cyprian E. Berens, O.F.M., appeared in the November 15, 1981, issue of l'Osservatore Romano.

commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard (*Lectura, Ordinatio, Reportationes*), which in fact more than being commentaries, are works so developed, personal, and independent of Lombard, that they resemble him only in the disposition of the respective materials.

The teaching of Duns Scotus in the most famous university chairs of his epoch vest it with an uncommon interest by reason of the warmth and depth of thought. Students and colleagues of his competed to obtain his notes and to copy them. Unfortunately, on account of his premature death, the Master could not finish and perfect his works for publication. This offered reasons to his students, desirous of having or of providing a complete and clear text, of making countless modifications, additions, transpositions, and corrections. The same phenomenon happened again after the introduction of the art of printing: editors assumed broad liberty to correct the patrimony of the Master for the purpose of putting out a neat text with no gaps.

This state of confusion of the philosophical-theological works of Duns Scotus clearly was incompatible with requirements of modern criticism, which seeks in the ancient writers, not a text arbitrarily rendered readable and clear, but a text that is genuine, authentic, presumably just as it came from the author's pen. So it became absolutely necessary to develop a process for a complete revision of the handwritten transcriptions and for a rigorous preparation of the critical edition of all the works of the Franciscan Master from Duns.

TO MEET THE NEED, after some difficulties, there was established in 1938 at Rome the Scotist Comission, along the lines of the "Leonine Commission" for the works of Saint Thomas. The direction was entrusted to Father Charles Balic, noted scholar of Scotistic thought. From then until now the Commission has published nine volumes, and at the moment two more volumes are at the printer with still another in an advanced stage of preparation. With the volumes published and the three due out shortly, the edition of his first two books will be complete: viz., the *Lectura* and the *Ordinatio*, parallel works with this difference, that the first is the fruit of his youth, and the second that of his maturity. In these volumes Duns Scotus deals with some of the basic problems of philosophy and theology, such as the existence of God and the capacity of the human person to discover and prove it, the paths which the mind of man travels to come to the knowledge of things, creation as seen by reason and by faith, the principle of individuation, the nature and extent of human liberty; the nature, limits, and finality of theology; the unity and trinity of God, his attributes, his life within and his activity without; the existence and nature and consequences of original sin, etc., all the problems of life which rock and excite the human spirit even now.

An enormous amount of work still awaits the members of the Scotist Commission; the fervor of preparatory studies, the ever growing interest with which the thought of Duns Scotus is being studied, the understanding and generosity by which the supreme authority of the Franciscan Order follows these labors—all these factors firm up confidence that the great enterprise, in good time, will be brought to a happy conclusion.

AT THE SAME TIME, actually in addition to the critical edition of his works, the Franciscan Order pushes ahead the "cause" for the confirmation by the Holy See of the cult which from time immemorial has been given to John Duns Scotus in some dioceses and regions of the Catholic world.

An important step forward on the route of this cause is the decree of the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, May 4, 1972, which declares the orthodoxy of the doctrine of Scotus and cleared the way for further development of the cause. This advance was preceded by another important document of Paul VI: viz., the Apostolic Constitution "Alma Parens" of July 14, 1966, in which Duns Scotus was called "the most able representative" of the Franciscan School, "the one who brought to perfection" the teaching of the Seraphic Doctor, Saint Bonaventure; the one who "with lively and prolific genius as well as with practical wisdom was a theologian who builds because he loves, and loves with a concrete love that is *praxis*, as he himself defines it: love is actually doing"; it is he who erected beside the "majestic cathedral" of Saint Thomas another "on solid foundations and with gleaming pinnacles"; it is he who "gives wings to the seraphic spirit of the Patriarch of Assisi, putting knowledge after living well"; from these works of his "can be assembled shining armor to combat and drive back the dark cloud of atheism which overclouds our age."

All these motives amount to further strong incentives for the editors to continue their struggle, for the scholars to penetrate deeper into the thought of the Subtle Doctor, for all Christians to keep their eyes on the noble figure of a scholar and a saint to draw precious lessons and examples for life. Ω

Speak to Us

Speak to us
hills of Umbria
Of Francis and the Lady Clare,
of the love they bore mankind;
of miracles witnessed there.

Sing to us
streets of Assisi
Of Francis's melodious voice;
of his encounter with a leper;
of Lady Poverty as his choice.

Yearn with us
cave of Greccio
for the scene under the skies;
of a stable fashioned for Mass
where the baby opened his eyes.

Pray with us
saints of three Orders,
followers of Christ crucified,
that heaven will rejoice with us
when we stand at Francis's and Clare's side.

Sister Frances Ann Thom, O.S.C.

Book Reviews

Prayer of the Heart. By George A. Maloney, S.J. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1981. Pp. 206 Paper, $3.95.

Reviewed by Father Francis de Ruijte, O.F.M., M.A. (Franciscan Institute), team member of the Burning Bush Prayer and Renewal Center, Lennoxville, Quebec.

This is a guide to contemplative prayer, including, among other valuable contributions, a brief history of the "Jesus Prayer." On our earthly journey, in the midst of the hustle and bustle of the world, we may ask ourselves what life after death will be like. Jn 17:3 answers this question: "Eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

In eternity we shall be able to experience the Trinity; but this is already possible now, here below, in contemplative prayer. Not only in the fourth-century deserts, but even in today's cities, people can "strip their lives of everything superfluous and self-centered in order to live as consciously as possible in the presence of God" (p. 11). Deep prayer needs inner silence and stillness, reachable under the guidance of a spiritual director (p. 13), for we naturally "tend toward self-centeredness and not toward God centeredness" (p. 44).

"Prayer of the heart" is a gift of the Holy Spirit, who prays within us without our words but with God's single, unspoken Word (Rom. 8:26–27—p. 48).

We may one day "wake up only to discover that we are at the end of our life and we have not yet even begun to live. Thus we need . . . to enter into the primeval, endless NOW of God's eternal silence. This is not a cowardly retreat; it is where life and love merge into the same experience" (p. 51).

Some views of the hesychastic Fathers carry genuinely Franciscan accents, as we see, e.g., in the last chapter—cf. p. 168, Adm. 1; p. 170, Adm. 5; p. 172, EpOrd 51; p. 174, the whole of Francis's Christology. Texts of the Desert Fathers are frequently quoted to illustrate such topics as sin, vice, virtue, and the spiritual combat. The Jesus Prayer, of course, grew out of this very spirituality.

Multiple subheadings help make the reading easier. Although Father Maloney writes for serious spiritual persons, the present work will, fortunately, help any reader to grow into precisely such a person. We are, after all, all called gradually to experience God more and more fully as the core of our very being (p. 139).

Padre Pio: The True Story. By Bernard C. Ruffin. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1982. Pp. x–324. Paper, $8.95.

Reviewed by Father Evan Roche, O.F.M., Professor of Philosophy at Siena College and Director of the local Padre Pio Group which meets at Siena College.

Almost any reader will find this book very interesting and even fascinating. Of all the books written in English on Padre Pio, it is the most informative; for it contains much about his life that was not previously available to American readers. This new information is startling and somewhat disturbing, and yet it is all thoroughly documented in the notes at the back of the book. The author had ready access to the archives of Our Lady of Grace Friary at San Giovanni Rotondo. He did a tremendous amount of research and also spoke with many of the friars who had lived with Padre Pio. Among these he frequently quotes Father Alessio Parente, with whom this reviewer had a long and enjoyable chat about five years ago.

Our author received a great deal of help from Father John A. Schug, of the Capuchin Friary at Garrison, New York. (Father Schug's own excellent scholarly book entitled simply *Padre Pio*, was reviewed in **The CORD** 27 [1977], p. 94.) The author praises Father Schug for supplying all sorts of data, including even his own unpublished manuscript.

The author has little to say about himself, except to make it clear that he is not a Catholic but a Lutheran. (One of the notes refers to him as Rev. C. Bernard Ruffin.) He does not give even a hint as to how he came to have such an absorbing interest in the life of a Catholic priest whom he had never met. All through the reading of his book, this reviewer marveled at the author's sympathetic understanding of his subject, a man whose background and culture was so very different from his own. In addition, the author displays an appreciation of Catholic doctrine and practice which surpasses that of many Catholic writers.

This book will hold the attention of any reader, even one who is not interested in whether the author is Catholic or Protestant. Nevertheless, many of the positions and comments of the author seem to carry more weight simply because he is a Protestant. For example, he in no way glosses over the difficulties Padre Pio had to face at the hands of many of the neighboring Catholic clergy. Previous authors, to whom Ruffin gives due credit, have given us incomplete and unsatisfying treatments of such crises in the life of Padre Pio. Father Schug's otherwise excellent book on Padre Pio, e.g., seemed to falter—if only by omission—in its treatment of the shadowy years of Padre Pio's external trials. Ruffin, on the other hand, felt no inhibitions about relating, in great detail, information which many readers may consider shocking.

In a similar vein, Ruffin does not hesitate to point up certain human weaknesses of Padre Pio, without in any way detracting from the true nobility of the saintly friar. For example, the author beautifully brings out Padre Pio's perfect obedience, heroic humility, and loyal submission to Church authority when his priestly faculties were restricted. Yet the author equally manages to show us some surprisingly warm-blooded reactions on the part of Padre Pio. He likewise describes Padre Pio's very human and sometimes imperfect treatment of several blood relatives.

These and other human touches may displease some readers, but they help keep the book from ever growing dull. Many of these newly published anecdotes have been vouched for by a personal friend of this reviewer. Mr. John Murphy, of the Padre Pio prayer group which meets at Siena College, was actually present with the author at San Giovanni Rotondo when these stories were told by the friars there.

Finally, this reviewer has reacted unfavorably, not to the author, but to the blurb on the back cover: "Padre Pio, The Second Saint Francis or A Warlock in League with the Devil?" In his many well authenticated descriptions of Padre Pio's struggle against the devil, the author shows that Padre Pio was always on the side of heaven.

Much more remains to be written about Padre Pio. Yet our author has made a splendid contribution, perhaps more than has any previous author in a single book. All who read this book should grow in love of Padre Pio and of his Lord, Whose marks he bore.

How to Pray for Spiritual Growth: A Practical Handbook of Inner Healing. By Theodore E. Dobson. New York: Paulist Press, 1982. Pp. viii–216. Paper, $6.95.

Reviewed by Father Stephen Malkiewicz, O.F.M., M.A. (Liturgics, University of Notre Dame), Guardian at Holy Name Friary, post-novitiate student friary of the Assumption of the B.V.M. Province and Associate Director of Formation of the same.

This is a practical handbook that provides ways of praying so that the reader/prayer may experience spiritual growth, self-discernment, and inner healing. It flows out of the genre of "how to do it" literature and thus is meant not only to be read but to be done, i.e., prayed. To facilitate the doing, the author provides ten models for prayer (prayer as purification, centering prayer, keeping a journal as prayer, prayer of integration, of forgiveness, of self-deliverance, prayer using religious imagery, using the imagination to see Christ in the events of our daily lives, using the imagination to place ourselves in the events of Christ's life, and prayer as focusing on feeling). Each model is the subject of a chapter. These are well worked out and include general principles for the given type of prayer, a brief description of the prayer, a concrete example of the prayer, and a sample guide for using the prayer. Each chapter is also followed by a study guide and short bibliography. Two appendices cover the application of these prayers to general healing services and the use of these prayers in individual ministry.

In general, I found the book well written, clear, and concise. The author marries a healthy dose of popular psychological insight (a glance at the bibliography after each chapter betrays a heavy dependence on the work of Conrad W. Baars), spirituality (especially of the charismatic type), and personal witness. The author is consistently careful in pointing out that the

models and examples are not the only possible ways of praying, nor are they an instant recipe for prayer itself, i.e., as the author would have it, the healing presence of God. While some may find the examples of personal witness a bit much, I found them realistic and enlightening. (Let everyone know that Ted Dobson is adopted.) Some of the major emphases in his spiritual theology are the primacy of grace; the use of the imagination in prayer (chapter 7 is especially good in this regard); spiritual, psychological, and physical healing as the result of the experience of Christ in prayer; and prayer as a process in spiritual growth.

Some of my difficulties with the book, besides some cases of muddy theology, have to do with givens of a specific theological viewpoint: a tendency towards biblical fundamentalism, an overemphasis on grace, and a preoccupation with a theology of light. I will attempt to raise these issues—as well as apprehensions—in terms of some questions. Does the Bible teach only a tripartite division of the person (body, mind, and spirit) as does Watchman Nee? Is the author of the Letter to the Ephesians implying that it is unhealthy to repress anger (p. 178) when he writes: "If you are angry, let it be without sin. The sun must not go down on your wrath; do not give the devil a chance to work on you" (4:26- 27)? Is it true that philosophy, science, and the arts "will ultimately lead us to failure, for they cannot be filled with the goodness and holiness of God" (p. 86)? If love is always active (as the author would have it), so that it will not allow a loved one to remain in pain (p. 140), would someone please explain to me the Cross? These questions may appear as a bit of nit-picking in a review of a practical book; but they do call attention to some of the author's underlying bias.

Despite the reservations expressed in the foregoing questions, I feel that the book can be helpful and rewarding in terms of learning ways to pray. I do, therefore, recommend it to anyone interested in prayer as healing and growth, or interested in teaching different ways of prayer to others (formation personnel and spiritual directors). Although I hesitate to recommend it for adolescents because of the apprehensions expressed above, I feel that it can prove helpful for an adult study group.

Set Your Hearts: A Celebration in Song at the Time of the 800th Anniversary of the Birth of St. Francis. Granby, MA: Conventual Franciscan Publications, 1981. 12-inch LP, $8.00.

Reviewed by Robert Zappulla, editor of Music Ministry Newsletter.

Subtitled "A Celebration in Song at the time of the 800th Anniversary of the Birth of St. Francis," *Set Your Hearts* contains a diverse collection of hymns in the contemporary style. Themes of praise, hope, the Eucharist, and Mary—as well as Francis—are included.

The hymns *Troubadour* and *Peace Prayer* are especially useful for Franciscan gatherings. *Troubadour* celebrates the Saint of Assisi and his "Canticle of Brother Sun." It is a joyful hymn which may effectively open or close a celebration. *Peace Prayer*, based on the prayer attributed to St. Francis, would make an appropriate hymn to accompany the Communion procession. The short refrain makes it easy for the assembly to sing without having to follow a worship aid during the sharing of the Sacrament. Careful arrangement by cantors and folk ensembles will bring the verses to life.

The strongest hymns in the collection are those composed by Robert Levulis, O.F.M.Conv. His hymn *Acclaim Him!* (based on Daniel 3 and Psalm 116), is a festive setting which can be divided into sections for the choir, men alone, women alone, and the entire assembly. It will be very effective as a dismissal hymn at special occasions and festival liturgies. *Mourning into Dancing* is a beautiful hymn of hope and faith in our saving Lord. The music itself expresses the "restrained joy" of hope, which makes it appropriate for the rites of Christian Burial.

The recording *Set Your Hearts* is performed by the young friars themselves, and is pleasant to listen to. One wonders, though, why they did not include any of the vocal arrangements from their album in the accompanying music book. It is these arrangements which make the use of these hymns more prayerful. Only two of the hymns include keyboard (organ) accompaniment.

Overall, this is a collection usable by the average parish folk group. I would especially recommend it for parishes looking to start a new folk group with some simple responsorial style hymns.

Letters from Pleasant Street. By Murray Bodo, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1981. Pp. viii–119, with illustrations. Paper, $3.25.

Reviewed by Anthony A. Struzynski, O.F.M., a member of a small Franciscan Community serving the poor in the Kensington section of Philadelphia.

This is a pleasant little paperback with a valuable experience to share. Perhaps the best summary statement of its contents would be that it is an interesting combination of revelations: revelation of the experience of poor people in the inner city and self-revelation of a Franciscan artist living amongst them. Short prose essays and poems (28 of each) serve as the media revealing these experiences that are touchingly human and faithful.

"Poverty and Patience" is a good example of Bodo's ability to reveal the experience of the poor. It is shot through with the concreteness needed to help us feel this reality:

> Always there are long waits and the condescending looks and the humiliation of rejection. And in winter, the fear that you will freeze or that you won't have the bus fare to get to work and it will be snowing or sleeting and impossible to make it there on foot. And if Manpower calls with a job opening, your phone will be disconnected or if they get through to you and you find a way to get to work, someone will yell at you for looking unkempt and dirty. Or your accent will make you sound ignorant and you will be ignored the way you are in stores when you're trying to get someone to wait on you. And the greatest fear of all: If you get sick, how can you pay the doctor and hospital bills and how much humiliation will be involved in getting financial help from some agency? [p. 98].

These are the "cries of poverty" as Bodo goes on to say in the essay. His short reflection on the meaning of poverty, arising as it does from such concreteness, is meaningful and to the point.

In other essays Bodo makes us notice the beauty in ordinary things that only an artist would see and then wraps around them the spiritual reflection of a Franciscan alive in his search for the Lord. In the essay entitled "Living Simply," for example, he begins with the old oak dresser in his room and, after describing the joy of refinishing it, slips in this gem about the distinction between "having time for something and having leisure": "If the time between doings is too short time doing-nothing is as intense an activity as working, and there is not that tranquility of soul that is leisure" (p. 20). Thoughts on celibate selfishness, spiritual direction, and Franciscan evangelization are more specifically religious reflections that pop out of the essays and are well worth pondering.

A Merton Concelebration: Tributes from Friends of the Poet-Monk. Edited by Deba Patnaik. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1981. Pp. vii–112, including Chronology. Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Brother Bill Barrett, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province who lives and works at Saint Francis Inn, a soup kitchen and house of hospitality in Philadelphia.

A Merton Concelebration is an interesting collection of poems, all inspired by the life, beliefs, and poetry of Thomas Merton. He had considered himself a poet first of all his literary inclinations; so Merton would probably like the idea of this collection. The list of poets whose appreciations of the monk are collected here is impressive: Robert Lax, Jack Kerouac, Daniel Berrigan, Sister Thérèse Lentfoehr. . . .

Not all the contributions are of the highest quality (that would be a rare anthology indeed!), but more than a few are powerful and substantive. "Enoch," by Sister Mary Anthony Barr, uses Merton's own literary images in a fine celebration of his enigma. Brother Patrick Ryan's "Tom Merton" offers a perspective on the legacy Merton's life has left to monasticism.

The longest poem in the volume, with 15 pages, is also perhaps the most significant. "Death of Thomas Merton," by Ernesto Cardenal, is a meditation filled with understanding of the strange relationships between life in our world today and death, both for believers and for those who live as if God were not. "Dying is the act of being quite uninvolved / likewise: Contemplation. / Love, love above all, as it were a foretaste of death;" and "Dying is not to leave the world / but to die into it." Merton had contact with, and some influence on, a number of Latin American poets. Cardenal, once a novice at Gethesemani under Merton and now Minister of Culture in the government of Nicaragua, writes with grace and power of "The blinding / splendour of death."

These poems are not limited by being posthumous and congratulatory telegrams; they speak of Merton the ". . . Blessed Fool, Burned Father / driven into silence like a nail and beatified / forever on the borders of outrage" (T. R. McClellan, "For Thomas Merton"). They proclaim the whole truth, that ". . . this merry mind / Had knives in it, had indignation" (Mark Van Doren, "Death of a Monk (T. M.)").

Thomas Merton: Monk with a Mission. By David R. Collins (text) and Mary Beth Froehlich (illus.). Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1981. Pp. iv–44. Paper, $1.95.

Reviewed by Brother Bill Barrett, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province who lives and works at Saint Francis Inn, a soup kitchen and house of hospitality in Philadelphia.

Thomas Merton: A Monk with a Mission is a little volume in St. Anthony Messenger Press's "Young People's Library of Famous American Catholics." It will be interesting to see how the lives of significant, and possibly controversial, people are presented to youth. If Thomas Merton's biography is typical, the results will be mixed.

Although Merton's unique personality at times led him into conflict—often creative conflict—with the institutions he loved, monasticism and the Church, there is no clue about that here in the relatively few pages that deal with his life as a monk. Perhaps it is expecting too much that a book (really a booklet) of this sort would deal with significant issues, but overall it make Merton's monastic life a bit too neat and nice, even praising some of the earlier writings that Merton himself knew were poor.

In many ways, this is like a children's digest of *The Seven Storey Mountain*. Like that autobiography, it spends three-quarters of its pages recounting Merton's premonastic days. But notions of prayer and of Christ are introduced gradually, and associated with feelings of peace. Merton becomes accessible to young minds, and if the seeds of an interest in this complex monk are planted through the reading of this book, it will have accomplished all that could be hoped for.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Getting to Know the Heart of Jesus: Points for Thought and Study. By Jesus Solano, S.J. Trans. Leslie Wearne. Rome: Cuore di Cristo Press, 1980 (U.S. Distributor: Regnery Gateway Books). Pp. 262; n.p.

Historical Development of Reparation in Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. By Jesus Solano, S.J. Rome: Cuore di Cristo Press, 1980. Pp. 134; n.p.

These first of the "Heart of Christ" series of spirituality studies are an excellent beginning. *Historical Development* is, as its title suggests, a series of quotations on the themes of the Heart of Christ and Reparation from Christian writers up to Margaret Mary Alacoque. Twelve black and white plates (with enlightening explanations) and two indices add to the value of the work.

The introductory essay on Reparation is, however, far too brief, and the bibliographies (one each, on the Sacred Heart and on Reparation) are undoubtedly aimed at scholars, since most of the works mentioned are not in English.

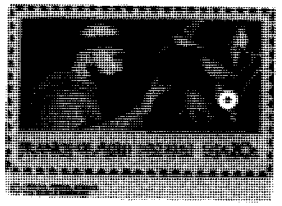
A more practical and more doctrinal work is *Getting to Know the Heart of Jesus*. The substance of the book is a series of thirty reflections (originally intended for each of the days of June, the month traditionally associated with the Sacred Heart) which consist of a text by the author and citations from Scripture, the Magisterium, and one of the saints. Among the topics: "Does God Really Love us?" "Jesus, Shepherd, Brother, and Spouse," "In Jesus God Loves Us with a Human Heart," and discussions of Baptism, the Eucharist, and Christ and the Holy Spirit. The author intends the book to be used for personal or group reflection and offers some plans for such use. The work is enhanced by indices of the quotations from Scripture, the saints, and the Magisterium—including John Paul II.

Time out for Grief: A Practical Guide to Passing through Grief to Happiness. By Jean Gannon Jones. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1982. Pp. x-214. Paper, $3.95.

The book is just what its subtitle says: a practical guide to passing through grief to happiness. Written by a widow who has made that passage, *Time out for Grief* addresses feelings that are real. Since grief-counseling is so much a part of ministry, parochial and personal, this book is one that will be helpful to all. And some of the observations on loneliness and depression may help religious deal with their difficulties in those areas.

The Crisis of Authority: John Paul II and the American Bishops. By George A. Kelly. Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1982. Pp. iv-115, including bibliography and index. Cloth, $10.95.

Readers who are discouraged by the imposing size of the author's *The Battleground for the American Church* (see our Review Editorial, January, 1980), will find this work a good summary. Although the focus in the present work is on the role of Bishops in the U.S. vis-à-vis Catholic education, Catholic theologians, Catholic press, religious communication, and the United States Catholic Conference, the evidence of dissent and disobedience, and "political" promotion of those attitudes is akin to that proposed in the author's first book. I found his analysis of the selectivity of the USCC's *Origins* highly informative, though I must give that publication credit for bringing before my eyes the West German Bishops' dealings with and criticism of Hans Küng. The subtitle led me to expect greater explicit reference to John Paul II and the Bishops than I found; and the section on religious life seemed "thin." But *The Crisis of Authority* is a book I wish all Bishops and Major Superiors would read.



St. Francis Stamp Issued October 7

The 20-cent commemorative stamp honoring St. Francis was issued at the M. H. de Young Museum in San Francisco at 11 A.M., October 7, the U.S. Postal Service has announced. The city was chosen for the ceremony because of its civic leaders' role in organizing activities for the eighth centenary celebration of Francis' birth.

The stamp, designed by Ned Seidler, of Washington, D.C., portrays Francis with a covey of doves—the birds of peace. The portrait of Francis dominates the upper portion of the stamp, and its lower portion bears the legend "Francis of Assisi 1182-1982, USA 20¢.

Books Received

Galusha, David (text), and James McIlrath (illustrations), *The First Christmas*—with Children's cut-out-and-assemble Nativity Scene. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1982. Pp. not numbered—8½"x11". Paper, $3.95.

Hanley, Sister Mary Laurence, O.S.F., and O. A. Bushnell, *A Song of Pilgrimage and Exile: The Life and Spirit of Mother Marianne of Molokai*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1980. Pp. xv-427, including Bibliography and Index. Cloth, $14.50.

Herr, Edward C., ed., *Tomorrow's Church: What's Ahead for American Catholics*. Chicago: Thomas More Press, 1982. Pp. 226. Cloth, $12.95.

Hitchcock, James, *The New Enthusiasts and What They Are Doing to the Catholic Church*. Chicago: Thomas More Press, 1982. Pp. 164. Cloth, $9.95.

Norris, Charles W., M.D., and Jeanne B. Waibel Owen, *Know Your Body: A Family Guide to Sexuality and Fertility*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1982. Pp. viii-88, including Bibliography and Glossary. Paper, $3.95.

O'Carroll, Michael, C.S.Sp., *Theotokos: A Theological Encyclopedia of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1982. Pp. x-379—8½"x11". Cloth, $35.00.

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Moneys resulting from the sale of the publications are to be used for future publications, thus insuring the continuity of this celebration gift into the future. Several of these books are scheduled to appear during this year of celebration. For further information, please write

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DECEMBER, 1982

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The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

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The CORD

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The illustrations for our December issue have been drawn by Brother John Francis Ty F.F.S.C., who teaches at St. Joseph's in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare
Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy
[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Franc
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

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A REVIEW EDITORIAL

A Song of Pilgrimage and Exile

A *SONG OF PILGRIMAGE AND EXILE* is much more than a story of one valiant woman fearlessly venturing forth to a strange country among desperate people afflicted with an incurable disease. It is a story filled, not only with heroism at its best, but also with the intrigue, the evil, the extreme vices to which man is prone under certain sets of circumstances. One begins to wonder, by the end of the story, who really were the destitute and the afflicted: the lepers sent to Molokai to live out whatever piece of their lives remained for them, or those who presumed to care for them and summon aid for them from a distant land.

It is impossible to separate the politics of the time from the journey of Mother Marianne and her Sisters as they traveled the hard road of resentment, both religious and political; as they trod the path of non-acceptance—from some professionals and from some of the patients; as they faced the tragedy of illness—among those poor unfortunates as well as among members of the Sisterhood; and last, but not least, indeed, the pull at the heart strings as they thought of their beloved Sisters in Syracuse.

There are several outstanding contrasts; indeed, the story is built on contrast. The Hawaiian Islands themselves show remarkable contrast in terrain; jagged volcanic shaped mountains, sometimes spewing forth molten lava; lush tropical foliage witnessing to the

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A Song of Pilgrimage and Exile: The Life and Spirit of Mother Marianne of Molokai. By Sister Mary Laurence Hanley, O.S.F., and O. A. Bushnell. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1980. Pp. ix-427. Cloth, $14.50.

name Paradise Islands; a sea and sky so aptly matched as to seem the reflection of one another, whether at peace or in turbulence. The Hawaiian people themselves a once peaceful, jovial, fun-loving people, now caught up in fear and anxiety having been touched by a loathsome disease; foreigners seeking to make their fortune, greedily exploiting the islanders; a childless King and Queen who have assumed the full responsibility for their unfortunate children abandoned by society and banished to Molokai; and the Sisters, gentle, dedicated, professional, going into a work very inadequately described for them.

Of the many characters whose lives touched Mother Marianne, there are two who hold a definite place in my mind as extreme contrasts in this unusual situation. There is, first of all, Mr. Van Giesen, the superintendent of the lepers; a man who has apparently, voluntarily, taken this task upon himself, but whose greed and depravity have caused him to mistreat the already miserable, to prey upon the helpless, and to *attempt* to discredit and frighten the very good, in the person of Mother Marianne and her sisters. Second, there is Robert Louis Stevenson, ill himself almost unto death, voluntarily coming to visit the lepers. Not only does he visit, but he spends much of his own strength in teaching and playing games with them and, after his departure, a gift of a piano arrives so that they may have some musical pleasure in remembrance of him.

Truly, this is a tale of humanity at its best and at its worst! The old saying that truth is stranger than fiction comes alive in this extremely well researched story of one woman's courage and vision. Although one may become bogged down in some of the details, the excitement of the journey and the desire to see Mother Marianne triumph over sea-sickness, natural disaster, a plot on her life, illness (her own and that of others), a man's unrequited love, politics, and loneliness—all these spur one on to read until her final breath had been taken and "she left as quietly as she had lived" (p. 410).

While the story itself does totally revolve around Mother Marianne, one cannot help feeling that she is always in the background, watching, smiling, sanctioning, encouraging, never really seeming to come forward unless beckoned forth. Then, she plays her part and once more disappears into the shadows. Mother, indeed, had learned well the secret of sanctity. Ω

Sr. Francis Ann Thom, O.S.C.

Contrasting St. Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* and the *Meditations on the Life of Christ*

GEORGE MARCIL, O.F.M.

DR. EWERT COUSINS'S new and excellent translation gives us especially good reason now to pay attention to Bonaventure's small treatise on the life of Christ, entitled *The Tree of Life*.[1] But there have always been good reasons for studying the treatise. It is perhaps the first "life of Christ," if by that we mean a review of the whole life of Jesus, ever written without making an exegetical study of one Gospel text or another. This work of Bonaventure represents a new departure in the trend in spirituality stressing the imitation of Christ.

A number of such biographies were written by friars in the 14th century for a more general public. The *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, long attributed to Bonaventure, is one of these, but the author, critics say, had to be an Italian Franciscan in the early part of the 14th century. The *Meditations* are a good example of Franciscan preaching, popular in tone, playing on the emotions, and emphasizing the imitation of Christ.

The present study is an attempt to examine some literary aspects of the two writings and especially to contrast them. Both works are worth reading in themselves; certainly the two were succès de presse in their own time.[2] But of late they have been neglected. It is hoped that this brief discussion will spark a new interest in these medieval masterpieces.

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[1]The Latin edition is found in Bonaventure, *Opera Omnia*, VIII, pp. 68–87 (Quaracchi, 1898). In the Cousins volume, entitled simply *Bonaventure*, it is found on pp. 117–75 (Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1978).

[2]175 manuscripts of the *Tree of Life* are described in *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII, pp. XLI–XLIX. 217 manuscripts of the *Meditations on the Life of Christ* are described in Columbanus Fischer, O.F.M., "Die Meditationes Vitae Christi," in *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 25 (1932), 3–483.

Father George Marcil, O.F.M., an Associate Professor at the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, read this paper at the 16th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, on May 9, 1981.

1. The General Structure of These Two Lives of Christ

STRUCTURE IS FUNDAMENTAL to Bonaventure's writing—especially his shorter treatises. In fact, it can safely be said that part of Bonaventure's message, e.g., in the *Mind's Journey* and the *Triple Way*, is in the structure.[3] It can be further argued that the *Legenda Maior* and the *Breviloquium*, as well as the *Collationes in Hexaëmeron*, are similarly marked.[4]

In the *Tree of Life* the structure is a clear division of the work into three major sections: about, respectively, the origins, the passion, and the glorification of Christ. They are then subdivided into four chapters each, making twelve quite symmetrical chapters in all. These twelve are further subdivided, each, into four topic headings. The entire work is thus tightly organized into forty-eight topics.

The structure can and should, however, be expressed in another way, the way Bonaventure himself symbolized it. He refused to use words like *section* and *chapter*. We are talking here about the tree of life. So Bonaventure translates the twelve chapters into twelve branches, each adorned with fruit. The chapter will thus be called a fruit, *fructus*. And we can further symbolize the work, thinking of the fruit as surrounded by leaves.

The life of Christ is, then, a living force. It is a tree full of life, producing foliage and flowers and fruits.[5] The historic actions of Christ still have a vitality which can transform the life of those Christians who meditate upon them.

Bonaventure seems to have worked hard to structure his opus into forty-eight compact topics of about equal length; he has developed each of the topics in identical style with a simple description followed by an emotional consideration. In the end, after the forty-eight, he adds one more topic, a forty-ninth, a prayer for the gifts of the Holy

[3]The *Itinerarium* is built around the image of the six-winged seraph, to mention only one of the structural traits. The three of the *De Triplici Via* has Trinitarian resonance and also has a developmental reference to beginning, middle, and end.

[4]Ewert Cousins' introduction explains the outline of the *Legenda Maior* (*Bonaventure*, pp. 43–44). The *Breviloquium* has seven parts with Christ in the middle of them. The *Collationes in Hexaëmeron* is linked to the days of creation.

[5]*Bonaventure*, p. 120, prol., n. 3.

Spirit. The forty-eight, a multiple of three and of four, then becomes forty-nine, a multiple of seven. One wonders whether Bonaventure is blundering here, or is seriously trying to symbolize the power to transform through the addition of the topic of the Holy Spirit.

Comparing the *Tree of Life* to the *Meditations on the Life of Christ* brings up a number of difficulties, not the least of which is the critical value of the text. We have a dependable text in the Quaracchi edition of the *Tree of Life*, but we have no critical edition of the *Meditations*. The careful manuscript review of Columban Fischer indicates that manuscripts of the *Meditations* vary so much that he classifies them as short versions and long ones.[6] The short versions have about forty chapters; the long versions, about a hundred. We will consider only the long versions, such as those found in the Ragusa-Green translation and in the Latin version of the Bonaventure edition (Paris, 1868).

The structure of the *Meditations* is first of all very loose and sprawling, which makes it different in that way from the *Tree of Life*. In the *Meditations* we have precisely what the title says, a book of meditations. The book is a planned program of reading, in fact a plan for seven consecutive days of fairly heavy reading.[7] In a book the size of the Ragusa-Green translation, the program calls for fifty pages to be read each day. The book begins with the nativity on Monday and continues day after day until Friday, when the passion is read. On Sunday the resurrection, ascension, and conclusion are read.

Each section in this seven-day division is rather loosely structured, rambling on quite extensively. Friday, the fifth day, is perhaps the only exception. It is rather tightly organized around the seven hours of the breviary, with special topics for each of the hours: for matins, for lauds, for prime, etc.[8] The meditation for the sixth hour, e.g., is the

[6]Cf. note 2, *A.F.H.*, 25 (1932), pp. 312, 330.

[7]Isa Ragusa and Rosalie Green, eds., *Meditations on the Life of Christ* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), ch. 100, p. 387.

[8]The old idea of crediting Bonaventure with the *Meditations on the Life of Christ* is slow in disappearing. That fraction of the Meditations which deal with the passion has a tie of even greater strength. The fact that the passion narrative has a firmer structure than the rest helps. Also the topical link between the meditations on the several hours and the corresponding prayers in the Bonaventurean *Office of the Passion* is a further argument in favor of the Bonaventurean authorship. Cf. *Obras de San Bonaventura* (Madrid: B.A.C., 1955–1959), II, p. 740; and M. Jordan Stallings, *Meditationes de Passione Christi* (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 1965).

nailing to the cross; the topic for the ninth hour is Christ's death.

In any case, there is a strong difference between the structures of these two works. The *Tree of Life* is very tightly structured. Even the style is subservient to the structure, made up, as it is, of branches and foliage and fruits. The structure of the *Meditations* is for the most part a practical device with the prime exception of Friday, where the theme relates to events which occurred on that day.

2. Some Further Characteristics of the Two Works

BONAVENTURE IS QUITE a disciplined writer. He knows how to stick to a topic. Certainly in the *Tree of Life* he focuses on the life of Christ without deviation. His style is disciplined also in that he sticks to the structure of his narrative. The structure, as we have said, is a dominant feature of this work. We would dare to wish that it didn't dominate quite so much. There are moments when he has too much material to handle, and yet he forces the story inside his form. There are other moments when there is, we would think, not enough material, but he just succeeds in spreading it thinner and developing it to make the form balance out.

On the whole, though, the style exhibited in the *Tree of Life* is succinct. Bonaventure tells his story, he tells it once without repetition or review. In the Cousins translation, the *Tree of Life* is less than sixty pages. The whole life of Christ is told in those sixty pages. In fact the book is divided in three. The first twenty pages contain the early life of Christ up to and including his ministry. The second twenty contain the passion. The last twenty contain the resurrection, the ascension, and a number of abstract developments on the character, power, and wisdom of Christ. An awful lot of ideas and facts are condensed into those very few pages.

Despite this succinctness, Bonaventure does not lose his feeling for the topic. He writes the work in the manner of a preacher who wants to be sure that his description reaches and affects his audience. So every description is followed by an emotional consideration of one sort or another. In fact, he warns us of this in the Prologue.[9] The reader must not look just for information here; he must allow himself to be moved. The Cousins translation lends itself to a good appreciation of this emotional factor. Even the print of the sense lines (as

[9]*Bonaventure*, p. 120, §2, and p. 55, §4 (*Soul's Journey into God*).

Cousins calls them) accentuates the poetic and emotional aspect of the Bonaventurean style. In the Cousins translation, the reader knows when the facts and the narrative end and when the poetry begins.

Although the *Tree of Life* is never intended to be a work of abstract theology, Bonaventure does not hide his doctrinal positions. There are echoes all through the text of positions or of expressions that Bonaventure has hammered out in his more explicitly theological works. The reader accustomed to Bonaventure is not surprised to find a glancing reference to the "Word uncreated, incarnate, and breathed forth" [*Verbum increatum, incarnatum, et inspiratum*].[10] He is reminded also of the ages of history, as set forth in the *Breviloquium*, with Christ making his appearance in the fullness of time.[11] There is a reference to the memory, intellect, and will—these make us into the image of God.[12] Christ's humanity, of course, is the perfect image, the resemblance, of the Trinity. And why not speak of the journey whose way is through the purgative, illuminative, and unitive steps?[13] And if it comes to preaching, beware of idle curiosity which leads, not to the enrichment of the mind, but rather to its dispersion.[14]

To ensure the success of his story of Christ in the structured and succinct style he adopted, and yet be doctrinally suggestive as well as poetic, Bonaventure had to be very economical in his use of scriptural quotations. And indeed he was. His story is the life of Christ. The plot follows no one Gospel; he amalgamates the four. Apart from that, he develops his plot with brief but well chosen references to the whole of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation. He quotes frequently from Saint Paul, from the Psalms. He quotes, too, or maybe merely suggests passages, from the Song of Songs, from Job, from the Lamentations. One does not find a direct use of the Solomon typology as found in the *Itinerarium*, but there is a use of the Samson image.[15] In the end, the *Tree of Life* connects with the whole of the Bible story and the whole of the Bible connects with it.

The characteristics of the *Tree of Life*, then: the book is tightly structured, it is succinct, the story is told with emotion, and the

[10]Ibid., p. 170, §46.

[11]Ibid., p. 127, §3.

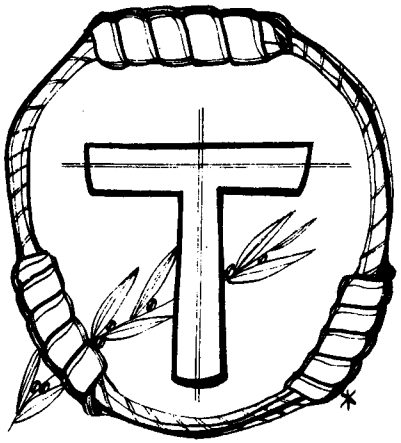
[12]Ibid., p. 119, §§1–2.

[13]Ibid., p. 163, §39.

[14]Ibid., p. 122, §5.

[15]Ibid., p. 159, §53.

language of the narrative connects with Bonaventure's theology and displays his ample and ready knowledge of the whole of the Bible.



The *Meditations on the Life of Christ* is a very different book. Succinct, surely, it is not. Though it tells much the same story, the *Meditations* is three hundred pages longer. The style of the *Tree of Life* is very much condensed and controlled; the style of the *Meditations* is the ample and relaxed style of the storyteller. In fact, the author of the *Meditations*, who remains very much unknown, has a philosophy that favors the use of one's imagination when going over the Gospel story. And so he uses his. He describes the scenery, though he knows little about it. He gives details about the menu and place settings at meals. The missing dialogue of certain scenes is suggested *in extenso*. In particular, we learn how life was in Egypt, what Jesus had to eat after his fast in the desert, who got married at Cana, what Moses and Elias had to say to Jesus on Mount Tabor. The story of Christ in the *Meditations* is much longer because the author adds a lot to the historical data.

The *Meditations* differs from the *Tree of Life*, too, because it does so much more moralizing. The book is not the theological reflection of a system builder; it is the preaching of one who speaks to crowds often and who leaves his people appropriate messages. There is a moral to the story of the Egyptian lady who cheated the child Jesus when he delivered his mother's mending. There is a homely moral to Jesus' asking the angel to fetch some of his mother's cooking after his forty-day fast. There is a lesson in humility when Jesus refuses to accompany a VIP but walks willingly with the simple and the poor. There is a strong bid in favor of contemplation in the extended treatise on Martha and Mary.

The *Tree of Life*, it is fairly easy to assume, was written for friars. The *Meditations* was written for contemplative sisters. The Prologue and Dedication say this quite explicitly. So the plot develops those aspects of the Christ story in which women are more involved. The Blessed Virgin, e.g., plays a prominent role; she is described

throughout as a very strong woman, especially on Holy Saturday when she bolsters the apostles' faith. Mary Magdalen and Martha also have extended roles. In fact, some of the most charmingly told episodes in the *Meditations* involve women.

We have already mentioned that we have no reliable edition of the *Meditations*. There is a characteristic of the present text that in my mind is linked with that: viz., the text contains extensive quotations from the sermons of St. Bernard. It is this writer's belief that they really don't belong there. *Pace*, St. Bernard; but the quotations needlessly take up about a quarter of the space. On the whole, they do not help the story; in fact, they break the flow of the narrative. It is quite plausible that they were interpolated systematically after the basic narrative was completed. The author, or quite likely someone else, could have added them because the doctrines in the two works were consonant, and because Bernard could add authority to the *Meditations*. In general it is easy to foresee an edition which would eliminate all of Bernard's quotes. The only things that would seriously be missed would be the extensive tract on Martha and Mary (a total patchwork of Bernardisms) and the short mystery play found in the Prologue on Mercy and Justice.

On the whole, then, the *Meditations on the Life of Christ* is a loosely structured work; its style is that of a storyteller. The book moralizes in the very simplest way; it accentuates the role of women in the Jesus story. The text, as we now read it, is filled with quotes that guarantee the doctrine with the authority of St. Bernard; but the long Bernardisms halt the flow of the story.

3. Some Sample Readings from the Two Texts

TO FURTHER ENHANCE the description of the two works, let us compare a few passages from each text in detail. These readings have been selected from the *Tree of Life*, one from each of its three parts; they will be compared to parallel passages in the *Meditations*. We begin with thoughts about the succinctness of Bonaventure's style in his *Tree of Life*. The first selection, taken from the first part of the work, is a paragraph summarizing the miracles of Jesus. In it Bonaventure gathers the awesome deeds of Christ into one quick generalization that still keeps some of the Gospel flavor. The passage begins with a line from a Psalm.

> He is the one who alone does marvelous things [Ps. 71:18]. He transforms the elements, multiplies the loaves of bread, walks upon the

sea, and calms the waves; he curbs the demons and puts them to flight; he cures the sick, cleanses the lepers and raises the dead; he restores sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the mute, the power to walk to the cripple, sensation and movement to the paralytics and those with withered limbs [§11, p. 134].

After considering the power of Christ in this quick passage, Bonaventure expresses his characteristic sense of feeling. Since Christ has this power, let us recognize it and go to him in prayer. Let us go to him in the way his contemporaries did, maybe using the very same words, such as "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean." Or, "Lord, my servant boy is lying at home paralyzed," or "Have mercy on me, Son of David" (p. 135).

So, Bonaventure does all the miracles in one fairly short paragraph. On the other hand, in the *Meditations* the author shows us how to expand on a simple, short miracle. The one chosen is the cure of Peter's mother-in-law. It is not a centrally important deed. Nor is it greatly developed. Still, the paragraph is longer than Bonaventure's review of all the miracles put together:

> It happened that in the same city the Lord Jesus rested at the house of Simon Peter, whose mother-in-law was in the grip of a violent fever. The humble Lord familiarly touched her hand and cured her, so that she immediately rose and ministered to Him and His disciples. Nothing is written about what she served. Reflect, therefore, that the Mother of poverty was in the house of the poor. Some coarse and easily prepared food was placed before them. Muse on this Lord Jesus who helps to serve, especially in the house of His disciple. Think as much as you can about humble things, how he placed the tablecloth, and washed the glasses and did similar things. All these were done by the Master of humility, who had come to serve and not to be served and sat in a familiar way at the table. Cheerfully He ate, especially as the food was resplendent with poverty, which He so loved [p. 162].

It is interesting to read the confident moralizing on poverty, helpfulness, and simplicity. It is particularly fascinating to watch the author draw a lesson on poverty out of the scriptural suggestion that the meal was served promptly. Poor food does not take much time to be prepared, he muses.

A second example contrasting the styles of the two works is taken from the description of the nailing to the cross. Again Bonaventure in the *Tree of Life* wins the prize for curtness, but even so there is feeling as he says,

> . . . [Jesus] was led forth to the place of Calvary [Jn. 19:17]. There he

> was stripped completely and covered only with a cheap loincloth. Thrown roughly upon the wood of the cross, spread out, pulled forward and stretched back and forth like a hide, he was pierced by pointed nails, fixed to the cross by his sacred hands and feet and most roughly torn with wounds [n. 26; p. 148].

The passage goes on in the style of a lament, considering who it is that suffers and how the truly compassionate disciple should want to suffer too because the Master suffers so.

The *Meditations*, as we have said, is not set on economy of effort; in fact, it wants to develop and to add details the Gospels lack. And so the author goes on in the following manner:

> Here pay diligent attention to the manner of the crucifixion. Two ladders are set in place, one behind at the right arm, another at the left arm, which the evil-doers ascend holding nails and hammers. Another ladder is placed in front, reaching to the place where the feet are to be affixed. Look well now at each thing: the Lord is compelled to ascend the cross by this small ladder; without rebellion or contradiction He humbly does what they require. When He reaches the cross, at the upper part of this small ladder, He turns Himself around, opens those royal arms, and extending His most beautiful hands, stretches them up to His crucifiers [ch. 78; p. 334].

In the continuation of the scene even more is added, as the author presents a discourse addressed by Jesus to the Father. Still further along, when the basic description is finished, the author makes a curious reversal. He notes that there are some who do not believe that the crucifixion was done in the manner depicted. For these people the writer starts the story over, describing the nailing as Bonaventure did with the cross on the ground: "If this suits you better, think how they take Him contemptuously, like the vilest wretch, and furiously cast Him onto the cross on the ground, taking His arms, violently extending them . . . "(p. 335).

In the third part of his *Tree of Life*, the part on the glorification of Christ, Bonaventure, despite the brevity of his text, seems to have to expand upon his material. This is due to a special maneuvre of his: he dispatches the post-resurrection appearances of the Lord all in one paragraph, the way he did with the miracles. That leaves him with about 13 paragraphs to fill before he gets to the ascension and enthronement. One of his ploys is to fill space with abstract considerations: on Christ the faithful witness, Christ the glorious conqueror, the judge, the spouse, the king.[16] Each of these considerations and more get a paragraph apiece.

Bonaventure, the master of the theory of illumination, the writer of a disputed question on the Knowledge of Christ, could hardly be expected to finish his *Tree of Life* without one paragraph on Christ as Light—and indeed without at least one reference to James 1:17, a favorite passage of his. The paragraph on Christ the Light, with its quote of James, reads as follows:

> In this eternal kingdom, all good and perfect gifts come down in plenty and abundance from the Father of Lights [Js. 1:17] through Jesus Christ, who is the superessential Ray and who, since he is one, can do all things, and renews all things while perduring [Wis. 7:27] himself. For he is a pure effusion of the brightness of the power of the omnipotent God, and therefore nothing that is sullied can enter [Wis. 7:25] into this Fountain-Ray of light [ch. 47; p. 170].

The paragraph ends with an expression of desire turned toward this Light which is so deep as to be bottomless, so high as to be limitless, so wide as to be unbounded, and so pure in quality as to be undisturbed.

The *Meditations* has a different approach. In general, it stays away from abstract, theological developments. Instead, it prolongs the considerations of each of the Lord's appearances, expanding on the details of each scene. But the author does one thing that leans toward the abstract. He gets involved in an argument, as it were, about which of the feasts of the Lord is most important. He reviews them, acknowledging how important the nativity and the resurrection seem to be for us. But he argues that objectively, from Christ's own point of view, the ascension is more important (p. 382). And in fact the *Meditations* has quite an extensive description of that ascension: the departure from earth, the flight through the angelic choirs, and the arrival at the right hand of the Father (pp. 376–80). So, the author continues to the end showing his readers the technique of using the imagination to develop what we already know of the life of the Lord. That developing process brings us actively into the life of Christ and uplifts our own.

Summary and Conclusion

SOMEWHERE DEEP IN THE Middle Ages the spirituality of the imitation of Christ began and developed. Saint Francis and the Franciscans played an important part in its development. The two writings that we have been considering contributed to that development. One cannot

[16]Ibid., pp. 165–69, §§41–45.

imitate what one does not have before one's eye. Reading the life of Christ is part of keeping Christ before us. Despite their differences, the two writings have this in common: they intend to reinforce the trend toward the imitation of Jesus.

Saint Bonaventure writes his *Tree of Life* with few, if any, examples to guide him. He writes as a theologian with a great gift as an innovator. His narrative, without losing its flow, connects with the whole of Scripture. In fact, it takes its structure from a biblical image with resonance: the tree of life. Bonaventure's narrative is brief; he writes with moderation and control. But still, Bonaventure's story of Christ is told with feeling. The reader is preached to; he is harangued for his hardheartedness, for his insensibility. All things considered, it is easy to concur with Dr. Ewert Cousins that the *Tree of Life* is one of Bonaventure's masterpieces.[17]

In his book on Franciscan literature, John Fleming points out rather cleverly that the *Meditations on the Life of Christ* has an inconsistency. On the one hand, in a discussion on prayer, quoting from St. Bernard, it argues against the use of imagination; on the other hand, the Introduction and the whole fabric of the book are committed to an abundant use of the imagination. To redeem the situation, Fleming quips, "I suppose it is alright to use the imagination if it is on the right subject."[18] Surely the author of the *Meditations* went his merry way, expanding the Gospel story, creating a number of details to make his narrative more down to earth. He invited his readers to create even more details: to see Christ in the kitchen, in the workshop, mixing with people, and getting caught up in lengthy conversations. The author tells his story especially for the interest of the contemplative women to whom he dedicated his work.

The two works have their similarities; they have their differences. But they both stand as important documents in the spirituality of the Middle Ages and, I dare say, of all times. Ω

[17]Ibid., p. 12.

[18]John V. Fleming, *An Introduction to the Franciscan Literature of the Middle Ages* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977), pp. 245–46.

Love's Alpha and Omega

Fair Eden's beauty clouded
that fateful mortal hour—
The Evil One was shrouded
and Eve within his power!

The sun grew pale and wavered—
The lie was born that day—
Woman's pride, it severed
the grace of God—dismay!

The beasts of the earth all wondered
why Adam sinned that night—
The Voice of God thundered:
two souls were held in fright!

The Father's love then conquered!
New hope He gave the strayed:
pardon and mercy entered
two bleeding hearts that day.

"In sweat and toil, my children,
endure till time is o'er;
another Eve shall lift men
then hearts again shall soar!

My servant Death is porter
to close the Gate of Life;
to open wide the portals
of Heaven—fight the good fight!"

The voice of God was silent:
all was still as death.
No more appeared the serpent, Lucifer
deceiver of blighted breath.

Adam toiled and waited
nine hundred years and more
till God the Father, sated,
called home the toiler sore!

Four thousand years, O brothers,
loved Israel's daughters wait.
Within each breast there hovers
the wish for mother-state.

The new Eve e'er expected:
the Messiah soon to bear—
The Father's price exacted;
man's insult must repair.

The stars shone down one evening
on a maiden still at prayer
while an angel, sweetly pleading,
tells of her God-like share.

Fair Mary acquiesces
to the will of God on high:
Et Verbum caro factum est!
the angel softly, softly sighs.

For me, for thee, O brother-kind,
conceived was He this day!
For me, for thee, O Jew, O Gentile
Sweet Love has come to stay!

Behold within the manger bed
lies Christ, our human Brother,
Come to bear our sins instead—
Low born of Virgin Mother.

Deep meets deep in wells of love;
heart to heart in rapture sings;
starry eyes from Heaven above
flood gray earth—list', angel wings!

She croons, she sings, Mary maid,
in ecstasy of soul:
Mother of God, saintly made
for ages yet untold!

Who shall tell of the years gone by,
of the Mother's love and care?
never a thought; never why
must we go here or there?

Joseph, pure, provides repast
while summer and winter flee—
Chosen of all for precious task—
holy death, his coveted fee.

Years roll on; twelve have passed.
The gracious Boy, lithe and strong,
Eager to commence at last,
the painful task to right that wrong.

Gone is He from Mary's side!
Darkest sorrow fills her day—
Joseph, meek, her faithful guide
halts each traveler by the way.

Till at length, the whole way through
vain proves their search on highway.
The Temple, tall, sacred, true,
again is entered, wearily.

There, in Council, found is He!
with Doctor, sage, and hoary.
Teaching clear, yes, mightily,
His Father's Law and glory!

"Son, why hast Thou done so to us?"
speaks her heart in sadness—
"Did you not know that I must be
about My Father's business?

Such response was found obscure
yet pondered in her heart
While docile Child, home, secure,
taught men to do their part.

Thirty years estate attained
Decades three count work and prayer
with hammer, saw, and smoothing plane:
toil unsung, unseen, unheard.

How blind, unwise, dull are we
who chafe at life's estate.
Eager to be heard and seen—
learning slow and earning late!

The gold of truth, love, and life,
hidden deep in toil obscure;
in willing service, not in strife
is sought in vain, 'mid glittering lure.

The God of all has taught us this,
He Who made all things that be.
Shall we then flout true earthly bliss
while waiting Heav'n patiently?

Other lessons yet to teach:
of parting, pain, and service;
Loved ones placed beyond our reach
called to the Master's presence!

Alone, all alone, the Master
walked down by the sunny sea
Waves were lazily lapping shore,
and there were fishermen three.

A-mending nets beside rough boat.
Spake He to these fishermen three:
"Simon, Andrew" (angels wrote)
said He, "come, follow Me."

There, by the shore, nets were left
and the hearts of these were free—
Earthly ties forever cleft
to follow eternally!

Others gathered: twelve were they,
this inner circle formed
Christ's school, to learn Christ's way
to save men's souls from harm.

Three years taught He; Word and deed
His "Fishers of Men" to be.
Penance, prayer—mustard seed!
with Faith, Hope, and Charity!

You and I may gather food
by reading Sacred Scriptur
wherein is writ all the good
wrought by the Master—Savior!

His Love, His care, clearly shown
for halt and blind and poor.
Sinners loved His kindly tone;
were braced to live secure.

"He went about doing good,"
Sacred Scripture tells us—
Doctors old wore blackest mood:
Evil were the thoughts they nursed.

Ponder, now, the tale is sad,
For a traitor enters in—
O man, O man, erring lad!
Black, black is your heinous sin!

In vain, in vain, Love has gazed
upon Judas' guilty soul,
Hard as flint, sin has traced
his dark path, the unholy goal.

O angels, weep! Love is spurned
by slime of earth, created
"like to His Image"—now turned
with Satan to be mated!

Thirty pieces was the price
of the Godhead, Infinite—
Rude soldiers cast the dice
and parted not His garment!

Sacred Hands and Sacred Feet
were pierced with nails less cruel
than hearts of men with souls asleep
in sin! Satan's ready tools!

Precious tree that bore my God
Forever thou'rt beloved
by man and maid, tho' earthly sod
whose hearts must beat in love!

Alone, alone once again;
all is dark and still!
Holy Love breathes hard in pain
high there on Calvary's hill!

A rustle, a move, a murmur:
a Figure stands erect!
Ah! the Loved One's own dear Mother
come to solace Whom men reject!

O! No sorrow is like to thine,
Mother of God, Mother of Men!
Mute in deathless pain, no sigh
relieves the strain, nor human ken!

But nature revolts at last
and speaks in nature's way—
The long-since dead of the past
walk, gaunt, in that awful day!

Mother, you cradled the Lamb,
that wounded Form, so broken,
as you bathed, caressed, embalmed
the Word made flesh! Love's Token!

Then in the fading light
You sealed away your Treasure—
Forlorn was the homeward flight,
Heart-broken, beyond all measure!

Ah! Mother of joy and sorrow,
we come in all love to say:
"We follow today and tomorrow
your paths on our homeward way."

Sister M. Colette Logue, O.S.F.

The Hippie Saint

SISTER LORRAINE WESOLOWSKI, O.S.F.

FRANCIS WAS WHAT one may call a person born out of due time. By all social standards he could be called the "hippie," the "activist," the "radical" of the thirteenth century.

He had the characteristics which we have used in recent decades to identify these persons. He was unkempt. He wore a patched tunic held in the middle by a rope and no sandals on his feet. He left his family. He said he would no longer call Pietro Bernardone his father. He became a leader of a "gang" who were just as much the object of stares as he was. They were an odd bunch who toured the countryside and neighboring villages of Assisi extending wishes of peace and good will, begging for their daily food and collecting stones with which to build churches. He was laughed at and scorned. He even had the townsfolk of Assisi afraid of this "mad" son of Pietro and Pica Bernardone. They feared his radical behavior. But like us, those people of Assisi also feared themselves. They were afraid to be caught up in the being, doing, acting, or feeling of other than what was expected of them. Even in the 1200s, there was a social standard, a norm of "right" behavior. We either fit in the norm or do not. Francis did not. But in his risk, his adventure, and his total self-surrender to a love that kept him in constant embrace, he changed the world. This is fact: if he had not upset the standards of the time, we would not be celebrating the 800th birthday of a man named Francis from a town named Assisi.

Francis, we may say, is made of different stuff than we. Wrong! What he did, we can do and must do. By virtue of our baptism each of us is called to the imitation of Christ and to sainthood. (Perhaps an examination of our conscience is in order!)

Francis read the Gospel and followed it literally. As Christians we know the richness of the Gospel, and we do pray. But in our humanness we are so much like the Francis of pre-metanoia. Perhaps we are still in the caves of desolation, loneliness, and searching. We have not yet met the blessed leper in our life. Or perhaps we have, but repugnance made us look the other way.

Sister Lorraine Wesolowski is a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Millvale, PA, in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania.

We pray. We hear God speak to us. But there is fear in listening. God may expect something of us. When we really listen, nothing less than radical action can be forthcoming. Francis listened to Christ speak to him from the crucifix at San Damiano. From his stone collecting of literal obedience, he went on to carry out the radical action of Gospel service to every creature.

This is hard for us to take—hard for us to do. Like Francis we can open ourselves wide to the workings of God as well as become the object of foolishness to others. Perhaps we have that gnawing and pulling between what we know we should do and what in reality we do. It is between the *shoulds* and the *dos* that this rationalization takes place. This is not for us. We cannot be expected to do what Francis did. The moment of holy unrest passes over into a warm, safe self-consolation, and we continue to admire Francis from afar instead of walking barefoot with him as a friend. The distance of centuries grows further for us instead of the risk of sacred kinship making us imitators of Francis and our God.

When we look closely at Francis, we can see that he accepted the grace of the Lord's call with resolute determination. He stopped his earlier rationalization and took up the position of one who lives the Gospel radically. Eight hundred years later, we know that what he did, we can and must do. Ω

The Peace of Christ

Recalling a Christmas homily given by
Father David Temple, O.F.M.

War went underground
and stirred about its roots
a brief space at Christ's birth.

Lower than kings in high estate
He came—
lower even than common folk.

Enough when He awoke on earth
that hillside cave where
cattle sheltered and brought forth their young;
enough for Him warm swaddling bands,
His chosen mother's caring hands,
a song of peace in Bethlehem skies.

Later He would teach where real peace lies:
not in grasping for oneself,
forging ahead,
lording over others, ready blame,
but in kind thought, sharing, serving,
becoming least, seeking the last place.

Words were not enough.
Before they wrapped Him in a winding sheet
to rest in another hillside cave,
He would gird Himself with a towel,
kneel and wash their feet.

When stripped to a loincloth,
pinned against the tortured tree,
there would be mercy on His mind,
forgiveness His plea.

Bitter the lesson, my proud heart,
unless you love, until you taste:
In lowliness lies your peace.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

Yes—to God!

CONRAD L. HARKINS, O.F.M.

The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Let him who hears answer, "Come!" Let him who is thirsty come forward; let all who desire it accept the gift of life-giving water [Rev. 22:17].

ON THE LAST PAGE OF SACRED SCRIPTURE these words I have read cry out to us. It is as if God, who created the world out of love, redeemed the world out of love, and sent the Spirit of love upon us, cries out one last eternal invitation to mankind to return his love. What we celebrate today is one woman's response to that invitation, one quiet "yes"—one word more significant than all the words spoken today in all the capitals of the world. It is a word the Church, the whole assembly of believing Christians throughout the world, applauds and celebrates.

Clare, whose name means "the radiant one," enlightened all Umbria and all the world in the 13th century. The beacon shines even more brightly today when the darkness is deeper.

Saint Francis of Assisi, whose eight hundredth birthday we have been celebrating this entire year, would have found a dramatic way to celebrate this day. When Saint Clare dedicated her life to God as a nun, Francis and the Bishop schemed to mark the day in a way neither Clare nor the citizens of Assisi would ever forget. Clare's family was opposed to her desire to enter a cloister—she lived in an age when

Father Conrad L. Harkins, O.F.M., Director of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, delivered this homily on the occasion of the Solemn Profession of Sister Frances Ann Thom, O.S.C., at the Poor Clare Monastery in Lowell, Massachusetts, last March.

daughters of the nobility were treasures spent to effect marriage alliances—so only in retrospect would Assisi learn what was celebrated. Palm Sunday was approaching, and Francis directed Clare to go to the blessing of palms that day dressed and adorned with all her finery. When the time came for the distribution of palms, the Bishop went down the steps to her and placed the palm of victory in her hand. And that night, on the 18th of March, 1212, Clare and her cousin Pacifica fled secretly from the house and were led by torchlight to the friars' chapel deep in the woods some two miles away. There Clare's golden blond hair was cut—it is still preserved in a reliquary in Assisi—as she made her dedication to God. Then by torchlight she was led on that night to the Benedictine convent of S. Paulo. Eventually she would be joined by her sisters Agnes and Beatrice, her mother Ortolana, and her second cousins Amata and Balvina, at the church of S. Damiano.

From the distance of eight centuries the sacrifice of Clare seems more romantic than real. But the demands of the Gospel were as real to her then as they are to us now. Jesus demands absolute generosity of his followers. Of his immediate disciples he asked a willingness to sacrifice home, all that one calls one's own, security, for "the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Mt. 8:20). He looks for a willingness to leave behind parents and family. The invitation is challenging, if one counts the cost. And he would have us count the cost: "A man who builds a tower first calculates the cost to see if he has enough to complete the project" (Lk. 14:26). Jesus promises that God will not be outdone in generosity: "Everyone who has given up home, brothers or sisters, father or mother, wife or children or property for my sake will receive many times as much and inherit everlasting life" (Mt. 19:29).

But the sacrifice is still not possible unless one is touched by God's love. And this is why the Church applies today the passage of the Song of Songs in which a maiden is courted by her lover. So God pursues us. We are captivated by God's love. It is the love which ensnared Francis on the 13th of June in 1205, held him back from joining the drunken revels of his youthful companions, and rendered him speechless and immobile. Only when the ecstasy faded could he stammer to the wonderment of his friends: "I shall take a more noble and more beautiful spouse than you have ever seen; she will surpass all others in beauty and will excel all others in wisdom." Francis had fallen in love with God. The same love filled his heart 19 years later when, marked now in his hands and feet and side with the marks of

Christ's Passion, he wrote with his wounded hands the *Praises of God*:

> 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 almighty.
> You, holy Father, are
> King of heaven and earth. . . .
> You are Good, all Good, supreme Good,
> Lord God, living and true. . . .
> You are all our riches, and you suffice for us.

This is the language of a man in love.

This love is the key to the poverty of Francis and Clare. Francis is known to all the world as the *poverello*, the little poor man of Assisi. Clare brought amusement and delight to the 13th-century papal curia with her request for her community to live in poverty. One can imagine the smile of the secretary processing fifty-three requests that morning for benefices and dignities and prebends, who picks up the fifty-fourth request and finds a petition from a cloistered nun in Assisi for her community to be poor:

> As you have thus petitioned us, so we confirm by Apostolic favor the proposal of highest poverty, granting you by the authority of these letters that you may be compelled by no one to receive possessions.

This was *voluntary* poverty, different from that crushing and dehumanizing experience of hopeless, inescapable penury, which no one extols. One of the great sources of relief for the involuntarily poor, in fact, was the distribution of the wealth of those who became poor for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Jesus said to those who would become his immediate disciples, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have, *and give the money to the poor*, and then come, follow me." Of Francis it was said, "Stripping himself, he clothed the poor." This voluntary poverty was, for Francis and for Clare, both an asceticism by which they removed all that could distract them from God, and a following of the poor Christ. But what made it joyous was, I believe, that it was a consequence of the gift of God's love. One in love cannot be occupied with anything other than the object of love. Neither Francis nor Clare thought material things evil; but how could one value money or land or jewelry or possessions, when one had glimpsed God's love?

It is this same love that moves a woman to embrace the contemplative life in a cloister. It is not that the material things of the world are not attractive; rather, God's love is all-enticing. "The Spirit"—the Holy Spirit—"says, 'Come,' " and "the Church, the bride, says, 'Come.' Let him who hears answer 'Come.' Let him who is thirsty come forward; let all who desire it accept the gift of life-giving water."

How much the Church is enriched and made holy by the generous acceptance of this call! The existence of contemplative convents is a more eloquent sermon than any preached by men, a true sign to the world. They are a constant reminder that man finds his true happiness, his fulfillment as a human person, in God. The witness is more direct than that given by any other state of life. Even the atheist can find some value in preaching, teaching, counseling, or directing, for these activities produce good effects in this world. But prayer is of no value if there is no God. The convent of cloistered ladies stands as a beacon shining in the blackness of night to proclaim to the whole world: "God *is*," and "if you miss him in life, you have missed the meaning of life itself." Clare, whose name means "the radiant one," enlightened all Umbria and all the world in the 13th century. The beacon shines even more brightly today when the darkness is deeper.

Who would say that we do not need the support of the prayers raised to God in this convent? In medieval times men saw a threefold division of labor in society: the cultivators of the land, who fed society; the knights, who protected society; and the class of priests and monks who called down the blessing of God upon society. In those days of primitive technological skill and medical knowledge, society was powerless before the elements. A flood, fire, or blight could destroy the crop and spell disaster for the people. And so, in great monasteries of the realm, clouds of incense and prayer went up to God to call down his blessings upon the crops. But in our day of weather forecasting, rapid transit of foodstuffs, and miracle drugs, man can care for himself. Except, of course, for several *small* trouble areas! It

seems we have made a bomb and have mass produced it. It is rather powerful, capable, in fact, of destroying every living thing on the planet. Intelligent people that we are, we seem to be driven by an insane madness. We cannot agree to stop making these bombs or to destroy the ones we have. While all the world cries out for justice and peace, the rights and dignity of men are crushed under the boots of soldiers fighting, their leaders say, for justice and peace. The economies of nations strain under the burden of building weapons to destroy the economies of other nations. Children robbed of human dignity die of starvation while the money which could feed them goes to build the bombs that would safeguard their human dignity. What madness is this! "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against the irreligious and perverse spirit of men who, in their perversity, hinder the truth" (Rom. 1:18). Raise your prayers to heaven, Poor Ladies of S. Damiano, Sisters of the Order of Saint Clare, Sisters to your fellow Christians and to all mankind, save us from the just deserts of our sins. Who dares to think we have no need of the communion of saints!

Today one Sister says yes to God. Seven hundred and seventy six years ago Saint Francis said yes to God; seven hundred and seventy years ago this week Saint Clare said yes to God. If God does not work by his grace in us what he worked in them, it does not matter. We praise him for what he does in us and praise him for what he chooses not to do in us. What is important is that we are not a hindrance to his working in us. We rejoice with you, Sister Frances Ann. The Church rejoices, for it is made holier by your returning love to God; it is strengthened by your witness; it is protected by your prayers. The Church congratulates you and prays for your fidelity to Him who first loved you. Ω

Book Reviews

Six Ways to Pray from Six Great Saints. By Gloria Hutchinson. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1982. Pp. viii-152. Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Father Stephen Malkiewicz, O.F.M., M.A. (Liturgics, University of Notre Dame), Guardian at Holy Name Friary, post-novitiate student friary of the Assumption Province, and Associate Director of Formation of the same.

It almost seems as if the old meditation manuals are making a comeback, for here we are presented with yet another "how to" book on prayer. But Gloria Hutchinson's *Six Ways to Pray from Six Great Saints* differs from the manual model (which formed much of our religious childhood) in its intent. The author's popular treatment presents six saints as guides who introduce the seeker to six different styles of prayer: the prayer of praise, praying with time, prayer using the senses, selfless prayer, praying familiar words, prayer of detachment. In general, her choice of guides is well made (Francis of Assisi, Clare of Assisi, Ignatius of Loyola, Thérèse of Lisieux, Teresa of Avila, and John of the Cross), since they represent four powerful schools of Western spirituality (the Franciscan, Ignatian, Carmelite, and French). On the other hand, as will be pointed out below, the distinction between Francis and Clare as guides might be more methodological than real. Why not Benedict or Bernard to represent the monastic and liturgical schools?

Each saint is the subject of a chapter. The author's method is, first, to provide a thumbnail sketch of the individual saint's life and prayer style. This is followed by a meditation/reflection which turns the reader to his or her own life in the light of the saint being discussed. At the end of each chapter, further explorations in the type of prayer just experienced are suggested by way of some practical points and bibliography. Obviously, this is a sketchy book because of its size and scope. It is also a book that must be prayed rather than simply read. Here we come to the similarity of this book to the tradition of meditation manuals: like them, it engages one in prayer and presents a systematic approach to prayer.

My principal difficulties with the book are those of a historian and liturgist. Since I am most familiar with the Franciscan school, I will limit my comments to the first two chapters (which deal with Francis and Clare). The author begins her treatment of Francis at La Verna (the Cross) and then moves on to San Damiano ("the Canticle of Brother Sun"), from suffering and self-emptying to praise. Then, in her suggestions for further exploration, she offers the "Peace Prayer" attributed to Francis. Why not the authentic prayers of Francis, which speak so eloquently of prayer informed by the Liturgy, prayer as self-emptying, prayer as reflecting life, prayer as be-

ing filled with the God of the Old and the New Testaments? I suggest that anyone discussing Francis and prayer please read the brief notice of Jerome Poulenc, O.F.M., in *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 68 (1975), 450–53, where he points out the early 20th century provenance of the "Peace Prayer."

It is in the author's treatment of Clare that we encounter some of the prayers of Francis. Saint Clare is presented as a guide to the enclosure and monastic horarium of praying the Liturgical Hours. In this context, the author includes Francis's "Praises before the Office," a selection from "The Office of the Passion," and the "Prayer before the Crucifix." From a historical point of view, why include this in a chapter with Clare as guide, except (and this is a good reason) that she is a faithful feminine counterpart to Francis? Or is it, perhaps, because Clare provides a ready vehicle to speak about prayer, the liturgical Hours, and enclosure? One receives an impression that the author had a given agenda, for the explication of which Clare has been used as a vehicle, rather than having in mind a specific method of prayer provided by Clare's example. In addition, from a liturgical point of view, I am not so comfortable with the linkage between the enclosure and the Hours. The Liturgical Hours, especially as reformed and, as I think Francis understood them, are not limited to enclosure or monastics, or private prayer, but are the expression of the assembled local community gathered to mark time with and in Christ.

Having said this, I feel better about the book. As I mentioned, it provides insights into six unique Christian lives and the prayer that formed these lives. It is short, systematic, and insightful. I have a feeling that it can only whet the appetite to know the Lord better in prayer.

St. Joseph of Copertino. By Angelo Pastrovicchi, O.M.C. Trans. and adapted by Francis Lang, O.F.M.Cap. Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers (P.O. Box 424, 61105), 1980—originally published in 1918. Pp. xiii–136. Paper, n.p.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy, Fordham University), Associate Editor of this Review.

Franciscans will be pleased to have in hand the information about this 17th-century saint who possessed among other gifts that of levitation. The twelve chapters deal with his early life (his mother had, he used to say, given him his novitiate), his priestly life (which became so restricted because of his extraordinary ecstasies and levitations), his practice of the virtues, his gifts, his last days. Of special interest are the many quotations revelatory, not only of holiness, but also of common sense: e.g., "it is better to carry the Rule in one's heart than on one's person."

Perhaps some readers of this work may be moved to engage in further study, making use of viewpoints and insights attained in the field since this book was first published.

Doubts, Loneliness, Rejection. By Catherine de Hueck Doherty. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1982. Pp. vi–93. Paper, $4.50.

Reviewed by Father Wilfrid A. Hept, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Anthony's Shrine, Boston.

All of us at some time may have to face the great human fears—fear of being alone, fear of being unloved, fear of being inadequate, fear of failure. Most of us will find the resolution of these fears in trusting faith in God. Catherine Doherty finds the same solution in a series of meditations on doubts, loneliness, and rejection in a new book by that title. Those who have read her other books may well be disappointed in this one, for not even Catherine Doherty can overcome completely the limitations of language in trying to express her deep feelings and experience in her encounter with God while meditating on these basic evils that plague every human spirit.

Yet one cannot but admire her ability to use picturesque language, as when she uses such phrases as "Doubts . . . like quiet little mice eating up the cheese of my soul, my mind, of my heart." How better to express the experience, than to write: "Fear comes first, then suddenly it vanishes, and doubts assail like a thousand dancers, as if someone had arranged a masquerade." Or who cannot appreciate a phrase like "when the abomination of desolation vomits its doubts into your heart as it did into mine"? This first series of 20 meditations is introduced by the poem, "The Hound of Heaven," by Francis Thompson; reading it is bound to strike a nostalgic chord in those of us who are older or have experienced "I fled him down the nights and down the days . . . and in the mist of tears I hid from him. . . ."

In the 10 meditations on loneliness the author discusses the various types of loneliness and loneliness in general. She goes on to write, "One of the ways of dealing with loneliness, and dealing it a hard blow, is accepting people as they are. Then friendliness toward my brother and sister becomes quite normal and natural, and I can communicate with them on the level at which they are."

In the final part of the book, on rejection—which includes a very lovely personal poem—she concludes: "To persevere under the constant blows of a whip of rejection can only be done when Christ and Mary are at your side." She herself experienced what it meant to be rejected; she speaks feelingly of her rejection by Russia and deplores the killing of so many Russians. She writes with passion about the rejection of the Jews by the Nazis, and in the final meditation, about the current alienation between Arabs and Jews.

Finally, a well known bishop said in a talk that I heard recently, that Catherine Doherty maintains the greatest hunger in America today for so many people is for someone to listen to them. It is more important than doling out food. In the 4th meditation on loneliness she writes: "That is why Madonna House has inaugurated listening houses. . . . Many people come to our Ottawa house, just to talk. It seems there is no one else in the Capitol of Canada who listens." It just might be that *Doubts, Loneliness, Rejection*, by Catherine de Hueck Doherty, is the book to make you too a better listener.

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The Staff of the Franciscan Institute joins the Editors in wishing you a very merry Christmas and every blessing for the New Year.

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Curran, James, O.S.F., *Rule for Hermitages: Way of Life for the Little Brothers of Saint Francis* (Sr. F. A. Thom), 2:61.

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McElrath, Damian, ed., *Franciscan Christology: Selected Texts, Translations, and Introductory Essays* (G. Scarfia), 1:29.
McGinn, Bernard, tr. and introd., *Apocalyptic Spirituality: Treatises and Letters of Lactantius, Adso of Montier-en-Der, Joachim of Fiore, the Franciscan Spirituals, and Savonarola* (G. Marcil), 7:222.
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Wijngaards, John, M.H.M., *Experiencing Jesus: Scripture, the Witness of Saints and Mystics, and a Life of Prayer Show the Way* (F. de Ruijte), 6:189.

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Daly, Gabriel, O.S.A., *Asking the Father* (*Ways of Prayer*, 4). Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1982. Pp. 120. Cloth, $8.95; paper, $4.95.

DePaola, Tomie, *Francis: The Poor Man of Assisi*. New York: Holiday House, 1982. Pp. 46—8½"x11"—illus. by author. Cloth, $14.95.

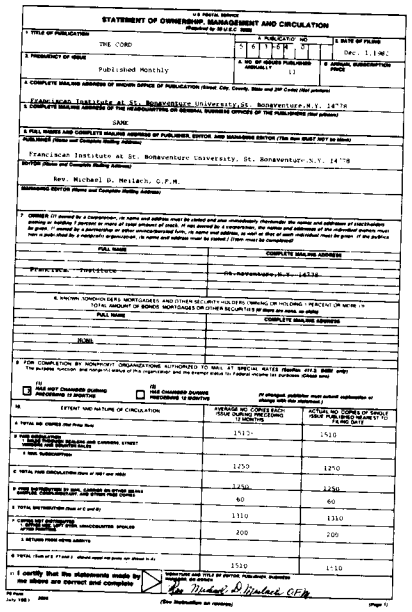
Hanley, Boniface, O.F.M., *Maximilian Kolbe: No Greater Love*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1982. Pp. 80, illus. Paper, $3.95.

Jackowski, Sister Karol, *Home on the Range*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1982. Pp. 96. Paper, $4.95.

Nemeck, Francis K., O.M.I., and Marie Theresa Coombs, *Hermit, Contemplation* (*Ways of Prayer*, 5). Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1982. Pp. 151, including bibliography. Cloth, $8.95; paper, $4.95.

Sawyer, Sister Kieran, S.S.N.D., *Confirming Faith: A Faith Development Program for High School Students Preparing to Celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria press, 1982. Director's Manual: Pp. 207; Paper, $9.75. Participant Book: Pp. 95; Paper, $3.75.

Sheen, Bishop Fulton J., *The Way of the Cross*. 50th Anniversary Edition. Illus. James McIlrath. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1982. Pp. 64. Large print (14 pt.) ed., 5¼" x 8"; Small print (10 pt.) ed., 3½" x 5⅜"; n.p.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