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The CORD

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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

Rebuilding the Church Today

NOTHING quite like the current state of Christian disunity existed in St. Francis' day. Communion between the Eastern and Western Churches had been ruptured and some sought to restore it. But more often than not their aims were tied to the objectives or the Crusades rather than to the restoration of the Unity of the Church itself.The Protestant Reformation had not yet occurred. The Church in the West was not institutionally fractured although there was much dissension and a great deal of tension because of repeated calls for the Church's reform "in head and members." Francis was inspired to rebuild the Church of his day praying before what we now call the San Damiano cross. This was not to be done primarily through a preaching crusade, but by the lived example of his followers.

There are three places in the writings of Francis where he cites the now classical biblical text of the modern ecumenical movement, "that all may be one... that the world might believe" (John 17:21-23). The first two are in the first and second versions of "The Letter to the Faithful." Both point to Christ the Redeemer and Good Shepherd who became Brother to us so all could become one with God. And not just one, but one through Christ so that we too can become children of God in God's only begotten Child (I Ep. Fid. 1:13-19; II Ep. Fid. 56-60). Undoubtedly Francis' concern was the individual penitent's ongoing commitment to a life of *metanoia*. But in view of the situation of the Church of his day and his sense of calling to rebuild it, it is also safe to state that his mind was to preserve the

unity of the Church in the bond of peace by focusing his followers on Christ offering a prayer for the unity of His followers. At once this directs Christians to the way to redemption, Christ, and to the object of Christ's self-offering, our unity with God, and because of this, our unity with each other in the body of Christ even here and now! The first eleven lines of Chapter I of the first version of the "Letter to the Faithful" very simply point this out. Up to line 56 of the second version of "The Letter to the Faithful," however, we have an ascetical discipline in homiletic style based on Christ's deeds and words that will preserve our unity in God and with one another.

Francis' third citation of Christ's High Priestly Prayer is the conclusion of his admonition in the Earlier Rule (Reg NB 22). There he tells his followers to cling to the words and deeds of Christ who prayed for us ". . . that (we) may be completely one . . . ." This is Francis' agenda for personal renewal. Personal renewal was his approach to renewing the Church. *Metanoia* still is. Moreover, it is considered the very soul of the ecumenical movement. Unity among Christians in their divided churches is impossible without that change of heart whereby all seek to be renewed in the Spirit. Fidelity to the Gospel means we seek to be one in Christ. Obviously then the ecumenical concern of the Catholic Church and of other Churches is the concern of franciscans.

Given Francis' guidance and direction through his use of John 17:21-23 we should note that one of principal expressions of spiritual ecumenism in our day is eighty years old this month. The Church Unity Octave, founded by Fr. Paul Wattson of Graymoor and first observed in 1908, is the forerunner of today's annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity traditionally held from January 18th to 25th. During these eighty years remarkable developments toward the reconciliation of all Christians have occurred. Some note that as Christian Unity Week grew, the more intensely did ecumenical rapproachement proceed. There is a need now for more intense prayer for Christian Unity because the ecumenical movement is at a turning point. The Churches are faced with new and serious common issues like multilateral theological agreed statements, new questions like "How much difference justifies separation?", and the suggestion that churches remain distinct even after unity in order to manifest the Spirit's gift of unity with diversity.

A franciscan, not surprisingly, originated the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The members of the congregation he founded, the Atonement Friars, promote its observance in collaboration with the

Faith and Order Commission of the National Council of Churches with the blessing of the US Catholic Bishops' Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs. But franciscans can not be comfortable in that one branch of their family does this, just as we can not think of ourselves as people of "true faith and conversion of heart" because some are truly committed to ongoing conversion of life. We are all called to "rebuild my Church" today in its obvious need for the unity of all who are Christian. But as Francis would advise, we first must profess what we believe by doing first what we would preach to others.

Thaddeus Horgan, S.A.

Thaddeus Horgan, SA, an Atonement Friar, is a member of **The CORD'S** *editorial board and chairperson of the Franciscan Federation's Rule and Life Committee. He has just been appointed associate director of the Bishop's Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.*

Rebuild

"Rebuild my church, yes, rebuild....
Take the stone of courage and plant your
feet firmly on it....
Take the stone of compassion and bring
it to the faces of my suffering children....
Take the stone of understanding and set it
as the foundation of your life...
Take the stone of joy and place it at the
base of all your labors...
Take the stone marked "SMILE" and carry it
to the far corners of the world...
Take the stone of LOVE and show it to all
you meet...
May my GOSPEL and my LOVE be your strength!
REBUILD.... yes, REBUILD... that the world may
know ME!"

Bro. John B. Maganzini, O.F.M.

Admonition XXVII and the Content of the Ministry to Spiritual Direction

Rev. DAMIEN ISABELL, O.F.M.

Introduction

1. Franciscan documentation on spiritual direction is much poorer than that found in other traditions. This is partially so because of the historical moment in which Francis began his movement. Francis' writings are inspiring but we can hardly call them treatises on spiritual direction. True, his letter to Leo is certainly such a letter, but it can leave one with the impression that all is liberty and there is no room for analysis of the spiritual experience of an individual.

2. In this short article, I would like to propose that Admonition XXVII of Francis is in capsule form an aid for the analysis of spiritual experience. I will examine each of the "virtues" and "vices" in the light of Francis' other writings and his *legends*. Because of my limited resources here in Africa I am not able to study in depth the question whether this admonition describes a certain spiritual progression, from charity to discernment, from fear and from hardness of heart, or if its structure is simply formal, a traditional way of classifying virtues and vices.

I. THE NORMAL TENSION OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Virtue and vice are two dimensions of the Christian's fight for charity. If we understand the tension present in these two–poles, we can begin to grasp Francis' comprehension of spiritual experience. "Where there is..." is a phrase that denotes the presence of God's pacifying activity in the person's life. The presence of "charity and wisdom," for example, excludes the presence of "fear and ignorance." The person is refashioned by God's gift. This desire to be totally alive in God is reflected in the Rule of 1221, 23:

The author, a well-known writer and lecturer of the Sacred Heart Province, is a missionary in Kolwezi – Zaire. This is the first of two articles on Admonition XXVII.

> Let us love the Lord God with *all* our heart, *all* our soul, with *all* our mind and *all* our strength and with fortitude and *total* understanding, with *all* of our powers, with *every* effort, *every* affection, *every* emotion, *every* desire and *every* wish. (AB, p. 132).

One reason the person is not totally alive in God is his own responsibility: "out of one's *heart* come evil thoughts" (Reg. B, Reg. NB), "through our own fault we have fallen" (Reg. B, Reg. NB); "each one has the enemy in his own power..." (Adm 10); "Through my own fault" (Ep Ord); "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..." (ibid.); "In whatever way you think you will best please our Lord... take that way" (Ep Leo); "we have left the world now and all we have to do is to be careful to obey God's will and please him. We must be very careful..." (Reg B, Reg NB).

The importance of this recognition of one's responsibility is well described by P. Pruyser in the questions he poses for a pastoral diagnosis:

> Sorriness for sin presupposes the shouldering of some responsibility for one's problem situation. Does the person assume any responsibility at all? Or does he present himself as a pure victim of circumstances, or fate, not responsible and unaccountable for his misfortune? Or, if he does assume any responsibility for his subsequent internal or external rection to his plight, does he feel unduly smitten, playing up the role of passive victim, or does he feel unduly angry, spinning fantasies of revenge? If so, does he feel some sorriness for those patterns of response? Or does he present himself in the most blasé manner, denying any role in his problem, and finding nothing in himself to work on toward betterment? (p. 72)

To "do penance" is to recognize the responsibility for the conflict in one's life. This inner conflict affects relationships with others as well and, therefore, the inner re-formation of my heart will necessarily be affected by my changing relationships with others.

> I am a center of freedom, but my freedom must be justified before the other. That is to say, I can only begin to understand the nature and the extent of my own rights, by examining, testing them and criticizing them in light of the orientation of others — most especially the strangers and aliens, or in general, those who are most likely to be victimized by my egoistic enjoyments. (Ogletree, p. 55).

"Egoistic enjoyments" mean that I have contracted my world to my own making and everything is judged from this viewpoint: fear (of those of another race, of intimacy), ignorance (of other ways of looking at reality), anger (because another is more full of life than I, or because I'm not in

control of all situations)... To move toward this total life in God, centered on the Other, Francis welcomed conflict situations:

> This is my advice with regard to the state of your soul. As I see it, you should consider everything that makes it difficult for you to love God as a special favor, even if other persons, whether friars or not, are responsible for it, or even if they go so far as to do you physical violence. This is the way you should want it to be... (Ep Min).

This contact with reality other than one's own enables the person to discover what is hidden in himself. He or she then has the chance to establish communion with others and to come out of the tidy world created at home. Francis calls this communion "mercy" (miseri-cordia), the ability to enter into the suffering heart of the other, the ability to forget oneself and to understand the other from the inside: "there should be no brother in the world who has sinned, however much he may have possibly sinned, who, after he has looked into your eyes, would go away without having received your mercy." (Ep Min).

What impedes this mercy, this communion? Fear, ignorance, anger, disturbance, covetousness, avarice, anxiousness, dissipation, Satan, excess, hardness of heart. Let us now study each one of these to understand the depth of Francis' analysis.

II. THE ELEMENTS WHICH IMPEDE MERCY ACCORDING TO FRANCIS

Fear. According to St. John "perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4,18). Echoes of this teaching of John is found in this Admonition XXVII, and also in the *Salutation of the Virtues:*

> Holy charity confounds all temptation that come from the devil or from the flesh, and all human fears (Armstrong: Carnal Fears; Brady, p. 39).

What are some manifestations of this fear? It keeps the brothers from begging (Reg NB, 9; II C 13, 71-72. Fear of social derision), it keeps them from sharing their need with the brothers (Reg NB, 9; II C 44)), it prompts them to flee suffering (Reg NB, 22), from confessing openly their sin (Adm 24-25; I C 54), and to flee solitude (II C 9). In a modern key, M. Kinzer captures the subtle activity of fear in our lives:

> We fear that others will disapprove of us if we speak out, sing out, or make ourselves conspicuous. We fear that we will fail or make a mistake, and we fear that we will make a fool of ourselves. Some of us feel timid and self-conscious when others look at us for any length of time; we feel certain they are thinking badly of us. Since we do not see ourselves as valuable or gifted, we believe that people who notice us will not like us or respect us. Thus we avoid prominence and visibility because we lack confidence in who we are. (Kinzer, p. 43).

Normal fear preserves us from danger, carnal fear keeps us from others. Fear hinders charity because it inhibits trusting relationships with others, it turns the person inwards, which is the contrary of charity. 2 Tim 1, 6-8: "It is not the spirit of fear that God has given us, but a spirit of force, of love and of reason.

Ignorance. Francis contrasts ignorance with wisdom. In his writings we find that he is more sorry for religious ignorance than for cultural ignorance:

> All of us who are clerics should be aware of the great sin and ignorance which some people have toward the most holy body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and his most holy written words which consecrate his body. (Ep Cler).

Along the same lines St. Clare says: "Therefore, as we have set out on the path of the Lord, let us take care that we do not turn away from it by our own fault or negligence or ignorance..." (Vlt Vol). In the *Minor Chronicle of Erfurt* Francis had to counsel the brothers who had no academic degree. They asked Francis: "What can we do for the salvation of the world? We have no diploma?" Francis' only answer was: "Go confidently with the help of God." A diploma does not assure holiness nor pastoral effectiveness. "Those are killed by the letter who merely wish to know the words alone, so that they may be esteemed as wiser than others and be able to acquire great riches to give to their relatives and friends..." (Adm 7) "and those who have no book-learning should not set their heart on acquiring it. Instead let them pursue what above all else they must desire: to have the spirit of the Lord and the workings of his grace, to pray always to him with a clean heart, and to have humility, patience in persecution and weakness and to love those who persecute or rebuke us..." (RB, 10; true wisdom). This same ignorance is described in chapter 17 of the Rule of 1221: "For the prompting of the flesh seeks and strives to be full of talk, but cares little for action; and seeks not God-centeredness and holiness in the inner man, but looks for and desires a religiosity and holiness that can be seen by men." This is ignorance.

Anger. According to David of Augsburg, anger "prompts a man to resist what is opposed to him with all his might and to cling tenaciously to what pleases him." Francis himself never defines anger, but he does speak

often of it: "They must take care not to become angry or disturbed because of the sin of another, since anger and disturbance hinder charity in themselves and in others" (Reg B, 7); "Let all the brothers... take care not to be disturbed or angered at the sin or the evil of another, because the devil wishes to destroy man through the fault of one" (Reg NB, 5). "they should not become angry, since 'everyone who grows angry with his brothers shall be liable to judgment...' " (Reg NB, 112); "Nothing should upset the servant of God except sin. And no matter how another person may sin, if the servant of God lets himself become angry and disturbed, he stores up guilt for himself." (Adm 11); "Nor should one become angry with a brother because of a fault of that brother, but with all patience and humility let him admonish and support him" (Ep Fid, 2); "And if anyone should be disturbed or become angry at God or at his brothers, or if by chance he persistently asks for medicines with a great desire to free the flesh which is soon to die... all this comes from the evil one" (Reg NB, 10).

These abundant quotations lead us to conclude that anger was an important object of Francis' reflections, and possibly an important element of his own personality. This anger impedes conversion to God because it arises from one's inability to actualize his or her potential; a person or a situation is more powerful than he or she. Recall how Francis was angry at his sinful brothers and God rebukes him for his smallness of vision (II C 158; see below). John Cassian had already taught this lesson:

> The chief part of our improvement and peace of mind must not be made to depend on another's will, which cannot possibly be subject to our authority, but it lies rather in our own control. And so the fact that we are not angry ought not to result from another's perfection, but from our own virtue. (See *Workbook*, p. 236).

Disturbance, Worry, Annoyance. As we have seen, disturbance finds its place alongside anger; it seems to be the overflow of anger, the disruption of one's peace of soul because of anger over some event. Francis himself struggled against disturbance: "For once when he was disturbed over bad examples and, thus distressed, gave himself over to prayer, he brought back this rebuke from the Lord: 'Why are you disturbed, o little man? Did I not place you over my order as its shepherd, and now you do not know that I am its chief protector?...' " (II Cel 158). According to II C 44 disturbance is the weight of fear that hangs heavily upon a person. Brother Riccerio was greatly disturbed because "he feared greatly lest the saint would see some hidden vice in him on account of which it would

happen that he would not show him his favor... (Bl. Francis said to him) 'Let no fear disturb you in the future, my son... you are very dear ot me...' "

In II C 125 we find a further development: "... When, however, the soul is wretched, desolate, and filled with sorrow, it is easily overwhelmed by its sorrow or else it turns to vain enjoyments... If the servant of God, as may happen, is disturbed in any way, he should rise immediately to pray and he should remain in the presence of the heavenly Father until he restores to him the joy of salvation..." The fruits of anger are disturbance and even sadness.

Already the fathers of the desert recognized the role of this trouble. Abbot Poemen received a brother one day who asked him: "What can I do my Father. I am plunged in sadness." The old man answered: "Never hate anyone, condemn no one, say nothing evil of another, and the Lord will give you peace." (Merton, p. 46).

Greed, Covetousness. Greed is the immoderate desire for money or wealth. Cupidity is the contrary of detachment or selflessness. "Let those who do not know how to work learn, not from desire *(cupidigia)* of receiving wages for their work, but as an example and to avoid idleness" (Test); "And we must hate our body with its vices and sins, because by living according to the flesh, the devil wishes to take from us the love of Jesus Christ... From the heart of man come forth and flow evil thoughts... avarice..." (Reg NB, 221); "In the primitive Church," said the Lord Cardinal of Ostia, "the pastors and prelates were poor men, burning with charity, not with greed. Why should we not choose bishops and prelates from among your friars, so that they may influence all the others by their witness and example" (SP 43).

Ubertino da Casale judged that the friars had a hidden agenda when they "served" the people:

> It is not the zeal for souls that inspires them, but the pursuit of temporal things, money and worldly favors. Indeed you cannot find them frequenting the poor or those who do not have the possibility to give them something... There is no question here of zeal for souls, only the pursuit of human greed.

In the very first days of the Order we find an example of this greed in the story about Sylvester the priest. When he saw Brother Bernard... making a perfect renunciation of his goods and giving them to the poor, he was moved to ravenous greed... Francis smiled, seeing that the priest's soul was infected with the passion of greed..." (See also 3S 30) Perhaps because of this experience Francis wrote: "The Lord commands us in the Gospel: 'Watch, be on your guard against all malice and greed (Lk 12,

15). 'Guard yourselves' against the preoccupations of this world and the cares of this life" (Lk 21, 34)" (1221,8; 1223,10)

It is clear that greed and covetousness are a frontal attack against God himself "to whom belongs everything that is good" (Adm 7), "all good things are his" (Reg NB, 17). The avaricious person seeks to have more than he or she needs. Instead of finding one's true identity in relationships, they surround themselves with things which are extensions of their false-self. Greed and avarice are signs that a person is not satisfied with himself or herself.

Avarice is "the insistent pressure of desire for material things out of all proportion to our needs." (David Augsburg) To distinguish it from cupidity, however, it is more exact to say that avarice is the passion to accumulate and to hold on to riches. It is contrary of generosity, largesse, prodigality. We can never forget that Francis had a very good example of this avarice in his own father. "When his father realized that he could not hope to make him turn back, he concentrated on trying to recover his money and when he eventually found it on the window sill, his avarice was satisfied and he calmed down a little" (LM II, 3). In the face of the great mystery of God's grace, Bernardone fled to something familiar. Avarice is always an attempt to reassure the small self that we know, that we have created, and it is an implicit denial of the self I do not know nor do I want to know.

In the *Sacrum commercium,* 38-39 Lady Poverty accuses Avarice of being her rival:

> This rival is Avarice which is said to be the immoderate desire to obtain and retain riches. Her friends are accustomed to call her by a holier name... discretion or providence, despite the fact that such discretion should be called confusion and such providence, the ruinous forgetfulness of all things.

Avarice is the root sin again poverty and joy, it is the desire to distinguish oneself from others in order to vaunt oneself before man. "In what then can you glory? For if you were so subtle and wise that you had all knowledge and knew how to interpret all tongues and minutely investigate the heavenly bodies, in all these things you could not glory... none of them would belong to you..." (Adm 5; See "sine proprio" Reg. B, 1; 6, 2; Reb. NB 1; 7) The one who is obsessed by greed and avarice and who continually increases his possessions, becomes very vulnerable and is continually disturbed because he/she feels threatened each time there is a question about his/her property." (*Diz Fran,* 102). In the Franciscan tradition, this

vice was attacked over and over again in concrete social action (e. g. Mons pietatis...)..

Anxiety, preoccupation, anguish, "desire for change" (French ed.). Anxiety impedes a clear vision of life: "Be on your guard, that your hearts do not become bloated with self-indulgence and drunkenness and the *cares* of this life, for that day will come upon you unexpectedly..." (Reg NB). "The Lord commends us in the Gospel: 'Watch, be on your guard against all malice and greed. Guard yourselves against the *preoccupations* of this world and the *cares* of this life' (Lk 21, 34)" (Reg NB, 8; Reg B, 10). Often anxiety stems from *not* living what one has promised:

> All those, however, who are not living in penance and do not receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; who practice vice and sin and walk the paths of wicked concupiscence and evil desires; who do not observe what they have promised and bodily serve the world by the desires of the flesh, the cares and anxieties of this world, and the preoccupations of this life, such people are deceived by the devil... they are blind... they do not have spiritual wisdom... for sweet to the body to commit sin and bitter to it to serve God... you are deceived..." (Ep Fid)

Here Francis warns us again against living an illusion or living a conscious lie. Because of the constant state of arousal, a person is not at peace physically (with resultant sickness), mentally (he or she cannot concentrate) and spiritually (one is so taken up with self that there is no longer any trust in God nor prayer).

As we will see more in detail, Francis proposes "inner peace" at the remedy for this anxiety (Adm 27). In a similar vein, Francis wrote a letter of direction to the rulers of the people (see also I C 433; II C 200) in which he appeals to them to: "Pause and reflect for the day of death is approaching. I beg you, therefore, with all possible respect, not to forget the Lord or turn away from his commandments by reason of the cares and preoccupations of this world... I firmly advise you, my Lords, to put aside all care and preoccupation and receive with joy the most holy Body... and Blood..."

Other brothers are troubled when they don't have the same academic status as their learned confrères:

> At the same time I warn the friars and implore them in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they keep themselves from all pride... the cares and worries of this world... And those who have no book-learning should not set their heart on acquiring it. Instead, let them pursue what above all else they must desire: to have the spirit of the Lord and the workings of his grace,

> to pray always to him with a clean heart, and to have humility, patience in persecution and weakness, and to love those who persecute us or rebuke us... (Reg B, 10).

In this admonition Francis does not exclude certain persons from studies, but he does warn the brothers to base their identity on their relationship with God and not on social status. Self-knowledge before God will naturally exclude certain people from certain academic pursuits, but this does not make them less valuable, unless, of course, the fraternity itself has introjected society's way of judging who is valuable and who is not. The source of much anxiety is the internalisation of values which are not evangelical.

The socially poor friar is one who refuses to be led, and who refuses to judge himself, by standards other than the Gospel's. This choice makes him socially poor and considered by many to be of little value. But in reality this poverty removes many occasions of anxiety:

> Poverty, which was all they had to meet their expenses, made them ready to undertake any task... They possessed nothing that belonged to this world... and so they feared to lose nothing. They were free from care, with no anxiety to disturb them or worry to distract them. Their hearts were at peace as they lived from day to day... (LM IV 7)

The lack of joy and peace is a sign of the presence of an obstacle to one's relationship with God and with others. Self-serving sollicitude is troubling, but Francis encourages sollicitude for others: "I will and promise on my part and that of my brothers always to have for you as for them loving care and special solicitude." *(The pattern of life given St. Clare,* Brady, p. 151). This solicitude for others is life-giving, solicitude over other things can be flight from death ("Reflect and see that the day of death is near..." Ep Rect), for to keep busy in a useless sort of way is to keep death from surprising us.

Dissipation, curiosity. In LM IV 9 we read that "when Francis saw that he had abandoned the world with its troubles and chosen Christ's peace, he called him Pacificus." Elsewhere Francis observed that "learning takes from many people their docility and does not permit them to bend to humble practices. Wherefore I want the learned first to make this petition to me: 'Behold, Brother, I have lived in the world a long time and I did not truly know my God. I beg of you, give me a place, that is removed from the noise of the world where I can think over my years in sorrow, where, recollecting my distracted heart, I can bring my soul to better things" (Read II C 194 in its totality). Against physical and mental

Behind these descriptions two realities seem especially predominant: the desire to appropriate for oneself that which is of God or of another, and disobedient arrogance.

restlessness Francis says: "And now that we have left the world, we have nothing else to do except to follow the will of the Lord and to please him." (Reg NB, 22)

A sign of this dissipation and curiosity is wandering outside of obedience. On this point Francis speaks with unaccustomed severity:

> But if any of the brothers do not wish to observe these things, I do not consider them to be Catholics nor my brothers, and I do not wish to see them or speak with them until they shall have done penance. I say this also of all others who go wandering about (*vagando vagunt*) with no regard for the discipline of the Rule, for our Lord Jesus Christ gave his life that he might not lose the obedience of the most holy Father. (Ep Ord)

This lack of a clear, inner goal is the contrary of simplicity: "pure holy simplicity confounds all the wisdom of this world and the wisdom of the flesh..." (Sal Vir)

> A sinner can fast, pray, weep, mortify his flesh. This however, he cannot do, namely, be faithful to his Lord... the greatest enemy of man is his flesh; it does not know how to recall anything to grieve over it; it does not know how to foresee things to fear them; its only aim is to misuse the present time. (II C 134)

Blessed Giles understood well the teaching of Francis, so one day he told a companion: "Until now I have gone where I wished and done what I wished, labouring with my hands. But now and henceforth I cannot do as I used to, but I must do as I feel *guided within*. Therefore I fear very much that others may ask me for what I cannot give them." This need to choose and even to refuse is rooted in Francis' teaching: "Therefore, let us desire *nothing* else, let us wish for *nothing* else, let *nothing* else please us and cause delight except the Creator and Redeemer and Savior..." (Reg NB; 23; see also letter to the Order: "Grant us in our misery to do for *You alone* what we know *you want* us to do and always *to desire what pleases you*." — the opposite of dissipation and curiosity!)

We can conclude with another observation of Blessed Giles: "The person who does not see great things will think that small things are great."

The Enemy. This verse seems to interrupt the rhytm of the admonition for "the enemy" is not a "vice". Who or what is this enemy in the writings of Francis? In Reg NB, 7 and Reg B, 5 we find:

> All the brothers should always be intent on good works, for it is written: 'Always do something good so that the devil will find you occupied.' And again: 'Idleness is the enemy of the soul.' Therefore, the servants of God must always give themselves totally to prayer or to some good work.

It seems that one enemy is idleness which is often the experience of a person who despairs of being more than what he or she actually is. "I want my friars to work and to be kept busy. If they are idle, their hearts or their tongues will soon be occupied with unlawful subjects" (LM V 6;p LP 116; II C 157 "useless persons"; II C 161; *Chronicle of Thomas of Eccleston*, 127; II C 209; LM XIV 1).

But there are other enemies "visible and invisible" as well.

> And all the brothers, wherever they may be, should remember that they gave themselves and abandoned their bodies to the Lord Jesus Christ. And for love of him, they must make themselves vulnerable to their enemies, both visible and invisible, because the Lord says: 'Whoever loses his life will save it...' (Ref. NB, 16)

The external enemies are apparently the Saracens. Our concern here is with invisible enemies. Francis speaks of them in Reg. NB, 13; "If any brother, at the instigation of the devil, commits the sin of fornication..." In his *Letter to a Ministry* (which also speaks of exterior enemies, the brothers who don't like you), but adds: if any one of the brothers at the instigation of the enemy should sin mortally..." (see also Reg B 7) Francis is convinced of the activity of a spiritual power opposed to God outside of man: "... 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" (Adm 2; Reg NB, 8).

As a consequence, Francis counsels vigilance for his brothers:

> And let us be very careful of the malice and the subtlety of Satan, who wishes that a man not raise his mind ahd heart to God. And as he roams about he wishes to ensnare the heart of the person under the guise of some reward or help, and to snuff out of our memory the word and precepts of the Lord, and wishes to blind the heart of the person through worldly affairs and concern... (Reg NB, 22; Mt 13, 19-23; Mk 4, 15-20; Lk 8, 11-15)

Often Francis had to confront the enemy "face to face" (II C 119; II C 109; LM VI 10; LP 92; SP 67; 3S 12; II C 9; LM X 3; LM IV 2; Third consideration on the Stigmata; LP 93; SP 99...)

Often this enemy works in the things of this world: "And the devil seeks to blind those who desire money or value it more than stones" (Reg NB, 8): Nothwithstanding the seductive activity of this "enemy", the person never loses his or her responsibility:

> There are many who when they commit sin or suffer some wrong often blame their enemy or neighbor. But this is not right, for each one has the enemy in his power, namely the body by which he sins. 'Blessed is that servant' then who ever holds such an enemy given into his power and wisely guards himself from it; because as long as he does this, no other enemy visible or invisible will be able to do him harm. (Adm 10)

There seems to be, then, a complicity between the enemy within and the enemy without. The latter has no power if the enemy within is under guard. As we will see "the fear of the Lord" is the best protection for the Christian.

Excess, Superfluity. In his writings, Francis uses the term "superfluity" only twice (Adm XXVII; Letter to the Faithful II). "Where there is mercy and discretion, there is neither superfluity nor hard-heartedness"; "we must also fast and abstain from vices and sins and from superfluity of food and drink, and be Catholics." In this last part of the admonition we have to ask what is the contrary of superfluity. At first glance we would say discretion, prudence. But up to this point, the first virtue has regularly been the contrary of the first vice, so I am of the opinion that "mercy" is its contrary. If this is so, what is the content of this superfluity? Superfluity must be the mis-treatment of the person based on a lack of understanding and compassion (in French all of this is summed up in one word: "brutalization"). Excess of food and drink is a punishment of the self-unknown, of the self which one does not know how to handle. Excess or superfluity gives one the impression of being very much alive, but it is proportionally a reminder of a great emptiness and of a great unknown. More will be said about this in our reflection on "mercy."

Hardness of heart, hard-heartedness. These expressions are translations of the Latin word *induratio* which is used only once in Francis' writings, here in Adm. 27. In Armstrong's translation "hard of heart" is found also in Adm. 1, a translation of the Latin *gravi corde*. "Hardness of heart" is a biblical term with a long history. First of all, Pharaoh refused to free God's people, even though the signs of God's presence were

evident. (Ex 7,3; 4,21; Rom 9,18...) Finally, the Israelites were freed but proved to be as hard-hearted as Pharaoh (Ex 17; Nu 20,3; Ps 78; Is 46,6-7). Despite the great sign of liberation and of God's care, they easily forgot God and proved much slower to liberate others than he (Ex 15, 15-18; Is 63,17; Ez 36,22-32...) Zechariah sums up well the attitude of his people:

> Thus says the Lord of hosts. Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy each to his brother, do not oppress the widow, the fatherless and the sojourner, or the poor; and let none of you devise evil against his brother in your heart. But they refused to hearken and turned a stubborn shoulder... They made their hearts like adamant lest they should hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets. (Zac h. 7, 8-12; See also Ezech 3,9; 2,4)

Ignorance of God is due to the hardness of heart of the Gentiles (Eph 4, 17-24); ignorance of Jesus Christ among the Jews is attributed to hardness of heart (2 Cor 3,14; Rom 11, 25). Similarly, the disciples of Jesus did not perceive his reality because of the hardness of their hearts (Mk 8, 14-21) and Jesus was obliged to perform his miracles before the hard-hearted (Mk 3, 1-6). Finally, just before his ascension, Jesus scolded his disciples who refused to believe the witnesses of his resurrection (Mk 16, 14). On that note he returned to his Father. Francis remembered this incident.

Briefly put, hardness of heart seems to imply a basic unwillingness to respond to God despite evident signs of his presence, and also a basic unwillingness to respond to one's needy neighbor (1 Jn 3, 17; Deut 15, 17). From this perspective we can understand what Francis is saying in Adm. 1 when he speaks of "hard of heart." "Why do you not recognize the truth and believe in the Son of God?" The Eucharist is the sign by which God's action is recognized in faith in this world; it will be the test of a person's faith stance.

If what I have described is true, than we have to prefer Armstrong's translation of *discretio* as discernment. For discernment has the task of recognizing what is of God and what is not. When a faith-person has the virtue of discernment, he does not become hard of heart toward God nor hard-hearted toward his neighbor. An example of this is found in II C 186 were Celano puts into Francis' mouth a description of the ideal minister: "Toward those who take flight from the order let him not shut up the bowels of his mercy (= hard-heartedness), as if they were sheep who had perished, knowing that the temptations that bring a man to such a pass are overpowering temptations" (in this same regard, read his *Letter to a Minister*).

III. SOME CONCLUSIONS ON THE "VICES" IN ADMONITIONS XXVII

All of these human realities form part of our spiritual make-up. Francis here does not list all possible experiences (See **Salutation of the Virtues**). One might be surprised to see nothing about the vice of lust, but for Francis, I believe, lust was simply a form of avarice. Spiritual direction must be able to recognize what are the driving forces in a person's life. All of these vices seen here have their positive replacements which we will study later on. We have simply wanted to describe Francis' way of speaking about the conflict experienced in the spiritual life.

Behind these descriptions two realities seem especially predominant: the desire to appropriate for oneself that which is of God or of another, and disobedient arrogance. Appropriation is an attempt to isolate the person from others. By means of referring all things to oneself, the person effectively sets himself or herself apart from others. The "other" becomes an object of comparison and is no longer a "you" a possibility of communion. Because of this appropriation the person becomes a "murderer" (Adm. 3), for he or she kills the life of another in order to have all life for self. Because of one's inability to tolerate the "other" (leper, unwanted pregnancy, a confrère or con-soer...), one attempts really or symbolically to eliminate him or her.

Once again it is Brother Giles who understands this relationship betwewen love of God and love of neighbor, and how the vices block it:

> The more we appreciate the good that the Lord performs in another, the more grace that good brings us, as long as we know how to cultivate and reap and preserve it, because the good is not of man but of God." And also, "I am not good and spiritual as I ought to be, and I do not greatly appreciate and rejoice over another's good, and I do not grieve or feel compassion for the misfortunes and tribulations of others, and so I am not profiting from the good and bad from which I should profit. So I sin against charity, my good diminishes, and I fall into sin. (*Life*, 1 in Brown, p. 242; see also p. 264).
>
> "That is the way of salvation: that you rejoice over your neighbor's good and grieve over his evil, and think good of others and evil of yourself, and honor others and despise yourself." This "think evil" and "despise" can be easily translated into modern terminology.

Because of his or her vices, a person is driven to "appropriate" others. But the relation with others is not based on any obligation towards them. They are there to help me develop my social person; when they are no

longer useful, I dump them. The remark by Ogletree helps us appreciate this perspective:

> Contrary to our ordinary way of thinking "the full confirmation of our individuality emerges only in a radical transcendence of all concern for self, including a concern for rights [cf. Adm. 23]. The transcendence of self-concern does not so much mark the end of the possibility of egoistic enjoyment as the termination of the urgent attachment to such enjoyment. For the sake of the other, I have the power to give it up without resentment or self-hatred." Sin denies "a recognition in the other of a center of meaning and value which cannot legitimately be reduced in significance to our own drives for self-actualisation." (p. 42, 52).

Separated from God the source of all Good, "the person feels fragile. She is afraid. She will mask this anxiety... by possessing, by dominating or by excluding others." (Hubaut, p. 58-59) This is vice.

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Poverty: Thirteenth Century Revitalization in the Writings of Clare of Assisi

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Introduction

A current of thought propagated by one Franciscan scholar in a recent article in *Haversack*[1] and disseminated in seminars for Franciscan sisters in various regions of the United States deals with the "plight" of women in the Franciscan movement. According to this interpretation of Franciscan beginnings, all was going well with the brothers and sisters as testified to by Jacques de Vitry in a letter referring to his experience near Perugia in 1216. Then in 1219 Cardinal Hugolino locked up the women and down came the curtain on feminine Franciscanism. Sweet but so very short was their sachet across history. The brothers carried on at least until 1234 when they too left the stage with the advent of clericalization among the men.

This to be sure is a parody of the early history of the Franciscan Order. David Flood, great Franciscan scholar that he is, has written scholarly tomes about the beginnings of the Franciscan movement. However, when he gives this folksy, soap opera scenario he serves by jarring us out of complacency to ask, really what was going on in thirteenth century Italy.

David is a self-proclaimed proponent of the Marxist dialectic that history is the result of social and economic forces at work over against one another. However, there is another school of thought, that of Marc Bloch, which claims history is factored by mentalities and the evolution of these mentalities. The truth lies most likely in an intricate weaving, and interdependence of the two.

Another great Franciscan scholar, Ignatius Brady, writes that "medieval texts, especially hagiography, are notably difficult for the modern reader to absorb."[2] The story and writings of an individual need to be understood

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from the person's epoch, the currents of thought and concerns of their century rather than facile comparisons due to superficial similarities with our own.[3]

The concern of this paper is to shed some light on Clare of Assisi, thirteenth century woman protagonist of the Franciscan Order. To understand Clare we need a hermeneutic or set of tools for interpreting her words and actions in the mindset and thought patterns of thirteenth century Italy. To amass such a chest of tools is far beyond the scope of this paper.

The single area of focus here is the climate of reform, renewal and even apocalyptic break-through of new spiritual energy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Lester K. Little writes, "There was a specific coherent line of reform running from the Italian hermits of the eleventh century through the early generations of friars."[4]

Marjorie Reeves corroborates the words of Professor Little. She writes of the thirteenth century as *novissimis diebus*. The day is breaking. There is a sense of urgency to get busy about the mission. What mission? Christ has come again in his servant Francis, calling all people to penitence, reform, renewal.[5]

Without a doubt a new modality of thought was infusing and informing people's lives. The introspection and growing psychological awareness of the twelfth century burst forth in new ways of looking at life and the world. More profoundly there was a new way of being together and for one another as people. There was developing a sense of responsibility for the burgeoning city population, Christendom as a whole, and also, among the more perceptive, beyond ideological boundaries to the Muslims.

Bernard of Chartres liked to say, "Standing on the shoulders of giants we can see further." Francis and Clare inherited all that had gone before. They held the tradition of the hermits, in their solitary seeking of God. Francis literally went often to one of his many hermitages to pray. Clare prayed alone in her cell. They continued the cenobitic life, shaping a life as lesser brothers and poor sisters. Francis took inspiration from the Canons and their life of preaching to the people, while Clare saw her preaching as by way of example.

There is another current essential to this confluence of energy and life. There is within Franciscanism from the beginning even to the present a strain of eschatological urgency and apocalypticism without which the Franciscan "mix" makes no sense.

A seminal figure in this apocalyptic thrust was Joachim of Fiore, twelfth century hermit, reformer, writer and Scriptural interpreter. Bernard McGinn writes of Joachim as a "Janus-figure." He held the riches of

Christian religious tradition from the past, but he was also a man peering into the future. The Holy Spirit was out in front of history for Joachim. It was the Spirit of God that was "the magnet of reform" summoning the Church into the future.[6] This future would be a better one than was presently known.[7] Optimism fueled energy for renewal and reform, reform in the sense of Gerhart Ladner's

> free, intentional, and ever perfectible, multiple, prolonged and ever repeated efforts by humans to reassert and augment values pre-existent (transcendental) in the spirit-material compound of the world.[8]

It is difficult to establish any direct contact between Francis and Clare of Assisi with the writings of the Abbot of Fiore. The first documentary witnesses linking particular Franciscans in connection with Joachim's works are in the 1240's. Salimbene in his *Chronicle* names Hugh of Digne, Rudolph of Saxony, John of Parma, as well as Brother Salimbene himself as having been Joachites.[9] Though the documentary link is missing, unmistakably present in both Francis and Clare is a sharing of Joachim's confidence in the coming age. There is the same energetic, dynamic sense of moving into the future with an implicit sense of fashioning that future in response to divine initiative.

Clare experienced her vocation as coming from the Triune God.[10] The heavenly Father called Clare through the working of the Holy Spirit, to follow Christ, the son of God. Her vocation was mediated through the person and the teaching of Francis of Assisi. He was the living contact point and his program was the context of her living and moving into the future.[11] And indeed, their contemporaries, especially those reflecting and writing about Francis and Clare after their deaths, saw them as eschatological figures ushering in a new age. E. Randolph Daniel paraphrases the 1282 author of the *Meditatio pauperis in solitudine:* "Then in the *hora novissima* God had made St. Francis into the image of the crucified Christ and given him St. Clare, as Adam had been given Eve."[12]

Poverty was the *modus vivendi* for Clare, a blue print for living spiritual renewal, not for her day only but with a lively sense of those who would follow in the life. She writes of poverty as the way for herself, for her sisters and those who would come after because it was the "way of the Son of God." Francis and Clare saw Jesus of the Gospels as a poor man among the poor. He lived without power and without the security of possessions. They were challenged to do the same, moving unencumbered into the future.[13]

The question I address in this paper is how do Claire's writings on poverty reflect her participation in the contemporary spiritual motifs of

the thirteenth century: *ecclesia renovata, imitatio Christi* and *vita evangelica*. In Clare's letters to Agnes of Prague she encourages her friend to *imitatio Christi,* self-emptying kenosis in order to be joined with Christ in spousal relation. Clare's *Rule* which she wrote and struggled all her life to have approved is the *vita evangelica,* a life of disappropriation of goods and ascesis of insecurity to walk in *vestigia Christi*. The Testament is considered to be the last writing of Clare. Here there is a tone of confidence in the pleroma being realized in herself and the community. The sisters are a microcosm of the *ecclesia renovata* and are called to be models and mirrors for Christians in the world. I hope to show that Clare's words on poverty taken in the context of her personal life story show her to be at the crest of the future oriented thirteenth century spiritual movement.

Thirteenth century spiritual revival expressed itself through *imitatio Christi*. This is clearly seen in the *Letters of Clare to Agnes*. Clare wrote four letters to Agnes of Prague, a Bohemian princess who welcomed the friars to Prague in 1232. Shortly after, in 1234, Agnes adopted the Poor Clare way of life, and wrote to Clare for advice and support. The letters responding to Agnes were written between 1234 and 1253, the last one shortly before Clare died. They contain a wellspring of Franciscan teaching. Among the spiritual motifs is a strong current of thought in the line of Philipians 2:6ff. Clare calls Agnes to a radical poverty with contemplation as interfaced. *Imitatio Christi* from Clare's feminine perspective is a spousal relationship with the person of the Son of God incarnate. The relation with the poor Christ is not limited to that of spouse only. Following Francis in his "Letters to the Faithful" with their universalist call to multiple relationship with God through the Holy Spirit, Clare writes to Agnes:

> You are the spouse, and the mother and the sister of my Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Mt. 12:50)... and have been adorned resplendently with the sign of inviolable virginity and most holy poverty.[14]

Clare shared in all that was Franciscan. At the heart of the Order's development was to be sure radical poverty but also mysticism and a desire even to be martyred in the service of proclaiming the Gospel.[15]

Sister Balvino of Coccorano, one of the nuns of San Damiano, testifying under oath three months after Clare's death, said that upon hearing of the martyrdom in 1219 of the friars in north Africa, Clare greatly desired to go to Morocco "so fervent in spirit that willingly she would have endured martyrdom for love of God in defense of the faith and her Order."[16]

By the time she was composing the first letter to Agnes, Clare had shifted her position. Like another would-be-martyr, Giles of Assisi, Clare

saw an alternative mode of conformity to Christ. It seems that after Giles had become a recluse, the only death he wanted to die was that of contemplation, to know God by interior experience. For Giles physical martyrdom was part of penitence whereas contemplation was union with his God.[17] It was similar for Clare. She lived her kenoticism by means of poverty that was christological rather than ascetical. In her letters to Agnes, Clare continually focuses attention on the littleness, weakness and suffering of her Beloved Christ, that Agnes might co-suffer with Him as she was mystically one with Him.[18]

In 1233 Emperor Frederick II sought Agnes' hand in marriage in order to forge an alliance with her brother, Wenceslaus I King of Bohemia. Agnes appealed to Pope Gregory IX who intervened on her behalf. Clare's first letter to Agnes is a celebration of Agnes' choice of Christ over Frederick, poverty over worldly riches.

> For, though you, more than others, could have enjoyed the magnificence and honor and dignity of the world, and could have been married to the illustrious Caesar with splendor befitting you and his Excellency, you have rejected all these things and have chosen with your whole heart and soul a life of poverty and destitution.[19]

The friars expressed their conformity to Christ in contemplation and mission.[20] For Clare the conformity was expressed through poverty and contemplation.

> Look upon him who became contemptible for you, and follow him, making yourself contemptible in the world for him. Your Spouse... became the lowest of men... gaze upon him, consider him, contemplate him as you desire to imitate him.[21]

Christ suffered for you and left you an example to follow in his footsteps" (1 Peter 2:21). Clare paraphrases Scripture to encourage Agnes, "who in the spirit of great humility and most ardent charity has *adhaesisti vestigiis* of Him to whom you have merited to be joined as spouse."[22]

"Imitatio Christi" was productive of redemptive love, the clearest expression of which was their patient, even joyful endurance under suffering or execution.[23] This was true of the friars on mission. Clare, however, had her own form of mission which she saw to be fruitful in "the field of the world and in human hearts."

> I see too, that by humility, the virtue of faith, and the strong arms of poverty, you have taken hold of that incomparable treasure hidden in the field of the world and the hearts of men (Mt. 13:44) with which you have purchased that field of him by whom all things have been made from nothing. To use the words of the Apostle in their

proper sense, I consider you a co-worker of God Himself (1 Cor. 3-9; Rom. 16:3) and a support of the weak members of His ineffable Body.[24]

Clare of Assisi lived and established a form of life as we like to say today on the "cutting edge."

Shortly before her death Clare wrote her most impassioned letter to her friend. Clare urges Agnes to contemplate her spouse, Jesus Christ "who suffered on the wood of the cross and died thereon the most shameful kind of death... may you cry out 'Draw me after you... O heavenly Spouse! I will run and not tire...' "[25]

The *imitatio Christi* is lived out in the *vita evangelica* which for Clare is none other than "the form of our poverty" as written in her *Rule*. Clare did not write a Rule and attempt to live it. She received a divine inspiration through Francis and responded to it with her life. It worked, and worked well for Clare, attested to by her canonization two years after her death, At the end of her life she received approbation for her Rule but in truth it was more for her life. This woman had wrestled with God's Church for forty years, and Clare had prevailed.

The Rule of Clare begins:

> The form of life of the order of Poor Sisters which the Blessed Francis established is this: to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.[26]

Clare sees the life of the Poor Sisters simply as the "form of our poverty." "When the year of probation is ended, let her be received into obedience, promising to observe our life and form of poverty.[27]

For Clare participation in the *vita evangelica* meant a life of disappropriation of goods and an ascesis in insecurity.

> The sisters shall not acquire anything as their own, neither a house nor a place nor anything at all; instead, as pilgrims and strangers in this world who serve the Lord in poverty and humility, let them send confidently for alms.[28]

Clare equates the form of life with poverty, as if all the rest can be subsumed under this one evangelical counsel.

> In the election of the Abbess... if a non-professed should be elected or otherwise given them, she is not to be obeyed unless she first professes our form of poverty.[29]

Poverty for Clare was not merely a spiritual ideal. Clare called the sisters to commit their lives to the Poor Christ and to live out the commitment in concrete choices and particular details.

> And for the love of the most holy and beloved Child who was wrapped in the poorest of swaddling clothes and laid in a manger and of his most holy Mother, I admonish, entreat, and exhort my sisters that they always wear the poorest of garments.[30]

Because of the missionary thrust of the friars' form of life, obedience played a significant role in their self-immolation with Christ.

> The friars were to be both contemplatives and missionaries, striving for union with God and inspiring others to seek to reform themselves according to the model of evangelical life.[31]

Clare, however, believed that Francis had given the sisters a form of life based on poverty, and this at the beginning of their Gospel call.

> When the Blessed Father saw that we had no fear of poverty, hard work, suffering, shame, or the contempt of the world... he wrote for us a form of life... to live according to the perfection of the holy Gospel.[32]

And again at the end of his life:

> That we might never turn aside from the most holy poverty... shortly before his death Francis wrote for us... "I, brother Francis, the little one, wish to follow the life and poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ. I ask and counsel you to live always in this most holy life and poverty.[33]

The mission that the sisters held for themselves and for their brothers and sisters in the world, was to model and mirror radical dependence on God. Shortly after the trauma of Francis' death and the demanding challenge of living without the one whom many considered "the living Rule," Clare was seen as a beacon, holding up for all the ideals of Francis.

> The burning desire to live the Gospel with which Francis inflamed the hearts of his first followers was nurtured and propagated (after his death) by the encyclical letter of Brother Elias, the "Sacrum Commercium" and by St. Clare.[34]

Clare remained at San Damiano from 1212 to 1253.

> Her life was outwardly stable and peaceful, save for the occasion when she is said to have routed some Saracen troops of the emperor Frederick II. But popes and cardinal protectors found it necessary to provide her own and her sister communities with no less than six rules between 1219 and 1263.[35]

Unable to deal with Gregory IX regarding the Rule, she let the matter rest, to take it up again with Innocent IV. Her concern was fidelity to the "form of poverty" given by Francis. This concern prevented her from accepting the Rule confirmed by Innocent in 1245 or the one the Pope himself drew up in 1247.[36]

Was this a simple theological squabble concerning a stubborn woman and Church authorities? Professor Ladner writes: "Some of the great events which truly transformed history ultimately depended on changes, often only slight and subtle."[37] Clare stepped outside the feudal landed class by refusing to administer lands and property. Clare disengaged herself from the developing mercantile system by requiring young women entering the monastery to come empty-handed. Heretofore the fate of a woman without a dowry was to remain at home as the property of her family or to hire herself out as a live-in-laborer often resulting in prostitution. In Clare, the first woman to write and have approved by the Roman Church a Rule for women, all women took a step toward claiming that evangelical liberty and equality won for them by the Christ, come to set all people free.

This *ecclesia renovata* was being realized in Clare and her sisters at San Damiano as seen in her *Testament*.

Popular among some Franciscan scholars today is the theory that Clare would have preferred to be out on the road with Francis preaching to the people. After all this was the new spiritual movement that was breaking in the Church.

> Women... felt some need for new forms of spiritual expression. Certain women displayed great intellectual and spiritual resources, to cite only Heloise, Mary of Olignies and St. Clare. But the request of St. Clare and her sisters to participate in imitating the apostolic life along with their Franciscan brothers was refused. The old fashioned cloistered life was definitively imposed upon them.[38]

This is an interesting hypothesis but there is no documentary proof to back it up. Clare was contending with the popes over her form of life, but not a word indicated that the struggle revolved around a life of preaching for the sisters. On the contrary Clare, writing in her *Testament*, evinced joy and contentment in her life at San Damiano.

> When Francis was building the Church of San Damiano... this holy man, in the great joy and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, made a prophecy about us which the Lord fulfilled later. He shouted in French "come and help me build the monastery of San Damiano because ladies will dwell here who will glorify our heavenly Father throughout His holy Church by their celebrated and holy manner of life."[39]

In the *Fioretti*, the vignette recounting Francis' dilemma as to whether he should spend his days in contemplation or preaching, the author has Clare and Silvester responding, "He wants you to go about the world preaching, because God did not call you for yourself alone but also for the salvation of others." Bonaventure, on the other hand, and in this case an earlier source and more reflective of the thirteenth century simply records in the *Legenda Maior*, "It was God's will that Francis should go out to preach as herald of Christ." In fact, as indicated in the study of hermitages undertaken by Raphael Brown, Francis spent equal or more time praying than he did in the actual preaching ministry.

Early Franciscanism was far from any form of pragmatic activism. The Franciscan charism was a renewed way of being *ecclesia*, that is a people called together by God. It was mystical and eschatological. The friars on the road and the sisters in the monastery saw themselves as having renounced the world so as to live the gospel of the Kingdom. By their lives of poverty, humility and above all fraternal love they were allowing the Kingdom to be realized in their midst. Their *ecclesia* was at the service of the Kingdom.[40]

The *ecclesia renovata* of Francis and Clare was very much the Church of Lateran IV, focused on sacramental life and prayer. It was the Eucharistic canons of the Council that Francis invoked so often in his preaching and letters. Clare's life at San Damiano was centered on Christ in the sacrament of the altar testified to in the Process of Canonization and the ancient biography sometimes attributed to Brother Celano.

Reform, Professor Ladner writes,

> contains as an essential element, that of multiplicity (not a one shot entering into the Death and Resurrection experience of Christ) but involving prolongation and repetition . The ceaselessly repeated sacrifice of Christ in the sacrament of the altar may perhaps be seen as the exemplary and vivifying center of Christian reform.[41]

Clare begins her Testament in a tribute to God's fidelity and generosity. "Among all the other gifts which we have received and continue to receive daily from the benefactor... is the greatest gift of our vocation."[42] Clare

writes of her fidelity and the call to continuity of this vocation in the Church.

> Time and again, we bound ourselves to our Lady, most holy Poverty, so that after my death, the Sisters present and to come would never abandon her.[43]

Professor Daniel writes that the primary means of conversion envisioned by Francis was that of example.[44]

Clare writes in the Testament of the Poor Sisters' mission of example:

> the Lord himself not only has set us as an example and mirror for others, but also for our own sisters whom the Lord will call to our way of life, so that they in turn will be a mirror and example to those living in the world.[45]

The first biographer of Clare states that her conversion process began with hearing. Word came to Clare that Francis, the "new man," was "renewing" the world by the example and teaching.[46] Clare saw herself and her sisters continuing the Franciscan mission of renewing the Church and the world through the quality and content of their life of poverty at San Damiano.

In conclusion I believe this paper shows that Clare of Assisi lived and established a form of life as we like to say today on the "cutting edge." Clare is above all the woman of hope. Not the emasculated wishful thinking that at times masquerades as hope but an existential stance.

> Christian hope works actively... striving to create within history the condition for the realization of the Kingdom by building the earth and contributing to the enrichment of human life and love. Hope does this... leading a life that is both worldly and eschatological, lived under the sign of the cross and the power of the spirit.[47]

Clare lived in expectant trust in the Triune God who had provided and continued to provide all and more than she could ever need or want. As she lay on her deathbed, Sister Benvenuta overheard Clare whisper to herself:

> Go in peace for you have a good guide. He who created you has provided for you for after He created you he infused into you his Holy Spirit and has ever guarded you as a mother does her little child.[48]

Footnotes

[1]David Flood, O.F.M., *Haversack*, (Dec., 1985).

[2]Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., *The Legend and Writings of St. Clare of Assisi*, (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.): The Franciscan Institute, 1953), 117.

[3]Caroline Walker Bynum, *Docere Verbo et Exemplo*, (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1979). 196.

[4]Lester K. Little, "Evangelical Poverty, The New Money Economy and Violence, " *Poverty in the Middle Ages*, Ed. David Flood, (Werl/Westf.: Dietrich - Coelde - Verlag, 1975), 16.

[5]Marjorie Reeves, Preface, *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1979) xvii.

[6]Bernard McGinn. *The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the History of Western Thought*, (New York: Collier Macmillan Publ., 1985) 236.

[7]McGinn, 237.

[8]Gerhard B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1967) 35.

[9]Salimbene da Parma, *Chronicle of Salimbene de Adam*, Trans. Joseph L. Baird, Giuseppe Baglivi and John Robert Kane, (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval and Renaissance texts, 1968) 79.

[10]McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 235.

[11]Duane V. Lapsanski, *Evangelical Perfection*, (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1977) 162.

[12]E. Randolph Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission in the High Middle Ages*, (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1975) 35.

[13]Leslie J. Hoppe, O.F.M., *Being Poor: A Biblical Study*. (Wilmington, Delawere: Michael Glazier, 1987) 166-67.

[14]Claire d'Assise, *Ecrits: Introduction, Texte Latin, Traduction, Notes et Index*, Marie-France Becker, Jean-François Godet et Thadée Matura, (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1985) 87.

[15]Daniel, *The Franciscan*, xiv.

[16]Nesta de Robeck, *Saint Clare of Assisi*, (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1951) 206.

[17]Daniel, *The Franciscan*, 43.

[18]Eric Doyle, O.F.M., "Discipleship of Christ in Clare's Letters to Blessed Agnes of Prague," *Franciscan Christology*, (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute Publications, 1980) 17.

[19]Claire d'Assise, *Ecrits*, 85.

[20]Daniel, *The Franciscan*, 109.

[21]Claire d'Assise, *Ecrits*, 97.

[22]Claire d'Assise, 93.

[23]Daniel, *The Franciscan*, xiii.

[24]Claire d'Assise, Ecrits, 103.

[25]Claire d'Assise, 115.

[26]Claire d'Assise, 125.

[27]Claire d'Assise, 127-129.

[28]Claire d'Assise, 147.
[29]Claire d'Assise, 133-135
[30]Claire d'Assise, 129.
[31]Daniel, *The Franciscan*, 30.
[32]Claire d'Assise, *Ecrits*, 143.
[33]Claire d'Assise, 145.
[34]Lapsanski, *Evangelical*, 287.
[35]Rosalind B. Brooke and Christopher Brooke, "Saint Clare," *Medieval Women*, ed. Derek Baker, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978) 276.
[36]Doyle, "Discipleship," 16.
[37]Ladner, *The Idea*, 35.
[38]Little, *Evangelical*, 25.
[39]Claire d'Assise, *Ecrits*, 167-169.
[40]Daniel, *The Franciscan*, 36.
[41]Ladner, *The Idea*, 32.
[42]Claire d'Assise, *Ecrits*, 167.
[43]Claire d'Assise, 175.
[44]Daniel, *The Franciscan*, 39.
[45]Claire d'Assise, *Ecrits*, 169-171.
[46]Lapsanski *Evangelical*, 162.
[47]Zachary Hayes, O.F.M., *What Are They Saying About the End of the World?*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1983) 68.
[48]de Roebeck, *Saint Clare*, 216.

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LaVerna

On LaVerna's craggy heights
Birds twitter, humanity
whispers.

Yet silence fissures the earth,
in upward adoration —
groping, love embracing.

Sr. Virginia Balk, O.S.F.

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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

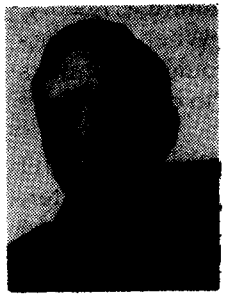
[1]I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).



Scholarship is Ministry and is Franciscan

It probably would have saved the order a lot of grief if St. Francis hadn't been canonized until St. Bonaventure was, and Bonaventure canonized shortly after his death. Then Franciscans would have had as role-models two early saints — Bonaventure and Anthony (canonized in 1232) — who saw learning as a way of God. And then perhaps some of the anti-intellectualism that runs as an undercurrent throughout Franciscan history would not be with us, as it still is today.

We know that the life and words of Francis offer us some excellent weapons to criticize those who see value in and feel called to a life of study and writing. That kind of life doesn't seem to have any immediate practical value and lends itself to accumulation of books, a yen for travel, and an inflated idea of one's own ego. But history and experience seem to indicate the last two find themselves into Franciscan lives regardless of interest in study. And with regard to immediateness of results, we just need to recall that ideas transform slowly — they are not amphetamines, and that human beings keep their traditions in writing, else they lack them.

Am I beating a dead horse or tilting at a windmill? Is it entirely uncommon that secretaries hired by the community have constantly upgraded typewriters (and computers) while some of those who write have to do so on vintage typewriters that thoughtful relatives gave them in pre-electronic times? Is it unheard of that someone who wants to prepare himself or herself for a career in teaching is assigned more pastoral experiences like visiting or assisting in hospitals, or serving in a parish during summers? Granted that writing about a soup kitchen or people engaged in Aids counselling is not the first-hand experience of doing those things, but it is an experience for the writer, and it does make the type of ministry written about visible to many.

In my Province at least the ministry of artist seems to be getting recognition, even though it is kind of a loner's work. Equally shouldn't we acknowledge that research in poetry, literature, history, philosophy and theology is a worth-while ministry. When I say "acknowledge", I mean a policy. Too often, it seems, would-be scholars must be aggressive, even pushy — or else "political"to obtain leisure or support to pursue their ministry.

Though scholarship can be turned into a hobby, it certainly isn't one, but rather a demanding discipline. And scholars do minister, for they seek to open minds to the truth and beauty that other human visionaries have seen. Scholars give the teacher — and the formation director — what values, concepts, and traditions are to be passed on. Scholars seek to clear the human mind of ignorance, which St. Bernardine of Siena, with some rhetorical exaggeration to be sure, describes as "the cause of all the evils in the world." Just as the vow of poverty deprives us of something, only that we may possess the Lord more fully; so the scholar drives out ignorance in order that wisdom, "one of the greatest riches of the soul," may be found there.

There are a diversity of gifts and ministries as Paul reminds us. It has been a Franciscan tradition to recognize this. In our genuine pastoral concern and zeal, let us not forget that scholarship ultimately is people-work. And let us scholars and non-scholars not forget Francis' commission to St. Anthony, to proceed academically in such a way as "not to extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotion."

Fr Julian Davies ofm

The "Virtues" in Admonition XXVII of the Writings of Francis of Assisi and their Usefulness in Spiritual Discernment

Rev. DAMIEN ISABELL, O.F.M.

Introduction

In my previous article I offered a brief reflection on each of the "vices" mentioned in Admonition XXVII and their importance for discerning the tension of the spiritual life. I said that each vice has its opposing virtue which opens up the life of the person to God and to others. Now I would like to follow the same method and study each virtue in the light of Francis' writings and of the legends in order to see how much an analysis might be helpful in the ministry to spiritual direction.

Before beginning my analysis, I want to remind the reader of the text we are studying:

> Where there is charity and wisdom
> there is neither fear nor ignorance.
> Where there is patience and humility,
> there is neither anger nor disturbance.
> Where there is poverty with joy,
> there is neither covetousness nor avarice.
> Where there is inner peace and meditation,
> there is neither anxiousness nor dissipation.
> Where there is fear of the Lord to guard the house,
> there the enemy cannot gain entry.
> Where there is mercy and discernment,
> there is neither excess nor hardness of heart. (AB, p. 35)

The January, 1988 issue of **The Cord** *carried the first of Fr. Damien's articles on St. Francis' Admonition XXVII. This second article completes the study by the St. Louis based friar who is currently a missionary in Zaire.*

I. SIGNS OF GOD'S PRESENCE IN THE PERSON'S ATTITUDES

Charity. "Where there is charity... there is no fear..." In English the word "Charity" is overly-charged with the idea of doing something for another, losing completely its primary meaning of God doing something for us. Charity is first of all God's gift of communion in His life which helps us understand why perfect love casts out fear. When one lives in charity one is not alone, and aloneness, according to many Africans, is equivalent to death.

Francis discovers this communion with God by contemplating his goodness: "He alone is good" (Ep Fid II; Reg NB, 17); "You are good, all good... and are love, charity..." (*The Praises of God* II; AB, p. 100; see the *Praises to be said at all the hours*, AB, p. 102). A similar insight is found in his *Prayer Inspired by the Our Father* (AB, p. 104):

> O our most holy Father... who are in heaven
> in the angels and in the saints,
> *enlighten them to love*, (emphasis mine)
> because you, Lord, are Light
> enflaming them to love,
> because You, Lord, are love...

This love which God has shared creates a desire in the person to return this love and to reach its fullest expression in communion with God. This love enters human reality "through Jesus Christ" (Reg NB, 17) and the human person returns to the Father "through" Jesus Christ:

> And because all of us wretches and sinners are not worthy to pronounce your name, we humbly ask that our Lord Jesus Christ your beloved Son in whom you were well-pleased together with the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, give you thanks as it pleases You and Him for everything.
> (He) who always satisfies you in everything through whom You have done such great things for us. (Reg NB, 23)

There is a marian dimension to this love for we bear Him in our hearts and bodies by means of love (Ep Fid) I).

The concrete sign of this love is found in love for people among themselves (see Reg NB, 11). St. Clare interprets Francis' teaching in her *Testament* (AB, p. 231):

> Loving one another with the charity of Christ, let the love you have in your hearts be shown outwardly in your deeds so that compelled by such an example, the sisters may always grow in love of God and in charity for one another.

Likewise, this love is familial (Reg B, 6; *Testament of Siena*) and even maternal (1221, 9; 1223, 6; 3S 41-42).

> ... and may we love our neighbors as ourselves by drawing them all with our whole strength to your love, by rejoicing in the good fortune of others as well as our own, and by sympathizing with the misfortunes of others, and by giving offense to no one... (AB, p. 105. See also p. 106 under "as we forgive those...")

This drawing of people into God's love (which could be a definition of the ministry to spiritual direction) is expressed throughout our sources: Ep Fid II, 1221, 4, 5, 11, 6, 7; Adm 25; Adm 11; 1223, 10; *Rule of St. Clare*, 10; Ep Min; Cant Sol, "Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for your love and bear infirmity and tribulation..." (See also II C 89).

As we can see from all this, the person who shares this love will have nothing to fear. Consequently, in the ministry to spiritual direction, there has to be established a love relationship within which the persons will not be afraid to speak about their truth. As we have seen, each person is capable of communicating (or of hindering) God's love to another. If the person has never known love, the minister will have to walk through the stages of his or her life until the moment when he or she can love because of the love he or she has known.

In the spiritual diagnosis, the minister will help bring to consciousness one's fears and one's experience of love. By doing so, both can discover what kinds of relationships have fashioned the person's life. One question that will have to be faced: Is this person capable at this moment of being loved and of loving, in a word, of reciprocity? With great gentleness it should brecome clear what is the quality of the person's love, and which fears have to be put under its rule.

Wisdom. "Where there is... wisdom... there is no ignorance..." "Hail, Queen Wisdom, may the Lord protect you, with your sister, holy pure simplicity..." (AB, p. 151). "The Spirit of the Lord... above all things longs for the divine fear and the divine wisdom and the divine love of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Reg NB, 77). "The Son of God" is called "True wisdom of the Father" (Ep Fid, II). The role of this wisdom is clear; "Holy Wisdom destroys all the wisdom of this world, and the wisdom of the body" (AB, p. 152; also Reg. NB, 17). This wisdom works to recuperate the dignity of the person (Adm. 5). Because of the wisdom of the flesh, the person has lost his or her transparency (Reg AB, 17; Ep Ant; Reg B, 10).

This transparency recovered is reflected in the wisdom of the desert: "Do not judge a fornicator if you are chaste, for if you do, you too are violating the law as much as he is. For he who said thou shalt not fornicate also said thou shalt not judge" (Merton, p. 41). In this wisdom we find what was precious to Francis: agreement between belief and concrete action. At times he severely corrects those who pursue studies because they tend to lose themselves in a conceptual world, and tend to avoid the question: "But you, who do you say that I am?" According to Francis, it is not fair to leave a person thinking that the reality thought is the totality of reality. "To reach him whom you do not know you must go by a way you do not know." (Finley, p. 12). The person who comes with unrealistic expectations will certainly be disappointed:

> Love is sought, not for the feeling it engenders but for its own sake. Looking for a direct experience of Christ, in the sense of trying to find out what goes on, is to condemn oneself to failure. Christ does not will to be reduced to an object of curiosity. God and the Risen Christ allow themselves to be seen through poor signs, which everyone possesses within themselves or their surroundings. To be discovered they must be lived out. Enough for us to live by this daily bread, seeking nothing other than the opening of our eyes, hearkening in order to be faithful, responding in love, discovering the Word of God in silence, finding his presence in what seems to be absence, feeling ourselves called to a life hereafter... It is a process of effecting a unity within oneself, to go on to meet even more closely the One who is God Love... This process is effected by the action of the same God and by our collaboration...
>
> Prayer, and experience of God, does not mean the strict control of our interior lives in the sense that we achieve a peaceful balance or a psychological harmony in our lives. Rather, it is the response to the Love which is, of itself, a vital unity, union with God. This unity of life is something we in our poverty can achieve... (Biffet, p. 26-27)

Wisdom, then, will replace ignorance. True, culturally a person might remain ignorant, but it is far more serious if the person loses touch with herself and her God, it is far more serious to be ignorant of where one has come from and where one is going. In spiritual guidance, there must be truth in its most full meaning, so that the person, by discovering his or her true self, will not constantly run after substitutes to prop up a false understanding of onself and of the world.

Patience. "Where there is patience... there is no anger..." As is often pointed out, "patience" comes from the Latin "pati" to suffer. I don't think that this means that a person has to passively and naively allow himself to be tread upon. Jean Mouroux speaks of "active passivity" which

is perhaps better translated in English by the word "receptivity." Once a person accepts to follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ, there will be many occasions by which this choice will be put to the test. For Francis, patience "begins with the contemplation of the Good Shepherd who suffered the passion of the cross to save his sheep" (See *Diz. Fran.*, col. 1227; also Adm. 6). "Take care not to be disturbed" (Mt. 24, 6); "For through your patience you will possess your souls" (Lk 212, 19); "whoever perseveres to the end will be saved" (Mt. 10, 22; See 24, 13 and 1221, 16). In this perspective, patience enables the person to act wisely, to keep before his or her eyes the reality of our graced and sinful world and to live in its perspective. "The Spirit of the Lord... strives for humility and patience and the pure and simple and true peace of the truly spiritual person." (AB, p. 123). "Instead, let them pursue what they must desire above all things, to have the Spirit of the Lord and His holy manner of working, to pray always to Him with a pure heart and to have humility, patience in persecution and weakness, and to love those who persecute us, find fault with us, or rebuke us..." (Reg B, 10). Note that humility and patience go together (Adm. 13), because anger or impatience often proceeds from our exaggerated sense of self-importance: "What good is it for a person to despise himself and mortify his body with fasts and prayers and disciplines and not be able to endure a single offense from his neighbor... And this is a warning sign, because his hidden pride is put to the test by the insult which he receives..." (Brown, p. 268 and read the whole chapter on patience; also Adm. 23).

This patience must be extended to those who sin: "Nor should he become angry with a brother because of a fault of that brother, but with all patience and humility, let him admonish and support him..." (AB, p. 70). Such anger against a sinner is misplaced, for sin is against God, not us, and God is always ready to forgive, so what is the source of our anger? Once again it is brother Giles who perfectly undertstands Francis' teaching: "Whatever a man does, whether good or evil, he does it to himself. So you should not be angry if anyone offends you, but you ought to have compassion for his sin" (Brown, p. 267; see also Cant Sol; II C 49; *Praises of God*, "You are patience."). The highest expression of this patience (and compassion) is found in a situation of "perfect joy": "I tell you this: If I had patience and did not become upset, there would be true joy in this and true virtue and the salvation of the soul" (AB, p. 166). Why? because patience is based on the conviction that "the Lord will realize his plan and will keep his promises" (I C 29; LM III 7; LM IV 7; 3S 18, 23, 36, 40; Sp 4; 5; I C 39, 12).

During times of sickness, when one must allow oneself to be served,

when one is "useless," true patience and humility are discovered (I C 102, 107; LM XIV 2; II C 177; 213). During St. Clare's final illness, Br. Raynald counselled her to be patient during the martyrdom of her sickness. Clare answered: "From the moment that I have known the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ through his servant Francis, no suffering has been bothersome to me, no penance burdensome, no illness difficult" (CL, 44). This same spirit is revealed in Francis' answer to a brother who offered to read him the Bible: "I have already made so much of Scripture my own that I have more than enough to meditate on and revolve in my mind. I need no more, son; I know Christ, the poor crucified one" (II C 105).

Patience is the condition of perseverance. "Francis... walked in the footsteps of Christ through innumerable labors and severe illnesses, and he did not draw back his foot until he had brought what he had perfectly begun to an even more perfect end" (II C 210). This patience is a sign of God's own action:

> Christ himself had said: 'I will not leave you, nor abandon you,' and another time, 'Do not fear, little flock, for it has pleased the Father to give you the kingdom, besides all you need for your lives.' Indeed St. Francis used to say that the omnipotence of God shines forth in the faith and in the patience of the saints... (Fior, p. 1756)

Fidelity depends on God's power:

> Let not the magnitude of the struggle deter you, nor the greatness of the labor, for you will have a great reward... Hold fast the confession of your hope without wavering. Run with love to the fight set before you. Run through patience, which is extremely necessary for you, that doing the will of God, you may receive the promise. For God is able to bring a happy consummation by his grace to what you have undertaken beyond your powers, for he is faithful to his promise. (*Omnibus*), p. 1594)

We can summarize Francis' teaching on patience under three headings: a) patience with God, b) patience with our brothers and sisters, c) patience in trials. Patience with God has two meanings: first, being patient with the way God deals with me (which is identical with patience with oneself), and secondly, being patient with God's own patience, he who is patience. To understand "patience with God", read I C 67-10 which describes Francis' painfully slow conversion. The patient person lives in God's hope (Adm 28, 19; Ep Fid II) and the example of Jesus (who lives in God's fidelity) and the saints bolsters our hope (Adm. 6).

Patience with our brothers and sisters enables one to bear correction that comes from another just as if it came from oneself. In this context,

the other is no longer an enemy nor a source of my anger, but rather the messenger who appeals to the wisdom in our hearts. "Francis cherished with greater kindness and supported with greater patience those sick he knew were tossed about and bothered by temptation and were fainting in spirit" (II C 177). Francis' patience was tested to the extreme by his brothers, but God brought him back to peace (LP 77; II C 158; LP 68, 76; II C 188; LP 75; Adm 15; L Min 1-10). To what extent can patience strengthen one in community? We find the answer in Adm. 3: "a religious who prefers persecution rather than be separated from his confreres certainly perseveres in true obedience."

Patience in tribulation is needed by those who have given up their whole being to the Lord Jesus Christ" (Reg NB, 16). It is possible because of the great good that one looks forward to: "So great is the good I foresee that all suffering is a pleasure" ("Tanto è il bene che mi aspetto, che ogni pena mi è diletta" (II C 191-192; *Diz. Fran.*, col. 1227-1238). Lady Poverty asked the brothers to show her their cloister. "Taking her to a certain hill, they showed her the whole world as far as she should see and said: 'This, Lady, is our cloister.' (She answered) ... 'persevere in the things you have begun... let not the magnitude of the struggle deter you..." (63-67; See also LF 114; II C 21, 115; 3S 18; I C 10,12,51-52, 57...).

From the viewpoint of spiritual direction, discernment requires the minister to explore the stability of the person and his or her reasons for hope and perseverance (cf. James 1, 6-7). Excessive haste in the conversion process is a sign of impatience. The way of humility is the way of realism. Signs of anger must be looked at (Eph. 4, 26; Prov. 16, 32; James 1, 19), "hot anger" (col. 3, 8; Gal. 5, 20; Eph. 4, 31) and "cold anger" (sarcasm, withdrawal, planning revenge, crabbiness, annoyance). (See the helpful little book by Therese Cirner, *The Facts about Your Feelings*. Ann Arbor: Servant Books, 1982, p. 82-83). In the area of patience, as in so many others, it will be a question of the vision a person has: "A person who does not see great things, will think that small things are great."

Humility. "Where there is humility... there is no disturbance..." It has been impossible to speak about patience without in the same breath talking about humility, just as anger and disturbance are inseparable companions. I have the suspicion that one arrives at humility. Francis spoke first of love, then of wisdom, thirdly of patience and now of humility. Is it not the result of certain relationships, of certain life experiences? Life itself offers us the grace to discover our limits.

Francis' understanding of humility is difficult to understand. Armstrong translates *The Salutation of the Virtues* in the following way: "Holy humility *destroys* pride, and all the people who are in the world, and all things

that belong to the world" (p. 152). Brady's translation is closer to the original Latin, and to the French and Italian translations: "Holy humility *confounds* pride and all the people who are in this world and in like manner all things that are in the world" (Brady, p. 39). God is humility (Brady, p. 25). It seems that humility does not eliminate pride, people and things, but it does put them into question. It shames pride by its truthfulness, it puts all people and all things in their just relationship with God. This seems confirmed by the *Canticle of the Creatures* which, after having shown the place of all things and of the person in the universe, Francis concludes: "Praise and bless my Lord and give him thanks, and serve him with great humility." Humility means finding one's place.

After having experienced many humiliations (study again his process of conversion), Francis discovered that God reveals himself in Jesus Christ in a permanent act of humility: "O sublime humility. O humble sublimity. That the Lord of the universe, God and the Son of God, so humbles himself..." (*Omnibus*, p. 105; See also *Praises of God*, Adm 1; Ep. Fid. II, I C 84; St. Clare's Fourth Letter). God takes up his abode in this world in shared meal rather than in the trappings of worldly glory, because this shared life is his truth.

Jesus' own example is the source of the brothers' humility. "All the brothers should strive to follow the humility and poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ, and remember that we should have nothing else in the whole world." And to show that this humility is not simply an attitude of mind, but a concrete way of "taking one's place" in this world, Francis continues: "And they must rejoice when they live among people who are considered to be of little worth, among the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside..." (Reg NB, 9; see LP 37, 38). In fact, Francis seems to have taught this humility in a very concrete way:

> So at the commencement of the Order he wished the friars to live in leper houses to serve them, and by so doing to establish themselves in holy humility. For whenever anyone, whether noble or commoner, entered the Order, among the other instructions given him, he was told that he must humbly serve the lepers and live with them in their houses... So he laid foundations both for himself and others on the deepest poverty and humility, for when he might have become a great prelate in the Church of God, he chose and willed to be humble, not only in the church but among his own friars as well. For in his opinion and desire, this lowliness was to be his highest dignity in the sight of God and men. (SP 44; see also LM I 6; SP 58; LP 102; Fior 25; 1221, 9; I C 38, 103).

It is clear from this that humility is an attitude of one's heart as well as the choice of a certain social status. Francis and his brothers were not disturbed when they did not have a high social status in the ordinary judgment of the world, for they knew the glory of their humble vocation. Humility is not only the honest definition of oneself before God, but the clear and confident definition of oneself within society.

Blessed Giles develops Francis' insight when he writes:

> A great degree of humility in man is to know that *he is always opposed to his own good*. (emphasis added) I also think that the fruit of humility is to give back what does not belong to us and not to appropriate it for oneself — that is, to attribute all good things to God, to whom they belong, and all bad things to oneself. (Brown, p. 265).

"All bad things" means all those things we do which are opposed to our own real well-being. Humility is also the recognition of how we abuse ourselves, and the willingness to eliminate all that is opposed to our real well-being (lies, false glory...).

Where did this humility, product of the contemplation of Jesus Christ, lead Francis? He considered himself "small among the brothers" (*Test.*), as a "humble servant" (Ep. Fid.); Ep. Rect; Ep. Ond; Ep. Brd. ; Reg NB, 7; Adm 230; Reg NB, 6). He was ready to confess his faults (a sure

sign of humility! Ep. Ord; II C 123; LP 23; *Fior* 31, 9), and to admit that he could still have children (II C 133; LM VI 3). All the good that he had and recognized was to God's glory (LP 104; Reg NB, 17; Adm 123). In his answer to why the whole world chased after him, Francis remembered God's love for the *anawim* (*Fior*, 10) Because of his rootedness in God's love, he willingly accepted to live the scandal of the cross and to imitate the humble status of Christ in the Eucharist. Nothing could frighten him, no humiliation could break him (*Test;* LM II 6; SP 68; LP 114; II C 30...)

Just as the wedding ring is the symbol of the bond of love between man and wife, so for Francis poor clothing, poor housing and so forth were symbols of his solidarity with the Most High God, who humbled himself to become like us (Reg NB, 2; Reg B, 2. These social choices have profound spiritual consequences in the life of a person.) Begging was another sign of his solidarity with Jesus and with the poor. For Francis begging was the necessary consequence of his initial act of almsgiving at the beginning of his vocation (Reg NB, 2; Reg B, 2). Because of this initial choice, a brother and sister also chooses to overcome shame in their lives. In spiritual direction it will be important to see if the person has the courage to change behavior which will have social repercusions (Reg NB, 9; Reg B, 6; II C 74; LM II 7; LP 62; *Fior* 12).

This same attitude of humility, the knowledge of one's own truth and place in the universe, makes a person ready to share the humble condition of others (Reg NB, 9; LP 88; II C 8; 3S 10) and to share the work of tending to the cleanliness of creation (I C 38; LP 61) such as sweeping churches, carrying water, working with one's hands, serving the lepers and so forth.

Language is likewise a sign of what is in one's heart. Francis has a teaching on the relationship of language and humility, an element of capital importance in the ministry to direction which often must simply depend on what the directee says because the minister to direction does not live with him or her. What is the language of the humble? It is not charged with anger nor with a desire to conquer the other (Reg NB, 11; Reg B, 3; Adm 27). It is simple and direct, not evasive nor rhetorical (I C 1; LM XII 7). Part of communication is the ability to listen and the willingness to answer (I C 29; LM III 7). Language about one's life must be rooted in personal experience and practice (Reg NB, 17). Finally, true communication must have the "you", the other, in mind, and not long discourses that are unintelligible (Reg B, 9).

Humility, consequently, is not a peaceful possession, it must be tested to be genuine. "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God. The servants of God cannot know how much patience

and humility he or she has within as long as everything goes well... But should a time come when those who should render him his due go completely against him, as much patience and humility as he then shows, so much he has and no more" (Adm 13). What is this relationship between peace and humility? Humility removes barriers ("give back what does not belong to us." Bl. Giles, p. 9 *supra*) to peace; pride, possessiveness, need to dominate others, unwillingness to listen, unwillingness to allow another to be different. We may laugh at some of the ways Francis' tested the humility of his brothers (I C 38, 40 etc), but we should take very seriously the task of discovering why there are conflict situations and how much they depend on the lack of humility. Francis even uses a "fantasy trip" to test his humility (II C 145; LP 83), a very useful technique in the ministry to direction (See also *Fior* 8).

The presence of humility is tested especially when a person is in charge of others. In Francis' case, little people were not afraid of him (LM XII 2; Brown, p. 262: "If you love, you will be loved. If you fear, you will be feared. If you serve, you will be served. If you treat others well, others will treat you well.") His attitude was that of a servant (L3 S 57), and he refused to appeal to seniority as a source of privilege. He was ready to obey even a novice of one day (LP 106). According to his way of thinking, a minister should be ready to wash the feet of the brothers rather than to seek glory because of his office (Adm 4; Reg NB, 5; Reg B, 10; II C 185-186; SP 80; Clare, *Letters* 3 and 4).

The learned are especially tested in their humility and they have to be ready to enter the school of the humble Christ (II C 140, 194; Fior 12; II C 191-192. See also I C 77; SP 44; II C 142, 144; 1221, 5; 1223, 10; II C 102, 152; 1221, 20; Adm 24; Reg NB 23; II C 146; LM IV 7; LP 106; see *Diz. Fran.*, col. 1869 - 1902).

Is the purpose of this testing to lead to self-hatred, as the terminology of St. Francis would sometimes indicate? I am of the opinion that excessive introspection is the contrary of humility, because it makes the subject the center of attention. The humble person, I believe, participates as one of the others, with others, in the common project of life, in relative self-forgetfulness. C. S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity* helps us:

> Do not imagine that if you meet a really humble man he will be what most people call "humble' nowadays: He will not be a sort of greasy, swarmy person, who is always telling you that, of course, he is nobody. Probably all you will think of him is that he seemed a cheerful, intelligent chap *who took a real interest in what you said to him*. He will not be thinking about humility: he will not be thinking about himself at all. (emphasis added. See Kinzer, p. 16-17)

In another book, *Screwtape Letters*, Lewis continues this theme. Screwtape, the senior demon, instructs an apprentice demon how to pervert a Christian's idea of humility:

> The great thing is to make him value an opinion for some quality other than truth, thus introducing an element of dishonesty and make-believe into the heart of what otherwise threatens to become a virtue. By this method thousands of humans have been brought to think that humility means pretty women trying to believe that they are ugly and clever men trying to believe they are fools. (*ibid*, p. 28).

I believe that humility replaces disturbance because the person is at peace with the fact that he or she has sprung from the hand of God, and all others have sprung form the same goodness. To praise God for the goodness in others is to recognize in one's own limitations the call to be completed by others.

Poverty with Joy. "Where there is poverty with joy, there is neither covetousness nor avarice." "St. Francis' love of absolute poverty won for him a share in the wealth of holy simplicity. In the whole world he had nothing he could call his own, yet everything in the world seemed to belong to him in God, the Creator of the world" (LM III 6). There is a fine distinction here between possessing something and having something that belongs to us in God. Possessing something means that this thing is an extension of myself; having something that belongs to us in God means that what I have is an extension of God, something lent to me. Thus, if an object is stolen or threatened, my extended self is also threatened if it it is my posession. But if, from the start, all belongs to God, if something is taken away, it is simply being restored to its true Owner. The result of this attitude is Joy (3S 33, 13; II C 9).

The source of Francis' joy was Jesus himself: "The brothers who lived with him knew how his daily and continuous talk was of Jesus... he was always occupied with Jesus..." (I C 115, read the whole paragraph; II C 95). During his suffering (and other times as well) Francis composed music, in particular the "Praises of the Lord" (LP 24, Sp 121). True, this absorption in God was tinged with joy and sorrow. "He was overjoyed at the way Christ regarded him so graciously... but the fact he was nailed to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of compassionate sorrow" (LM XIII, 3).

From his experience Francis understood that this joy was "the safest remedy against the thousand snares and wiles of the enemy... When... the soul is wretched, desolate and filled with sorrow, it is easily overwhelmed by its sorrow or else it turns to vain enjoyments..." (II C 125; see also II C 126-127). To one brother burdened with sadness Francis said: "It is not becoming for a servant of God to show himself sad or upset before men... Examine your offenses in your room and weep and groan before your God. When you return to your brothers, put all your sorrow and conform yourself to the rest" (II C 128; this is a reflection of Francis' own words: "Let the brothers beware lest they show themselves outwardly gloomy and sad hypocrites; but let them show themselves joyful in the Lord, cheerful and suitably gracious" Reg NB, 7; II C 128; Phil. 4, 4). In this example we see how possessiveness leads to sadness; joy comes from "letting go" sin, from "stripping oneself" of sin and its dominion. St. Clare understood this:

> It was God of such splendor and greatness who entered the womb of the Virgin. It was his choice to be despised, needy and poor in this world so that men who were so very poor and in such deep need and in dire hunger of heavenly nourishment might be rich in him and possess the heavenly kingdom. Therefore you should respond with full joy of spirit and set no limit to your rejoicing and you should be filled with a mighty joy and in true spiritual happiness because you have chosen to set aside the world rather than to be drawn in quest of its honors. (*Workbook*, p. 84; AB, p. 192).

The freedom from self-concern makes the person "the helper and one who lifts up the languishing members of the ineffable body of Christ. Who is there, then, who would not encourage me to rejoice over such marvelous joys?" (AB, p. 200; *Workbook*, p. 87). Joy, therefore, means being able to give oneself with no hidden agenda, with no second thoughts about the risk involved or the cost of the commitment.

If a minister to spiritual direction finds that a person is not in joy, he or she can look for one of several causes:

a) Unrealistic expectations: is there a discrepancy between hope and fulfillment, between clinging to something that does not correspond with reality:

b) A poor self-imnage, living out "shoulds" that should not be;
c) Self-pity, clinging to "if only" in life;
d) Excessive introspection, a proud desire to "figure out" everything;
e) Unrepented sin (Ps 32; Ps 103);
f) Spiritual oppression by the "Enemy";
g) Physical exhaustion or sickness.
(Cirner, ch 8, p. 93f; Read SP 95)

Inner peace, Quiet. "Where there is quiet... there is no preoccupation..." "Where there is inner peace... there is no anxiousness..." "The Lord revealed to me a greeting, as we used to say: 'May the Lord give

you peace' " (*Testament*). In this way Francis extended the apostolic command of Jesus to give peace to those who welcomed the apostles into their homes. Likewise, Francis opened each sermon or exhortation with the greeting "The Lord give you his peace!" (I C 23). His method is well-expressed in 3S 58 (*Anon Per*, 38):

> Since you speak peace, all the more so must you have it in your hearts. Let none be provoked to anger or scandal by you, but rather may they be drawn to peace and good will, to benignity and concord through your gentleness. We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way. (Reg NB, 16 contains the "mission method")

In Adm. 15 we read: " 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God' (Mt 5,9). The true peacemakers are those who preserve peace of mind and *body* for love of our Lord Jesus Christ, despite what they suffer in this world" (see also Mt. 10,13; Lk. 10,5). It is interesting to note that peace of "body" goes together with peace of mind. Does this mean that Francis recognized the importance of bodily discipline? Does this mean that frenetic activity is contrary to "peace-making?" Today we have discovered the role of the body in the spiritual life; is it a new discovery?

Certain situations will challenge this peaceful attitude of mind and body (cf. Adm 11 and 14), so "in the face of a certain situation over which the brothers have no control, they must assert an interior attitude, flowing from the sources of the spiritual life which must dominate the conditions of life...." Shortly before his death, Francis added a strophe to the *Canticle of the Creatures* in order to call the bishop and the mayor of Assisi to a mutual reconciliation:

> Praised be you, my Lord, through those who give pardon for your love and bear infirmity and tribulation. Blessed are those who endure in peace for but you, Most High, they shall be crowned. (*Omnibus*, p. 130-131; SP 100-101; **Workbook**, p. 59-62.

"The last two verses seem clearly inspired by Adm. 15. In one case, it is a question of protecting (public) peace, in the second case a question of keeping peaceful... Francis does not invite the bishop and mayor to conclude a peace agreement... Rather he begs them to find within themselves the inner spiritual energies which permit them to transcend their suffering, to dominate their anger, to avoid disturbance, to remain in peace..." (*Diz. Fran.*, col. 1192-1193).

Francis and the brothers went among the warring cities of medieval Europe. "Go ... announcing to men peace and repentence unto the forgiveness of sins" (I C 29). By bringing all people back to Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, he knew that he was bringing them to the source of peace and reconciliation: "... the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in whom that which is in the heavens and on earth is brought to peace and is reconciled to the all powerful God..." (AB, p. 656). The life of the brothers revealed its eucharistic roots: "Amid all these things, they strove for peace and gentleness with all men and always conducted themselves modestly and peaceably..." (I C 41).

This moral effort was in line with Francis' teaching on the "spiritual person": "The Spirit of the Lord... strives for humility and patience, and the pure and simple and true peace of the spiritual person" (Reg NB, 17). "You are Peace," Francis said of God, and those who share his life are in his peace. But as we see in II C 48 this peace does not preclude personal struggle. Rather, it consists in the ability to "endure" tribulation (Cant Sol), to "*preserve* peace... *despite what they suffer*" (Adm. 15). A symbol for this need for inner peace despite exterior suffering is found in LP 95.

In our own day we have to remember that peace is the fruit of having no-thing other than what is real as the basis of one's life. Thomas Merton's remarks capture a source of anxiousness for us today:

> The idea that you can choose yourself, approve yourself, and then offer yourself (fully 'chosen' and 'approved') to God applies the assertion of yourself over against God. From this root of error comes all the sour leafage and fruitage of a life of self-examination, interminable problems and unending decisions, always making right choices, walking on the razor edge of an impossible subtle ethic... All this implies the frenzied conviction that one can be his own light and his own justification, and that God is there for a purpose: to issue a stamp of confirmation upon my own rightness. In such a religion the Cross becomes meaningless... (Finley, p. 68).

Meditation. "Where there is meditation... there is no dissipation." In this admonition we find the only occurence of the word "meditation" in Francis' writings. But the reality, without a specific method, is scattered throughout his writings. For example: "Let us pay attention, all my brothers, to what the Lord says..." (RNB, 22), "But that which is sown on good soil are those who hear the word with a good and noble heart and understand it and keep it and bear fruit in patience..." (RNB, 22), "... let us be very much on our guard so that we do not lose or turn away our mind and heart from the Lord..." (RNB, 22).

Francis' example is more striking than his words. "He would recall Christ's words through presistent meditation and bring to mind his deeds through the most penetrating consideration..." (I C 84. Read the whole section); "One night as he lay awake thinking about God..." (LM V II); "He called the Rule the book of life... the marrow of the Gospel... he wanted it to be had by all, to be known by all, to be the object of meditation by the interior man..." II C 208); "These are my knights of the Round Table: the brothers who hid in abandoned and secluded places to devote themselves with more fervor to prayer and meditation..." (LP 71).

The same spirit animated Clare. In her *Testament* she wrote: "... Beloved sisters, we must consider the immense gifts which God has bestowed on us..." (AB, p. 227); "Look at him who has become contemptible for you... gaze upon Him, coonsider Him, contemplate him, as you desire to imitate him" (*ibid.*, p. 197); "Look at the parameters of the mirror..." (*ibid.*, p. 204); "... look up to heaven... never let the thought of him leave your mind but meditate constantly on the mysteries of the cross and the anguish of his mother... Pray and watch at all times" (*Ibid.*, p. 208)

From all of this we can understand how meditation precludes dissipation for it is constantly centered on God and his works. Every method or form of meditation is meant to create a permanent attitude of meditation so

that the person's whole life will be centered on God. In spiritual direction one looks for the ability and willingness to reflect, one looks for centeredness.

Fear of the Lord. "Where there is fear of the Lord... there the enemy cannot find a way to enter." Shortly before his death, Francis "extended his right hand over his brothers who were sitting about and beginning with his vicar, he placed it upon the head of each one. 'Farewell,' he said, 'all you my sons *live in the fear of the Lord* and guard yourself always therein' " (II C 216. The Italian version differs from the English).

The "fear of the Lord" in question here is better translated, perhaps, by "reverence" and it finds its roots in an experience of God's holiness as well as his judgment. Never do we find Francis speaking lightly of God, the "most High." " 'Fear the Lord and give him honor'. The Lord is 'worthy to receive praise and honor'. All you who fear the Lord, praise him..." (AB, p. 42). The idea, of course, is completely biblical. When the all-holy God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, he commanded: "Do not come near; put off your shoes..." (Ex. 3, 5) Later on Isaiah posed the question: "Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the voice of his servant, who walks in darkness and has no light, yet trusts on the name of the Lord and relies upon his God?" (50, 10). According to Jeremiah those who do not fear the Lord are those who forget him. (5, 24; 33, 9).

In Franciscan writings "fear of the Lord" extends to "fear" of God's commandments. Obedience to his commandments is a way of showing God reverence (II C 41). At times, the brothers have to make judgments that will make them appear foolish before the world, but the "fear of the Lord" prompts them to act despite the consequences" (II C 30). This same "fear" must extend to the concrete signs of God's presence in the world:

> Listen, my brothers: if the blessed Virgin is so honored, as it is right, since she carried him in her most holy womb; if the blessed Baptist trembled and did not dare touch the holy head of God; if the tomb in which he lay for some time is so venerated, holy, just and worthy must be the person who touches him with his hands, receives him in his heart and mouth, and offers him to others to be received. This is he who is now not about to die, but who is eternally victorious and glorified... (AB, p. 57)

In other words, the spirit of the Lord enables one to see the manifestations of the risen Christ and to revere them (Ref NB, 17).

"Fear of the Lord" precludes a flippant attitude towards God and service of God. It is not hasty to claim that "this" or "that" is God's will, but out of respect for the Lord, it takes time to pray and fast in order to discover

his will (LP 93). But once His will is clear, the "fear of the Lord" helps one obey promptly (SP 49). In fact, fear is a basic attitude during prayer: "He was anxious to honor God's name with special reverence..." LM X, 6). Likewise, the "fear of the Lord" prompts the person to guard God's secrets, "fearfully", that is, with reverence (II C 96; LM XIII, 4; Adm 22. Wittgenstein somewhere made the remark: "All that really matters in life is precisely what we must be silent about.").

"Fear of the Lord" guards the house of the believer that has been consecrated to God and it helps the person act with courage for what is of God, even in the face of opposition. By reason of this reverence, "the enemy" finds no room to work in the person's life.

Mercy. "Where there is mercy... there is no superfluity." As with all other attitudes, God is the origin of mercy. Francis was lost in admiration for what God had done in salvation history (I C 26) and he prayed: "I will praise you in the midst of all peoples, Lord, for your mercy is great as the heaven" *(Office of the Passion)*. Francis is deeply aware that "God will save us by his mercy alone" (1221, 23): "Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God..." (EpOrd); "I trust in your mercy" (Off Pass). He asks for himself and for others the goodness of God: "And forgive us our debts, by your ineffable mercy..." (Exp Pat).

The mercy Francis had received from God was the mercy he showed the lepers (*Test;* I C 17; 3S 11-12). God continued to show Francis his mercy by enlightening him with regard to his mission (3 S 13). Francis' own words reveal how deeply this mercy had touched his life: "If Christ had shown such mercy toward the greatest criminal in the world, I am convinced that he would be much more grateful; to God than I am" (LM VI 6).

St. Bonaventure, the theologian of Franciscan experience, summed up the tradition which remembered the role of mercy in Francis' life (*LM VIII 5;* I C 76; II C 83; 85;p LP 89; SP 30, 37; LM I 2):

> Francis sympathized lovingly and compassionately with those stricken with any physical affliction and he immediately referred to Christ the poverty or deprivation he saw in any one. He was kind and gentle by nature and the love of Christ merely intensified this. His soul melted at the sight of the poor or infirm and where he could not offer material assistance he lavished his affection... One day he rebuked a brother saying: 'My dear brother, when you see a beggar, you are looking at an image of our Lord and his poor Mother. When you see a sick person, remember the infirmities he bore for us.'

Within his fraternity he expressed this mercy especially to those who

were sick and "tossed about and bothered by temptations and were fainting in spirit..." (II C 177; 3 S 59). His counsel for those in authority is also based on mercy: "Those who have received the power to judge others should exercise judgment with mercy as they themselves desire to receive mercy from the Lord. 'For judgment will be without mercy for those 'who have not shown mercy' " (Ep Fid II). But the *Letter to a Minister* is perhaps the finest description of the extent to which mercy must be carried:

> . . . there should not be any brother in the world who has sinned, however much he may have possibly sinned, who, after he has looked into your eyes, would go away without having received your mercy, if he is looking for mercy. . . (Read the whole letter; see also Reg B, 7; Rule of St. Clare, 9).

Pardon is an exalted expression of mercy (Reg NB, 21; *Exp Pat Inspired by the Our Father;* II C 89; *Diz. Fran.*, col. 997-1006).

Mercy, however, is not sentimentality, "an excessive degree of emotional excitability and response to experience." Some people, like Francis, are easily drawn by physical and psychological suffering of others. But we should never forget the beginning of Francis' life: "When I was yet in my sins, it seemed to me unbearably bitter to see lepers. And the Lord himself led me among them and I showed mercy to them" (*Test.*). At the start Francis was *not* drawn towards those who were sick. If later on we see him with the sick and poor by preference it is because God himself had intervened in his life and had unblocked his resistance to the suffering other.

Mercy excludes superfluity in the individual's own life because it creates bonds of solidarity with the needy-other. Perhaps Francis would also like to add that it excludes superfluity in our dealings with others, an excessive concern, an excessive desire to give that proceeds more from sentimentality or guilt than from reason and faith. When concern for oneself or for others is excessive, it probably is an unhealthy form of compensation for one's guilt feelings, for one's desire to dominate another or from one's dissatisfaction with one's home situation.

Today we have to enlarge the sphere of mercy and not consider only the immediate suffering of individuals and groups, but also the causes of their suffering. In Francis' *Letter to the Rulers of the People* we see how he had a high sense of the responsibility of civil officials. All those compromised by violent structures are worthy of mercy because they also have, perhaps, "lost their souls" because of them (*Omnibus*, p. 1429f).

Discernment, Discretion. "Where there is discernment, there is no hardness of heart." Mercy that is not genuine can lead to a perversion of love as Flannery O'Connor demonstrates so well in her stories, that which

Francis calls excess. "Hardness of heart," the inability to move away from one's impulsive needs, shows us the great need for discernment. The Latin word *discretio* has two meanings: a) prudence, b) good judgment.

Francis counsels prudence to those brothers who performed excessive penances or who studied or worked beyond their powers (1221, 17; 1223, 10; *Ep Anth* etc.). This same prudence taught him to guard secrets (II C 135-136; LM X 4; Adm. 28). The measure of discretion for one will not be the same for another. "You do with a pure intention what you must do; but then I also with good intention will do what I judge I must do in conscience" (Fior, p. 2688).

Good judgment, or discernment, enabled Francis to deal differently with different people (LM XV, 1; Fior 18, Adm 18). He never pretended to know one way for each person who sought his guidance, he was no idealogue (I C 57; II C 31). In his guidance he insisted on balance (LP) and he "reproved his brothers when they were too harsh on themselves... they appeared to be hating themselves..." (3 S 59; LM V 7). Nonetheless, he did not always seem so discerning in his own life (II C 129; *Fior* 11). If someone was sick, he allowed them special clothing, food and drink (II C 69; 1223, 2). When a brother was "dying" of hunger, Francis ordered the cook to prepare a meal for all the brothers lest the hungry brother feel "shame" to eat alone (LP 1; LP 3; II C21).

In II C 129 (SP 97), we find what has been called "a long discourse on discernment" which is also a discourse on prudence. According to Francis 'the brothers' vocational choice demanded a certain discernment in order to be faithful: amount of work (SP 82; LP 78), kind of work to be chosen by brothers (Reg. NB, 7; Reg B, 5; I C 39), tools necessary for work (Reg B, 7), when one may beg (1223, 6; LP 71), adaptation to places, times and cold climes (Reg B, 4, 2); times for fasting and for not fasting (Reg B, 3); when one could travel on horseback (Reg B, 3); how to act when outside the convent (Reg NB, 3); the freedom to adapt to needs and circumstances (LM V 7; SP 28, 42; Reg NB, 8); the choice of candidates (II C 187; Reg B, 2); choosing friars to go to mission countries (Reg NB, 16; Reg B, 12) or to preach (Reg NB, 17); how to correct the friars (Reg NB, 5; Reg B, 7); how to command under obedience (SP 49; II C 153); how to teach theology (Ep. Ant.); how to deal with recalcitrant and sinful brothers (Ep. Min.); how to be a minister (II C 187); the relationship between the sexes (II c 112; II C 113).

Discernment in the spirit makes the prudence of the flesh look ridiculous. In the *Chronicles* of Thomas of Eccleston we read: "There are three things necessary for bodily health: food, sleep, and good humor... Once... (the superior) commanded a melancholy brother to drink a full cup of the

best wine, as a penance, and when he had grudgingly drunk it, the superior told him: 'My dearest brother, if you would perform this penance more frequently you would also have a better conscience" (Fior, p. 2554). Discernment keeps a person from becoming hard on themselves and hard-hearted.

But discernment was easier to exercise on a personal level than on the community level. Even during Francis' lifetime different 'readings' of Gospel life were in conflict: an itinerant life or a life of stability, studies or no studies, clerical or lay, monastic forms or not, poverty or possessions (SC 38-40, 44). It was not always easily to distinguish the "spirit of the Lord" from the "spirit of the flesh." But no one ever claimed that discernment gave absolute certitude. Perhaps it is within this climate of conflicting values that Francis composed Adm. 2:

> And whatever he does and says which he knows is not contrary to his prelate's will, provided that what he does is good (note the need to discern), is true obedience. And should the subject sometimes see that something 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 sacrifice. (Note the relativity of decisions made after discernment. Note also the need to live a eucharistic life). Instead they should earnestly try to fulfill the wishes of the prelate. For this is loving obedience because it pleases God and neighbor. (See *Diz. Fran.*, col. 413-432)

II. RECAPITULATION: THE VICES AND VIRTUES OF ADM. XXVII

> Most High glorious God, enlighten the darkness of my heart, and give me, Lord, a correct faith, a certain hope, a perfect charity, sense and knowledge, so that I may carry out your holy and true command. (AB, p. 103)

DARKNESS	LIGHT
1. Fear: impediment to action, to sharing, to trusting.	1. Charity: loved by God. Participant in the love of others. Trust. Importance of the person.
2. Ignorance: impediment to a spiritual perception of reality. Superficial. Not live out what one believes.	2. Wisdom: Ability to judge life from a faith-perspective, to carry out what one believes. Recognition of creatureliness. Faith in self and God.
3. Anger: inability to accept others, oneself, one's situation because of unreal expectations.	3. Patience: strength to accept others and contradictions and the slowness of life. Realistic goals, confidence in providence.

4. Disturbance: inner turmoil. Frustrated in one's desires. Result of fear, anger or sin.	4. Humility: Feeling sure about one's true place in life. No exaggeration nor denial of who one is. Willingness to respect, to pardon.
5. Greed: excessive desire for what is not necessary because of one's dissatisfaction with self. Impedes disinterested relationship with others.	5. Joyful poverty: gratitude for God's gifts, especially of self. Living with what is necessary. Concern for the needs of others. Communion with others, stewardship of goods which are God's.
6. Avarice: spirit of possessiveness, putting one's trust in things instead of in relationships with God and others.	6. (same as 5)
7. Anxiety: impediment to a clear vision of life. Exaggerated fear or concern, impedes calmness of body and reflective life.	7. Inner peace: reconciliation with oneself, neighbor and God. Quietness of body and spirit.
8. Dissipation: mental and physical restlessness; a life of curiosity, impeding one to concentrate on what is important.	8. Meditation: concentration of mind and activity; take time to reflect on God's word.
9. Enemies: idleness. no responsibility for one's life, work and study. Interior and exterior threats to faith life; satan.	9. Fear of the Lord: reverence for the All Holy God, for his commandments and for other signs of his will and presence.
10. Excess: overdoing a good or a bad thing. Loss of perspective: sentimentalism, excessive work because of faulty self-image. Excessive food, drink, drugs, meetings, TV...	10. Mercy: ability to accept God's concern for me and for my well-being. Capacity to leave excessive self-concern to enter into the heart of another. Concern for my well-being.
11. Hardness of heart: inability to recognize God's action in signs; closed to one's deepest feelings, to feelings of others, to correction of others. Rigidity, ideology.	11. Discernment: capacity to make a creative judgment according to God in each circumstance of life. Prudence. Sense of vocation, liveliness, dedication, search.

Conclusion

In this brief analysis of Admonition XXVII we recover the experiential dimension of Francis' writings. We see that his life and his writings provide us with a certain structure by which we can diagnose spiritual experience.

Each element needs, to be sure, much more study, especially in the light of the spirituality of his day and in the light of contemporary psychology and spirituality. I hope that this article will open the door for some researcher who has more time than I, and will be of some help to those who exercise the ministry to spiritual direction.

Bibliography

In addition to the books used in the first article, I have used the following books in this article:

J. Biffet, *Experience of God*. Manila: St. Paul, 1977. (= Biffet)

T. Cirner, *The Facts about your Feelings*. Ann Arbor: Servant Books, 1982. (= Cirner)

J. Finley, *Merton's Palace of Nowhere*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria, 1978. (= Merton)

A book which I did not use but which came into my hands in Zambia offers some helpful insights into spiritual direction/counseling from another perspective than the one Catholics are used to: J. E. Adams, *Competent to Counsel*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co.,, 1970.

The Warblers Return

Bright birds they were, and it was spring,
And so we trailed in wonderment,
Amazed that God could fashion such
A fragile, lovely, passing thing;

To flit across the greening scene
And then to wander on and on
Until at length it spent itself
And passed on to an earthen grave.

Now birds are here and leaves are green;
But you are gone; I know now why.
And, as I scan the evergreen and yearn
At length for your return, I know,
My lifelong friend, though you have gone
On home, the warblers did return.

Fr. Joyce Finnigan, O.F.M.

St. Francis Challenges the Yuppies

ED McCORMACK

ALTHOUGH the title of this article appears to indicate two diametrically opposed views towards life, Francis and the Yuppies both have one goal in mind. Both are striving to deal with reality in such a way that life becomes meaningful and satisfying. Yet that is where the similarity ends: the radical Yuppies approach life through self-indulgence and seeming self-sufficiency, while Francis approaches it through poverty, self-denial and dependence on God, his Father.

In many ways modern man finds himself at this fork in the road where the Yuppies and Francis part. Each day is a choice between one attitude or another. By taking a closer look at the two options we may make more informed choices and choose the road that best speaks to our true self.

To do this I will analyze the Yuppie and Franciscan approaches to meaning and then see how Francis challenges their attitudes towards wealth and self-sufficiency.[1] To round out the discussion I will also look at their different approaches to joy and happiness. In other words, how do these two attitudes approach questions like: What is our basic attitude toward life? How do we find meaning? How do we quiet this infinite desire for satisfaction within us? How do we deal with possessions and other people? Where does God fit in?

The Search for Meaning

The Yuppie seeks meaning and satisfaction in striving to get rich and accumulate power. They define themselves by what they own and how much they control. In short, satisfaction is found in acquiring things.[2] In US News and World Report an article on Yuppies explains that their top priorities are making money and their work. The article emphasizes this attitude when it reports that one Yuppie went as far as to schedule job interviews on her honeymnoon! Yuppies even use leisure for advancement, and work while at play.[3] In an article in Newsweek some Yuppies express their own attitudes: "It is a mistake to choose a low paying field that you like." "Couples with money are usually happier than those with little." "Charity begins at home," which is often limited to their friends at the bar at the South Street Sea Port in New York City!

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Francis found meaning and freedom in a life of Poverty. How different from that of the Yuppies! He saw that through detachment, not attachment to possessions, a person comes to realize his true self and experiences meaning and satisfaction. Poverty is the basis of his spirituality and the food of his humility. Through it he was able to achieve simplicity based on a deep dependence upon God. He saw all good coming from God, and this was the root of his joy, gratitude and meaning. While the yuppie is constantly trying to own things, Francis in his rule of 1221, 1223 and through his life encourages his Friars to live without property and to give all money to the poor.

In contrast to this life of poverty and simplicity, the Yuppies are conspicuous consumers with an insatiable appetite for designer clothes, videos, computers, pasta makers, espresso machines and BMW's.[5] One girl claims to own $1,200 worth of pots in her kitchen, but eats out all the time! Working a 12 hour work day to pay for luxuries is commonplace, especially when it is a $600 a monthy health spa. Achieving status is very important and many say that they will sacrifice marriage, free time and family for their careers. No wonder Joanne Martin of the Standford Business school predicts that in the next decade we will see the biggest mid-career crisis ever![6]

To demonstrate Francis' belief in the value of poverty let us look at some examples from his two Rules. His rule of 1221 (chapter 2) says the friars should own a habit, with a hood, cord and trousers and should avoid expensive clothes. In chapter 8 he encourages fasting without looking gloomy and says that the friars should have no more concern for money than for dust. In chapter 9 he tells them not to search for status, but to delight in lowliness and poverty. In chapter 22 he says that they should strive to put away every attachment, be free from self-seeking and attachment to earthly goods and be free from anxieties and worries that will dull the heart. In the rule of 1223 he again stresses serving God in poverty because God in Christ made himself poor and it was this that led Francis to the land of the living. In the Rule of 1223 he is emphatic when he states: "Cling to poverty with all your heart." Francis was so adamant about the value of poverty that he describes his own relationship to it as a marriage to "lady Poverty." It was this deep sense of the hidden value of poverty that gave him a sense of utter dependence on God.

Self-Sufficiency or Dependence on God?

The Yuppies are striving for a sense of self-sufficiency and independence by trying to become the best educated, and wealthiest group. Their possessions often give them this apparent sense of self-sufficiency. This ideal borders on an inability to see their need for God, and often leads to a set of false expectations. "Who says we can't have it all"?, "We were brought up thinking we could have tremendous jobs, wonderful houses, exotic travel, great marriages and wonderful families."[7] One Security Pacific VP summed it up when he said: "We want fancy toys and many life experiences." [8] The bumper sticker on many BMW's also captures this attitude: "The one who dies with the most toys wins."

Francis, on the other hand because of his life of Poverty had a deep sense of dependence on God. He saw the world utterly dependent on God's mercy, not on fashion, wealth, or even Wall Street. Because of a sickness, he returned early from soldiering — a crushed, defeated and humiliated man. It was out of this experience of humiliation that he gained a new vision of the world. He proceeded to give back his father's possessions, and he spent a great deal of time in a cave reflecting on his humiliating situation. G. K. Chesterton in his classic biography of St. Francis sees that at this point Francis was a crushed, defeated man. He has gone from being a leader, partier, merry-maker and promising soldier to being at the lowest point in his life. To explain Francis' conversion Chesterton says Francis was like a man who begins to dig down into the earth and eventually begins to turn upward. He came out with a whole new worldview. In other words, Francis came out of his conversion seeing Assisi held upside down, by the hair of the mercy of God. Thus those structures that in the eyes of the world seem so secure are from this point of view in the most peril.[9] This image is vivid if one thinks of New York city!

The constant search by Yuppies for possessions and meaning has led many people to become bored, cynical and under the surface unhappy. According to Faith Popcorn, who works for the brain reserve, a New York marketing research firm, "this generation is very bored." She goes on to explain that Yuppies are constantly searching for something new. This is also expressed in an article in the International Herald Tribune, which states that this generation is bored and restless.

Typical attitudes that arise out of the notion of finding satisfaction in owning are Carnie Gilbert's, "I could live comfortably on $200,000 a year. Money means a lot to my happiness." She buys two outfits a week, "because the way you look is more important than what you do." Also, Rob Young says, "I want to be rich, have more money than I can spend, own a Jaguar and a quarter of a Million dollar house." The preacher of

the Yuppie movement is the Rev. Terry Col-Whittaker. She is the author of the book *How to Have More in a Have-not World*. Her theme is: You can have it all now.[10]

Francis thought that self-denial, fasting, doing without, and poverty would satisfy one. *Unlike the Yuppies he saw acquiring goods not as a way to meaning and happiness, but as a way to dissatisfaction, boredom, emptiness and one of the causes of the thirst they are trying to quench.* Acquiring possessions for Francis is like trying to quench your thirst with salt water.

In reading about Francis one is struck by his joy, freedom and gratitude. This sense of gratitude enabled Francis to reach the very rock of reality. He saw all as dependent on the mercy of God. Since all was a gift to Francis he had no expectations. "He who expects nothing enjoys all." He saw all coming from God. The fact that at every moment we are dependent on God is a fact the Yuppies are trying to cover up in their search for meaning in possesions. For Francis, the Truth was that the world is held in its existence by the mercy of God and the Great Lie is that man doesn't need God who in fact often gets in the way.

Francis knew that all of life looks better when it is seen as a gift. Everything gave him joy and thus he didn't need to go searching everywhere for joy, meaning and satisfaction. Since his security depended on God, he was free from the need to be popular, receive attention and own things. He was free from seeking security in power, wealth and manipulating people. He was so free that looking into his eyes must have made one feel that this man is really interested in me and values me. He was free to love all.

The Yuppies' concern for owning things, status, and image can lead to a condescending, elitist attitude based on how much one owns. The value of a person is measured by what he owns, not who is is. What you wear, where you work, what you eat and whom you associate with is very important to the point where many new York City accountants are afraid to be seen with a loosened tie on a Friday night in the city!

Francis, however, because of his poverty and sense of dependence on God was a very humble man. For Francis a man is really who he is only before God (Adm. XIX). He was aware of the vast difference between the creature and the Creator. His love for God and his sense of sinfulness led him to fast, and deny himself. He had his friars fast from all Saints day until Christmas and from the Epiphany to Easter. He had no concern for his status or for impressing people. In the Rule of 1221 he tells his friars to welcome friend, foe, and robber. In Chapter 9 he tells them to be delighted to follow the lowliness and poverty of the Lord, to be glad

to live with social outcasts, the poor, helpless and the lepers and beggars. Even as they are insulted they should thank God. In Chapter 11 he advises them to answer everyone humbly, not to give way to anger, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling and to turn the other cheek. In chapter 17 the friars are told to humble themselves at every turn, not to boast, to have humility and patience, to be gentle and peaceful. In chapter 22 he claims that our friends are those who cause us trouble, suffering and shame; those are the ones we should love. He warns that *knowledge* is not to let people know that a person is learned, but is for serving others (Adm. VII).

To conclude, let us return to our title: How does Francis challenge the Yuppie ideal? By his life of poverty and detachment he challenges the Yuppies' search for meaning through acquiring wealth. His sense of dependence on God challenges their sense of self-sufficiency and independence. His real joy and gratitude in the face of poverty and suffering challenges their illusory search for joy, their boredom and unhappiness. His humility and ability to accept others regardless of their social status flies in the face of their arrogance, need for status, and elitist attitude.

Since this writer and many of us in the US are influenced in explicit or subtle ways by the Yuppies, we should examine their attitudes and listen to the challenges of Francis. He offers us another option that points to the one who 2,000 years ago called himself "the way, the truth and the life."

Footnotes

[1]In the article I am using the word "Yuppie" to designate the basic ethos associated with the term. I do not intend to say that every Yuppie exemplifies this ethos totally.

[2]*Newsweek*, December 31, 1984.

[3]*U.S. News and World Report*, April 14, 1984.

[4]*Forbes*, February 24, 1986.

[5]*Newsweek*, December 31, 1984.

[6]*Ibid.*

[7]*Newsweek*, February 3, 1986.

[8]*New Republic*, July 9, 1984.

[9]G. K. Chesterton, *St. Francis*. (Image Books: New York, 1924) 70.

[10]*Newsweek*, December 31, 1984. International Herald Tribune, Thursday, June 5, 1986. "The U.S. Video Generation: 'Images, Impressions are what count; not Words.' " Margot Hornblower.

Book Reviews

The Gracious Mystery. Finding God in Ordinary Experience. By James J. Bacik. Cincinnati, Ohio: St Anthony Messenger Press. 1987. Pp. 141. Paper, $5.95.

Reviewed by Michael J. Hart, O.F.M. Cap. STL (Spirituality) Antonianum, Rome.

The Gracious Mystery arises out of the author's experience with those who, from many walks of life, find themselves thrust into a religious or spiritual quest. Many of the 'solutions' presented to these modern day wayfarers fall short of the demands of a profound search for religious meaning in our modern world. For those of us who face this challenge there is a need for a transforming yet balanced approach to the spiritual life. The author attempts to present a readable series of spiritual reflections aimed at those who, while dissatisfied by the superficiality of the technical age, do not find the answers to their search in the excesses of some of the more fundamentalist approaches to spirituality. He does this by combining solid theological insights (indeed his debt to Karl Rahner is evident) to an active dialogue with the experience of life in the United States.

He divides his reflections into two main parts. In the first we find what the author calls the "framework for cultivating a deeper awareness of self and God." This awareness is based on the spiritual return to the Gracious Mystery of God which can be experienced in everyday life. This awareness begins with the experience of ourselves as beings of finite capabilities endowed with infinite longings. The author calls his readers into this reflective life accompanied by acceptance, an acceptance of self as dependent upon the mystery of God and an acceptance of our finitude and eventual death in total surrender to that Mystery. This first part also includes sections on the other necessary attitudes and virtues one must have in this search for meaning. He provides as well an exercise for cultivating the awareness of the Mystery of God in our lives and various reflections on fundamentalism.

The second part of *The Gracious Mystery* is a rather diverse collection of essays which express some concrete examples of the encounter with the 'mystery.' This part contains sections on the negative aspects of our world, the meaning of resurrection, the lives of various public figures (Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton and Martin Luther King) and various other aspects of daily life which can draw the reader into the awareness of the Mystery of God. He ends this part with an intriguing presentation of certain liturgical, cultural and natural seasons of the year.

The entire book ends with a "contemporary creed" in which the author capsulizes many of the insights of his book. I found this section very well done and thought provoking.

I have to applaud the effort of James Bacik for an approach to spirituality which begins at the core of a person's existential experience and for trying to incorporate good theology into a spiritual tract. While the first part is at times difficult to follow, it certainly orients well the person who wishes to continue this search for the mystery off God. I felt that there could have been more emphasis on how this spirituality might bring one into the concrete mission of Christ in the world however. Despite this I feel that *The Gracious Mystery* is enriching reading for those who wish to put aside the superficiality in their lives and live in the reality of the Gracious Mystery of God.

Mother Angelica's Answers not Promises. By Mother Angelica with Christine Allison. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row Publishers, 1987. Pp. x-275. Cloth, $13.95.

Reviewed by Sr. Frances Ann Thom, O.S.C. Monastery of St. Clare, Lowell, MA.

The readers of Mother Angelica's book will find exactly what she promises — answers — answers from her personal and loving study of the life of Christ, as well as from her own interesting unique background. Mother begins her book by sharing some of this background with the reader in order to place her present life style as a Poor Clare in the correct perspective with her TV station. The author then moves into some very heavy and current religious and moral questions asked of her during her TV shows and in private discussions with persons who visit her and her nuns at their monastery. Using her own personal experiences or experiences as they have been related to her by others. Mother tackles some universal themes such as: love, hate, despair, guilt, evil, goodness, as well as God's ability to understand the human beings he has created. Her conversational style makes the book easy reading, and one feels as though Mother Angelica is only a chair away.

While mother does not get into any real theological interpretations, she does adequately handle the questions the ordinary Christian is concerned with today. She helps the prayerful person talk to and with God by learning how to accept the challenges he sends. She further demonstrates that God, at times, also needs to be challenged by the person of faith.

As Mother Angelica attempts to ease the pain of loneliness, loss and doubt, which all persons experience at some time in their lives, and points out that it is something to be accepted, understood and valued as part of the human condition, the reader becomes aware of the heart to heart conversation which had taken place. The book, as a whole, is a sharing of deep faith, love and devotion written by a woman who has dared to be different in her approach to spreading the Good news.

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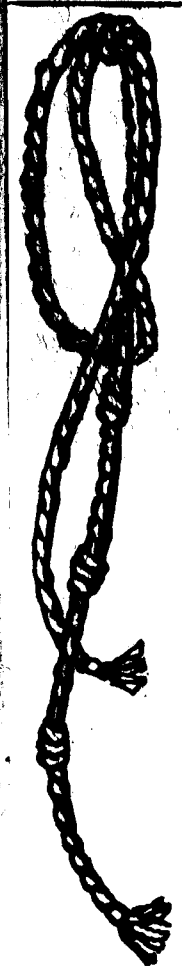
MARCH, 1988

The CORD

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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

MAR 23 '88

Reflection for the Marian Year

DR. DIANE D. GAUTNEY, Ed.D.

As the new year unfolds, I hear an inner call to look more closely into the mystery of myself and the mystery of my relationship with others. How is my God present to me? How does my life reveal His presence to others?

For me, revelation happens within the context of my experience both with myself and with others. As I seek to understand my experience, I personally look for a model... a person... a woman... a disciple who sought the mystery of God within her ordinary human experience and who was able to listen to that unfolding in the midst of her life. I look for a person and I see Mary.

The prophet Ezekiel (36:26) says: "I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stoney hearts and giving you natural hearts." This passage echoes a recurring theme, that the people of God are called to a change of heart... from hearts of stone to hearts that are receptive to the power of God. This power is manifest when we say to people, "I will pray for you." This is a very important commitment. The sad thing is that this remark often remains only a well meant expression of concern. However, when we learn to descend with our mind into our heart, then all those who have become part of our lives are led into the healing presence of God and touched by Him in the center of our being. What we are speaking about here is a mystery for which words are inadequate. It is the mystery that the heart, which is the center of our being, is transformed by God into His own heart. This heart is large enough to embrace the entire universe, the pain and sorrow, the conflicts and agonies, the lonesomeness and misery. This is not because of some great psychological or emotional capacity, but because God's heart has become one with ours. This change of heart, this metanoia has historically occurred through brokenness.

Dr. D. D. Gautney, an associate with the Franciscan Sisters of Williamsville, New York, is staff psychologist at Villa St. John Vianney Hospital in Downingtown, PA.

Bonaventure University Institute

The first Dolor provides an image of a meeting... an invitation to metanoia. In Luke (2:34-35) the words of the prophet recognize Mary's Son. Jesus as the Savior: yet her heart is pointed to and proclaimed as a future scabbard for a sword. The scripture reads: "... so that the thoughts of many hearts may be laid bare." This was a time of both joy and promise, but it was also a time of pain, suffering and contradiction.

Edward Farrell, in his latest book *Gathering the Fragments* speaks of a disciple as "... one who is willing to have her heart broken."

It occurs to me that the reality facing Mary was the staggering cost of the relationship to which she was called. This call would ultimately lead her to an invitation to be co-redemptorist. However, to accomplish this, Mary first had to be willing to be broken.

How did she face it?

The silence of scripture is pregnant with meaning in Luke 2:39 where the scripture reads: "... and, when they had fulfilled all things as prescribed in the law, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth."

Mary ultimately returns to the ordinary experience of living each day, but what about the interim... that in between time?

What did you think, Mary? How did you feel? Mary, tell me... how did you do it? Did you listen to the conflicting feelings in your broken heart? Did you struggle to say yes in spite of the fear? Was it hard to say that you would try? Did you reach out to others... to say that you would try? Did you reach out to others... to Joseph, to Elizabeth?

When I am called into a deeper relationship with myself or others, how do I respond? Am I willing to face all the conflicting feelings... my defensiveness in looking at all that is needy within me? My reluctance, my fear at what challenges the relationships with others may cost me?

Mary's story reflects attitudes and behaviors of faith that speak to me. Can you be one with that image of a broken heart? In the silence and solitude of her heart, she listened and she waited. These words are awesome assent to the processes of God within. Mary consented to the experience of revelation within herself and others. These experiences, these processes filled the spaces in her broken heart, a heart one with her Son's.

In Mary's heart, we can see the intimate relationship between prayer and ministry. Mary led her struggles into the heart of God. This is the discipline of prayer as well as the discipline of ministry. We don't see Mary worrying alot about people and their problems or involved in and endless number of activities. She took her worries to the heart of God and there prayer and ministry became one.

Between the time of her meeting in the temple and her return to Gallilee, she was a woman in process. Here was a woman who had said yes... I will try in the ordinary experience of my life to do the will of God.

Scripture reveals Mary's attitude toward the events of her hidden ordinary life at Nazareth. In Luke 2:19 scripture says: "His mother treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart." Mary did more than mull over her experience and observations. By the light of the Spirit, she contemplated what had been spoken and revealed to her. Only with the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit can we truly ponder the mysteries of God as He reveals Himself to us.

Revelation is the process of our learning how to live in the presence of God... a God Who uncovers us to ourselves, a God Who journeys through our minds and our hearts.

How did you know what you were to do, Mary? How did you know where you belonged? Mary knew that she was on a journey, that she had a mission to accomplish with her life. She experienced herself as chosen and entrusted with faith. This faith was a sign of grace. This grace enabled her to be free to love deeply, to forgive, to suffer.

It has been said that home is where the heart is. Although Mary is seen infrequently in Jesus' public life we sense that her home was with Him wherever He traveled and there her heart was also. This is seen in the events of the wedding feast at Cana but it is most dramatically portrayed in the Fifth Dolor. Scriptures according to John 19:25 say: "... there stood by the cross of Jesus, His mother." How her heart must have ached, yet she stood... silent, waiting, listening, present to her Son in her heart.

The heart is the place of conversion, the place where the old self dies and the new self is born. It is in this place that we struggle and encounter Mary's Son. We are called to this place to become wise. It is here that we confront our own nothingness. As Mary was called to processes of surrender, letting go, trusting, standing alone, standing with another, so are we! Yet as Mary was not truly alone, neither are we. God has sent His Spirit as we face our brokenness, our fears and our compulsions. It is in our broken hearts that we become deeply aware of our solidarity in brokenness with all of our brothers and sisters.

Everyone can live the gospel... you can... I can. Mary was an ordinary woman who suffered through the ordinary processes of a real life and yet she was able to say "Yes" to extraordinary things through the power of the Holy Spirit. Do we believe that the gospel still has the power to move us as ordinary men and women who are willing to open our hearts to the message of Jesus? Are we open to the experience of being taught and being grasped by God's love?

Catholic tradition teaches that Mary conceived Christ in her heart through faith before conceiving him in her womb. This is the gift of faith that inspired her to ponder over and over in her heart the mystery of Jesus' and Mary's metanoia is to face life with the belief that every person

who believes is ultimately rooted in the mystery of redemption.

I have just completed my Doctoral work. As I reach for that highest reward the academic world can bestow, I reflect on all the people who have helped me in their minds and hearts through this arduous journey. Although I didn't always appreciate others at times, as I look back, I have come to treasure those people who have called me to change and to become. The gospel theme of metanoia through brokenness is a way I understand my experience. The symbol of the broken heart speaks to me. I have been broken in the process.

Many of those who have supported me are themselves broken. There are so many who have lifted me up but two people stand out among the rest. One is my husband; one is my friend. Both have broken hearts; both have broken bodies; both have broken minds; yet they have continually called me to reflect on what the Lord was showing me and doing in my life. They have waited; stood by me; listened; and pondered me in their hearts. Scripture speaks of ordinary persons called forth by the persons of others willing to have their hearts broken in love.

Today, take a moment to reflect, to ask the Spirit to enlighten you as you contemplate what is being revealed to you in the experiences of the relationships of your life. Are these experiences calling your heart to change? To be broken? Ω

Lenten Sequence

Ash Wednesday
rich and poor
taste the dust

latching His feet
under the soft belly
He rides the ass

Pilate's hands
washing
mine too

Christ steals the kindness
of the thief upon the cross
forgives his theft

for John only
who alone follows Christ to His death
no martyrdom

Sr. Mary Thomas Eulberg

The Cross of San Damiano still Speaks

T. ANNE SCHMIDT, SFCC, SFO

There is a dusty road just down the steps, past the highway and outside of Assisi's gate. The road leads to St. Damian's Sanctuary. It was here that the painted image of Christ crucified spoke to Francis. In that moment the 23 year old merchant's son received his vocation and the meaning of his fate.

The word *fate* means "... the divine word."[1] It is derived from *fari* and *fatum* which carry the meaning to speak.[2] Interestingly, the word fate is also connected etymologically to the word *abandonment*. "And abandonment's literal meaning is, *not to be called*"[3] *(italics mine)*.

However, it was in 1205 that the abandoned church of St. Damian attracted Francis to herself. Celano describes the sanctuary as "... nearly fallen to ruin and (was) abandoned by everyone."[4] As I walked the lonely approach to St. Damian's I wondered if the young Francis had found in the forgotten sanctuary a relationship to his own feelings of abandonment and dis-repair, i.e. despair?

In my feeling imagination I begin to see the child Francis. Encountering him in my own feelings, I am given to believe that he did not have an easy or by any means an ideal life. True, Francis had the riches of his profitable father. And his mother may have been of noble class. His parents could provide all the material and social pleasures that 12 - 13th century life could offer. But in all his fortune, I wonder, did Francis ever feel himself unloved or unwanted? Is it possible that Francis of the middle ages could share with individuals of the 20 - 21st century the fate of having been born to parents who, because of their own wounded child within,

---

Sister T. Anne Schmidt, SFCC, SFO, has just completed her doctoral thesis in cancer research in Switzerland. In her dissertation she tries "to express cancer as a 'dis-ease' of our spirits and a symptom of being forbidden to love." As this article reveals, she is committed to giving the abandoned child a voice for healing.

are unable to love and respect their offspring as unique creations? History is strangely silent in the relationship of the baby and child Francis to his parents, but there are indications which, when felt into, suggest that Francis' sensitivity and talent may have been from early on extracted to support the unlived desires of his father. If so, Francis is more than ever the saint for our time. I believe we have not very far to look and find a wounded child who was not allowed to love or was never loved, respected, or appreciated for its own gift of uniqueness behind every act of violence and despair. The Franciscan vocation is one way to healing the inner child, when the feelings of the child Francis are imaginaly experienced from history. That is, *his-story*...

Imagination does not have to run wild to see that Francis was a talented child. The poetry of the man Francis, his autographs and various writings convey intuitive thought, artistic ability, creativity and compassionate depth. An analysis of the saint's handwriting by Girolamo Moretti reveals a "quantitatively superior intelligence (that was) qualitatively capable of original concepts... (and he had) organizational abilities... firmness of character... decisiveness... knowing gentleness."[5] The exquisite sensitivity of Francis was in all likelihood present in his childhood. Such gifted children, we know today, have a way of zeroing in on and anticipating the desires of their parents. The parents of such talented children can and often do exploit the sensitivity and intelligence of their progeny by narcissistic gratification. The child dependent on the parent for love and hence survival[6] may have to lose his/her own world of feelings to insure that the parent is never disappointed. For if parental expectations are not psyched-out and reflected by the conforming child, the love he/she is so dependent upon may be withdrawn. The child of such parents then enters adulthood with a sense of loss, depression, abandonment, the feelings of the inner child having been fated to "not being called." The narcisstically wounded adult may be given to repetitious behavior, repeating acts of violence, desperation, or perversion as a way of trying to attain what had been abandoned, lost or not called i.e., the fated child within.

But Francis is a saint for peace making, gentleness, and conversion. And I suggest his vocation may well be a way to restoring the abandoned child's feelings which are none other than the life of the soul. Remembering Jesus' admonishment "Let the children come to me. Do not hinder them. The kingdom of God belongs to such as these,"[7] it is easily seen how important the life of the child is to the life of the soul. And I am convinced that every act of "abuse means killing the soul of a child."[8] The Franciscan vocation is, I believe, a vocation to healing – restoring the child-soul so urgently needed to being consolation to each person and peace to the nations on earth.

The first indication that Francis may have had a disturbed parental relationship is found not long after his birth. In fact, at the time of his birth his father was absent. Perhaps in the fall (summer?) of 1181 Pietro Bernardone, the buyer and seller of cloth was away on business.[9] For whatever reason, his absence suggests an early emotional abandonment of the baby Francis. What was so important that the child's father was not pre ent to welcome his new life? Or assure the new mother that she too is loved and wanted and will not be abandoned so as not to impart to the child her own feelings of loss. In her husband's absence, the Lady Pica names her son Giovanni. But her pleasure of having named her infant is quickly taken away. When Pietro returns, he changes the child's name to Francesco. It has been suggested that he renamed the child for France, a country he loved so well. If this is true, I must wonder: is it possible that the new-born child was to carry in his name and hence in his person (for to name someone is to have power of possession over the one named) some desire for or claim to a particular emotional affect that Pietro may have attached to France but could not himself attain? It is also quite possible that the husband who negated the mother's intended feelings in naming her child could also forbid her to be tender towards the infant, mothering and nurturing to seed him/herself as a unique, respected, and loved self. It is possible that Francis, like so many other infants, felt abandonment and grew learning to "get love" and hence survive by being sensitive toward parental expectations. In this way he could be assured of his father's love until Francis' own soul sickened within him. And in 1204 the youth became severely ill. In my feeling imagination I see in Francis a breakdown of body, mind and spirit (we would today say he had a "nervous breakdown") that would later allow for restoration of his true feelings. Feelings which could no longer bear up under the demands of a conscious attitude that belonged, not to Francis' authentic world of feelings/self/soul, but to parental aspirations to be lived out by the clever son. Perhaps by his illness Francis was brought to a felt experience of his emotional abandonment, his needs, and so the chance for new possibilities. Celano tells that Francis himself "began to think of things other than what he was used to thinking upon". And the lad "... wondered therefore at the sudden change that had come over him..."[10] That Francis' sensitive soul was pained becomes more clear when his earlier losses are recounted.

It was already in 1200, at the age of 19, that Francis would have known the hardship of civil war and the loss of certain families who were forced to move from destroyed homes. St. Clare and Brother Leonardo would have been among them. In 1202 Francis loses or is abandoned to the loss of a precious goal to please his father and city by attaining heroic knighthood. After a year in Perugia's prison, Francis is ransomed by his father

and returned home without a hero's welcome, sick and abandoned in his loss.

Emerging from his illness in the spring of his 22nd year, Francis starts out again to live out what his father can not achieve, but the young Francis is supposed to. In 1205, in another attempt at being the knight of his father's ambition, Francis is turned back. This time a message from his own soul makes clear in dream symbols that his life needs to be different to be whole. Francis now begins a life of conversion expressed in the way he becomes faithful to his own soul. Conversion is a way of turning from false conscious attitudes (that often are not our own) that are not in agreement with our true self. Conversion brings us close to our neediness, our essential poverty and Francis takes on conversion as a life style by feeling the emptiness of his essential poverty. If Francis had never felt his needs he could not have possibly known his poverty and changed the direction of his life. It is when Francis feels his needs — enters conversion — that his father withdraws his love and Francis is more abandoned than ever.

Pietro Bernardone tries to bring the young man to his senses by imprisoning, in chains, the very son he had earlier ransomed for his own requirements. But now Francis has turned to prayer with "fasting and weeping... in a pit of darkness."[11] I suggest that Francis is now in mourning for what was lost within him. He begins to give away merchandise and alms and despises money as though it would "snatch away life, shutting-off the life-giving spirit."[12] Francis has come into a felt experience of the abuse (and hence the attempt to kill) done to his inner child's feelings by the aggressive wealth and greed of his father aimed at achieving his own satisfaction at the expense of his child's emotional needs. Francis will continue to hold in mourning what had been lost until a restoration is found. When Lady Pica can no longer withstand the cruelty of her husband and frees Francis, Francis goes to St. Damian's. Pietro, finding Francis gone, "... turned to upbraid his wife, heaping sins upon sins."[13] If he cannot possess Francis, Pietro will have the money Francis had taken with thought of providing for the repair of the fallen sanctuary. Father and son have their last conflict before Bishop Guido of Assisi. Francis is no longer functioning to gratify Pietro and the elder will in no way honor the youth for himself. Francis, as any other baby-child-youth, has the basic human need to be wanted, comforted, loved and respected for his own self. But now this is dramatically denied him and Francis will at the Bishop's court remove himself from secular life and enter religion, as a penitent.

It is significant to note that it was just about the same time that Francis renounces knighthood that the Cross of San Damiano speaks to him and these dates are closely connected to the time of the Bishop's trial in 1206,

a scene preceded by Francis' goal loss, father's abandonment and withdrawal of love, and the message of the crucifix, who is also a son feeling, in his moment of agony, abandoned by his Father ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"[14] All of this leads to Francis literally stripping himsel f before the Bishop of all his father could claim possession to. The Bishop shelters his naked skin with his own cloak, suggesting that Francis is receiving a new layer of flesh, tissue, made not from his father's cloth but from the fiber (*fiber* meaning tissue from the Middle English, meaning a "rich cloth" and *tissue* connected to our word "tissue-fiber"[15]) of the Church. And at the base of the word *tissue* is found "... the fabric of everyday life (is) the image of begetting, and image of making a child... That is the very fabric of everyday life."[16] So it is that Francis is recovering

It was when Francis entered the abandoned sanctuary that he felt his own inner abandoned sanctuary . . .

his lost child, providing for its protection, and begetting a "new wonder."[17] Francis is received into Holy Mother Church and begins to address God as All Good, Total Good. His love affair with Lady Poverty is also beginning. Suffering the painful fate of having not been called, that is the abandonment of his inner soul-child, Francis is, at St. Damian's, paradoxically fated. He is called by name and it is the Divine Word who fates him. Francis' hushed-up inner child has, through prayer, resumed dialogue.[18] The child is invited to express itself and in its sorrow it now receives its vocation. The Word directs Francis to repair. The abandoned son on the cross speaks to the abandoned man-child. "Francis, go repair my house, which, as you see, is falling completely into ruin."[19] Francis, in child-like simplicity, gathers stones and begins to mend the abandoned church all the while the inner work of reparation had also begun. Here, Francis' identification with the wounded sanctuary and the wounded son of God is found, the foreshadowing of Francis' later imaging of the Crucified, when he receives the stigmata on Alverna.

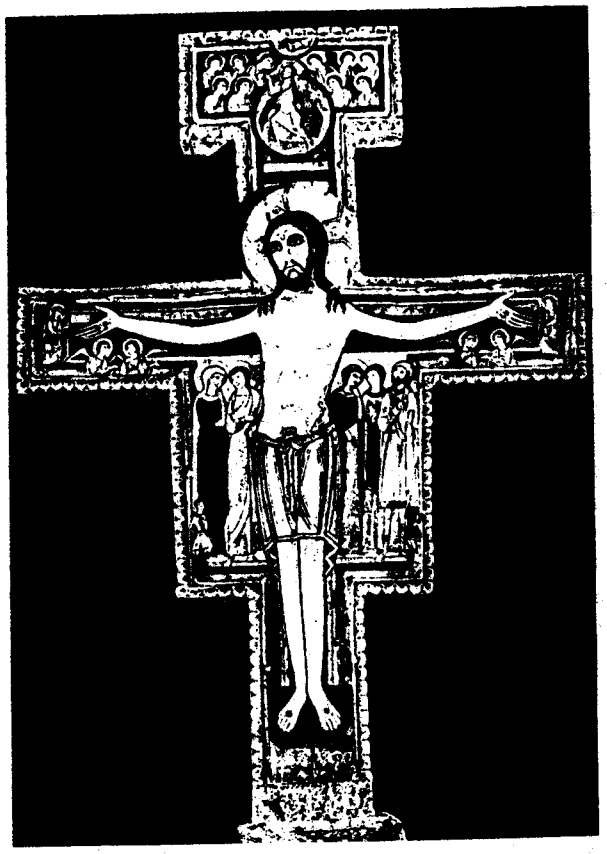
But how is it that fate can be so indifferent to wound by abandonment or call by divine word? The apparent conflict of these opposites can, I believe, only be contained by a soul given to metanoia in the process of mourning. For it is in mourning that the child appears. *Mourning* has a certain ring to *morning*. I am reminded of pictures of the child Jesus

which seem to issue light from the child's body. The child brings light, the particular light of truth that belongs to the child's world of feelings which, when spoken, have a tendency to expose untruths — if you know how a child can tell a truth no adult is wanting to hear. Such a soul communicates symbols from the unconscious to the conscious. And symbols appear when we allow ourselves time and space to feel with our inner child our greatest needs, or some moment in life when we felt unwanted, not appreciated, respected or abandoned to not being loved as a unique and gifted creation. This is to enter into conversion, the Franciscan vocation of reparation to the child-soul.

It was when Francis entered the abandoned sanctuary that he also felt his own inner abandoned sanctuary and the symbol of God's own suffering spoke from the depths of Francis' despairing heart-felt darkness. But Francis does not suffer alone. Rather, his suffering is in relationship to the Crucified. Suffering for the sake of suffering alone would be dark indeed. But suffering in relationship can bring the light of meaning. Later, blinded and near death, Francis returns to St. Damian's and writes the Canticle of Brother Sun (perhaps Francis' brother, the suffering Son?), expressing his unity with all creatures by common inheritance of suffering and death. Francis could now accept suffering as a joy because he did not know suffering in isolation and darkness but, rather, in relationship and unity with all creatures. In the Canticle he writes, "Be praised, my Lord for our Sister Bodily Death whom no man can escape." It is significant that he writes of Sister Death as the second death. "Woe to them in mortal sin. Blessed are those whom she (Sister Death) will find doing your holy will, for to them the second death will do no harm."[20] This implies that Francis had known another death. The death of an ego divested of its energy and sunk into the deus absconditus, "... the dark and chthonic powers of the unconscious".,[21] Where the ambivalent forces of fate birth forth renewed conscious life and hence light from dark depths. Out of darkness the child is begotten and we see a new light. In Francis' illness and depression, he knew a psychic death and contacted new life i.e., new possibilities — conversion. Abandonment transformed to unity expressed by fraternal living, the living tissue of our Order.

It is significant that the saint immediately provided for an oil light so that the painted image of Christ at St. Damian's be given due honor. Oil from biblical times to the present church is used in the rite of healing. Later, as a protection against the evil of dejection, Francis, "... made it a point to keep himself in joy of heart and to preserve the unction of the spirit and the oil of gladness."[22] Francis knew that the unity he had come into could be injured or "thrown into confusion" as understood by the Greek word ***diaballein*** from which our word Devil is derived and can

mean to "bisect or create enmity, to slander or insult."[23] And the way Francis says to drive off this devil of disunity is by the oil of gladness and by tears. Francis, in his uncomplicated way, is telling us not to separate our feelings from their cause, but to experience them in relationship to our intimate suffering and even to the death of a conscious attitude that



is essentially gone wrong, or is in confusion with the needs/feelings of our child-soul. In reparation to the life of the soul there comes the possibility for being fated — called, and of healing transformation where sadness becomes joy and death, eternal life. So it is that ***second death can do no harm***.

The Cross of San Damiano still speaks. I made my way down the dirt road just before the feast of St. Clare. It was August and hot in Italy. The tiny sanctuary was packed with pilgrims. It seemed there was no air and the walls were too narrow. I leaned against an inner wall for its coolness, but felt instead a scream of desperation. Abandonment seemed to bridge the centuries... I felt my own pain. The priest spoke on and on in Italian. I can't speak Italian — not a word. I thought, I can't connect except from the despair I feel. Looking up at the Cross of San Damiano I silently said, I have to go now, I can't feel myself a part of this, or understand, and besides in all the many years of my Franciscan life I have prayed before you as Francis that fateful day had prayed, "Most High and Glorious God Enlighten the darkness of my Heart...". And never once have you spoken to me and now I feel too sad to stay. It was then that the priest, without taking a breath, began to speak in a language I express my feelings in and I am brought to tears through. In German he said, "He screamed, he thought he would go under. He became desperate. And (then) the Lord reached out his hand and brought Peter into the boat." Even Peter had known despair. I reflected that Peter must have felt the depth of his despair when he found himself alone in the water seemingly abandoned by the Lord. Peter felt his pain in relationship to its cause. He thought he would go under, abandoned to a watery fate, when the Lord had returned to the boat and left him alone. Peter was then sinking into the watery abyss as well as into his own inner depths. And it was when Peter felt his desperation, his abandonment, and screamed that Jesus could reach out His hand and save him. The Lord restored Peter to the boat, that is, to relationship/"community." But it was only when Peter felt his confusion and despaired of it that he was in a place, that is to say, enabled to receive the Lord's restoring hand.

It was my own moment of feeling recognition that the crucified image spoke to me the meaning of my own process of conversion. It is only when I feel into my depression, abandonment, loneliness and desperation that the Savior can reach me. And I find my vocation's meaning in repairing to the love of God for the sake of the child — my feeling soul. "Let the little children come to me. Do not shut them off. The reign of God belongs to such as these."[24] But when the children had been brought to Jesus, the disciples began to scold them. The children were not readily welcomed by the adults. Could it be that the disciples were repeating behavior that had made them in their childhoods feel unwelcome or not accepted and respected for their unique self? And could it be that the adults had to behave so to protect themselves from feeling the pain of their own rejected, abandoned, wounded child within? But Jesus welcomes the child, the child is always innocent, and carries the truth of the soul, the world of

feelings. And Jesus lays his hands upon the children and blesses them. The Lord admonishes us not to shut ourselves off from the child. I believe, the suffering child must be invited to speak its pain before the adults can enter into conversion. As a Franciscan I am a penitent. The word *penance* is closely related to the word *reparation*, or *repairing to*. This brings me to my need for inner healing, for repairing the inner sanctuary, a reparation made possible when my child within is allowed to express its pain and teach me my essential poverty. This is the life I have been *fated to*, it is my perfect joy, I am thankful to be called — and that the Cross of San Damiano still speaks...

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[2]ibid.

[3]ibid.

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[5]Francis the Writer, found on page 1916 of the Franciscan Omnibus of Sources.

[6]Miller, Alice. *The Drama of the Gifted Child and the Search for the True Self*. Translation by Ruth Ward. Farber and Farber, 1980. The entire text should be read for concept and *extreme value*.

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[9]Legend of the Companions 1:2. Franciscan Omnibus of Sources.

[10]Celano, First Life, 2:3; Franciscan Omnibus of Sources.

[11]ibid., 4:10.

[12]ibid., 4:8.

[13]ibid., 6:13.

[14]New American Bible, Mark 16:34.

[15]Lickhart, Russell A. *Words as Eggs: Psyche in Language and Clinic*. Spring Publications, Dallas, Texas, 1983. Page 161.

[16]ibid., p. 5.

[17]ibid.

[18]Asper-Bruggisser, Kathrin, "Der therapeutische Umgang mit Schattenaspekten der narzistischen Störung." *Analyt. Psychol.*, 17: 1-24, 1986.

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[24]New American Bible, Matt 19:14.

Lent

Lent is coming.
I can smell Ash Wednesday in the air.
Barren February trees
shiver in the gray and solemn sky:
their naked branches
call me to penance.

We eat so little in Lent,
swallowing, instead, our pride and self-indulgence,
finding new nourishment in meditation.
The will of the Father
becomes our meat and drink.

Our prayer burns with repentance
and we clothe our hearts with humility,
taking up the cross each morning,
and each evening,
yearning for Easter.

Sr. Edmund Marie Stets

Sermon for the First Sunday of Lent by St. Bonaventure

Translated by Fr. BRAD A. MILUNSKI, O.F.M.Conv.
Edited by Fr. CLAUDE JARMAK, O.F.M.Conv.

Translator's Introduction

The sermon of St. Bonaventure which follows is a translation of the Latin text established through the research of Jacques Guy Bougerol, O.F.M., in his 1977 work entitled *Sermones Dominicales*.[1] Bougerol brings together in this volume a collection of sermons "reported" by Friar Marcus de Montefeltro, St. Bonaventure's secretary, during the period between April 24, 1267, and May 17, 1268. The Latin texts, as established by Bougerol, are actually "revisions" or "developments" which were published by Bonaventure and his secretary. As a result, the sermons contained in *Sermones Dominicales* are the authentic work of St. Bonaventure.[2]

The sermon for the First Sunday of Lent begins with an introductory section called the "protheme," in which the Seraphic Doctor, utilizing a passage from the Letter of James, speaks of the goodness of God who bestows wisdom upon those who fervently pray for it. Bonaventure also believes that it is necessary for every person whose duty it is to preach the word of God to invoke divine wisdom before undertaking a task of such responsibility.

The theme of the sermon is the temptation of Jesus in the desert as recorded in Matthew's Gospel. St. Bonaventure centers upon Jesus being inspired by the Holy Spirit in truth, justice and fortitude in order to confront the devil and defeat his threefold temptation of gluttony, pride

This sermon was translated by Friar Brad Milunski, O.F.M.Conv., a student at St. Hyacinth College and Seminary in Granby, MA, and edited by Fr. Claude Jarmak, O.F.M.Conv., a faculty member of St. Hyacinth's. The translator also wishes to thank Fr. Thomas Reist, O.F.M.Conv. and Friar Dean Leh, O.F.M.Conv. for their assistance.

and greed. The desert is an important image in this sermon as well as a significant element in Jesus' confrontation with the devil. According to St. Bonaventure, the barrenness and austere surroundings of the desert provide a most suitable environment in which to resist the devil's enticements.

Bougerol sums up the central point of this sermon by declaring that the devil is defeated by the "weakness, humility, and poverty" of the Son of God. Indeed, as Bougerol states, "the humility of God is the manifestation of his love."[3]

Sermon for the First Sunday of Lent by St. Bonaventure

1. *Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil* (Mt. 4:1).[4]

[Protheme] *But if any of you is wanting in wisdom, let him ask it of God, who gives abundantly to all, and does not reproach* (Jas. 1:5). At the start of a sermon, any preacher ought to consider the following three things which are understood in the second text taken from the Letter of James. The first is the inadequate state of human weakness; second, the strength of devout prayer; and third, the abundance of divine generosity. The Apostle James refers to the inadequate state of human weakness when he writes: *If any of you is wanting in wisdom*. He speaks of the strength of devout prayer when he adds: *let him ask it of God*. The abundance of divine generosity is noted when he states: *who gives abundantly to all*. Therefore, beloved brothers and sisters, when we experience our human inadequacy and the abundance of God's generosity, let us run with urgent prayers to God the Father of lights and the giver of wisdom. In this way, accustomed as we are to his goodness, he will give us his wisdom and enable us to speak about those things which give praise to him and consolation to our souls. *Amen*.

[Sermon] 2. *Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil*. Because a person's life and example persuade more effectively than his speech and his words, our Lord Jesus Christ, whose "every action is our instruction,"[5] desired to be led by the Spirit, remain in the desert, and be tempted by the devil to teach others more effectively by the example of his own life how to resist Satan. Therefore, to instruct us perfectly on how we should resist the devil, three aspects concerning Christ are mentioned in the proposed Gospel text. First, the interior inspiration of the Holy Spirit to guide us; second, a safe place in which to oppose the devil; and third, the outright attack of the devil to destroy

us. The first aspect, namely, the interior inspiration of the Holy Spirit for guidance, is suggested by the words: *Jesus was led by the spirit*. The second point, a safe place in which to withstand the devil, is signified by the phrase into *the desert*. And the third aspect, the outright attack of the devil to destroy us, is denoted by the words: *in order to be tempted by the devil*. These three things are well-chosen because it is necessary for the person who wants to triumph over Satan by Christ's example to be directed by the Holy Spirit, to stay in a safe place, and to withstand the continual onslaught of the devil.

I. "Jesus was led by the spirit . . ."

3. The prompting or inspiration of the Holy Spirit for enlightenment is suggested in the Gospel passage when the evangelist writes: *Jesus was led by the Spirit*. We discover in Sacred Scripture, however, that Jesus was led and inspired by a manifold spirit, for although the Holy Spirit is one in substance, it is nevertheless diverse in its effects. First, *Jesus was led by the Spirit* of truth to teach those in need of learning. Second, he was inspired by the Spirit of justice to expose those who were unjust. Third, Jesus was prompted by the Spirit of fortitude to conquer the devil. Truth works against the destructive spirit of error; justice fights the spirit of pretense which inflates a person with pride; and fortitude combats the spirit of cowardice which easily surrenders.

A. The Spirit of Truth

4. Jesus was prompted by the spirit of truth to instruct the unlearned as prophesied in Isaiah: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me: he has sent me to preach to the meek, to heal the contrite of heart, and to preach a release to the captives, and deliverance to them that are shut up* (6:1). Whoever is chosen for the office of preaching should model himself after Christ and be chosen for his holiness according to the Scriptures: The spirit of the Lord is upon me. Then, he ought to be appointed because of his justice, as Scripture says: *because he has anointed me above my fellows, for I have loved justice and hated wickedness* (Ps. 44:8). And finally, the true messenger of God should exercise the authority of his office, indicated by the words: *he has sent me to preach to the meek*. The fulfillment of his task should consist in healing and consoling those who are sad and are suffering from grief or the distress of punishment. He should heal the sick from the wounds of sin and free captives imprisoned by the devil.

B. The Spirit of Justice

5. Jesus was led by the Spirit of justice in order to bring to light those who are unjust. As it says in Isaiah: *[He] shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. And he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked* (11:4). Indeed, our Lord Jesus Christ was never silent about the truth out of a fear of being rejected by those in power, or out of a love for wealth. And he would not compromise the truth in order to be pleasing to others. He did not remain ambivalent in the face of falsehood. On the contrary, "he used to strike justly" both the great and the small "with the arrows of truth."[6] He was moved by the Spirit into the temple at a time when he was not ready to listen. Instead, he used a whip to drive out all those who were buying and selling spiritual things for a price. He did not remain quiet but threw them out of the temple because these people had made the house of prayer into a place of business.

C. The Spirit of Fortitude

6. Jesus was also driven by the spirit of fortitude to triumph over Satan. As it is written in the Psalms: *May your good spirit guide me on level ground* (142:10). The desert, where the Spirit led Christ, is this *level ground;* it is an ideal place for the practice of abstinence and the complete subjection of sensuality to reason, lest reason, prone as it is to weakness, be led into sin. In Christ, however, there was no conflict between flesh and spirit, but a perfect harmony between his most holy body and his most holy spirit. *For your name's sake, O Lord, you will quicken me in your justice,* as if Christ said: "My Father and Lord, I need the help of your strength because I have afflicted my body with much fasting in this desert. In its great weakness, my body feels totally mortified. *You will bring my soul out of distress,* out of the anguish of hunger and weakness. *And in your mercy you will destroy my enemies* (Ps. 42:11-12), especially Satan who, without cause, intends to attack and destroy me." Jesus was moved by the spirit of fortitude to go into the desert and did not shun solitude. He withstood the harshness of hunger and the onslaughts of the devil. Indeed, he purposely sought out this deserted place in order to defeat Satan.

II. "INTO THE DESERT . . ."

7. In the Gospel text chosen, the words "into the desert" indicate safe place for resisting the devil. In a threefold manner the desert is a very suitable place to resist diabolical temptations which the Lord was to undergo, because the desert is a harsh and barren and despised place. In these surroundings, Jesus waited to be tempted with gluttony, greed, and vainglory so that he could teach us by his example. First, Christ wanted to be led by the spirit into the desert because its harshness lends itself to abstinence, which promotes the sanctification of the flesh. Second, since the desert is a place to be shunned, it contributes appropriately to the defeat of boasting, which is rooted in worldly ambition. Third, the barrenness of the desert helps to conquer deadly material greed.

A. Harshness of the Desert

8. As was said above, Jesus desired to be led into *the desert* because its harshness leads itself to the practice of abstinence which fosters the holiness of the body. The book of Deuteronomy states: *You shall remember all the way through which the Lord your God has brought you for forty years through the desert, to afflict you and to prove you, that the things that were in your heart might be made known. He afflicted you with want, and gave you manna for your food* (8:2-3). *The Lord God led you for forty years,* that is to say, forty days, because Sacred Scripture often uses a year to represent a day. The text states: *through the desert,* implying the desert of austerity, to afflict you, with hunger and with need, and to prove you, that is, permit you to be tempted so *that the things that were in your heart might be made known*. This last part of the sacred text also refers to the fact that all the people were kept together to be taught by the example of the Lord's patience. *He afflicted you with want, and gave you manna for your food*. What a marvelous divine plan! We cannot receive the consolation of heavenly nourishment unless we first experience the lack of earthly food. Manna came down from the sky for the people of Israel in a harsh and barren desert instead of in a fertile and plentiful Egypt.

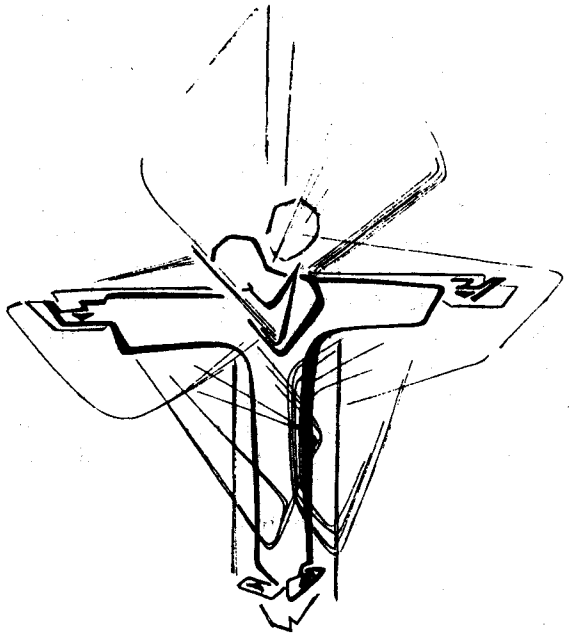
B. A place to be Despised

9. Jesus wanted to be led into *the desert* because it is a place to be despised. This helps to conquer pride with its roots in earthly ambition. As it is written in the second book of Maccabees: *But Judas Maccabeus, who was the tenth, had withdrawn himself into a desert place, and there lived among wild beasts in the mountains with his company* (5:27). Judas, considered glorious because of his virtue, symbolizes Jesus Christ. By reason of his humility and holiness, Jesus in his assumed humanity was the glory of God the Father. He is said to be the tenth because of his eminent perfection. Jesus humbled himself to such a degree and lived in the world taking the form of a servant (Phil. 2:7). He despised himself so much that he became *the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people* (Ps. 21:7). Living in the desert among the wild beasts, he totally defeated pride born out of worldly ambition. Therefore, when one's head is bowed in profound humility, no other part of his body ought to flaunt itself ambitiously. For it would be unnatural for the foot or some other part of the body to be raised above the head, since all the members of the body must be subjected to the head.[7]

C. A Barren Place

10. Jesus wished to be led into the desert, a barren place, which serves to curb possessiveness, a form of deadly greed. As it is written in the First Book of Maccabees: *And Mattathias cried out in the city with a loud voice, saying: one that has zeal for the law, and maintains the testament, let him follow me. So he, and his sons fled into the mountains, and left all that they had in the city. Then many that sought after judgment, and justice, went down into the desert: And they abode there...* (2:27-30). Matthathias, whose name means "gift" because he was outstanding in holiness, symbolizes Christ, the gift to mankind from God the Father. Jesus *cries out* by his preaching, so that *everyone who has zeal for the law* of the gospel which establishes us in peace and friendship with God, *should follow after him* and reject through detachment a worldly way of life. For *he and his sons*, namely, the apostles, despised everything in the world so that with open hearts they could run more quickly with him to the mountains and pursue gospel perfection. *And then many* sons *went down*. This sentence refers to those religious who have truly left all things behind them, both communally as well as individually, to follow Christ into the desert of want, the mendicant way of life. They seek *judgment*

for the punishment of their sins and *justice* in order to fulfill God's commands. They remain in that desert with a tranquil mind and recollected heart, experiencing no worldly cares, except the desire for devout prayer and sacred reading. Today, on the other hand, there are those who descend into the desert of religious life but do not remain there. They are lured away by a distracted mind and a divided heart. These religious continually collect material things, and always — or almost always — lack an attentiveness to devout prayer. Thus they experience personally what Gregory



wrote in Book XVIII of the *Morals:* "The distracted minds of people who live in the world bemoan their frustration. They have lost the source of true wisdom."[8] According to Gregory's opinion, a person should not be considered lazy if he pursues intellectual endeavors and seeks the truth, for intellectual work is more meritorious than manual labor. Thus Ambrose says: "One who studies the word of God is not lazy or less meritorious than one who performs manual work. The person who studies is seeking to understand divine things."[9]

III. "TO BE TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL"

11. Finally, the outward attack of the devil to ruin us is denoted in Matthew's text when it says: *to be tempted by the devil*. Satan presented three temptations to Christ, the same three with which he tempted and deceived the first parents. First of all the devil tempted Christ with gluttony in the desert. Then he tempted him with pride in the temple, and finally, with greed on the mountain. However, the devil was not dealing with Adam who was unintelligent and foolish but with Christ who was intelligent and wise. Christ conquered the temptation of gluttony with abstinence; the temptation of pride with humility; and that of greed with poverty. The devil's approach was presumptuous and his method was malicious; however, his departure was demeaning because he did not discover anything certain about Christ. Satan could not find any glory for himself in his deceitful temptation or find any excuse for his confusion. *He was defeated* by one who was hungry and weak, by one who was looked down upon and despised, by one who was detached by the experience of need, and yet was temperate. O marvelous battle! O perfect patience demanding imitation! O natural wisdom inviting admiration! The Lord of life, crucified in his members, was tempted by the prince of death; yet the prince of death himself suffered defeat at the hands of the Lord of life. Satan tempted Christ with gluttony to corrupt bodily and spiritual purity; with pride to lead him to vanity; and with greed to show him the attractiveness of earthly beauty. Christ conquered gluttony through the strength of spiritual food. He defeated pride through voluntary self-emptying, and he conquered greed by despising all earthly things.

A. Gluttony

12. The devil tempted Christ with gluttony to defile the purity of his body and soul when he said: *If you are the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread* (Mt. 4:3). It was as if Satan wanted to make Christ a glutton and then prepare him for every other kind of sin. For it is said in the *Gloss:* "Unless one curbs gluttony, attempts against the other vices are made in vain."[10] Christ taught us by his example to conquer the temptation of gluttony by tasting spiritual food: *Not on bread alone does man live, but in every word that proceeds from the mouth of God* (Mt. 4:4). For the human person is made up of both body and soul. As the body needs to be refreshed and nourished by material food, so the soul needs the spiritual food of the word of God. If it is heard reverently, understood diligently, and willingly committed to memory, the word of God nourishes the soul. This is why the Lord said to his apostles: *Be watchful and pray lest you may enter into temptation* (Lk. 22:40). *Be watchful,* he says, by restraining vices, for *keeping watch over riches wastes the flesh* (Sir. 31:1). Then, after having put aside the wastefulness of the flesh, *pray* that you may savor the sweetness of the word of God when your soul is lifted up. For *this kind of demon, namely gluttony, is not cast out but by prayer and fasting* (Mt. 17:20).

B. Pride

13. The devil also tempted Christ with pride to make him give in to vanity. To entice him to an air of worldly show, the devil said: *If you are the Son of God, cast yourself down* (Mt. 4:6). As Chrysostom wrote: "Flying through the air is not really the work of God because it is useless both for the body and for the soul."[11] Christ taught us to conquer the temptation of pride through a profound and heartfelt self-emptying when he said: *It is written: You shall not tempt the Lord your God* (Mt. 4:7). This is as if to tell us not to look for an example of boasting from him because one who boasts exalts himself and tempts God through presumption. Behold, my brothers, we have Christ's own example. In his own contempt for pride, he humbles himself and conquers this vice. On the other hand, he who exalts himself is defeated and conquered. It is well-stated in Sirach: *Before prayer, prepare your soul and be not as a man who tempts God* by being proud and presumptuous, and by considering yourself great *when [you are] nothing* (Gal. 6:3). The Pharisee in Luke's Gospel did this and rashly looked down upon others, considering only *himself* just. The publican, because of humility, *went down into his house justified, rather than* the proud Pharisee (Lk. 18:14).

C. Greed

14. In his last attempt Satan tried to tempt Christ with greed by showing him how alluring worldly beauty is. *All these will I give you, if you will adore me* (Mt. 4:9a). The devil, by greed and unlawful desire, tried to trick Christ and lead him to idolatry. Christ instructed us to defeat greed by totally rejecting wordly prosperity when he said: *It is written: The Lord your God shall you adore, and him only shall you serve* (Mt. 4:10). Christ could easily have said that anyone who adores gold or anything other than God is an idolater; one who despises all things because of God *serves God alone*. Such a one does not vacillate between two opposing attitudes, but considers nothing equal to God. The person who despises all material things is not bound by anything, but his whole heart is owed to God in love. And because of this the wise Apostle wrote the following

to Timothy: *But having food and sufficient clothing, with these let us be content. But those who seek to become rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many useless and harmful desires, which plunge men into destruction and damnation*. (1 Tim. 6:8-10). The apostles were content with food, but the devil sets out the delights of worldly beauty before those who are greedy and avaricious. They are struck by such a greedy and blind love for these things that they permit themselves to be fooled by the devil and are led into eternal punishment. Because of this Bernard says: "Greed is the root of all evils, a mysterious poison, a hidden disease, the mother of hypocrisy, the cause of envy, the fuel for imperfections, a rusting of the virtues, the worm which eats away at generosity, etc."[12] Let us ask the Lord...[13]

Notes

[1]St. Bonaventure, *Sermones Dominicales*, Jacques Guy Bougerol, O.F.M., ed. (Grottaferrata: Collegio S. Bonaventura, 1977). The text of the sermon for the First Sunday of Lent is found on pages 234-42. This edition of Bonaventure's sermons will hereafter be referred to as "Bougerol." The reference below to the writings of the Church Fathers or other medieval works are taken from Bougerol's text. A critical text of the sermon for the First Sunday of Lent is also found in the *Opera omnia* of St. Bonaventure in Vol. IX, 204-208.

[2]Bougerol 29.

[3]Bougerol 114.

[4]Scriptural quotations are taken from *The Holy Bible*, Saint Joseph New Catholic Edition (New York: Catholic Book Publishing, 1957) and *The Holy Bible*, Douay version (Baltimore: John Murphy, 1914).

[5]Bougerol notes that this phrase is used five times in the Sunday sermons. It can be traced to the *Glossa* on Psalm 85 by Peter Lombard. For a fuller explanation, see Bougerol 100 - 101.

[6]The two expressions derive from Matins of the feast of St. Anthony of Padua.

[7]This idea is taken from St. Bernard, *Super cant.*, serm. 25, n. 8.

[8]Ch. 43, n. 70 (PL 76, 80A).

[9]*Expos. in Ps. 118*, serm. 11, n. 11 (PL 15, 1352; CSEL 62, 239).

[10]*Glossa ordin.*, on Mt. 4:1.

[11]Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Opus imperf.*, on Mt. 4:6, Serm. 5 (PG 56, 666).

[12]Bernard, *In Ps. Qui habitat*, serm. 6, n. 4.

[13]Bonaventure ends his sermon with a prayer unfinished in the Latin text.

Book Reviews

The Gethsemani Poems from within the walls of the Abbey of Gethsemani, the monastery at Trappist, Kentucky — home of Thomas Merton, monk & poet. By Ron Seitz. Monterey, Kentucky: Larkspur Press. 1987. Pp. 67. Paper, $12.50; special hard-bound signed edition, $55.00

Death Eat. By Ron Seitz. Cincinnati, Ohio: Spotlight Press. 1987. Pp. 95. $7.95.

Reviewed by Father David Kocka, O.F.M.Conv., a poet and sculptor, who is presently Spiritual Director of Mount Saint Francis Friary in Indiana.

The Gethsemani Poems. "Gethsemani": Isn't that the place where poetry finds its consumation? Isn't that the grove of poets where one can say

on white ice
I stand
with closed
eyes
dreaming deep...

I thought that it was the hill-garden where God's poetic Word, readied like velum stretched between two mountains (Tabor and Calvary), sweat blood before the final verse was written. Perhaps there is a Gethsemani in the corner of every poet's heart: a brief dark solace wherein the shadows of Tabor and Calvary eclipse and make you sweat blood.

Nevertheless, Gethsemani was Thomas Merton's home, both inward and outward. And Ron Seitz went to visit and wrote poems.

What is this book of poetry about? Like every book of poetry it is about the poet and his mysterious adventures with life. More precisely, this book of poems is about the poet and his Merton affair — poet-to-poet, friend-to-friend:

poems dear Tom & high again

time it is to spill my say
walk the wire of song barking my eyes
all those weeps & childy dreams
lost flaming along the pavement

forgive me the knuckles upon your door
old Poet
I don't have a rose to wield
cheeks to ring this day

but I do know the sting
of your beauty
& must kiss you
some way

How does one discuss the intimacy of a relationship, more adequately than does the poetry itself, of two men who

nourished one another? Who can mark the invisible moments more accurately than the poet? This is the reason for poetry, and for our reading — of Merton reading Seitz's poem to him

sitting his rocker before the fire
unfolding this paper with fingers
flickered by flame
heat eating the page edge
wrinkly crisping gray to black
a light ash float up the chimney
out to unvoiced words wavering
syllable by styllable on the still air
printing darkness hard to trees
beneath a dome freeze December sky
roofing silent in snow
those chalice'd high hands
warming the monastery
Whole Earth's Eucharist

The Gethsemani Poems are works of art which probe the invisible moments — past, present, and future — of the poet's relationship with his friend. From within the confines of this relationship these poems explode, simply and directly, beyond personalism into a universal appeal.

Hold your breath, Poet —
the pure air of silence speaks you
in beauty
and all the words aloud now were

Add nothing to what's not said —
the thing steps out of silence
and presents itself

Hold the fear that you will be no more
when the last word empties to silence

The music of silence in unwritten
poems
whose dreaming now sounds

The book, with its exquisite binding and printing, creates one work of art, lovingly labored to fine line. It cannot be measured. The poems may be loved or liabled, but not measured. Only the reader is measured in their reading. Because we bring ourselves to the task — ignorant or wise, arrogant or humble, open or closed. What is measured by our words are not the poet's words, but rather our way of perceiving the words he has shared.

This collection of poems is like a compilation of musical notes, small mirrors of our spirits, nostalgically laced with sweat and tears and blood dappled on a page. — That's the Gethsemani link. And if one reads them with a dialated heart, one shall recognize oneself as the turf upon which warm blood has dripped and stained him forever.

Ron Seitz, author of the recently acclaimed *The Gethsemani Poems,* has produced another significant book of poetry.

The title of this new collection of Seitz poems, *Death Eat,* is an embodiment of the poetry itself; it is much like the Word in which all words are contained. In the last verse of the prologue —

sepia mist
eating our death

— one finds a description of the poet, his substance, and the toil of his "*difficult good.*"

Sepia refers to the cuttlefish which has an internal shell. It also connotes the dark brown pigment, an inky fluid, which is secreted by the cuttlefish in times of danger. It is an appropriate image for a poet with the intensity of Seitz, living in times just as intense. A society in a mythless condition such as ours, is in danger and thus requires certain individuals with interior shells... to eat our death.

Ron Seitz is such a poet. He has dared the devastating downpour of death's sting and swallowed it. His poetic self, a crucible-like vessel wherein the raw of life's undifferentiated material (paradox and contradiction), converge in order to diverge in "*sepia mist.*"

The fluid concentration of this "*sepia mist*" seeps into the imagination of its readers. The poems are lean and impressionistic of necessity, for he has eaten our common death in his own and from the crushed bones has given us bread.

These are not poems of death, but of life. They are mystical equations, contemplative pauses, secreted for the reader like a sepia from the martyrdom of Seitz's own contemplation.

The inner shell of the poet, like a sarcophagus, modifies the meat of memories. Themes of friends and family — "Thomas," "Death," "Requiem," "Annora, This Song," and "Philip Seitz (1886 – 1967)" — mingled with an assortment of other poems ("Starry Night," "The Still Point") — are placed before us like a banquet, masticated as from a mother's tender lips: death eaten for life-giving nurture.

The book's invisible aroma is as real and as vital as the fiber of its flesh. The bouquet of Seitz's poems lingers in the palate long after the reading. Thus it secretly causes associations to be made, one to the other: his imaged-experience (poetry) with one's raw experience. In this associated remembrance, one's own experience is not suffered in isolation, but rather is given meaning by virtue of a relationship with the poetry. Such a book is a commodious sacrament.

History and anthropology teach us that a human society cannot long survive unless its members are psychologically and spiritually contained within a central living myth. Such a myth provides the individual and the community with a reason for being. Myth is a pattern of reality that can be expressed through the imagination or through history. If the creative mninority in our midst, the myth-makers, are in harmony with prevailing myth, then they can lead and inform the other layers of society and may even spare us a direct encounter with the ultimate question of life: our death.

We live, however, in a mythless society. The central myth is dissolving around us and the features of the new rising myth have not fully revealed themselves. — This is where Ron Seitz appears. This is where any poet or artist enters who is willing to suffer our mythless condition: "to eat our death"....

finally
let go of lines
as the deepsea diver
cutting the length of breath
afloat to the surface:
a serpentine flail upward

to drop deeper
downward to darkness
cold
alone

the last light of the life
bubbling
a rise bulging bigger
to burst the water with
air:

lost mute words
voiced from blackness

opening saltwet lips

wide to the sun
forever shunned —

a solitary vision
single say

Janus-faced joy
ephemeral

(POET)

The World is a Prayerful Place. By Dianne Bergant, C.S.A., Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1987. Pp. 132. Paper, $8.95.

Reviewed by Leslie J. Hoppe, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Religion, Northwestern University), Associate Professor at the Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, Ill.

Though this book is about prayer, it does not provide the reader with a new method for prayer; rather it attempts to set a mood for prayer. The atmosphere the author intends to create is decidedly optimistic about the ability of human beings to commune with God and find in that process new meaning and purpose for their lives. The author derives her inspiration from an unexpected source: the wisdom literature of the Bible, a collection of texts that seem to have little to say about prayer. But since this book is not really about a method of prayer but tries to set a tone for prayer, Bergant finds just what is needed to do just that in the writings of ancient Israel's sages. The author lets the insights of the wisdom tradition guide her readers without loading her text with a numerous biblical citations that can be tedious in a work such as this. This book is a fine example of how ancient perspectives of life can inform people today. The skill of her presentation is that the author lets the biblical tradition speak almost unobtrusively.

Readers will find themselves putting the book down from time to time not in order to process complex theological ideas but in order to let the author's rich metaphorical prose work its wonders. Here again the influence of the wisdom literature is evident, but instead of simply reusing the images in the biblical text, Bergant lets the contemporary scene suggest the metaphors that she hopes will help her readers feel the presence of God through their own experience. Here the author is at her best for she is doing for her readers today precisely what ancient Israel's sages did for their readers long ago.

Bergant's reliance on inspiration from the wisdom tradition is the book's greatest strength but also its greatest weakness. Some biblical interpreters believe that the wisdom tradition reflects a type of class ethic. Its primary audience was composed of people who "made it" in ancient Israelite society. It speaks to their experience rather than to that of the poor and simple. The great challenges to the perspectives of conventional wisdom came from the Books of Job and Ecclesiastes which pointed out the weakness of an overly optimistic view of life yet even these books reflect the experience of the upper class. While Bergant writes very clearly and quite creatively, the book does reflect the author's own experience and background. Those who share this background are those who will most benefit from the book because they will be able to identify with its unspoken but real assumptions about life and the world.

This book has so much to commend it. It reflects the perspectives of a portion of the Bible that usually does not inform those who are searching to grow in their life of prayer. It is based on a confidence in the human spirit and a belief in the beauty of creation that are the great legacy of the wisdom tradition. Its style is clear and very engaging. Most of all, its readers will find this book a thoughtul, sensitive and faith-filled stimulus to prayer.

Living With Sickness. By Susan Saint Sing. St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1987. Pp. 86. Paper, no price given.

Reviewed by Sr. Marie Francis Gallagher, O.S.F. Sister is presently working with the poor in the Ministry of Caring in Wilmington, DE.

Saint Sing, in this captivating "struggle toward meaning" offers you consideration of a life with sickness. This is not a book to hurry through. No; read between the lines, and read with faith in her words. Only the truth displayed on each page will set you free from your fear of disease, illness, man, suffering or whatever you are agonizing about. Looking at them, you can offer them as gifts of praise to the Praise Creator.

Not really, you may choose to say. Then what will you do with the suffering and death that is vividly depicted on TV every day? What about the Wars that have been fought throughout the World, fought in the name of peace. What about all the men, women and children who are lifetime victims of wheel chairs, old age, mental patients in state hospitals for the insane? What about life time prisoners, illegal aliens? And now more recently we see Aids victims questioning with their eyes "Why me?" I was born as we all were born without our help. I, too, will suffer and die without help from another, unless I, choose to take my own life because of pain or suffering. No one can escape suffering and death. You do have to say thanks for suffering and death. Death will be welcome indeed after the struggle for life is ended.

The Creator of life sent His Son to earth to become human like you. Jesus was born, grew up, became a carpenter, worked for His living, provided for Mary, His Mother. Jesus said goodby to Mary, was baptized by John, went into the desert; fasted and prayed; met and overcame evil. Then, off in stride to heal, to cure the sick, to raise the dead. All these things Jesus did because he wanted people to be whole, to be well. He gave these powers to the Apostles and He gives them to you. You have these gifts and they can be as effective as Jesus was — even more so. Your faith in His gifts must be real.

The fourteen chapters in this book are a manifestation of the life of a young promising athlete and her struggle to live a full life despite many obstacles. It reads like an odyssey in a land of triumph aloft with every just right to utmost disaster with broken chips abounded and no two pieces could be fitted together. Saint Sing was accidentally dopped on her head during a volley ball exercise.

Looking this life-shattering event in the eye, Saint Sing became worse and contained within herself. Her main support came after she herself sought help from many others. She began to learn how to cope with simple things and to admit to herself and others her deep-seated fears.

Chapter 9, Facing Mortality, is an eye-opening experience as Saint Sing

walked and sat in the cemetery. This led her to a true discovery of the creaturehood with which all are covered.

Shorter Notices

FR. JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

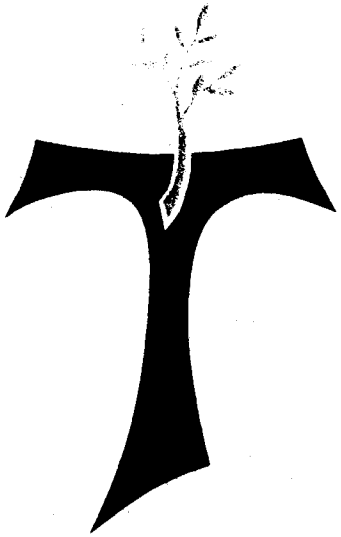
Miracles. A Catholic View. By Dr. Ralph M. McInerny. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1986. Pp. 153. Paper, $6.95.

The author, a well-known philosopher and Catholic layman, begins this account by pointing out that a miracle is always "a sign of God's presence and an opportunity for men to respond to the divine call" (p. 14). He takes time to criticize the fideism which rejects reason's role in relation to faith, and he also critiques the skepticism that would say miracles are unreasonable.

The book is divided into three parts, which need not be read as they occur. Part I recalls the miracles in Scripture, some from the Old Testament, and the miracles of Jesus, and those of the apostles, as recorded in the New Testament.

Part II, perhaps the most interesting part, deals with Miracles in the life of the Church, treating of pilgrimages and shrines, relics and uncorrupted bodies, and apparitions of Mary. Part III, "The Theology of Miracles," treats of the views of the magisterium , theological tradition, and Thomas Aquinas. There the question of the possibility of miracles is raised as well as the question "Can miracles be seen?" A concluding chapter suggests the balance that must be held "Between Skepticism and Credulity."

This book is not a dry treatise. It is written in a personal style, and draws on the author's own experience of holy places and pilgrimage. It is probably too succinct in its refutation of logical positivism and its defense of the principle of Contradiction. As a book for the believing Catholic layman whose mind is subject, like all of ours, to the influence of skepticism today, the book succeeds admirably.



holy week

to a winter-worn world:
seasoned message of hope,
written in fresh green
and spring pastels
of flowers and blossoms.
life begins anew
from the still-death of winter:
Resurrection.

fear and weariness,
broken twigs and ashes,
winter
dying
palms amid olive branches.
chrism,
holy
thorns and nails
cross
to Life.

Sister Lorelei Francis, S.A.

A Concelebrated Death

Three died once and
Christ was among them.
So was Dismas and
so was — who?
We think of Christ and
Christ thinks of Dismas,
and who?
If Christ had died alone,
we would not have Dismas,
and who?
If Christ had died alone,
we would not have had
Grandma's death there too.
There was Dismas, "who",
Grandma, cousin Jim,
and me.

Fr. Patrick G. Leary, O.F.M.

Passionflower

A vase of roses blooms beneath the cross.
His alabaster body gleams in the red glow of their love.
Scarlet flowers lay soft against the rigid wood,
crowding for a place nearest his heart,
their velvet heads bent with sorrow,
shamed that they can not
bleed for him too.

Sr. Edmund Marie Stets

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Books Received

Farley, Margaret A. *Personal Commitments. Making, Keeping, Changing*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987. Pp. 148, including Index. Cloth, $13.95.

Farrell, Rev. Edward J. *Gathering the Fragments. A Gospel Mosaic*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1987. Pp. 100. Paper, $4.95.

Geaney, Dennis J., OSA. *Quest for Community. Tomorrow's Parish Today*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1987. Pp. 142. Paper, $3.95.

Ravitch, Diane, and Finn, Chester E. Jr. *What Do Our 17-Year-Olds Know? A Report on the first National Assessment of History and Literature*. New York: Harper & Row, 1987. Pp. 297 with Appendix and Index. Cloth, $15.95.

Reiser, S.J., William E. *Drawn to the Divine. A Spirituality of Revelation*. Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1987. Pp.. 138. Paper, $4.95

Rohr, Richard and Martos, Joseph. *The Great Themes of Scriptures: Old Testament*. Cincinnati, Ohio: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1987. Pp. 131. Paper, $5.95

Segundo, Juan Luis. *Theology and the Church. A Response to Cardinal Ratzinger and a Warning to the Whole Church*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987. Pp. 192. Paper, $8.95.

St. Romain, Philip A. *Jesus on the Cross. Why?* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1987. Pp. 110, including Appendices. Paper, $4.95.

Franciscan Studies M.A. Program Summer 1988 Offerings

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FS 504	Life of St. Francis	3	M-F*	8:30-9-45	Conrad Harkins, OFM,Ph.D.
FS 506	Survey of Franciscan History	3	M-F	9:55-11:10	Dominic Monti, OFM,Ph.D.
FS 508	History of Franciscan Thought	3	M-F	9:55-11:10	Romuald Green, OFM,Ph.D.
FS 520	Writings of St. Francis & St. Clare	2	M-Th	11:20-12:25	Michael Hart, OFM Cap.,S.T.L.
FS 541	Franciscan Theology of Prayer	2	M-Th	11:20-12:25	Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap.,Ph.D.
FS 519	Theol. Foundations of Franciscanism	2	M-Th	1:00-2:05	William Short, OFM,S.T.D.
FS 563	Principles of Spiritual Direction	2	M-Th	1:00-2:05	Edward Coughlin, OFM,Ph.D.
FS 500	Method and Bibliography	2	M-Th*	2:20-3:15	Paul Spaeth, M.L.S.
FS 511	Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts	2	M-Th	2:20-3:15	Malcolm V. T. Wallace, Ph.D.
FS 564	Franciscan Praxis of Spirit. Direct.	2	M-Th	2:20-3:15	David Couturier, OFM Cap.,Ph.D.
FS 598	Francisc. Mystics: Angela & Jacopone	2	M-Th*	7:00-8:05 (evening)	Paul Lachance, OFM,Ph.D.

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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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

Reflection:

Music and a Religious Franciscan

SISTER MARY FRANCILENE, CSSF

I AM A MUSICIAN. More than this, I am a religious — a Franciscan at that. And yet I'm not proficient in either field; for I can't express my thoughts of music in a masterful composition, nor am I interiorly disposed as to withold my feelings and humbly submit to them! Therefore, I must try to explain the answers to my own unsolved and bothersome questions in this piece of writing.

Do I alone wonder how a musical interest and a religious vocation can be developed harmoniously? I don't think so. Most faithful religious dedicated to the apostolate of music at one time or another ask the question — "Is this a conflict?"

To me, music is a precious gift; intangible yet real. When I enter the music room to put in an hour of practice or just to run through one or two compositions, I like to imagine that I am entering a chapel. (Idealistic?) No. I want to be a good religious too. If this is one way to recall the holy presence of God and unite myself to His Love, I think it is very reasonable!) I offer my playing as a prayer, and at times feel as close to God in that tiny space as in a big cathedral. And perhaps even more; for beautiful music is like feeling the breath of God as he wills life and strength to all His creation. Upon leaving such a room, there is nothing much to show in human standards, except perhaps the crumpled and marked-over sheet of some seventeenth century composer held in my tired hand; yet heavenward soaring are the notes which have been practiced [illegible] Each one is harmoniuosly praising its Master, and interceding in behalf of the poor musician who gave them their wings for the flight [illegible]

Sister Mary Francilene, CSSF, has served as the president of Madonna College, Livonia, Michigan, since 1976. Prior to that she was a music teacher for twelve years in secondary schools. She has been a previous contributor to **The CORD**

St. Bonaventure

As a religious, I also believe that music is fulfilling its highest role when it is rendered as the handmaid of a liturgical function. My deepest ambition was, and is, to always be faithful in the artful and pious expression of sacred Music. What a privilege it is that the Divine prayer of the God-man, as offered in mediation to the Eternal Father at Mass, is sent winging to heaven on the melodious strains of a human musician's efforts. This is *real* music — a Prayer of the Mystical Christ rendered in a musical way!

Music itself is a prayer. Every passage is a reflection, every phrase an aspiration, every measure a beat of love — whether it be considered from the viewpoint of the active composer and player or the passive reflection of the listener. Just as in a musical composition, our lives are notes and verses and melodies — each adding ot the whole.

In another light, all of music is but a collection of themes from one great sumphony, of which there is but one Great Composer. This *Eternal Symphony* has three movements: the first, the most important movement of a symphony because of its structure and thematic material, is the *Allegro*. From infinity we have been in the Mind of God — all of us as individual themes; vibrant and alive.

Then slowly, the second *Adagio* movement begins. We unfold on the staff line of earth, and grope our way in human time during this, the shortest though most melodic movement of the Eternal Symphony. We often become discordant with others who are in contrast to our own selves; yet soon we resolve concordantly because of the human tendency for orderly variety. Constantly renewing our effort and courage; failing often, yet repeating acts of confidence, we attain the peak of divine unity. Thus, sustained by God's Providence and grace we carefully wend our way to the *Finale!*

Then breaks forth the *Vivace!* Freed from the bonds of flesh, the soul sprightly dances onward and upward to the untouchable heights of melody and remains forever vibrating with life and love for all eternity!

Am I alone in my desire to be united with God in melodious love? No. Christ has shown the way. Was it not of Him that it is written, "And after reciting a hymn, they went out to Mount Olivet." (Matt. 26:30) The identical words are emphasized again by Saint Mark (Mark 14:26).

On the eve of his bitter passion, Jesus did not hesitate to renew His strength by reciting a hymn. John, the Beloved one who knew so intimately the longings of Christ's human heart, in speaking of that night even mentions that "Jesus had often met there together with his disciples." (John 19:2). It is easy to imagine that their conversations must have often commenced with one or two favorite psalms of Christ and his disciples!

Being a Franciscan, I also have other models. It is recorded of Saint

Francis that after God, Francis ardently loved music!" (*My God and My All*, by Elizabeth Goudge). Another devotee says of him:

> "Francis was in love with God. The presence of God blossomed in his soul... He was more of a soul than a body, though his body was aching with pain. In the forest here at this very moment the presence of God intoxicated him. From time to time he cried Jesus! And the echo sent the words back to him through the whole forest. He wanted to say beautiful things, but he found only scraps of words. He wanted to sing, but he had no voice. He wanted to dance, but he could hardly stand on his feet. Oh! if only in such a moment of ecstatic love could make some music. Something worthy of Jesus and the Cross! He picked up a stick, broke it in two and held one end under his chin, using the other piece as a violinist's bow. And he heard music. He swayed like a virtuoso in that white forest where nothing could be heard but the rubbing of one stick against another. Yet he heard the song of his heart, the song of his Brothers, the song of humanity; that hum of thankfulness and longing which amid the darkness of sin, rises silently to God, to the bleeding Christ on the Cross!"(*The Perfect Joy of St. Francis*, by Felix Timmermans).

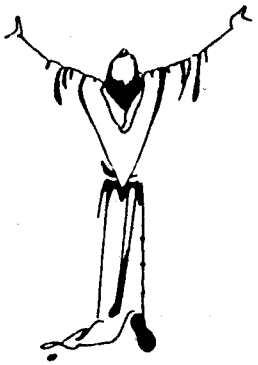
The last of the many other examples which could be cited here, is the most beautiful of all — how to welcome death with a song.

> "The moon was shining brightly in the silence of the hot summer night. Beggars were lying asleep near the fountain. Two sentries were pacing up and down before the Bishop's palace, for fear that the Perugians might dare to come and kidnap the dying Francis. Suddenly in the silence of the night a voice said:
>
> 'Be praised, my Lord, for sister Death...'
>
> Francis was silent awhile. Then from his open window could be heard the voices of Leo and Angelo, repeating the song. A beggar who was unable to fall asleep sat up and joined in the singing. After all, he had heard the song every night for a week! They continued singing that way while the moon climbed into the sky, until morning... At twilight — in the evening — at night — they were always singing!" (Timmermans)

My own day is not void of examples. How many of the Sisters in our Felician Community have left behind themselves a beautiful account of their deaths in the Mortuology — the Remembrance of the Dead. One in particular has always inspired me. It is written of a certain Sister who merited her eternal reward on August 13, 1945 — "As the pain became more severe, Sister did not withdraw her sacrifice but suffered in silent

union with the Agony of Christ. Her last prayer on the night before she died was *to sing a Magnificat* of thanksgiving..." (Mortuology of the Felician Sisters)

Ah! To die singing is to die loving. This is my *only* purpose for allowing my nature and talents to pursue the God-given treasure of music. Does it conflict with my love of Him? Never. Does it inspire it? Yes, yes over and over! Music is above matter. Unselfish. Good. Beautiful. She is a fair daughter of Love uniting me to my King.



It's time!
The time to rise,
to embrace this new day
to gather golden flowers
to sit by the quiet lake
to quack to sleeping ducks
to feed bold squirrels
to walk amidst a green-gold world
to stand in awe before the mystery of the birch tree.

For this is the time of Resurrection,
of being born anew,
graced and gifted,
a woman's hour to seek
to meet and embrace
the Risen Lord.

Christine Diensberg, O.S.F.

The Power of St. Francis' Preaching

SÉAMUS MULHOLLAND, O.F.M.

In the life of St. Francis the relationship between his preaching and the Word of God has not so much been overlooked as taken for granted. Yet this was something that Francis never did himself: he never took the World of God for granted, but rather accepted it as a gift and as a special revelation. For Francis it was the word of God which brought about reconciliation and peace, two themes which occupy a great amount of his preaching ministry. The view that Francis had of preaching is well attested to and indeed is one of the hinge points of his active mendicant ministry since it was to "preach" reconciliation and penance that the Pope gave him his commission when he sought approval for his way of life (cf. Cel. 1,32; 2,17; LM 3,10).

When Francis preached he always preached about peace and it was this power of his preaching about peace which brought about reconciliation. Bonaventure (LM 3,3) tells us that Francis always began his sermons by wishing everyone peace with the greeting "May God give you peace." This form of greeting, Bonaventure goes on, was "revealed" to Francis and such was the power of this revelation within Francis that Francis was "moved by the spirit of the prophets" and being so moved he preached and proclaimed peace and salvation. The power of this greeting and the power of Francis' words broke the chains of enmity between people who had been in conflict with one another and who had been in conflict with Christ and "far from salvation."

Similarly Celano records that Francis "fervently announced peace to men and women" and to everyone he met on the road or that he came in contact with. Celano goes on further to say that it was this greeting

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and its immensely personal aspect which brought peace to many people and in a sense brought them salvation for they turned away from their previous ways of life and embraced Christ. Francis' own conversion is reflected in these encounters for it was through the word of God announcing peace and salvation in Christ that Francis turned away from his old way of life and "put on" the new way of life which was Christ. The words of Francis and their power were not powerful in the sense that they were marvellous homiletic rhetoric, but rather that they were pure, sincere, genuine and put together with honesty and integrity. It was this power of God's word which had been preached to Francis himself which inspired his preaching and proclamation of peace and reconciliation, or conversion and penance to others.

The power of Francis' preaching was so strong that it had not only the power to reshape and record lives, but it also drove out demons. In 1222 Francis was preaching in Bologna and the sermon was heard by Thomas of Spalato the Archdeacon and recorded in his "Historia Salonitarum". We do not unfortunately have the words of Francis but we do have Thomas' account (Omnibus, p. 1601) of the subject matter. The entire city had gathered to hear Francis and the subject matter of his homily was "Angels, Demons and Men." Thomas records that the manner in which Francis spoke and his "clarity" impressed even the scholars and "aroused" the ordinary people to great admiration. Thomas refers to Francis as "an untutored man," a term Francis would have agreed with, this untutored man was not possessed of a "sacred eloquence" but rather harangued the people. It may well be that the learned, academic mind of the Archdeacon, well used no doubt to writing long, scholarly sermons with great intellectual and catechetical imput and subject matter, found this haranguing of the people unsavory and something to be expected from one "untutored." But Thomas also reads beneath the haranguing to understand that Francis was preaching peace and reconciliation and a "putting and end to hatreds."

The *Little Flowers* (27) record that it was on this same occasion that Francis' power of preaching made further conversions. Listening to the sermon on Angels, Demons and Men were two noblemen, Riccieri and Pellegrino. So impressed were they with what Francis said and so deeply did it strike them that they left their former way of life and joined the Order committing themselves to the life of preaching and penance to the extent that Bernard of Quintavale would call Pellegrino "... the most perfect friar in all the world".

As Thomas noted, Francis was "untutored" and it is more than likely that he was not possessed of the eloquence of the angels, but nevertheless his preaching was powerful in its content, its delivery, and its integrity.

While Francis may have been possessed of a love for the word of God and the way in which he preached it shows that God had granted him a great gift, he was never quite convinced that he had the talents and the gifts necessary for the task. The famous story of Francis asking Clare and Sylvester to pray for him that the will of God might be revealed to him as to whether he should live a life of preaching or a contemplative life, is on the one hand an exercise in community discernment, but on the other is the search for affirmation. Bonaventure records the incident in his Major life (12, 1) and Francis himself admits of his inability to speak, rather like Jeremiah.

> "... I am a worthless religious, I have no education and I am inexperienced in speaking. I have received the gift of prayer rather than that of preaching..."

For Francis this was genuine search for Bonaventure tells us that he was "tormented by doubt" and he had set the life of prayer and the life of preaching in balance: each was as valid as the other, each as meaningful and each as profound and mysterious as God-given gifts. Undoubtedly the gift of prophecy had been given him, in many ways he knew his own mind since what he was to do was revealed to him by the Lord, as he attests in the Testament, but Bonaventure notes that Francis "was unable to solve his own difficulty satisfactorily." But once again God's mysterious hand is at work because Bonaventure understood that this "was just the way God wished it so that Francis might remain humble and the value of preaching "might be proved by a revelation from heaven." Once again revelation of what he is to do plays an active important role in Francis' life. Once Clare and Sylvester had discerned that it was God's will that he should go out and preach, Francis "... refused to delay and set out immediately..."

This commitment to God's will and his depth of vitality in action and word makes the power of Francis' preaching for good extremely mysterious for he admits of his being "ineloquent" and that he is not used to public speaking. But his trust in Christ's words, "do not worry what you are to say because on that day if will not be you speaking but the spirit of your Father speaking in you" enables him to set forth with joyfulness of heart, with peace and convinced of his mission to proclaim peace and goodness to all as God has revealed to him.

There is however an element of humor in some ways in which Francis preached and it is a salutary example for we also who preach peace and reconciliation and indeed may well prove useful as we agonize over our homilies — their content, their level and the manner of the delivery. It is also heartening to know that there were occasions when even Francis

may have got it wrong to the point of confusing his hearers. Francis used simple direct things with which the people to whom he was preaching were familiar: suggestions, a vague nod of the head, a knowing glance or look conveyed to the people who were listening and understanding and a knowledge which the profundities of theology, philosophy, homiletics and social-medial communications could not do. The example I have chosen is the one which Celano gives us of the poor doctor who has listened to Francis preaching, reflected upon the manner and content of his preaching and has concluded:

> "... while I can retain the preaching of others word for word, only the things that St. Francis says elude me. If I commit them to memory they do not seem to be the same that dropped from his lips before..."
>
> 2 Celano, 107.

Francis' preaching and its power was a gift from God, a gift profound in its power for good, in its power to bring and maintain peace.

Setting aside the unfortunate experience of the confused doctor for the moment we can turn to the effective power of Francis' preaching and the ways in which his words had visible effect. Celano records that Francis' preaching on peace drove out the "demons of war" at Arezzo and that the city returned to its previuos peaceful state (2 Cel. 108). This preaching in times of war had an effect far beyond the confines of 13th century Italy, for in the turbulent, war-torn strife of the Middle Ages with their petty fuedalisms, the Crusades raged and burned like some Medieval Frankenstein that could not be controlled.

The Crusades were particularly vicious and savage in their barbarism with many atrocities on both sides — all in the name of God whether it be the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, or the One, Merciful Allah. Into this conflict burning with the desire for martyrdom and armed only with the weapons of peace, reconciliation and trust in the word of God Francis entered the Sultan's camp. The story is well known but it is of special interest in the context of these few reflections since it shows Francis at his most impetuous, abnormal, wild self — these are not to be seen as criticisms but rather as eye-gazing, mouth agape compliments for only

someone who trusted in God so much would do such a thing. That Francis walked into the Sultan's camp is one thing; that he went with the intention of preaching Christ, converting the Sultan and trying to bring peace and reconciliation, is quite another and even more astounding is that he walked free and with his head still on his shoulders.

The Sultan was Melek-el-Khamil and the Crusade the Crusade at Damietta which began in 1216 when the truce had expired between those on the Holy Land and the Saracens. In 1218 the plan of Innocent III was brought into effect, namely, "... to bring the army of Christ into the land of Egypt..." The battle which the Crusaders and the Saracens had been fighting raged from May 9th 1218 to August 29th 1219 and after the battle a truce was arranged. The truce however collapsed and war ensued again on September 26th so it was between August 29th and September 26th that Francis spent time in the Sultan's camp. The stories related about this visit vary: Bonaventure Major Life, 9, 7-8; Celano, 1, 57; Little Flowers 24. But the textual variations admit of one thing — that Francis went and that he preached peace. The following is an eyewitness account of Francis' arrival and mission at Damietta:

> "... At Damietta we saw the first founder and master of the new Order of wandering preachers, he who all others obey. He is the simple and unlettered man from Assisi, one beloved of God and man. They call him Brother Francis. When the army arrived before Damietta in Egypt this fearless brother, Francis, armed only with the shield of faith walked alone towards the lines of the Sultan, he who men call "the King of Babylon"..."
>
> *"The World's Debate: The Story of the Crusades Through The Words of Eye-Witnesses".*
>
> B.B.C. Radio Broadcast, Radio 3, 8th June, 1984.

The texts present the Sultan receiving Francis honourably and with great admiration and they show an interesting interchange between the Sultan and Francis in the way in which Francis not only preached peace with simplicity and power but also through his actions preached holy poverty. Francis refused the gifts of the Sultan, not with the intention of spurning him personally, or offending him, but rather out of his love of poverty — this made the Sultan admire him even more. The two main intentions of Francis were the search for martyrdom and the conversion of the Sultan through Francis' preaching of the good news; perhaps Francis also thought that he could end the bloody and senseless carnage of the Crusade and put an end to the slaughter by preaching peace. None of these intentions were realized, yet that does not lessen the power of his preaching or the effect of his actions. For a brief, untimeable moment

two worlds met: two views of God, the world, life: a man of peace and, by force of circumstance, a man of war. The Sultan remained a Moslem though there are versions of the story which speak about his conversion to Christianity, but both parted amiably and in a real sense the preaching of Francis had worked: each had not only been reconciled by recognizing and accepting their differences, but in a real sense Francis and the Sultan in their shared dialogue had demonstrated in a practical manner the futility not only of the Crusades but the futility of violence as a whole. The Sultan was actually moved by Francis' preaching and realized that they were the words and intentions of a man steeped in peace whose only goal was peace and reconciliaton.

Francis' preaching and its power was a gift from God, a gift profound in its power for good, in its power to bring and maintain peace. Today the Friars continue to follow the example of Francis and his ministry of preaching, and to the Sultans and Crusades of our day, to the war-torn cities and many injustices which exist in our world we too are called upon by God to preach peace greeting all men and women, regardless of race, creed, colour or political persuasion with the words the Lord revealed to Francis: May God give you peace! Let us place as much trust in our words that Francis placed in his — for the words of peace have their source in the Word which became flesh and who preached peace and reconciliation not only in his words but in the ultimate preaching — his death on the Cross and his resurrection to a new life of peace since through it we are reconciled to God and we who were once "far off have now been brought close."

On How Certain Brothers from Rome reflected on the Admonition of Brother Francis, Which Says: "Where There is Peace and Contemplation, There is Neither Care Nor Restlessness"

(Adm. XXVII)

Fr. HERMANN SHALUCK

It was the beautiful month of September in the year of the Lord 1986, and the leaders of the peoples had declared an International Year of Peace. Shortly after the feast of the Stigmata of our Father and Brother Francis the Minister of the whole Fraternity with his Counsellors, also called Definitors, wended his way towards the north of the Italian Peninsula, to a city called Vittorio Veneto in the Province of Treviso, to a humble convent under the obedience of the Minister of that region, Augustinus Venetus.

At the beginning of the second year of his six years of ministry, John of Santa Barbara, the Minister of all the Brothers, joined by those brothers called Definitors and relying on the powerful help of the prayers of so many brothers in so many Provinces desired to study the numerous, diverse and difficult tasks which lay ahead. Together they wished to help in putting into practice the Six-Year Plan of the Order, which had been enjoined upon them by the last General Chapter, held in the Portiuncula. This Plan should promote the three Priorities — thus the Brothers are wont to call them — of this present time: the contemplative life, the life of poverty and the promotion of Justice and Peace.

This reflection, in the style of the Little Flowers of Saint Francis, *is the work of Fr. Hermann Shalück, O.F.M., D.Th., General Definitor of the Order stationed in Rome.*

During their short periods of recreation in that convent the friars devoted themselves to prayer and song, to fraternal dialogue with the hospitable brothers and sisters of that region and fraternity, to harvesting the grapes in the garden, and to playing with and imparting Franciscan formation to three young cats which wandered about the cloisters of that venerable old convent. They also made an excursion to the high mountains of that province — called the Dolomites — where they were afforded a special opportunity of singing the praises of Sister Rain and Sister Fog.

Once these fruitful days were over the brothers decided to pass two more days in Venice for the purpose of living the contemplative dimension themselves, instead of talking about it first and then recommending it to others. In order to do this — and in obedience to the brothers and sisters of Venice, particularly to the Minister Augustinus — they agreed to retire to a hermitage situation on an island in the Venetian lagoon called "St. Francis of the Desert." This is the island to which St. Francis betook himself on his return from his apostolic journey of peace to the East. Here he hoped to find peace himself and to seek God in prayer (LM, 8,9). And even though it was most difficult, if not impossible, for the brothers from Rome to observe a fast — a feature also present in Vittorio Veneto — because of the watchful motherly attentions of the brothers and sisters who had welcomed them, they tried at any rate to seek conversion of heart and to pray for world peace, in accordance with the admonition of their Father and Brother Francis, already quoted.

And so, the Minister General and his companions, guided personally by the Minister from Venice, set out in a gondola. This same went within an ace of capsizing, due to the volume of the documents and "Pro-Memorias" from the Roman Curia taken on board. They passed beneath the Bridge of Sighs, meditating with deep intensity on their problems and anxieties, and came in fromt of that church where Marco Polo is buried. In silence they admired his courage as a Discoverer. They came to that island called "The Desert," where the Friars Minor live. Because of the fact that St. Francis rested here, it is held in great veneration even to this day. At the pier they received a cordial welcome from all the friars, who showed them to their poor cells, then led them to the chapel and finally to the refectory all laid out for a hearty feast.

For the space of several hours the brothers, in quiet meditation, dedicated themselves to the contemplation of the reality of God, endeavoring to drive far away all care and restlessness. With the first light of dawn they became aware that, as St. Bonaventure had described, they were on an island in the middle of the Venetian lagoon which was inhabited not only by friars but also by enormous flocks of birds of different kinds, by one cow and one dog. And as the same Seraphic Doctor had already

described, the birds, alighting on the branches, "set up an animated warbling" (LM 8,9). Since the brothers from Rome, however, did not enjoy the power of prophetic language like Francis who in his time had caused the birds to observe silence so that he might peacefully recite the canonical hours, and then gave them permission to continue their warbling, the brothers just had to sing the divine praises accompanied by the birds.

During the whole of the first day in the "Desert" the brothers meditated on the words of St. Paul in his letter to the Romans in the hope of shedding light on their own lives: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Rm 8,35).

For the meditations of the second day, however, a brother living among the transalpine fogs, chose an episode taken from the Vita Secunda of Thomas of Celano (2 Cel 98), offering an explanation of it so that the others might apply it to their own lives. The story told how Brother Francis was "on a journey" towards a "leprosarium," "carried on a donkey." He passed through the town of Borgo San Sepolcro, almost crushed by the multitude of onlookers, but was so absorbed in "contemplation of the divine mysteries" as to be oblivious of what was happening around him. So when they had already passed through Borgo San Sepolcro, he asked his companions what time they might arrive at that lively borough.

In silent prayer and fervent dialogue among themselves, with nature and with the animals of that island, the brothers asked themselves — in line with the second "Priority" — whether they also were on a journey towards a leprosarium and towards the poor; furthermore, whether they tried to dedicate themselves also to contemplation while on their journeys, whether they were content with the back of a donkey on these same journeys and, finally, whether they were capable of devoting themselves to contemplation from the back of a donkey. At any rate they asked insistently of the Lord to grant them the gift of quiet, tranquility and sweetness in contemplation, not only in their chapels and on solitary islands but also when they were hurrying through continents or when they stopped over in the big cities of this world; likewise, when they found themselves surrounded by people or, naturally, in the midst of their own brothers.

With great humility the brothers from Rome had to admit that in this respect they found themselves far behind Brother Francis. However, through meditation of the Word of God and the gospel example of their Seraphic Father, they felt so consoled and strengthened that they adopted various good resolutions, giving thanks to the Lord for it all.

At the end of their stay on the island of "St Francis of the Desert" the

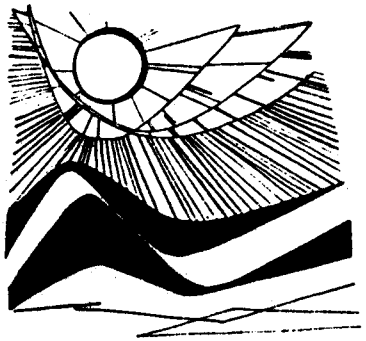
brothers were treated to a special rendering of music and song precisely by that brother who formerly had been the Minister of the Province of Venice and was now the Guardian of the Island. His name is Florindus.

Fortified in spirit and in body and accompanied by the polyphonic choir of his Definitors, Brother John of Santa Barbara celebrated a closing Mass in which more brothers from Venice took part, having arrived hurriedly in boats and gondolas. To all he addressed words of fatherly exhortation and brotherly gratitude.

Finally the brothers from Rome returned to the mainland and each one separately went out to meet the brothers of the whole world, exhorting them to live according to the Gospel and the three evangelical Priorities already mentioned, beginning with contemplation. They carried with them a letter from the Minister General inviting all to fast and pray on 27 October, the Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi, in union with the Lord Pope and the Heads of world religions. In their hearts, however, they carried the message of the "Desert," namely, PEACE with oneself and the HOPE of new life. They felt purified and fortified in the Desert, through prayer and the encounter with God, to dedicate themselves to greater and deeper contemplation. Nay more: they were prepared to fight for the justice of the Kingdom of God — should the Lord call on them — and for the ongoing renewal of the Fraternity according to the Gospel.

Ad laudem Christi.

Haec omnia vidit, audivit et fideliter transcripsit frater Hermannus Transalpinus, in die Transitus nostri Patris et Fratris Sancti Francisci, 3.10.1986.



Saint Francis Discovers Brother Word*

Words love you and you love words.
When they cluster together on the pages
And decide to live together, even marry,
Become the *sine qua non* of the poem.

Each word, what would it say if it could speak?
I will stay put where the Poor One put me.
I have my right place in his stanza and line.
I am needed there for more than the meaning.

O how charmed they are when Francis
Begs 'brother' and 'sun' to become Frate Sole;
Go hand-in-hand in his heart,
Caught on paper, the praise of all Umbria.

I listen and, although it is
Latin becoming Italian, I understand.
The moon can scarcely believe he wants
Her for a sister. But does he not half!

And words are only human after all!
They are hungering to start flowering,
For dark eyes that look on them fondly,
The mind discovering they go well together.

Small wonder they get lonely when
Hidebound in the bunker of a book,
Craving to be given life by some sweet voice,
Pleading "love me and mouth me, do not leave me.'

Iain Duggan, O.F.M.

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*Brother Words, i.e. words as Brothers or friars.

St. Bonaventure's
Collations on the Ten Commandments
Collation I: On the Four Motives for Observing Divine Commandments and the Decalog in General

Translated and introduced by
PAUL J. SPAETH

In the year 1267, during the season of Lent, St. Bonaventure preached a series of seven sermons, or collations,[1] on the Ten Commandments. These sermons turned out to be the first of three sets of collations[2] which he was to give at the University of Paris during the last seven years of his life. Although this first set of sermons is the least discussed of the three, they give us insight into Bonaventure's sermon style, his exegetical style and his polemical style. Furthermore, and more importantly, we see that Bonaventure's exposition portrays the Decalog as something central to the Christian's life, focusing on Christological and Trinitarian themes in the opening and closing sermons.

The structure which Bonaventure usually follows in these collations is that of the thematic sermon[3] which breaks the text down into theme, protheme and development of the theme. Exegetically Bonaventure follows the idea, as did almost everyone of his day, that Scripture can be expounded by four senses,[4] even though in the present work the most he ever uses is two. Bonaventure's polemics in these sermons consist of refutations and attacks against what he percieves as errors of both theology and philosophy, the main targets being the Latin Averroists,[5] the Albigensians[6] and the Jews.

In the first sermon of the series, Bonaventure begins by giving the theme not only of that sermon but also of the whole series. He does this by quoting the words of Christ from Matthew 19:17, "If you wish to enter

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into life, keep the commandments."[7] In this we see that Bonaventure is concerned with a goal (life), and a way to that goal (keeping the commandments). This is shown to be of the greatest importance to the Christian since the words are those of Jesus. From the start Bonaventure centers our attention on Christ. Bonaventure's exegesis of the Decalog has been described as a 'summa of the Christian life' in that he portrays the Decalog as containing fundamentally the whole of God's will in relation to man.[8] Bonaventure not only starts his sermons by pointing to Christ as the lifegiver, but also concludes the series of sermons by pointing to Christ as the liberator from the penalty of sin by his atoning work on the cross. In the last sermon Bonaventure likens the ten plagues that God sent against Egypt to the things that transgressors of the commendments suffer because of their actions.[9] But then Christ is shown as having gone through ten abasements, presumably to free the transgressor from the penalty of his sin.[10] Bonaventure's concluding remark is, "that we should always conform to Christ and to eat with him so that we might come to the eternal feast...."[11] The parallel between this and the opening passage from Matthew is clear; the eternal feast or life is the goal, conforming to Christ or keeping the commandments is the way.

Following on with the next section of the first sermon Bonaventure gives four motives or reasons for keeping the commandments.[12] The first is the authority of God who gave the commandments. The second is the benefit derived from keeping the commandments. The third is the danger from transgressing. The fourth is the impeccability of the commandments. This last motive deals with the idea that there is no place for the blame of sin in the commandments themselves but rather this blame lies completely with the transgressor.

There is a short interlude before the last section of the first sermon that in purpose is similar to a protheme. In this part Bonaventure talks about Matthew 22:36-40 where Christ is asked what is the greatest commandment.[13] The answer was, of course, to love God above all else and your neighbor as yourself.

Lastly, in this first sermon, Bonaventure gives us what he sees as the proper division of the commandments into two sections, or tables.[14] Keeping the commandments on the first table, or the first three precepts, puts us in right standing before God, or uncreated being.[15] Keeping the commandments on the second table, or the last seven precepts puts us in right standing before men, or created being.[16]

In explaining the special significance of the first three commandments Bonaventure utilizes a second major theological theme, and that is the Trinity. Bonaventure tells us that the first three commandments corres-

pond to three attributes of the Persons of the Trinity.[17] The first commandment tells us to adore divine majesty in the Father, the second commandment tells us to confess divine truth in the Son and the third commandment tells us to love divine goodness in the Holy Spirit. In the second sermon Bonaventure explains the opening phrase of the first commandment, "I am the Lord your God," in terms of the aformentioned attributes of the Trinity.[18] In the third sermon Bonaventure speaks in terms which we can line up as follows:[19]

FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
Fatherhood	Sonship	Procession
Majesty	Truth	Goodness
Efficient cause	Exemplary cause	Final cause
1st commandment	2nd commandment	3rd commandment

And finally in *Collation* 5.2, Bonaventure states that these first three commandments, which he has aligned with characteristics of the Trinity, are the "basis of all the teaching of the Law..."

Bonaventure's exposition based on the words and actions of Christ, and on likenesses to the three persons of the Trinity, shows the Decalog to be not just a moral code but rather something which is foundational to the life of the Christian, being the way both to please God and to become conformed to Christ.

[Theme]

1. "If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."[20] These words are written in Matthew and they are the words of our Savior. In these words is explained to us the entire substance of our salvation as it relates to two things. First, as it relates to eternal rewards; when it says, "If you wish to enter into life." Second, as it relates to the merit of human actions, when it says, "keep the commandments." And this is the correct order, because the end moves the agent, in order that the agent might work to the required end.[21] So let us follow the pattern of the great Teacher,[22] and before we say anything about the commandments themselves, first let us speak of the reasons for observing the commandments.

[Motives for keeping the Commendments]

2. The Lord first gives us the motive, and then he describes the act by which we are able to reach the required end. And it should be noted that there are four motives which move us to observe the commandments of

God. The first motive is the authority or dignity of the one commanding. The second motive is the benefit of the observing. The third motive is the peril from transgressing. The fourth motive is the impeccability of the commands. Then because he who commands the precepts to be observed is of great authority, and transgressing places one in great peril, and the command is impeccable; therefore there is no one who is able to be excused from observing the commandments.

3. First, the authority of the one commanding should move us to observe the commandments of God, because it is God who commands us to observe the commandments. That he is of great authority is clear because of three reasons. First, because he creates us by his great power. Second, he rules and governs us by his marvelous wisdom. Third, he saves us by his manifold kindness.

First, I say, that the one who commands the commandments of God to be observed is of great authority because he creates us by his great power. Job says, "Your hands have made me and fashioned me altogether."[23] And in Deuteronomny it says, "Your eyes have seen all the great works of God, which he did, in order that you may keep his commandments."[24]

4. Secondly, he is of great authority because he governs us by his marvelous wisdom. And so Isaiah says, "I am the Lord teaching you useful things, leading you in the road that you walk. Would that you had kept my commandments! Your peace would have been made like a river."[25] The Psalms say, "I have kept your commandments and your testimonies, because all my ways are in your sight."[26]

5. Thirdly, he is of great authority because he saves us by his manifold kindness. Deuteronomy says, "And now Israel, what does the Lord your God ask you, but that you should fear the Lord your God and walk in his ways and love him and serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and keep the commandments of the Lord?"[27]

"The Lord your God," who created you, who governs you and who saves you.[28]

And so it is clear that the authority of the one commanding should be the primary motive to keep the commandments of God.

6. Secondly, the benefits from observing should move us to keep the commandments of God. For in keeping of the commandments of God there are a great many benefits, which can be reduced to three. The first benefit is the receiving[29] of divine gifts, the second is the understanding of the Sacred Scriptures, and the third is the gaining of heavenly rewards.

7. The first benefit in keeping the commandments of God is the receiving of divine gifts. So in John it says, "If you love me keep my commandments, and I will ask the Father and he will give to you another paraclete."[30]

8. The second benefit is the understanding of the Sacred Scriptures. The Psalms say, "I have understood more than the ancients, because I have sought your commandments."[31] Gregory shows how we come to an understanding of the Sacred Scriptures. He does this by citing the incident when the disciples saw Jesus and did not know him, but when they heard him speaking, then they knew him. And so Gregory says the following, "The disciples were not enlightened by hearing the commandments of God, but were enlightened by doing them."[32] Because, "not [so much] the hearers of the Law, but the doers of the Law are justified."[33] And James says in his epistle, "Be doers of the Word of God and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves; because if anyone is a hearer of the Word of God only and not a doer, he will be like a man looking at his own face in a mirror."[34] If a man sees his own face in a mirror ten times, he still will not know himself well. But if he sees the face of another man apart from the mirror, he will know the other well. This is because of the strong and direct[35] impression of the image[36] on the eye, while in the mirror the perception is not true.[37] Similarly, when a man hears the Word of God it seems to him that he understands it well, but immediately that understanding leaves. But when he puts it to practice by right doing, then he understands it.

9. The third benefit of observing the commandments of God is the gaining of heavenly rewards. As it says in Proverbs, "Keep my commandments and you will live, and keep my law as the apple of your eye."[38] This is the reason God gave the observance of commandments to man while he was living in paradise.

And so it is clear that the benefits from observing should move us to keep the commandments of God.

10. Thirdly, the peril from transgressing should move us to observe the commandments, because the transgressor of the commandments falls into many dangers. First, he loses out on many good things. Second, he plunges into terrible degradations. Third, he deserves eternal punishment.

First the peril from transgressing should move us to keep the commandments of God because transgressors lose out on many good things. In Leviticus it says, "If you will not hear my voice and do not keep all my commandments, I will visit you with want and burning heat, which will waste your eyes and consume your souls."[39] He says, "I will visit you

with want," that is deprivation of all earthly goods; "and burning heat, which will waste your eyes and consume your souls," because it blinds the intellect to truth and it takes away the love of goodness. And because of this the Psalmist speaks in the person of the transgressor, "My strength has left me and the light from my eyes itself is not with me."[40]

11. Secondly, transgressors of the commandments plunge into terrible degredations. In Baruch it says, "We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord, that we should walk in his commandments, and we have gone off each one according to the inclinations of their wicked heart."[41] Of such transgressors the Psalms say, "My people did not hear my voice, and Israel did not listen to me, and I have sent them off according to the desires of their heart."[42] For the Lord gives such transgressors into the hands of demons. That is shown well in Daniel where the three young men in the fiery furnace said, "We have sinned and we have acted wickedly and we have transgressed;"[43] "And we have been given over into the hands of our enemies who are evil and very wicked and liars and to an unjust king and one who is the most wicked in all the earth.[44]

12. Thirdly, the transgressors of the commandments deserve eternal punishments. The Psalms say, "Cursed are those who turn from your commandments."[45] "Cursed," because it is said to them, "Depart you cursed into eternal fire,"[46] in Matthew.

13. See the extraordinary benefit of obeying and the extraordinary calamity of disobeying. The Lord said to Moses, "Behold I set before you a blessing and a curse; a blessing if you obey my commandments, a curse if you do not."[47] The Lord puts us in between the blessing and the curse and deals with us wonderfully. When someone wishes to prove something to another person, he proves it to him in two ways: namely by an ostensive proof and by a proof 'per impossibile.'[48] This is the way the Lord does it: he puts man in the middle bewtween Heaven and Hell; in Heaven is eternal glory, in Hell there are eternal punishments. And when the Lord shows man the glory of paradise, which he is able to merit by keeping the commandments, then God inclines him to the keeping of the commandments by an ostensive proof. When, however, he shows him the punishments of Hell, into which he will fall if he transgresses the commandments, God inclines him by a proof 'per impossibile'.

See, he sets before us a curse and a blessing. Let us leave the curse and snares to Judas the betrayer, of whom it is said that he did not want the blessing (and it will be taken from him), but rather let us receive the blessing with blessed Matthias.[49]

14. Fourthly, the impeccability of the commandments should move us to the observing of them. A commandment is called impeccable when it does not contain anything impossible, or anything burdensome, or anything unjust. So it is with the commandments of God.

15. First, the commandments of God are impeccable because they do not contain anything impossible. So in 1st John it says, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not heavy."[50] It says first, "This is the love of God," indeed, to the one having love the commandments of God are easy and pleasant, but to the one not having love they appear difficult. Augustine gives an example of a bird with feathers and of a bird without feathers. He says that for the bird with feathers it is easy to fly, but for the bird without feathers it is difficult. Similarly, to a man of perverse will the commandments appear difficult, while to the one having love, they are easy. So it says in Deuteronomy, "This commandment that I command you today is not above you, nor far from you, neither situated in the heavens, nor placed beyuond the sea, but the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it."[51]

16. Secondly, the commandments of God are impeccable because they do not contain anything burdensome, but rather they are pleasant. So it is said in Ecclesiasticus, "There is nothing better than the fear of God, and nothing sweeter than to have regard for the commandments of the Lord."[52] The Psalms say, "More desirable than gold and many precious stones and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb;"[53] "It is a joy for the just to do the just thing,"[54] or justice. But we see that sweet food seems bitter to the tainted palate. Similarly, to the man of perverse will the commandments of God, which are easy and pleasant, seem difficult.

17. Thirdly, the commandments of God are impeccable because they do not contain anything unjust. So the Apostle says, "The law indeed is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good."[55] And so he says in another place, "I command you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, that you keep the commandments impeccable, without fault."[56]

So it is clear the commandments are impeccable.

18. Therefore let us bring together these four motives: namely the authority of the one commanding, the benefit of observing, the peril of transgressing and the impeccability of the commandments; and we will see that there is no one who is able to excuse himself from observing the commandments.

[Division of the Commandments]

19. But, "What is the first and greatest commandment in the Law? The Lord replies in Matthew, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. Moreover the second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two depend the whole law and the Prophets."[57] Augustine declares on the basis of these words from the Psalms, "Moreover for me to cling to God is good,"[58] is contained all that Christ meant when he said, "You shall love the Lord your God," etc. For we should love God because this is just, holy, easy and pleasant. So Augustine says, "Lord, who are you to me? And who am I to you, that you command me to love you, and if I do not love you, you would threaten me with great afflictions."[59]

20. The holy Decalog, which was given to Moses on Mount Sinai, shows how we should keep the commandments. And I wish to show you that just as there are eight parts of speech,[60] which are the basis of all those things which can be expressed in language, and just as there are ten categories,[62] which are the basis of all those things which can be determined in logic; so the Ten Commandments are the basis of all laws and divine precepts. For this was the reason that the Lord wished that they be given to Moses.

I will now state these precepts in general:

You shall not have strange gods.
You shall not take the name of your God in vain.
Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.
Honor your father and mother.
You shall not kill.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness.
You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.
Neither covet anything of his.[62]

21. And it should be noted that the whole of the Law commands nothing but justice. For the Law is the rule of justice. Moreover justice is that which orders man to God and to his neighbor. And so there is a twofold justice; one by which we are ordered to God, the other by which we are ordered to our neighbor. And so two tables were given to Moses, namely the first and the second. On the first are contained commandments ordering us to God, on the second are contained commandments ordering to our neighbor.

22. On the first table are contained commandments ordering us to God. But God is triune, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To the Father is attributed majesty, to the Son truth and to the Holy Spirit goodness. In the Father the highest majesty is to be humbly adored, in the Son the highest truth is to be faithfully confessed,[63] in the Holy Spirit the highest goodness is to be sincerly loved. But if on the basis of an eternal command we are to do these three things, then it is necessary that on the first table there be three commandments according to these three attributes which are appropriated to the three divine persons. For in the first commandment humble adoration of the divine majesty is commanded when it says, "You shall not have strange gods." In the second commandment faithful confession of divine truth is commanded when it says, "You shall not take the name of your God in vain." In the third commandment sincere love of divine goodness is commanded when it says, "Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day." These are the three commandments of the first table.

23. On the second table are contained seven commandments ordering us to our neighbor, which are expressed by two precepts of natural law, namely: do to others what you would wish done to yourself and don't do to others what you don't wish done to yourself.[64]

And according to these two precepts of natural law there is a twofold justice, of which one is of blamelessness,[65] the other of kindness.[66] And according to this twofold justice there is a twofold command: the first of kindness, the other of blamelessness.

The commandment of kindness is, "Honor your father and mother." This commandment is not only one of reverence, but it is also one of kindness and obedience. And not only is it in regard to parents but to all those who have a similar authority.

24. The commandment that is of blamelessness has many subdivisions, because it consists in this: that a man should guard against offending his neighbor. It is possible to offend one's neighbor in three ways: namely in thought, word and deed.

The offense in deed is of three kinds: because a man can offend his neighbor by an act either with regard to the person himself, or with regard to another person connected to that person, or with regard to earthly possessions. And according to this there are three commandments, "You shall not kill. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal."

Then follows the offense in words, against which there is one commandment, namely, "You shall not bear false witness." By 'false witness' is signified all things which a man can say against his neighbor. The offense in thought has two sources according to a twofold desire, namely of the flesh and of the eyes. Against the desire of the flesh is one commandment,

"You shall not desire your neighbor's wife." Against the desire of the eyes is another commandment, "You shall not covet his land nor any other thing."

And so in general it is clear that there are ten commandments and why they should be followed.

Notes

[1]Collations can be defined here as sermons which were given outside of the normal course of academic lectures.

[2]The other two sets were his *Collations on the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, given in 1268, and his *Collations on the Hexaemeron*, given in 1273.

[3]For the treatment on the development of this style see: Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse *Preachers, Florilegia and Sermons* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1979), p. 65-90.

[4]The first sense is the literal, while the other three senses are called spiritual: namely, the allegorical, the tropological (or moral) and the anagogical.

[5]This movement takes its name from Averroes (ca. 1126 — ca. 1198), the arabic philosopher and commentator on Aristotle, who, like this group, gave philosophy an ascendant position over theology in his thought.

[6]This group was also called Cathari (refered to by Bonaventure as Manicheans) and held to a dualist heresy which rejected the material world as evil in favor of a spiritual, non-material reality.

[7]*Collation* 12.1.

[8]Hanspeter Heinz, *Trinitarische Begegnungen bei Bonaventura* (Munster: Aschendorff, 1985), p. 16-17.

[9]*Collation* 7.10-14.

[10]*Collation* 7.15-17.

[11]*Collation* 7.18.

[12]*Collation* 1.2-18.

[13]*Collation* 1.19.

[14]*Collation* 1.21-24.

[15]*Collation* 2.3.

[16]*Collation* 2.3.

[17]*Collation* 1.22.

[18]*Collation* 2.9.

[19]*Collation* 3.2.

[20]Matthew 19:17.

[21]Compare Aristotle's *Physics* 2.29 and *Methaphysics* 5.2.

[22]This phrase refers back to ther words of Christ quoted from Matthew 19:17.

[23]Job 10:8.

[24]Deuteronomy 11:7-8.

[25]Isaiah 48:17-18.

[26]Psalms 118:168.

[27]Deuteronomy 10:12-13.

[28]The Latin text reads: "*Dominus*, qui te *creavit; Deus*, qui te *gubernat; tuus*, qui te *salvat*." Bonaventure here probably refers to the Trinity in the creative power of the Father, the governing power of the Son and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.

[29]The Latin word is "impetratio." This word means the obtaining of a request that is put in the form of a petition or supplication.

[30]John 14:15-16.

[31]Psalms 118:100.

[32]Pope Gregory I, *Homiliarium in Evangelia*, 11.23.n.2.

[33]Romans 2:13.

[34]James 1:22-23.

[35]The word "direct" translates the Latin phrase: Secundum lineam rectam.

[36]Or species.

[37]This refers to the medieval notion that a likeness, image or species of either a substance or accident is impressed upon the intellect by the senses through direct vision but not through a mirror reflection. In linking this notion to the passage from James, Bonaventure seeks to illustrate the difference between true and false understanding of the Bible. The mirror reflection gives a weak impression just as only hearing the Word gives a momentary understanding. Direct vision gives a strong impression just as doing the Word gives a permanent understanding.

[38]Proverbs 7:2.

[39]Leviticus 26:14, 16.

[40]Psalms 37:11.

[41]Baruch 1:18.

[42]Psalms 80:12-13.

[43]Daniel 3:29.

[44]Daniel 3:32.

[45]Psalms 118:21.

[46]Matthew 25:41.

[47]Deuteronomy 11:26-28.

[48]An ostensive proof is a direct proof based on a positive goal. A proof 'per impossibile' is a negative proof based on the unacceptability or undesirability of a conclusion arrived at from a given starting point. (See: Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* 2.14).

[49]Reference is made to Peter's sermon in Acts 1 where in vs. 20 he quotes from Psalms 108:8 in speaking of Judas which is contrasted against the appointment of Mathias in vs. 23-26.

[50]I John 5:3.

[51]Deuteronomy 30:11-14.

[52]Ecclesiasticus 23:37.

[53]Psalms 18:11.

[54]Proverbs 21:15.

[55]Romans 7:12.

[56]I Timothy 6:13-14.

[57]Matthew 22:36-40.

[58]Psalms 72:28.

[59]St. Augustine, *Confessiones* 1.5.

[60]Namely: noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, participle, conjunction, preposition, interjection. (See: Priscian, *Institutionum Grammaticarum* 2.4).

[61]Namely: substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, position, condition, action, passivity. (See: Aristotle *Categoriae*).

[62]Exodus 20:3-17.

[63]The Latin word is 'asserenda' (assertio).

[64]See: Matthew 7:12, Luke 6:31, Tobias 4:16.

[65]Or not doing harm.

[66]Or doing good.

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Notes from Lazarus' Journal

I sleep, but my heart is awake.
  Listen! The voice I love!
  I hear my Beloved knocking!
    "Open to me!"
    "Take away the stone!"
See where He stands
  behind the wall,
  peering through the latices.
    "Winter is past,
    the rains are over and gone.
    Flowers have appeared on the earth,
    the season of alleluias has come!
    Come, my dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock,
      show me your face!
      Let me hear your voice!"

I have taken off my tunic —
  am I to put it on again?
I have washed my feet —
  am I to dirty them again?

"Lazarus, come out!"

I trembled to the core of my being.
Then I arose
to open to my Beloved.
At the sound of your greeting
  the body in my tomb leaped for joy!
My heart and my flesh
  exult in you, my living God!

The voice of the Lord is in power!
  The voice of the Lord in splendor!
The voice of the Lord over the waters of death!
  The voice of the Lord shatters the bars and gates of hell!
      "Unbind him, and let him go free!"

"If you believe, you shall see God's glory."
  And in his temple,
    all say
      "Glory!"

Sr Mary Pius, O.S.C.

Book Reviews

Becoming More Like Jesus. By Bert Ghezzi. Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, Indiana 46750, 1987. Pp. 156. Paper $5.95.

The Ways of Prayer: An Introduction. By Michael Francis Pennock. Ave Maria Press, 1987. Pp. 141. Paper.

Reviewed by Sr. Marie Francis Gallagher, O.S.F. Sister is presently working with the poor in the Ministry of Caring in Wilmington, DE.

Is there anyone of you, who does not want to become more like Jesus? It is a call for every Christian, and it is also a challenge. According to Webster, a challenge is the quality of requiring full use of one's abilities.

As I carefully read Ghezzi's splendid work on growth in the Holy Spirit, I realized this should be in the hands of every religion teacher, particularly as a text book for instructors before and after the reception of the Sacrament of confirmation.

If we are to be Christians, we must above all things act like Christ. The author tells us how to do this. We must behave, take on the character traits of Jesus. We must be kind, meek, patient, forgiving, happy, joyful. And where are the roots of those traits? The Holy Spirit fills us with them in the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Most Catholics heard of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. But few ever heard of them as put forth so simply by this author. Most young people need someone to "be like" or imitate. Athletes, Nurses, Doctors, Dads, Mothers are a few people who exemplify courage, patience and kindness. Jesus and his saints are special others who could be followed. Eventually all of us will be rewarded if we have followed Jesus while here on earth.

St. Paul's letters are further evidence of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5 lists the fruits of the Spirit, and gives a comparable list of works of the flesh. While the fruits of the Spirit and the works of the Flesh cannot coexist, Paul reminds us that they seek to conquer each other. The Holy Spirit provides strong aggressive resources to overcome all of our evil tendencies.

Now to understand and obtain the gifts of the Spirit let us look at Jesus in His familiar manner of daily living. At the Cana wedding, Jesus brought joy to His Mother and everlasting gratitude to the bride and groom. He promised the good thief heaven that very day. Jesus experienced frustration, anger, fear, rejection and betrayal. Yet He courageously accepted the pain of torture without complaint.

In Chapters 4 through 11, Ghezzi considers the fruits of the Spirit individually. Because Jesus acted so positively all the time, one may well believe it was easy. After all, Jesus was God, and therefore he had to act right. Jesus was also a man and like man he had to learn how to overcome the evil that surrounded Him. Jesus learned from his parents, His friends, His teachers. The book is filled with examples of how-to-imitate Jesus. By no means is it easy. "Take up your cross daily and follow Me." "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

"Father, let this chalice pass from Me." These expressions are those of the Man-God. In every Good News recording, Jesus the Man suffered but he healed others; to the Samaritan woman he showed kindness while encouraging her "go and sin no more." The first thing Jesus did when he appeared to the disciples after he rose from the dead was to restore their relationship; with Him. "Peace be with you," he said. Note it was Jesus who sought his followers, whereas we might expect the reverse. Jesus was supremely gentle with all. Jesus was reliable, faithful, loyal, trusting of others; he was humble, courteous, and meek. Contained in these chapters are the examples of Jesus daily living as presented by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, the writings of St. Paul, and the examples of the early Church portrayed in the Acts. The author spells them out in detail to the benefit of his readers. While the basis of all good is Jesus Christ, it is not easy to "put on" Jesus Christ. Included in these Chapters are numberless examples of ordinary people learning how to practice virtue through the use of one's natural abilities. The incidents are truly realistic garnered from the experiences of the writer who is constantly struggling to live a full life in the Spirit, while he walks ruggedly with feet of clay.

You might be tempted to read the last chapters first because they are the "Do-It-Yourself" part of the book. A brief answer to "How do we become like Jesus?" is "Cooperate with grace." Nothing good just happens by itself. With meticulous care and concern, a spiritual journey is presented. Like all journeys preparations must be made. Prayer in different forms, reading and reflecting the Scriptures, conversing with others who are making an effort to become like Jesus are self helps that are available for those who want help. While Gospel living is a radical way of life, Jesus never demands of us what we cannot do. If we are challenged to do, the grace and means to do are within us. Christ has promised each of us: "My grace is sufficient for you."

This is a book for all readers who are seriously training to be Christians. Students and teachers will want to keep this treasure and frequently re-read it. All kinds of behavior changes take place in people between ages 13 and 90. What I need to know are my talents and how to use them. Natural abilities show themselves in various ways throughout life. With great skill, Bert Ghezzi puts his own gifts at the disposaal of his readers. Be sure to read and tell another person about "Becoming More Like Jesus."

The Ways of Prayer is a book for all the seasons of one's life. Presentation of material is systematic and suggests practical ways of getting started, then moving into meditation and contemplation. Whatever one needs regarding prayer is in this handbook.

In his introduction Pennock reminds the reader that "it is only with the heart that one can see rigthly; what is essential is invisible to the eye." All prayer is concerned with answering the question. "Do I know what Christ has done for me?" Prayer is trying to decipher God's action in my life.

For the beginner at prayer, the book exemplifies ways of applying God's Word to everyday living experiences. For those more advanced, Pennock's guide is a source of encouragement to

continue his/her meditative or contemplative prayer. One does not remain static in prayer; rather there is a movement forward or backward. My way and your way are personal to us and to God. I believe what the author has written can be reduced to one truth: God calls human person to union with Himself and with one another in Christ and in the Church which is His mystical Body. Every sincere Christian believer can and should experience a tangible awareness of God.

Belief in Christ means a living encounter with Him, and a discovery of the Holy Spirit in one's life. In the last analysis, we can grasp God only in faith and with the heart, for when we love we can never get enough of whom or what we love — even if it is incomprehensible. Language points to the ordinary as the place of God's grace among us — God and nature are on the same side. His language is that of the Cross; His power is mercy and compassion; His presence brings people together in community.

Even the most personal and intimate prayer of the individual is bound up with the good of the community. The act of praying gives the one at prayer an appreciation of the author's intent to express his relationship; with God and with his community of men and women. Prayer forces us to interiorize and reflect and encourages us to think thoughts of God, not of humans, and to brush up on God. *The Ways of Prayer* can easily become a popular publication; it has so very many good features.

The format of this handbook is very attractive. Wide margins give the pages a special look; chapter titles are catchy and meaningful. At the end of each chapter is a Prayer Reflection. The Appendix contains a brief review of some of the prayers discussed in the book as well as a compilation of traditional prayers. The Bibliography gives an annotated list of modern works on prayer and some spiritual classics. *The Ways of Prayer* is intended for laity, clergy and religious; it seems to be written for the average reader.

The eight chapters present the right attitude towards prayer, the need for a real desire to pray and how to get into the act of praying. The Apostles asked Jesus how to pray. They saw Him doing it so often that it was a very natural question for them.

Pennock tells the reader to inform self; read the Scriptures and note how many times Jesus prayed. Listen to His prayers — "Father forgive," "Take this cup," "I thank you, Father for hearing my prayers," "Into your hands, I commend my spirtit."

Traditional methods of praying are included. The Rosary, Litanies, Liturgy of the Hours and Stations of the Cross are a few. After brief commentaries, the author actually includes the words of the prayers. This is another plus for *The Ways of Prayer*. The author encourages all to consider the methods of prayer as practiced by St. Francis of Assisi, St. Benedict and the Little Flower. Experimenting and practicing various ways can help one to contact the living God. There is no one best way of praying. The best way for you is your way found by you through trying, struggling, listening and imploring the Holy Spirit to pray through you. The Spirit prays where He wills. Pennock advises his readers to "continue to read about prayer," and to "Pray."

The chapter on Spiritual Classics includes those which Pennock believes a beginner can read and understand. *The Cloud of Unknowing, The Imitation of*

Christ, The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis De Sales' Introduction to the Devout Life, The Practice of the Presence of God by Brother Lawrence, and Thomas Merton's works are treated sufficiently to persuade one to become enriched as he/she travels his/her spiritual journey to God. The author advises a final word, "Keep doing everything you learned from me and were told by me and have heard or seen me doing. Then the God of Peace will be with you." (Phil. 4:9).

At your first opportunity, buy a copy for yourself and a friend.

The New Catholics. Edited by Dan O'Neil. New York, Crossroad Publishers, 1987. Pp. 204. Cloth, $15.95.

Reviewed by Fr. Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Associate Editor of this Review.

As the title suggests, this book recounts the stories of seventeen men and women who have joined the Catholic church as adults, most of them within the last ten years. The converts tell their stories articulately and personally. There is a diversity in the group—some came from almost no religion, others from Anglicanism, one came from Buddhism, another from Judaism.

Some common threads run through the narratives — the example of good friends, the influence of good books — Chesterton, C.S. Lewis, Thomas Merton are names occuring again and again — the lives of people like Dorothy Day and Eric Gill. Then too there are the attractions of Catholicism — the Liturgy — the Daily quiet mass is singled out more than once, as is the Eucharist as the way to best meet God. The existence of a magisterium headed by the Pope — and this particular Pope too, was also attractive to several of the narrators.

I read this book while traveling by train, and had to stop in wonder and joy at the workings of God's grace in the hearts of those who shared their experience of God and movement to Faith and the Catholic Church. I recommend this book without reeservation, and hope it will be in paperback soon. It seems to me to rank with *Giants of the Faith* and *Road to Damascus*, great books of yesteryear, and also in one instance helpful to one of the "new Cahtolics."

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MAY, 1988

The CORD

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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

EDITORIAL

Mary as Disciple: A Promising Image

Redemptoris Mater, the encyclical letter of Pope John Paul II for the Marian Holy Year, carries a rather insistant refrain that in and of itself could have far-reaching effects not only for Mariology but also for Christian life in general. The frequency of the phrases "journey of faith" and "pilgrimage of faith" with reference to Mary demonstrates the Pope's desire that we turn our attention in a special way to Mary's exceptional discipleship so consciously expressed in Saint Luke's Gospel. The encyclical devotes an extraordinary amount of attention to the intimate tie between Mary and the pilgrim Church of which she is the "model in faith, hope and charity," a striking theme of Vatican II's *Lumen Gentium.*

The image of Mary as the disciple *par excellence,* if taken seriously, should gather all believers together in faith with her who "continues to 'go before' the People of God." We are to discover our communal and individual Christian identities in journeying with her who "is already the eschatological fulfilment of the Church." This journey includes all: pope, cardinals, bishops, religious, laity; or, as Francis says in his First Rule (RNB XXIII, 7): "... all clerics, all religious men and all religious women, all lay brothers and youths, the poor and the needy, kings and princes, workers and farmers, servants and masters, all virgins and continent and married women, all laymen and women, all children, adolescents, the young and the old, the healthy and the sick, all the small and the great, all peoples, races, tribes, and tongues, all nations and all peoples everywhere on earth who are and who will be..."

This image of journeying together in faith with Mary provides a uniquely Gospel point of departure for issues of Justice and Peace in the Church. It allows both men and women in the church to become more acutely conscious of our oneness in dignity and equality as disciples. Mary ceases to be exclusively the model of women, which too often was misinterpreted as passivity and submission. Because her faith can be "compared to that of Abraham" and because her faith "inaugurates the New Covenant," she becomes the dynamic model for all believers, men and women alike and together.

Choosing Mary as the prototype of discipleship should enable us to reformulate and reform how men and women in the Church look upon, respect and revere one another. Standing with one another in discipleship should awaken new energies and new hopes in the hearts of clergy, religious and laity alike for approaching in a spiritual way some of the difficult problems regarding the rightful place of women in the Church. As Franciscans we may not forget how for Francis and the first followers Mary's commitment to the word (Word) enabled them to clarify the meaning of their Gospel discipleship: "We are mothers.... we give birth to Him." In his "Letter to all the Faithful" this imagery is extended to all believers. This Gospel intuition is amazingly prophetic; it seems to anticipate the encyclical of Pope John Paul II by centuries. Isn't it our obligation to mine its riches as Francis would have us, in "word and deed", for the benefit of all men and women in the Church today?

Joseph Dorne OFM

Mary, A Model For Franciscan Spirituality

LARRY DUNPHY, O.F.M.

Mary has always held a special place of honor in Franciscan life, right next to Jesus. She is there from the very beginning in the development of Francis' own vocation and in the beginnings of the Order. Along with Jesus, Mary became the model according to which Franciscan life was to be formed. The Franciscan Order has lived much of its history under the mantle of Mary.

Franciscans have contributed much to the devotional practices of the Church regarding Mary, for example the addition of the words: "Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death" to the Hail Mary, or the practice of the recitation of the Angelus, or the addition of the Final Antiphons to the Blessed Virgin Mary after the hour of Compline. Devotion to the Seven Sorrows and the Seven Joys of Mary have held prominence in Franciscan preaching and devotional practices. The development of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was primarily the responsibility of the Franciscan theologians. There is no doubt that Mary does hold a special place in the devotional practices of the Franciscans.

The proper place and true worth of Mary in our Franciscan lives, however, will not be reached by a study of any one or all of these particular Franciscan devotions, but rather by looking at the words and deeds of Francis and Clare regarding Mary in order to learn how Mary helped them to become the kind of Franciscan persons they did, in fact, become. Francis and Clare contemplated Mary, along with Jesus, as a help to becoming the kind of saints God called them to be. Our prayers and devotions to Mary are meant to lead us to a similar contemplation and consequent formation of our Franciscan lives.

Fr. Larry Dunphy, O.F.M., formerly of the Santa Barbara Province in the Far West, is now a member of the Vice-Province of St. Francis in Africa. This article is a revision of a conference he gave to the Poor Clares in Bukoba, Tanzania last May.

In the beginning of his vocation, Francis came to the Portiuncula, a place dedicated to Mary and the angels. Practically speaking it was here that his first serious steps of progress in his vocation began. One might say that this little chapel was the womb in which the order was conceived and from which it was born. Francis clearly saw this as a place that was special to Mary.

Celano writes:

> The happy father used to say that it had been revealed to him by God that the Blessed Mother loved this church among all the other churches built in her honor throughout the world with a special love; for this reason the holy man loved it above all others. (II Cel. 19)

Bonaventure makes it quite clear that Francis chose this spot because of his devotion to Mary. He writes:

> When he finally completed St. Peter's Church, he came to a place called the Portiuncula where there was Church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mother of God, built in ancient times but now deserted and cared for by no one. When the man of God saw how it was abandoned, he began to live there in order to repair it, moved by the fervent devotion he had toward the Lady of the World. According to the name of the Church, which since ancient times was called St. Mary of the Angels, he felt that the angels often visited there. So he took up residence there out of his reverence for the angels and his special love for mother of Christ. The holy man loved this spot more than any other in the world. For here he began humbly, here he progressed steadily, here he ended happily. At his death, he commended it to the friars as a place most dear to the Virgin. (LM II, 8)

The very smallness and poverty of the chapel helped him to be aware of and know the presence of Mary, who with her Son, Jesus, was so poor. Thus, this place of spiritual birth and formation under the patronage of Mary contributed to the direction of poverty and humility that were to become so fundamental in his way of life.

Celano tells of this as he writes:

> For there also had been built in that place a church to the Virgin Mother who merited by her singular humility to be, after her son, the head of all the saints. In this church the Order of Friars Minor had its beginning; there, as on a firm foundation, when their number had grown, the noble fabric of the order arose...; this place he willed to be preserved as a model of the humility and the highest poverty for their order.... (I Cel. 18).

In this place Mary was not merely someone he prayed to with great devotion, as he in fact did, but there she became for him someone who through his contemplation of her helped the gospel to be conceived in him in the way it was to be expressed in his order. Bonaventure writes:

> While her servant Francis was living in the Church of the Virgin Mother of God, he prayed to her who had conceived the Word full of grace and truth, imploring her with continuous sighs to become his advocate. Through the merits of the Mother of Mercy, he conceived and brought to birth the spirit of the truth of the Gospel. (LM III, 1)

We will see that Mary along with Christ kept coming to his mind to show him the way of poverty and humility that were so fundamental in Francis' way of following the Gospel.

At times there have been distortions in Catholic devotions to Mary. Certain ways of speaking of her and/or of practicing devotion to her leave the impression that she is independent of God, or that devotion to her is preferable to devotion to God himself, or that she herself directly grants favors. These errors are to be avoided and are the reasons why some today will not speak about devotions to Mary. Francis' devotion to Mary was always most solid and grounded on a correct theological understanding. Celano states clearly Francis' motivation for devotion to Mary: "Toward the Mother of Jesus, he was filled with an inexpressible love, because it was she who made the Lord of Majesty, our brother." (II Cel. 198). Any honor to Mary must be given to her solely because of Christ. It is worth noting that in his writings and words, Francis never mentions Mary apart from Jesus. Mary is nothing apart from Jesus and can do nothing apart from him. Her greatest joy is to lead us to her Son. Yet this devotion is essential in both Franciscan and Catholic life. Jesus came to us through Mary and continues to present himself in that way.

Francis' teaching and devotional practice regarding Mary are fully in accord with the teaching of the II Vatican Council on Mary. In *Lumen Gentium* #67, the Council writes:

> Let the faithful remember moreover that true devotion consists neither in sterile and transitory affection, nor in a certain vain credulity, but proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to recognize the excellence of the Mother of God, and we are moved to a filial love towards our mother and to the imitation of her virtues.

True devotion to Mary and, certainly, true Franciscan devotion to Mary cannot consist merely in the recitation of prayers, no matter how solid and traditional these may be. Prayer and honor of Mary must lead to contemplation of her and her Divine Son. We need to behold what God's saving grace has done in Mary for the salvation of all, and to see how she is the model for all of how to come to God in Christ.

Mary resembles her Son, Jesus. This is not the way it usually is between mother and son. In contemplating her life, we can come to learn more fully the way to become like Jesus.

Francis speaks of Jesus and Mary most frequently in connection with poverty, because he sees them to be poor, which fact, in turn, inspired him to choose a life of poverty. In the unconfirmed rule of 1221, Francis cites the poverty of Jesus and Mary as the motivation of Franciscan poverty and begging:

> They (the friars) should be glad to live among the social outcasts, among the poor and the helpless, the sick and the lepers, and those who beg by the wayside. If they are in want they should not be ashamed to beg alms, remembering that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living all-powerful God set his face like a very hard rock and was not ashamed. He was poor and had no home of his own and he lived on alms, he and the Blessed Virgin and his disciples. (Reg NB, Chapter 9).

Mary and the disciples share in the poverty and humility of Christ. Franciscans are also to share in the poverty of Christ.

Francis gives this same teaching to the Clares in his Last Will to St. Clare:

> I, little brother Francis, wish to live according to the life and poverty of our most high Lord Jesus Christ and his most holy mother and to persevere in this to the last. And this I beseech you, my Ladies, and I exhort you to live always in this most holy life and poverty. Keep close watch over yourselves so that you never abandon it through the teaching or advice of anyone. (ULT Vol)

Clare herself also instructs her Sisters to follow Jesus and Mary in the same way. She writes:

> Dedicating yourselves wholly to this (poverty), my most beloved Sisters, do not wish to have anything else forever under heaven for the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and his most holy Mother. (Rule of St. Clare Chapter VIII, 1)

and further on in her Rule, repeating the words of Francis, she adds: "... we may observe forever the poverty and humility of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of his most Holy Mother and the holy Gospel which we have firmly promised." (Rule of Clare, XII, 11). According to both Francis and Clare, Mary is to teach us the way of poverty. Shortly we will see why the full way of poverty and humility is so important in our Franciscan life, and also in any truly Christian or Gospel life.

Franciscan poverty is expressed not merely by dispossessing ourselves of material things, but also by putting ourselves in relationship with the poor. We saw this above in our reference to Chapter Nine of the Rule of 1221. For Francis, the poor, the sick, the suffering, etc. were signs and reminders of Jesus and Mary, and that these poor were to receive great

care, love, and concern because of their relationship to Jesus and Mary. St. Bonaventure tells about an incident in which Francis heard a Friar respond gruffly to a beggar. On this occasion he ordered the Friar to strip himself, cast himself at the beggar's feet, and then told him:

> When you see a poor man, my brother, an image of the Lord and his poor mother is being placed before you. Likewise in the case of the sick, consider the physical weakness which the Lord took upon himself. (LM VIII, 5)

Awareness of Mary and Jesus and their life of poverty is supposed to help us Franciscans to be understanding, kind, and gentle with the poor.

Clare also offers Mary along with Jesus as a motive for the love that leads the Sisters to live a life of poverty. She tells her Sisters in the Rule:

> And for the love of the most holy and beloved Child who was wrapped in the poorest of swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, and of his most holy Mother, I admonish, entreat, and exhort my sisters that they always wear the poorest of garments. (Rule Chapter II. 18).

Contemplating the poverty of Jesus and Mary, and reminded of it by the poor through whom he experienced a deeper invitation to the life of poverty, Francis grew in insight about the fundamental place poverty was to exercise in the spirituality of his order. Poverty let Christ enter into his life, and, as it were, allowed Christ to be conceived in him. Celano sees that in some way poverty made Francis to be like Mary. Because of poverty Francis gives birth to Christ again in a spiritual way. Celano writes:

> Whatever he saw in anyone of want, whatever of penury, he transferred in his mind by a quick change to Christ. Thus in all the poor he saw the Son of the Poor Lady, and he bore naked in his heart him whom she bore naked in her hands. (II Celano, 83).

Poverty together with humility, which are seen together in both the lives of Christ and Mary, create the kind of emptiness that allows God to fill it with his best gift, Jesus. Franciscan poverty is authentic and complete only when it is one with humility. Poverty and humility go together in Jesus, in Mary and in the Franciscan way. This truth is expressed so well in Mary's *Magnificat*. His comprehensive understanding and practice of the way of humility and poverty of Mary enabled Francis to become pregnant with Jesus or to conceive him in his heart as Celano mentioned.

Our contemplation of Mary is a reminder and an invitation to imitate both the humility which the Lord undertook in becoming man, and this same humility which he renews daily in the Eucharist:

> Every day he humbles himself just as he did when he came from his heavenly throne into the Virgin's womb, every day he comes to us and lets us see

him in abjection, when he descends from the bosom of the Father into the hands of the priest of the altar. (Adm. I).

This lowliness of Jesus which Mary helped bring to us calls for praise, adoration and imitation of the humble Jesus.

Franciscan spirituality closely resembles the spirituality that Mary expresses in her *Magnificat*. Both Francis and Clare refer to the poverty and the humility of Jesus and Mary. Francis in his "Praises of the Virtues" calls them twin sisters. Humility is essential in Fraciscan poverty. We are not only to empty our hands of all exterior possessions, but neither are we to hold on to, nor to claim as our own any interior possessions, such as our education, accomplishments, talents, etc. We are not even to possess ourselves. As Francis writes in Admonition XVII:

> Blessed the religious who takes no more pride in the good that God does or says through him, than in that which he says or does through someone else.

And, in Admonition XIX, he writes:

> Blessed the Religious who refers all the good he has to his Lord and God. He who attributes anything to himself hides his master's money in himself, and even what he thinks he has shall be taken away.

These directives of Francis are rooted in the same values that Mary expressed in her *Magnificat*. This total emptiness, that is not possessing one's self, nor one's works, nor one's deeds is necessary so that the Lord can come and fill this emptiness.

He fills the emptiness with himself and by possessing him who possesses all things we become rich, as Clare said in her Second Letter to Blessed Agnes of Prague. Mary proclaims that there is nothing of herself that is to be honored or acknowledged, but only what God has done. Again this is the constant message of Francis, which was expressed so clearly as we saw above in Adminition XIX. God can work fully only in people who have emptied themselves totally. This total poverty within and without enabled God to use Mary to be the Mother of his Son. She put herself totally at the disposal of God. This poverty regarding her very self and her capacity to share human love in marriage enabled God to use the empty womb to make it fruitful with the fullness of life, the life of one who was fully human and fully divine.

Both Francis and Clare teach that through poverty there can take place in us in a spiritual way what happened to Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit. We also can conceive Jesus in spirit for the benefit of others. Clare writes in her Third letter to Agnes of Prague:

> Therefore, as the glorious Virgin of Virgins carried Christ materially in her body, you too by following in His footprints, especially those of poverty and humility, can without any doubt, always carry him spiritually in your chaste and virginal body. And you will hold him by whom you and all things are held together... (Nos. 24-26).

In his Letter to All the Faithful, after instructing his readers on lowliness and humility, Francis writes:

> . . . and we are mothers to him (Christ) when we enthrone him in our hearts and souls by love with a pure and sincere conscience, and give birth to him by doing good. This too should be an example to others.

This poverty and humility that allows Christ to be conceived again in our

hearts and born from us into the lives of others, is true for male as well as female Franciscans.

This point of Franciscan sprituality anticipates, I believe, a cardinal point of the teaching of the II Vatican Council about Mary and the Church. The Council teaches that Mary's highest role is to be a model of the Church. In imitating Mary, the Church is to cause Christ to be born again in the lives of people. We as individual members of the Church are to do the same thing. We conceive Christ, like Mary, not for our own sakes but in order to give birth to him for others. The Franciscan element here is allowing the twin sisters of poverty and humility to bring about conditions of heart under which Jesus can be conceived in us, and then come to birth. I believe that this is at the heart of Franciscan devotion to Mary; that is, to allow our contemplation of the poor Mary to make us become poor in goods and holy in emptiness of self. God will then fill this emptiness with His Son who is true riches.

It is clear that Francis considered rigid fidelity to Jesus' call to poverty to be more important than external signs or honor to Mary. For example, when Peter of Catania asked Francis to allow him to keep some of the goods of the entering novices in order to provide for the needs of the large number of brothers who came to visit the Portiuncula, Francis refused this violation of poverty by giving the following instruction to Peter:

> Strip the altar of the Blessed Virgin and take away its many ornaments, since you cannot otherwise come to the help of the needy. Believe me, she would be more pleased to have the Gospel of her son kept and her altar stripped than that the altar should be ornamented and her son despised. (II Celano 67).

Again, we see that true Franciscan devotion to Mary consists more in imitation of her, particularly of her poverty, than in external signs of reverence and honor.

In our Franciscan observation of this Marian year, Francis and Clare set us in the right direction. Always keeping in mind that primary devotion to Mary is the imitation of her and her son in gospel poverty, and in the fruitfulness which poverty meant to produce in us, we can safely go with Francis, Clare, and the whole Church to the prayers of praise to God through Mary. It is certainly true as Francis prayed in the antiphon in the Office of the Passion:

> Holy Virgin, Mary, among all the women of the world there is none like to you; you are the daughter and handmaid of the most high King and Father of heaven; you are the mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Spouse fo the Holy Spirit.

Yes, truly of all God's creatures, only Mary can claim these exalted titles. The contemplation of these truths regarding Mary according to Celano, "filled Francis with an inexpressable love. He sang special praises to her, poured out prayers to her, offered her his affections, so many and so great that the tongue of man cannot recount them." (II Celano 198)

During this Marian year as all during our Franciscan lives, the advice of Clare to Blessed Agnes of Prague in her third letter holds true: "Cling to his most sweeet Mother who carried a Son whom the heavens could not contain." Mary is certainly an essential person in bringing us to living out our Franciscan vocation. "Clinging" to Mary is most solidly Franciscan. Bonaventure and Celano both report that Francis put all of his trust in her and took her as patroness for himself and his friars, and that he made her the Advocate for his order and placed under her wings the sons he was about to leave. This was a fitting conclusion for his life, since during it he frequently spent the nights in pouring out prayers to God and to his holy Mother. (LM, IX,3 and II Celano, CL. 198).

It seems that along with letting Mary become a model of our Franciscan living, we also should join with Francis in praising God on account of Mary. His Praises of Mary may offer an appropriate model for such prayer:

> Hail, O Lady,
> Holy Queen,
> Mary, holy Mother of God
> You are the Virgin made Church
> amd the one chosen by the most holy Father in heaven
> whom he consecrated
> with his most holy beloved son
> and with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete,
> in whom there was and is
> all the fulness of grace and every good.
>
> Hail, His Palace!
> Hail, His Tabernacle!
> Hail, His home!
> Hail, His Robe!
> Hail, His Servant!
> Hail, His Mother!
> And all you holy virtues,
> which through the grace and light of the Holy Spirit are poured into the hearts of the faithful so that from their faithless state, you may make them faithful to God.

Our Lady

Our Lady, of the statues of lead.
Our Lady of the living, of the dead,
Hear me.

Our Lady, who gave us a Child,
To teach that the helpless, the fragile, the mild,
Lord God, are nearest to Thee,

Our Lady, without whom
The gods were inventions of doom,
Appear to me.

Our Senora, whose tears for your Son
Left so much to love, undone,
Enter in me.

Our Lady of Grace, our Lady Distraught,
Grant that each thought
Graceful, will be.

Our Queen of the great, our Lady of the slight,
Grant me the light,
The truth to see.

Our Lady, who gave us your Gift,
Accept these lines, as I lift
Them to Thee.

Our Lady, of the statues of lead.
Our Lady of the living, of the dead,
Pray for me.

Victor Andrew

Francis in Prison and Non-Violence

RAPHAEL BONANNO, O.F.M.

One of the incidents in the life of St. Francis of Assisi that is related to non-violence but little studied from that aspect is the year he spent in prison.

Francis was twenty years old at the time. The prison was in Perugia, the large neighboring city north of Assisi. In 1198 the townspeople of Assisi had attacked the Rocca Maggiore in their city, razed the mighty fortress and sent the feudal lord and ladies fleeing off to Perugia. So in 1200 the renegade nobles tried to come back to their city to reclaim their castles and properties. Other neighboring towns like Nocera, Bevagna, Rosciano and Bastia allied with Assisi against Perugia. The small army was formed of foot-soldiers from the workmen and lower-class citizens whereas the mounted troops came from the knights and wealthy townspeople. Francis Bernardone was among the latter. With banners flying and the bells pealing the troops marched off to war.

The decisive battle took place late in the fall of 1202, somewhere between Collestrada and Ponte San Giovanni, on the same modern road which leads from Assisi to Perugia (Felder, 29)

Unfortunately the Assisians were no match for the Perugians. The carnage was terrible and the terror and grief overwhelming. Boniface of Verona wrote of it: "The battle field is strewn with dead... Nowhere a foot joined the hand... instead of eyes, gaping holes... blood runs in streams...." "O Assisians," he cried out, "what a day of misfortune, what an hour of dismal fate..." That was the most ruinous defeat which the Perugians ever inflicted on their enemies (Felder, 29, footnote 3).

Celano and the Three Companions also report this blood-bath and the fact that many soldiers and knights were carted off to Perugia as prisoners. Francis was among them (2 Cel 4; L3S 4).

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It is difficult for us to imagine what medieval imprisonment was all about, long before the Geneva Conventions. Military prisoners were treated with harsh, barbaric cruelty. They were tortured, chained, locked in deep, dark dungeons. In Assisi, Spoleto, Foligno, Terni and Narni they were pulled up and down on gallows until the ropes broke. In Parma they were chained to walls out in the open and exposed to summer and winter severities. In Forti, they were shod with iron, like horses. In Cittá del Castello they were tied to the tail of a donkey, dragged through the city, and impaled with the head downward. In Perugia, there is still the street called "Cage Street" (Via della Gubbia) (Felder, 30). It received this name because an iron cage was suspended over it in which prisoners were locked up and left to die of hunger. Prisoners were chained with irons, pitched together into narrow, filthy dungeons and subjected to indescribable hardships and privations.

Francis as an aristocrat was not among the common soldiers but classed with the knights. But these too suffered terribly. Later in his life Francis recalled with horror the tortures inflicted on him and his companions at that time by the Perugians. Thomas of Celano recounted how Francis remarked once to his friars with a trembling voice: "The people of Perugia have done great evils to their neighbors" (2 Cel. 37). Gradually even the bravest of his fellow-prisoners grew despondent. They bemoaned their fate and thereby made their lives all the more unbearable.

Only Francis did not despair, even though the prison severities must have been harder on his delicate, refined nature. He heroically maintained a stance of non-violence in the face of such gross violence. He maintained his native cheerfulness in the face of despondency. He seemed serene and untouched by the heaviness of the situation. He even joked about his chains, so that his companions wondered whether perhaps he was not losing his mind. But Francis answered in jest: "You do not know why I am so merry. I shall yet be revered throughout the whole world" (2 Cel 4; L3S 4). With these words he would break into his contagious laughter.

It is amazing to watch Francis in his bad situation. His self-image undergoes no belittlement by his suffering. By embracing suffering he transforms and masters it. He pulls splendid good out of deep, dark evil. He is the perfect non-violent man. The lesson of his imprisonment was nevermore forgotten. Francis was to bear the imprint of this experience for the rest of his days. It was probably the first time in his life that the pampered young man faced loveless suffering. As St. John of the Cross was to say three centuries later: "Where there is no love, put love and you will find love."

In this way Francis changed the whole prison situation for his comrades. He radiated warmth and light in the darkness of that infamous dungeon.

He raised the spirits of the others. He calmed down their quarrelsomeness and irritation. He went out of his way to be good to one of the knight-prisoners whom the others avoided, due to his arrogance and discontent. Only Francis would talk to him. Slowly and with great patience Francis reached out to him, helped him to correct his faults, and succeeded in reconciling him with his companions.

This experience was to stand Francis in good stead later as a founder of a religious order. He would have to do the same reconciliation time and again to build a brotherhood based on Gospel love.

Meanwhile the winter passed. Spring came and went. The heat of the summer made the dungeon almost unbearable. The monotony of the days dragged on. The hope of peace between Perugia and Assisi vanished. By this time Francis had become very ill. In spite of his high spirit, the lack of exercise, light and air plus the other privations had sapped his strength. As a result, the prison-keeper enrolled him in the Congregation and Company of Sick Prisoners (Felder, 30). These could regain their freedom if their relatives paid money for them. The rich merchant Peter Bernardone, paid the ransom and brought his fever-stricken son home. This was about the end of the year 1203, about a year after the disastrous battle of Collestrada. Francis was sick all that winter and only slowly regained his strength the following spring. He was 21 years old, and a very changed man. His imprisonment and illness by God's Providence had set his feet on a different road of which he was still unaware.

His experience of non-violence in the face of violence was over. But the mark of it sealed his soul. He later became famous for his greeting of "Peace and every good be with you," for his love for nature and God's creation, for his re-building first of material churches and then of the spiritual church by Gospel love and peace. He even reached the point of embracing suffering so much that he asked the Lord for the wounds of his Passion. And he received them in the Stigmata.

In one way or another Francis' later life can be traced back to the dark pit of Perugia's prison. There he had met violence head on in a non-viole way and had drawn unsurpassable good out of tremendous evil.

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The Wolf of Gubbio Story: Justice and Peace Motif

SEAMUS MULHOLLAND, O.F.M.

The story related in Little Flowers (21) of the encounter between St. Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio is not only a story about Francis' amazing power as a peacemaker and arbitrator in serious disputes, it is also, if examined closely, a profound reflection upon the nature and criteria for establishing peace with justice. Over the years various documents from the Order from Medellin to letters from different generals have consistently called upon the friars to work strenuously and selflessly for justice and peace. There is, however, another element within the area of justice and peace which must be considered, and that is the concept and experience of "equity," or "equality." In the Wolf of Gubbio story there is not only justice done, peace established and reconciliation brought about through the impartiality of St. Francis, but there is also an equitable acceptance of both sides of this particular dispute.

The Wolf of Gubbio is one of those stories about St. Francis which restores one's faith in man's generosity and gentleness. But as a poet I see more in the story: it is a story which possesses the principle tenets of myth and fairy tale; it contains elements of drama, fear, wonder and excitement. Its natural counterpart in the world of story and fairy/folk tale is that of Little Red Riding Hood; for the Wolf of Gubbio is just as terrifying as the wolf whose "Big teeth were all the better to eat with" (and so Little Red Riding Hood suffered the same fate as many of the residents of Gubbio). However, St. Francis is a little more subtle and understanding in dealing with the Wolf of Gubbio than Red Riding Hood was with her particular canine adversary for Francis understands and sympathizes with both people and wolf. He understands the fear of the people but also understands the reasons for the actions of the wolf. It is this unprejudiced total acceptance of the legitimacy of both sides which

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provides the basis for an equitable, just and peaceful settlement of this conflict.

The story is well known but if the readers will bear with me for a while and allow me to recap the main elements of the story it will help illustrate what I am trying to say. Francis was preaching at Gubbio where he was told that people were afraid to leave the town for fear of a savage wolf which was terrorizing the neighborhood and killing man and beast alike without any discrimination for taste (a culinary cosmopolitan beast this wolf!). Francis went to the wolf "... without any intention of doing it harm..." (Fior 21) and explained to the wolf that his crimes were "heinous" since he was not only killing animals but also those "... made in the image and likeness of God" and as such he should be put to death for such terrible crimes.

Francis, however, being a practical man, has a solution to this problem which is not only effective, but very realistic given the nature of the conflict; a solution which will eventually bring about reconciliation between wolf and people based upon a principle of justice and fairness, and which will establish lasting peace with equity. Francis offers the wolf a "peace pact" which I quote here in full since I intend to use it to further illustrate the relationship between justice, peace and equity/equality:

> "... Brother Wolf, since you are willing to make and keep this peace pact, I promise you that I will have the people of this town give you food every day as long as you live, so that you will never again suffer hunger, for I know whatever evil you have done it was because of hunger. But my Brother Wolf, since I am obtaining such a favour for you, I want you to promise me that you will never hurt any animal or man. Will you promise that?..." (Fior 21)

The story then narrates how the wolf nodded its head in agreement and promised to do as Francis asked, ratifying the treaty between them by putting his paw in Francis' hand. The story concludes with the wolf and Francis going into town, making the peace pact "... in the name of the Lord..." So the wolf was fed, it never hurt anyone after this, no dog barked at it and the story goes on to tell that when the people found the wolf dead they were sad because

> "... its peacefulness and patience reminded them of the holiness of St. Francis...'

The Wolf of Gubbio story is always a delight to read for the sheer enjoyment of it and a favorite of mine to tell the children at our parish infant school. But underneath the simplicity of this beautiful story there is a profound meaning for us who strive to work within situations of conflict

whether they be domestic, industrial, educational, local or national.

An examination of the "peace pact" offered by St. Francis provides, I believe, a motif which can be of service to us as we work for peace with justice and equity. St. Francis approaches the wolf having heard the argument put forward by the townspeople. But even though Francis reproaches the wolf for killing animals and people, he makes a conciliatory advance without preconditions, without anger, fear, prejudice and without holding any firm immovable position. Francis' position is simply to bring peace and justice not only to the townspeople but also to the wolf.

The peaceful reconciliation which is effected in this story has within it the understanding that certain conditions or environments must be present before such justice and peace can be brought about. But these conditions, which it should be noticed Francis does not demand outright, are not just terms of agreement, but rather "terms of love and understanding." Francis begins from the first "term of love" — allow everything to be itself. He does not condemn the townspeople for their fear or for their treatment of the wolf that is killing them; similarly he does not condemn the wolf for being a wolf and for acting in the way wolves do when THEY ARE HUNGRY!!

The reconciliation between wolf and people was justice itself; it establishes peace and yet it does so with equity rather than animosity.

And this is the crux of the story: the wolf killed because it was hungry; because its own rights were not being met, it denied the right of the townspeople. Francis clearly understood that the wolf was acting in this manner because in a real sense it had a just grievance — its own hunger,[1] and if it was not being fed then it would have to take whatever food came its way — human or animal. Nowhere in the story does Francis condemn or judge: he simply allows the wolf to be itself and at the same time guarantees "in the name of the Lord" that the rights of the wolf to food will be met. The reconciliation between wolf and people was justice itself; it establishes peace and yet it does so with equity rather than animosity. It established equity because Francis allows both sides to recognize the rights of the other. When this is done the problems of both sides are

solved: the wolf is fed and does not kill, and the people who feed the wolf are not killed. As the story relates, all live in peace and it may be assumed that the townspeople forgave the wolf for its past crimes and that they in turn allowed the wolf to be itself.

Francis approaches this particular conflict of interests with the same openness and receptivity, with the same concern for both parties as he does the Sultan when he walks through the Crusading armies into the Sultan's camp to proclaim peace and goodness. As the wolf is not condemned for being wolf, the Sultan is not condemned for being Sultan/Muslim. Francis' ability not only to see but to understand both sides of an argument and to use that understanding first to establish "terms of love," and then to establish peace with a just and equitable settlement of the dispute, provides the friars today, I believe, with a motif for approaching those complicated areas of conflict which are deeply rooted in history, culture, economics, society and in which need and want cannot at times be distinguished from greed and the lust for power.

One is obviously tempted to draw "political" comparisons between the wolf of Gubbio story and the denial of human, animal and creational rights today. But the wolf of Gubbio story is not a "political" story and a cry for an equitable distribution of the world's resources. An appeal against acid rain, radiation fallout, or a heartfelt cry to stop the slaughter of the whale or seal pup and a concerted effort to protect the rights of the unborn and man and woman everywhere, will go unheard and unacted upon if preconditions are set before an openness to dialogue. Prejudice prevents peacefulness and it further lessens the integrity of any just cause.

Francis shows us that creation in its entirety has rights, that not only men and women but animals, trees, birds, whales, the sea, mountains and the earth's natural resources have rights also. But he shows this in an unprejudiced way when he does not set preconditions or make irrational, inordinate demands. Francis is able to do this not simply because he recognizes ALL rights, but his attitude to justice, the fruit of which is peace, is more broadly based than the limiting political, economic or social. The equity which Francis achieves through this recognition and understanding is based upon the experience of his own powerlessness — or, as we profess it today, his poverty.

Francis approaches the wolf in poverty, as he does the Sultan, as he does creation in the Canticle, indeed as he does Sister Death. For us who follow Francis I am convinced that this experience of powerlessness must be the first condition upon which we as Franciscans approach the wolf of Gubbio in our own countries, societies, towns, or local church situations. A recognition that even the oppressors, tyrants, villains, thieves, thugs and murderers have rights will help us understand that

the poor with whom we rightly identify may not simply be the "townspeople of Gubbio" today, but also the wolves. Our poverty/powerlessness in a real sense is no different from Francis', even though our cultural, linguistic, social, political or economic situations may differ considerably A recognition that all concerned in conflicts or disputes where justice is denied, leading to a lack of peace and inequality, have equal rights and responsibilities, will make our work of striving for justice with peace and equity all the more realistic. Factional segregation of concern e.g. Left - Right, Socialist - Fascist can be transcended and in a real sense become irrelevant to the point where ideologies give way to acceptance of varying points of view and visions of the world.

The justice obtained and the peace effected in the wolf of Gubbio story is based precisely upon the powerlessness of those who seek nothing for themselves. Francis sought nothing for himself in his dealings with the wolf and the people but sought only to ensure that the rights of wolf and people were guaranteed and respected. It is this selfless motivation in this particular story which provides, I believe, a motif for Franciscans today who work for the establishment of justice with peace and equity — for the one who is powerless can have nothing taken from him since he possesses nothing and wants nothing except to see the Kingdom on earth.

The Eternal Summer Aspect of the Child

At the Presentation
he was forewarned
by the frown and
cast shadow
of Simeon,
the falling hands
and eyes of Anna,
and the desperate
hold and tears
of the young Mother,
that the eternal
summer aspect
of the Child
could darken and fade
in autumnal shades.
He was instructed
first by the gifts and
golden adoration
of the Mages,
chiefly through
the waft and billow
of myrrh and incense,
he learned
where the throne
of the kingdom
was to be planted.

In the Temple
of winter
he was taught
from within
amidst the air
of caution, incredulity
and embarrassed
veneration — gifts (!)
from the Doctors
of Scripture and Law —
that he was no
preternatural visitor,
but a God child
at home.
Springtime woke
to see him
flowing eloquently,
a vibrant sapling,
ever yearning
ever yielding,
to the lights of
night and day.
In the summer
he could see
Mt. Tabor
from their home
in Nazareth
and count the stars
over its peak.
There he learned
to read the
book of constellations
teaching him
in starlit epiphanies,
in but a brief moment
he would be
the radiant
dawn.

William Hart McNichols, S.J.,. S.F.O.

A Truly Seraphic Prayer

GREGORY SHANAHAN, O.F.M.

I do not think there was any outcry (correct me if I'm wrong) at the disappearance of St. Bonaventure's prayer *Transfige* (see translation below) from the Missal's Thanksgiving After Mass.[1] (Sacristies here and there still retain it, framed above a prie-dieu either as an ornamental reminder of the past or for the benefit of ageing clerics who like to pray in Latin). Presumably there is nothing against using it as a private thanksgiving prayer! But is it unauthentic? Is its omission due to a suspicion hanging over its genuineness? Did some purist perhaps discover it to be non-Bonaventurian? Were its affective nature and effusive style regarded as rather mystically highflown? Which, then?

What we have is an elaborate form of a shorter and simpler original. The simpler form appears in the text of St. Bonaventure's *Soliloquy on Four Exercises of Soul*.[2] The elaborated prayer can be found in the late 13th century treatise by Friar James of Milan. *Stimulus Amoris (The Goad of Love)*, where it concludes a prologue.[3] A longer form is also in a late 15th century codex of the *Soliloquy*. And on the respected principle of literary criticism by which a *forma brevior* is generally to be deemed original, the simpler prayer in the *Soliloquy* must be Bonaventure's own.

The Original Form

In order to show the difference in format between the original and the prayer as it is more generally known, I give here the *Soliloquy* text:

> Eia, dulcissime Iesu! transfige saluberrimo vulnere amoris tui medullas animae meae, ut vere ardeat, langueat et liquefiat et solo tuo desiderio deficiat, cupiat dissolvi et esse tecum. Te solum semper esuriat, panem vitae caelestis, qui de caelo descendisti. Te sitiat, fontem vitae, fontem aeterni luminis, torrentem verae voluptatis. Te semper ambiat, te quaerat teque inveniat, in te dulciter requiescat.

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A Translation

Come then, dearest Jesus! transfix
my soul right through,
making with your love
a wholesome wound,
until my soul is all aglow,
faints,
melts,
loses itself
in desiring only You,
and longs to depart
and be with you.

Let it hunger at all times for You,
bread of celestial life
who came down from heaven.
Let it thirst for You,
fount of life,
source of everlasting light,
torrent of real pleasure.
May it ever hunt after your favors,
go in search of You,
find You
and come to delightful repose
in You.

The Old and New Testaments are echoed. At least two motifs are also in *The Tree of Life:* that of the 'wholesome wound' (which marks Bonaventure's approach to the mystery of the Sacred Heart) and of Christ as 'life-giving font' and 'fountain-ray of light.'[4] This latter thought is positively Dionysian in tone, although here the attribution is transferred from the Father to Christ in whom 'the whole plenitude of Deity is embodied.' Psalm 35:9.10 is clearly echoed:

> *You give them to drink from your pleasure-torrent.*
> *In you is the source of life*
> *and in your light we see light.*

The eucharistic allusions derive from the Bread of Life Discourse (cf. Jn 6:51) and the *fainting, melting, seeking* and *finding* reflect the love language of the Song of Songs. The culminating thought is that of 'rest' in Christ Jesus. The soul searches beyond itself to satisfy the restlessness of its nature. Thus the Franciscan desire for self-emptying poverty, on the

one hand, and for possession of the source of every good, on the other, links up with the Augustinian idea of human restlessness satisfied only in the rest of God. And so it is that six stages of the soul's pilgrimage lead finally to peace; the throbbing heart's yearning is that of St. Paul, who longed 'to depart, and be with Christ' (Phil 1:23).

The Longer Form

In the following version of the elaborate form of St. Bonaventure's prayer (the form in which it is best known as a thanksgiving prayer), in square brackets appear the variants and additions which occur in the prayer as it is in the *Stimulus Amoris* prologue.

TRANSFIX, dearest Lord Jesus *[Christ]*, the innermost depths of my soul, making with your love the cleanest and most wholesome wound. With charity true and unvexed *[fraternal]*, apostolic and most holy, wound my *[inmost]* soul, so that it faints and melts, *[with the very ardor of]* always loving and desiring You alone. Let this soul of mine crave for You and faint with longing for your courts; let it want to depart and be with You.

At all times make my soul hungry for You *[alone, bread of celestial life, who came down from heaven]*, the bread of angels, who are the refreshment of holy souls, our daily supersubstantial bread that has every sweetness and flavor, every possible delight and pleasantness.

For You, on whom angels long to gaze, may my heart ever hunger till it feeds itself full; and filled may my inmost soul be with relish for the flavor of You. May it always be thirsty for You, fount of life, spring of wisdom and knowledge, source of everlasting light, torrent of pleasure, abundance of the House of God. Let it always hunt after your favor, go in search of You, find You; let it so direct its source as to reach You. Let it ponder over You and speak *[of]* You. And may it carry out everything for the praise and glory of your *[sweetest]* name; and do it with humility and discernment, with admiring love and delight, with courteousness and affection, with *[serenity as well as endurance, purpose together with]* perseverance all the way to the end.

So may You alone always be *[all in all to me]*, my total hope and assurance. Be riches to me, *[enchantments to me]*, delight to me, happiness to me, joy to me; be repose and tranquillity for me, be peace and pleasantness for me, be for me fragrance and sweet loveliness. Be my food, my refreshment, *[my love, my meditation, be that which holds me in suspense, be my hopeful vision]* my refuge, my help, *[my endurance]* my wisdom, my portion, my possession, my treasure.

In You may this heart of mine be immovably rooted, fixed and firm for ever. Amen.

In this longer prayer biblical echoes abound still more. *Desire*, so salient an Augustinian theme and a *leit-motif* in Bonaventurian writings which influenced subsequent Franciscan writers, runs right through the prayer (e.g. 'longing for your courts' — Ps 83:3). The satisfying 'bread of angels' echoes Wisdom 16:20.21 and the Lord's Prayer. The 'Spirit of Christ' who was in the ancient prophets, the Christ Mystery latent in the Old Testament, is what the Christian soul now seeks to possess (1 Pet 1:12 — 'on whom angels long to gaze'). Jesus is the personification of the 'abundance of the house of God' (Ps 35:9).

It is some measure of Bonaventure's influence on his elaborators that his doctrine concerning spiritual sense perception (the 'spiritual senses' of sight, taste, smell, etc.) is reflected even within the confines of these simple prayers. In the original prayer, however, this doctrine is expressed only in nucleal form.[5] What is not perhaps commonly noted is how 'spiritual sensation' looms large in *St. Francis;* but indeed the entire last portion of the additions to the original prayer (*So may You... be my hope, assurance, riches, delight, repose...* etc.) evokes the *Praises of God* and other prayers of Francis. So that, all in all, we have here a truly seraphic prayer.

The omission of the prayer from the Thanksgiving set was not arbitrary. The real reason must have been that *neither the original nor the elaborated Bonaventure Prayer was composed simply as a Thanksgiving after Mass*. Somebody knew his Bonaventure and knew the prayer was set in a wider context, albeit it has exquisite eucharistic references. The prayer of St. Thomas, on the other hand, is much more obviously a post-communion thanksgiving. And so it came to pass that, since two stars keep not their motion in one sphere, one of the two great medieval luminaries had to go! Sad for us that it had to be the 'prince of mystics' who bowed out of public view, so to say: he who in his prayer leads us so delicately from Christ as our Bread to the Christ revealed in other words of God.

A Prayer can both condense and highlight the traits of a spirituality, contextualize the successive events of an itinerary. (Witness what the Psalms do for the historical and prophetic books of the Bible! Or is this to claim far too much for the little prayer we have been discussing?) The *Transfige*, in any case, is redolent of Franciscan devotion in all its affectivity and unction. Utterly Christ-centered and Scripture-flavored, it is a veritable *promptuarium*[6] out of which we may draw words to sustain our prayer of adoration and the initial stages of contemplative prayer.[7]

Notes

[1]The 1970 Roman Missal, in its set of Thanksgiving Prayers after Mass, omitted St. Bonaventure'ss prayer while retaining that of St. Thomas *(Gratias tibi ago)* which had always accompanied it. Franciscan missals followed suit.

[2]*Soliloquium de Quattuor Mentalibus Exercitiis*. *Opera Omnia* VIII, cap. 1, part. 18, p. 35. See *The Works of Bonaventure*. Trans. José de Vinck. St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N.J. *Opuscula*, vol. 3 (1966), 54 - 55.

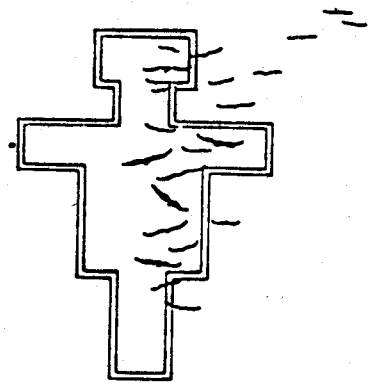
[3]Quaracchi (1949) ed., 34-5. For St. Bonaventure's influence on the treatise's author, see Hugh Eller, O.F.M., "James of Milan and the *Stimulus Amoris*" in *Franciscan Christology*, ed. Damian McElrath, Franciscan Institute Publications, St. Bonaventure University, New York, (1980), 89-107.

[4]The 8th and 12th 'Fruits', respectively. Ewert Cousins, *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey Into God. The Tree of Life. The Life of St. Francis*. New York (1978), 155. 171-172.

[5]Bonaventure is acknowledged as foremost among medieval mystical theologians for the elaboration and extensive use of the patristic doctrine of the 'spiritual senses'. See K. Rahner, "The Doctrine of the 'Spiritual Senses' in the Middle Ages" in *Theological Investigation*. Vol. 16 (New York, 1979).

[6]*Promptuarium* (literally = *larder, storehouse, magazine*) was the title of vademecum and prayer manuals in use throughout the Order.

[7]At the same time, the prayer is merely one effusion in a treatise (the *Soliloquy*) intended for simple souls (!) in which the Soul holds dialogue with the Interior Self over basic approaches in spiritual life in the light of divine truth. The elaborated forms, admittedly, have more of a contemplative ring about them.



Assisi Morning

Early Sunday morning
the day is awakening,
birds chirping
and bells tolling.

I gaze from my balcony spot
to the tower of Santa Chiara.
In this sacred place
I want for nothing,
it is as if life to this
moment is complete.

I am loved through no power
of my own,
I embrace this early morning
as a lover greets the beloved!

I am loved to my fullest
as never before.
My totality takes on new meaning,
as the lover greets me
through the warmth of the sun
as likened to a kiss.

Sr. Margaret Holden, O.S.F.

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Solvite Templum Hoc

For the dedication of the Portiuncula,
Franciscan University of Steubenville,
23 October 1987

Your parable struck lightning in the eyes
Of him whose Papal audience you sought,
For deep beneath the billows of his thought
A half-remembered dream began to rise.
The Lateran basilica he viewed,
The Temple of the New Jerusalem
Whose patrons (moneylenders, all of them)
Have set it tottering and made it crude.
But then a dirty beggar takes control,
And in a trice restores his Father's house.
A Samson in reverse, the beggar bows,
And, hands upon the pillars, holds it whole.
His Holiness now sees the dream fulfilled:
He sees in you the church you will rebuild.

John R. Holmes

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FS 504	Life of St. Francis	3	M-F*	8:30-9-45	Conrad Harkins, OFM,Ph.D.
FS 506	Survey of Franciscan History	3	M-F	9:55-11:10	Dominic Monti, OFM,Ph.D.
FS 508	History of Franciscan Thought	3	M-F	9:55-11:10	Romuald Green, OFM,Ph.D.
FS 520	Writings of St. Francis & St. Clare	2	M-Th	11:20-12:25	Michael Hart, OFM Cap.,S.T.L.
FS 541	Franciscan Theology of Prayer	2	M-Th	11:20-12:25	Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap.,Ph.D.
FS 519	Theol. Foundations of Franciscanism	2	M-Th	1:00-2:05	William Short, OFM,S.T.D.
FS 563	Principles of Spiritual Direction	2	M-Th	1:00-2:05	Edward Coughlin, OFM,Ph.D.
FS 500	Method and Bibliography	2	M-Th*	2:20-3:15	Paul Spaeth, M.L.S.
FS 511	Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts	2	M-Th	2:20-3:15	Malcolm V. T. Wallace, Ph.D.
FS 564	Franciscan Praxis of Spirit. Direct.	2	M-Th	2:20-3:15	David Couturier, OFM Cap.,Ph.D.
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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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

Reflection:

On the Manner in which Some Brothers from Rome Discovered the Importance of Music and Other Arts for the Work of Evangelization

FR. HERMANN SHALÜCK, O.F.M.

In the year of the Lord 1987, at the time when many hundreds of bishops were holding a discussion in Rome on the role of many millions of lay people in the Church, and when the Curia of the Lord Pope had declared the Fraternity to be a "clerical Order", it so happened that the Council of the Order of Friars Minor, called the General Definitorium, came together for a long session under the guidance of Brother John. The place chosen on this occasion for their quiet meeting was a hermitage in Emilia Romagna called "Montepaolo", a place dedicated to the memory of Brother Anthony of Padua who many a time and oft had set out from this place on a mission of itinerant preaching.

During their stay of almost ten days the Brothers from Rome, mindful of the example of Brother Francis, solemnly promised obedience to a certain Brother Damian, just as Francis had submitted himself in obedience to Brother Masseo (cf. L1 1) on Mount Alverna, and to Brother Angelo in Monte Casale. In the same manner they submitted themselves in obedience to a certain Brother Paul, the cook in the hermitage at that time.

Exhausted by the dust of the road and the fatigue of the past months, the Brothers from Rome took their rest early. On the following morning they were roused from their beds by sounds at once unusual and most pleasant. Some of the Brothers from Rome, more conversant with the

Fr. Hermann Shalück, O.F.M., D. Th., is a member of the General Definitorium of the Order of Friars Minor in Rome. As in a previous reflection (CORD April, 1988), he narrates unusual experiences of the General Definitorium in the form of a "Little Flower" episode.

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spirituality of Brother Francis, thought at first that they were hearing that sweet and comforting melody which, on one occasion, had restored strength to Francis in his illness (cf. LM 5, 11), or if not, the melody of that noble falcon who had awakened him for the divine praises (cf. 2C 168). Others, however, relying more on their knowledge of zoology, recognized on the spot that those sounds which had aroused them had emanated from animals less noble, to wit, from a large flock of hens, cocks, ducks, geese and turkeys, which for some time now had come to share life with the Brothers in the hermitage.

Not just on that first day but on all the following days, the Brothers from Rome got out of bed to this music and wended their way to the Sanctuary to pray, bless the Lord and to place all their cares in Him. Those Brothers who already had been on pilgrimage to the Holy Places, remembering the sustained singing of birds on the wing, immediately gave this place the name of "San Pietro in Gallicanto" or "St. Peter at Cockcrow."

Under the maternal vigilance of the Brothers of Emilia Romagna, the days following the musical awakening ran their course, full of creative intuitions. Also, Brother Damian had conceived the idea of giving to each one of the Brothers from Rome the name of a musical instrument, so that one was called "Violin," another "Kettledrum" and another "German Flute." The result was that the Brothers, in their reflections, began to pay special attention to music and to recommend it warmly to all the Friars scattered throughout the world as they strove to apply the "Six-Year Plan" adopted at the last Chapter of Pentecost.

Basing their studies on Sacred Scripture and following the example of brother Francis, they recognized with greater clarity than ever that in the CONTEMPLATIVE DIMENSION we should compare our own vocation to a melody which God himself suggests to each person, one which springs continously from creation and from the human heart. This now becomes a means of giving thanks to God "for Himself" (Reg NB 23,1), especially for his "Goodness, Meekness and Beauty" (Laud Dei) and for the harmony of creation. Filled with joy the Brothers from Rome realized that they formed one body with all their brothers and sisters among the animals, fowl and birds, with whom Brother Francis had, indeed, already recited the canonical Hours (cf. LM 8,9). Indeed the Brothers became convinced in an altogether new manner that the whole creation is nothing other than a piece of polyphonic music to God, which they should accompany with their own voices. And that is precisely what they tried to do during those days in Montepaolo in union with the cicada which, for the

happiness of Francis, had sung all the praises of the Creator for eight full days (cf. ibidem).

In the second priority of the Six Year Plan, that of their OPTION FOR THE POOR and, likewise, in their gospel witness in defense of JUSTICE AND PEACE, the Brothers ultimately realized that music is again an indispensable means. Was it not because of it that the Bishop and the Podestá were enabled to be reconciled, since Francis had composed the musical stanza on reconciliation (cf. LP 84)? Were there any means capable of breaking down in a peaceable manner the walls of hatred and injustice (2 Cel. 127) other than the woody violin of Brother Francis or the no less biblical trumpet of Jericho (cf. Jos 6)? Or could the Brothers have taken upon themselves in a credible manner the construction of a new heaven and a new earth if they had not been capable of listening with an attentive year, as Francis did at Rieti in the poverty of his life, to the wonderful sound of the zither, the music of which was so sweet and so harmonious that "he thought he had been transported to another world" (LM 5, 11; LP 66)?

Likewise, the preparation of a new kind of FORMATION FOR THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT, the third Gospel priority of this large Fraternity, could never achieve success — as the Brothers clearly recognized — without the knowledge of music. It was precisely here in Montepaolo that they recalled the words of the Apostle Paul: "In the case of lifeless things which produce a sound, such as a flute or a harp, how will anyone know what is being played if there is no distinction among the notes? If she bugle's sound is uncertain who will get ready for battle? (1 Cor 14, 7-8) In dark and cold England, in a place not far distant from learned Oxford, — so we read in a Chronicle — a knight in armour approaching at a gallop, was converted to the Gospel at the sight of two Friars Minor who were walking barefoot in the snow and, full of joy, were singing the "Salve Regina." (cf Lanercost Chronicle) Later on, when Germany was divided into two Provinces, one located in the region of the Rhine and the other in Saxony, was it merely by accident that the General Chapter itself placed at the disposal of the Brothers Psalters and Antiphonaries for the chant, so as to raise the spirits of those hardtried missionaries on the other side of the Alps? (cf. Chronicle of Jordan of Giano, 57). Finally, among the Sisters and Brothers in the groups known as "Base Communities," were there not, perhaps, many worthy of mention who, in many ways, fulfilled the word of the Psalmist who declares: "Sing to the Lord a new song!"? (cf. Ps. 33,3; 96,1) Was not Brother Francis himself a shining example of what is now known as "Inculturation"? This is shown by the fact that, while he came from Umbria, he knew how to sing in French? (cf 2 Cel 90).

As the tranquil days in Montepaolo drew to their close, the Brothers were treated to a different artistic experience. Some of them even described it as a new and very intense form of up-to-the-minute "Inculturation," one for which they had not yet found a model either in Sacred Scripture or in the life of Brother Francis. Brother Paul, the cook, choosing from among some exquisite gifts of Mother Earth, over a period of months had reserved for the nutrition of the General Definitorium what might well be described as a crescendo in a symphony of eats and drinks, to wit, a wise and exotic cat ("Felis Siamesis"). So, on the feast of Saints Cosmas and Damian, also the feastday of the Guardian of the hermitage, all were served a delicious meal as they recalled the words of brother Francis, which stated that in time of necessity the Brothers "may eat of all food permitted to men" (Reg B 9,13). Those Brothers who were not accustomed to drinking wine or who drank very little, now celebrated this festive banquet with an excellent wine called "Sangiovese," one which has made the region of Montepaolo famous. So they all ate and drank and had their fill. One Brother, a native of the fogs of the north, realized — too late of course, — that the day was Friday, a day on which it was forbidden to enjoy any kind of meat. He resolved to fast an another day.

On the evening of the same day, Brother Damian together with all those present, as well as Brother Berard, the Minister of Bologna, who had joined them, celebrated a solemn Liturgy. During this the Brothers from Rome, with the help of a Sister, sang in parts some "psalms, hymns and canticles, according as the Spirit inspired them" (Col. 3, 16). Under the influence of all that they had heard and seen, eaten, drunk and discoursed upon, the brothers from Rome sang in the manner Francis one day had desired: "The brothers should not pay any attention to the melody of the voice but rather to the harmony of the soul, so that the voice may be in unison with the soul, and the soul in unison with God. In this manner they may win God's favour by purity of heart while they are not trying to please the ears of the people by the sensuality of their voice. However the danger of such vain adulation did not, in fact, exist on that day.

In an impassioned homily Brother Damian warmly exhorted the General Definitory to open their hearts to music, to sing together more frequently and not to behave like the prisoners of Babylon who, once upon a time, "hung up their harps sorrowfully on the trees and began to weep." (cf. Ps. 137, 1-2) Rather they should remember those other words which say: "Those who are sowing in tears, shall sing when they reap" (Ps. 126,5). He added that in their song they should follow the example of their Father and Brother who, on one occasion, by means of insistent prayer, had put

a stop to the diabolical noise of the demons on the roof of the church of Bovara, from where they were trying to terrorize Him (cf. 2 Cel 122). He compared the Brothers from Rome and from the whole world to an orchestra, in which the originality of each instrument contributes to the unity and harmony of the whole. Where there is noise, they should create silence and peace. Where there are discords and harsh sounds, they should create harmony and melodious song. Where too many soloists have entered the scene, they should form a choir or, rather, an orchestra.

After all these things the Brothers left that hospitable hermitage. They felt comforted and consoled in their hearts because the Lord had shown them, in a new way, what was the real task which He had confided to them.

In praise of Christ. AMEN!

Haec omnia vidit, audivit, et fideliter conscripsit Frater Hermannus Transalpinus, Lutetiae Parisiorum, in commemoratione S. Dionisii et Sociorum Martyrum, die nono mensis Octobris A.D. 1987.

●

The Healing Fire

Glory be to the Father:
God knows my agony — God touches my pain.
To my desert soul, God sends droplets of Hope.
And to the Son:
Jesus lived my agony — Jesus feels my pain.
To my sinful soul, Jesus offers the Hope of Redemption.
And to the Holy Spirit:
The Spirit soothes my agony — the Spirit mends my pain.
To my broken soul, the Spirit pours out the healing fire of God's love.

Jerry W. Harrington

The Portiuncola Doves

When I first saw the doves
cradled in your statued hands
the cynic in me was skeptical,

but to be respectable
I nodded in tacit approval

then quickly walked the way
of the cloister area
where the thornless roses
were in full bloom and sway.

Suddenly
the cynic found no room
to move or breathe

so I let him go

and went back to the doves
clutching a few petals from the roses
and quietly laid them at your feet.

I did not look up,
but pulled the cord
tighter around my habit
and headed towards the door

smiling
  knowing I was cradled
in your hands as lovingly
as the Portiuncola Doves.

Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.

Mary's Spanish Sons — Our American Heroes

Father Pedro de Corpa and His Companions

FATHER JUDE M. ROCHFORD, O.F.M. CONV.

The martyrdom within a week of five Franciscan Friars, all Spanish missionaries, by a group of disgruntled, apostate Guale Indians dates back almost four hundred years, to September, 1597.

These friars, who met death for defending the marital laws of the Church[1] and their love of the Immaculate Conception,[2] are less known than the more popular North American Jesuit martyrs. This could be due to the British and French colonial sixteenth century exploration, and their later political influence from victorious battles over the Spanish in this region. At any rate, Spanish conquests in the south-east of the New World were soon forgotten.

It was the policy of Catholic European nations at this period of history to send out soldiers and priests together. The soldier landed and held the colony for the mother-nation while the priest, his ever present companion, went about the work of christianizing the local people. Colonization and evangelization went hand in hand.[3]

Spanish civilization moulded with Christianity among the New World inhabitants begins with the founding of Spain's first city settlement in St. Augustine, Florida, by Pedro Menendez in 1565. This was forty-four years before Jamestown and fifty-five years before Plymouth Rock was founded. The Spanish who arrived that year were founders of the first permanent Catholic mission of Nombre de Dios (Name of God).

Four priests with Father Lopez de Mendoza Grajales offered Mass on the 8th of September, 1565. A grove of outstretched palms, stately pines, and twisted oaks with their fleecy interlaced moss, whose branches met overhead, formed a hushed sanctuary of welcome. For this ancient sacrifice

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an altar was built of freshly hued logs. The devotion and reverence of the Spaniards near the coastal waters must have impressed the local Indians as it was said that they imitated during the sacred service all their ritual actions. Here, Christianity began in what is now the United States of America.

John Gilmary Shea, historian, wrote of this event: "Mass was said to hallow the land and draw down the blessing of heaven before the first step was taken to rear a human habitation".[4]

The first group of Franciscans arrived in 1573, taking over the task of evangelizing the Timucuan Indians, the Ais, and the Sorroque. The Jesuits, who had come in 1566, a year after Menendez, left in 1572 to work in Mexico. They were recalled by their Father General, St. Francis Borgia, as nine of their number were slain in encounters with Indians; also, they were to labor in a less malaria infested area in the southwest.[6]

The Franciscans established numerous missions on the Atlantic Coast and its many Isles, from St. Augustine (Florida) to Parris Island (South Carolina). Then, Spanish Florida comprised the entire southeastern part of the United States, extending as far north as Virginia and as far west as the Mississippi.

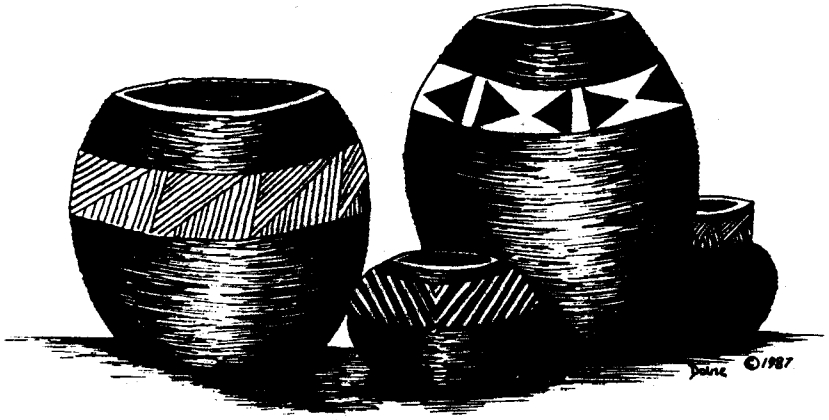
The Spanish friars' missionary project to christianize the various Indian tribes was a big undertaking. Franciscan Marion Habig, a great promoter of the Georgia martyrs, tells us: "During that time, 487 friars devoted themselves to missionary work in Spanish Florida, sometimes for many years and amid great dangers and hardships."[7]

The missions to the Guale/Yamesse Indians began in 1587 on Georgia's Coastal Islands: St. Simons, Sapelo, St. Catherines, and the adjoining mainland. These missions with well over a thousand conversions would flourish for ten years until all would be destroyed by a band of renegade Indians in 1597. They would be rebuilt again but wiped out forever in the period between 1702 and 1704 by British expansionists. The defeated Spanish and the friars, with over a hundred year presence in their missions, were forced to withdraw. The friars fled to their original friary of the Immaculate Conception in St. Augustine, Florida, headquarters of their large missions. The soldiers likewise went to St. Augustine. A few Guale Indian Christians, escaping death and captivity by the British occupants, accompanied them. The Spanish Crown did not allow the Franciscans after these defeats, and the Battle of the Bloody Marsh in 1742, which ended Spanish rule, to return to their former coastal and inland missions.

Historian Father Maynard Geiger sums up the friars' missionary endeavors in these words: "The first work among the Indians was carried on at Nombre de Dios and San Sebastian near St. Augustine. Very important missions were opened among the Timucuans north of St. Augustine

at San Juan del Puerto and at San Pedro or Cumberland Island. Thriving missions were founded in what was known as Salt Water District on the Golden Isles of Guale along the Georgia shoreline and on the various islands fringing the coast."[8]

The tragic events that led to the sudden deaths of these poor friars who came from a civilized land of Spanish opulence to the new territory needs to be retold. The friars not only christianized the Indians but taught them European methods of agriculture. They encouraged them to abandon their nomadic lifestyle and settle in a mission area. It was fidelity to the Church's teachings on Christian marriage that led to the eventual massacre of the friars.



The names of these martyrs are: "Fr. Pedro de Corpa, of Villalbilla, Spain, who came to Florida in 1587; Fr. Blas de Rodríguez, a native of Caucos, Spain, who went to Florida shortly after his ordination to the priesthood and arrived there about 1580; Fr. Miguel de Añon of Zaragoza or Huesca Spain, who came in 1595; Fr. Francisco de Beráscola, a Basque from Gordejuela, Spain, who likewise came in 1595; and Bro. Antonio de Badajoz, born at La Albuera near Badajoz, who was already advanced in age when he arrived in Florida in 1587."[9]

Father Pedro de Corpa was to die near present-day Darien, Georgia, while Fr. Blas, near Eulonia, Fr. Miguel and Brother Antonio on St. Catherine's Island, and lastly, Fr. Francisco, on St. Simon's Island.[10]

"Records show that the Franciscans were flexible about many of the customs of the Guale Indians, but upon one point they were adamant:

There could only be one wife in a valid Christian marriage. The Guales had traditionally practiced polygamy. It was this issue that brought about the revolt in which fived Franciscans died, killed by the tomahawks of Juanillo and his men."[11]

Juanillo, a convert, was the son of a chief and heir to the chieftainship (cacique) of the Guale. He took a second wife. Although reprimanded for this action by the friars, he was adamant. When told his lineage to the throne was to be deprived him because of bigamy, as this was against Catholic practices and undermined the faith in his village, he became very contentious and infuriated. Collecting other dissidents together, reprisals and fiery revenge were planned against the friars, their catechizers and preachers.

On September 13th, as Father Pedro, a devout and zealous religious man, was on his way from the friary to the mission Church, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe at Tolomato, (Darien, Georgia) to say his morning prayers, Juanillo with other proud and malicous Indians attacked him with stone hatchets. After killing him, they impaled his head on a lance near a dock for all to see but buried his body secretly in the forest. Juanillo boasted: "Now the friar is dead. He would not have been killed had he let us live as we did before we became Christians."[12]

Inflamed with anger, Juanillo continued: "They take away our women, leaving us only one and perpetual, forbidding us to exchange her. They prevent our dancing, banquets, feasts, celebrations, games and warfare so that by disuse we shall lose our ancient courage and skill inherited from our ancestors."[13]

The blazing fire of hatred once enkindled, leaped and danced over the marshlands, tidal creeks, sandy beaches, and forests of oaks and pines quickly to the other Franciscan missions. No one, not even the silent, embracing witness of the earthy marsh halted its flames.

Painted and feathered Indian warriors appeared suddenly at Mission Santa Clara at Tupique, near Eulonia today, to slay Father Blas, a courageous and peaceful friar. Amidst twirling spears and dust of stampeding feet, he sought permission from the rebel leader to say his last Mass of Thanksgiving, beseeching the Lord to forgive them. Then without fear or self-pity, he gave away to his persecutors the little he possessed while some Indians ransacked and burglarized the Friary and chapel.

To the Indians, whom he loved and served, Father Blas spoke fervent words of compassion: "My children, for me it is not a difficult thing to die... what hurts me is your loss, and the fact that the devil has been able to make you commit so great an offense against your God and Creator..."[14]

Ignoring these reconciliatory words, similar to his Master's on the cross

when he was dying, the apostates with their ominous war drums stifled his merciful pleas. His head was crushed like pulp from the blows of stone axes.

The friar's body was thrown in a field as carrion for birds and wild animals. His body was buried by some of his faithful converts; later it was reinterred by Spanish soldiers.

Meanwhile, some distance away, the Chief on St. Catherine's Island, mindful of the drum and runner messages, forewarns Father Miguel and Brother Antonio of these barbarous events.

Listening to their fate and with no time to flee, they turn to their Eternal Protector. Prayers are offered for their oppressors. Mass was celebrated under difficult circumstances. In accordance with the order of the chief, the friars were put to death with tomahawk. Their bodies were buried near the large cross Father Miguel had erected on the island when he first arrived.

A few miles to the south, Mission Santo Domingo stood at Asao, St. Simon's Island. Here Father Francisco, a giant of a man, ministered the 'Good News' unselfishly. When the marauding Indians arrived, Father Francisco was away. He had gone south to St. Augustine's Mission for provisions. The Indians waited for his return. Unaware of his impending death and the hypocrisy of the Indians, who greet him with apparent friendliness, the joyful friar extends his welcome with gifts. Suddenly he is surrounded by Indians. Tomahawks glisten in the sun's fading rays. Warriors seize his shoulders and pin him down. Amidst intermittent blows, Father Francisco dies. The fifth servant of God is dead within the one awesome week.

The Spanish Governor, Canzo, was unsuccessful at first in finding and punishing the rebels. He organized several Guale chiefs to wage a campaign against Juanillo and his followers.[15] Soon they were captured and killed. Their scalps were sent to the governor as proof of their deaths. The uprising and rebellion was over.[16]

For a long time drought and intermittent fires engulfed the area. Famine followed. The Indians repented of their outrageous acts as they were starving and dying, and then sought forgiveness. It was given them. The captured Indians did not forget the love of the friars who had taught them to grow better seasonal foods to ward off starvation and the use of oyster shells mixed with sand to build permanent residences. At an inquiry shortly after the deaths of these heroic and true sons of St. Francis of Assisi, they testified to their love of the Church. The blood shed by the martyred friars bore fruit.

Fifteen years later, on October 16, 1612, the Definitorium of Santa Elena wrote King Philip III of Spain, in his capacity as *Patronato Real* of

the New World: "Although the Indians did not martyr the friars for the faith (i.e., for doctrine, as such), it is certain that they did martyr them because of the law of God which the religious taught them."[17]

The American Catholic Church, in 1930 and again in 1941, petitioned the Holy See, The Sacred Congregation for Causes of the Saints, for the beatification of these servants as well as for 113 others who gave their precious lives for the faith during the turbulent historical period, 1542 - 1885.

Scholarly research was done both in Spain and the United States to make the Cause of the Georgia martyrs more known on a 'grass roots' level. Publicity was given the Cause,[18] and archeological findings were published.[19]

The American hierarchy was briefed again in 1975. A few years later, in 1980, one of their member, Bishop Raymond W. Lessard of Savannah in whose diocese the martyrdoms had occurred, paid tribute to the heroic friars of Georgia for laying the foundations of the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century.[20]

In Febrary, 22 and 23, 1984, he opened the proceedings which, God willing, will lead to the beautification of Father Pedro de Corpa and his companions.[21]

The missionaries died in defense of the Sacrament of Christian marriage which prohibits polygamy, defends the equal rights of women, and fosters monogamous marriage.[22] Catholics believe that husband and wife are no longer two, but one, bonded in fidelity and in the indissolubility of their Christian marriage. This intimate union, based upon Christ's love for the Church, demands a sacred trust and a permanent commitment.

The Georgia martyrs can be a source of inspiration and intercession for husbands and wives who struggle to sustain and deepen their Christian commitment to one another in a secularistic society. The concern regarding the current erosion of the values of Christian marriage was expressed with strong emphasis by Bishop Raymond W. Lessar of Savanah in his 1987 Christmas message: "I would be remiss if I did not mention... as priority areas of concern such questions as... marriage and family enrichment."[24] Within this context, the cause of Father Pedro de Corpa and his companions assumes great relevance. Their ultimate canonization can serve as a timely reminder that some overlooked early American history bears the unforgettable witness of Catholic martyrs who gave their lives in heroic defense of the sacrament of matrimony whose values are so desperately needed for the moral reconstruction of our nation.

May the Holy Spirit guide the Church to acknowledge the exceptional sanctity of Father de Corpa and his four companions!

Prayer to the Georgia Martyrs

Lord Jesus Christ, reward the apostolic zeal of Father Pedro de Corpa and his four companions, Father Blas, Miguel and Francisco, and brother Antonio, who labored for the spiritual well-being of the Indians in Georgia and gave their lives in defense of the Christian faith. Through their merits and intercession graciously grant the favor I humbly ask of you, so that, for the glory of Your name, they may be raised to the honor of the Altars. Amen.[25]

Notes

[1]Margaret Davis Cate, *Our Todays and Yesterdays. A Story of Brunswick and the Coastal Islands*. Rev. Ed. Glover Bros., Inc., Brunswick, Georgia, 1930, pp. 22-28.

[2]Alexander Wyse, "Unearthing the Past," [Holy Name] Provincial Annals (1986) p. 109; Marion A. Habig, "The Franciscan Friary at St. Augustine, Florida, 1584 - 1763," *Franciscan Herald*, April 1965, p. 115.

[3]John H. Hillmann, *A Historical Record of Seventy-five Years*, Brunswick, Georgia, private printing, 1947, pp. 1-2; Cate, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[4]Reading on Historical Landmarks, Shrine of Nombre de Dias, American's First Mission, St. Augustine, Florida.

[5]Cate, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[6]Marion A. Habig, "Spanish Florida's Indian Missions," *Franciscan Herald*, May, 1965, pp. 140-141.

[7]Habig, *Ibid.*, p. 141.

[8]Quoted in Habig, "The Franciscan Friary at St. Augustine, Florida, 1584 - 1763." *Op. cit.*, pp. 117-118.

[9]Habig, "The Five Martyrs of Guale," *Franciscan Herald*, 1960, p. 299.

[10]Hillman, *op. cit.*, p. 3; Barbara White, "Tragic event has all the elements of a good movie," *Florida Times Union, Jacksonville, Florida, Friday, February 28, 1986*.

[11]*Gillian Brown: Franciscan Missions of Coastal Georgia*, St. Anthony's Shrine, Boston, 1985, p. 8.

[12]*Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

[13]*Ibid.*, p. 11.

[14]*Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

[15]Cate, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[16]Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-17.

[17]Alexander Wyse. "The Five Franciscan Martyrs of Georgia," [Holy Name] *Provincial Annals*, XXXIV (1985) p. 31.
[18]Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
[19]Wyse, "Unearthing the Past," *op. cit.*, p. 108.
[20]Wyse, "The Five Franciscan Martyrs of Georgia," *op. cit.*,, p. 33.
[21]*Ibid.*, p. 35.
[22]*Ibid.*, p. 36. (He mentions reasons for sainthood, eg., Hispanics and irreligion of modern marriages).
[23]231 Thess. 2:13.
[24]"Christmas, 1987," *The Southern Cross*, vol. 67. No. 46, Thursday, December 24, 1987.
[25]Wyse, *Unearthing the Past*," *op. cit.*, p. 111.

(For copies of prayer write: Fr. Alexander Wyse, O.F.M., Vice-Postulator of the Cause, 100 Arch Street, Boston, MA 02107).

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Son of Man Our Lover

Let us follow Him...
The Man Who went by
with a Cross!
With muffled steps
and hushed heart
listening to that
labored breath,
sighing out the coming,
dreaded DEATH!

Follow after, follow on!
sighing out our sorrow
sincere and long!
The ruby Drops
point the Way:

Precious Blood
to lave our clay,
lies stark before us!
O! Let us follow on!
On to the End!
... to the END!

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

To Know His Will

FRANCIS BERNA, O.F.M.

Though the particular circumstances which called St. Francis to write his letter to Bro. Leo remain uncertain, it is absolutely certain that Francis intends that Leo discern the will of God for the matter at hand. It is also absolutely clear that Francis gives Leo a great deal of freedom to discern that will — perhaps reflective of the compassionate understanding of God toward human attempts to discern His will!

That same compassionate understanding exists today as human beings attempt to interpret the divine call. What follows is an attempt to outline how Francis himself sought the will of God and some suggestions how one might follow his example in the freedom of obedience.

One could immediately suggest that Francis offers Leo a good deal of latitude because he appreciated the complexity of the task, how easy it is to mistaken one's own will for the divine will. One could immediately suggest that Francis offers Leo a good deal of latitude because the call of God is a call which respects human development and growth.

These suggestions emerge from a brief consideration of Francis' own experience. Initially Francis is confused by the divine command "Go, rebuild my Church." (1C 6, 10) Francis establishes a building program of bricks and mortar while the Lord is calling for the renewal of human hearts. It took a bit of persistence on God's part to clarify what he really desired.

The work of Francis among the lepers suggests his continued search to discover what God was asking of him. It might well suggest another stage in the process of his conversion. Perhaps it was preparation for the preaching mission — a living out of what he would later preach. What

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can be seen clearly is that the work with lepers was not what God finally wanted of Francis for he leaves it behind to follow another call.

Thomas of Celano records that when Francis heard the gospel injunction that the disciples of Jesus were to carry no money, nor have a walking stick, nor own two tunics he immediately attempted to fulfill its command. After the priest explained the passage Francis exclaimed, "This is what I wish, this is what I seek, this is what I long to do with all my heart." (1 C 1, 9) Francis remained steadfast in this way of life until he thought the Lord might again be calling him somewhere else.

The *Fioretti* recount how at one point Francis was uncertain whether he should continue in the apostolate of preaching or dedicate himself to prayer on LaVerna. Through Bro. Masseo Francis sought the advice of Sylvester, Clare and one of her companions. When given word that the Lord wanted him to continue as before, Francis embarked on the road with the proclamation, "So let's go — in the name of the Lord." (Brown, *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, p. 75).

Francis may well have had his own experience in mind as he counseled Bro. Leo. That would be one reason to account for the wide range of freedom. If Francis had his own experience in mind when writing Leo, if he were presuming Leo would follow his own path of discernment, Francis would have been presuming certain elements in the process. The life of the saint recounts that he relied upon personal prayer, the Church's proclamation and explanation of the Scriptures, some intuitive knowledge and the advice of spiritual friends. It is tempting to formulate these elements into a system and identify them as "the Franciscan Process of Discernment." However, such an approach would not be all that correct. One would also have to incorporate Francis' notion of obedience as described by Bonaventure. In the major biography Francis describes the perfect subject in comparison to a dead body moved here and there and never resisting. (LM 6, 4). Furthermore, a literal following of a proposed outline would fail to meet the questions of the contemporary seeker.

Today, seekers of God's will live in the era of modern biblical studies. The Church commands proper exegesis using the tools of modern research and the guidance of commentaries. Biblical literalism is carefully avoided. While there is a sincere appreciation of charismatic faith and life in the Spirit, most people seek a more reasonable approach to faith and shy away from the clouds of fundamentalism and cult-like structures.

Today, the equation of the will of the superior being equal to the will of God no longer balances. And it is recognized that it never really balanced for Francis. He writes that a superior should act toward his subjects "like a mother toward her son." (*Letter to a Superior*) Always the subject should be able to find great compassion in the eyes of the superior. Today it is

hopefully appreciated that the superior, like every other member of the community, is in need of understanding, compassion and forgiveness.

Today the Church appreciates an expanded concept of vocation and God's call. Grace and holiness comprise a fundamental aspect of human existence. The call of God arises from the depths of everyday living taken with all seriousness of possibility. Those who help discern incorporate the tools of psychological testing, interviews and letters of recommendation. These tools take everyday living with all seriousness of possibility.

How then is one to discern God's will? What might it mean to discern that will in a "Franciscan" way? There is a way in which the task is impossible and the Franciscan label meaningless. That is, there is no process whereby one might know with absolute certainty, in some sort of definitive way, precisely what God's will is in the particular immediacy of the here and now. Francis' experience yields that the divine will does not readily lend itself to absolute certainty for all eternity. However, his experience does offer some elements of a process readily adapted to the contemporary world.

Were he to offer a process of discernment for the contemporary seeker Francis might well include some of the following. Certainly he would insist on PRAYER — a patient prayer which is willing to wait and to listen. Francis would insist on SCRIPTURE in the tradition of the Church. The tools of modern exegesis would be applied in conjunction with what the medievals term the anagogical sense whereby one is "lifted up" by the words of the text. As Francis consulted Sylvester and Clare, so he would expect the modern person to seek the advice of SPIRITUAL FRIENDS. With such people one can be comfortable in speaking about oneself and God's activity in the heart. In such people one would see the active presence of God.

The life of Francis also suggests the element of PERSONAL MATURITY as part of the overall process of discernment. Francis was not interested in an institution called the Order. He was interested in his brothers, in people. When a brother was hungry from excessive fasting, Francis got up in the night and ate a meal, all the while being careful not to embarrass the friar. The personal care for this friar undoubtedly arose from Francis' conviction that God is a personal God. In contemporary terms this would mean an acceptance of self "as is" with a simultaneous conviction that one can be used by God "as is." Only when Francis accepted the reality of God's love could he hear the divine call. Only then was conversion a possibility. Furthermore, since God has created the human as personal, a being in and for freedom, he would seem to have more creativity than to be limited to one plan, one process, one lifestyle which is good for

everyone. As a mother recognizes the uniqueness of each child, so the process of discernment must recognize the uniqueness of each seeker.

Modern psychology makes clear that maturity is not a once in a lifetime event. A certain relativity marks maturity — the relativities of age or possibility. Maturity, and the appropriate response to the divine will, is best seen as a process not a single goal to be achieved. Recognizing that his own conversion was developmental Francis undoubtedly felt he could rely upon the maturity of Leo.

In addition to the experience of Francis the process of discernment ought to be colored with some general perspectives. The will of God involves RISK or CHALLENGE. The call of God speaks of adventure, not boredom. This sense of adventure, an excitement for living, spiritual joy, suggests the working of God even in the boring moments and the work of everyday existence. The will of God involves a call toward the God "who is ever new."

Any discernment of the divine will must be based on the conviction that God is a SAVING GOD. God rescues one from self and from stupidity. God remains committed to a person despite their stupidity, stubborness or simple oversight. God makes the best of human decisions and the situations they create.

Ultimately to do the will of God means the total surrender of oneself to the ABSOLUTE MYSTERY which is God, a final surrender to the unknown, the unimaginable God who deigns to be part of our existence. This was the experience of Francis on LaVerna and the experience of his death.

Ultimately one can say that the discernment of God's will involves the ongoing commitment of oneself to the mystery which is God. Discernment involves a fluid rather than a solid reality. It leaves more unknown than known. The stability arises only from an experience of love which one knows to be eternal, a love which can never fail, a love from which one can never be separated. "For who can separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rms 8).

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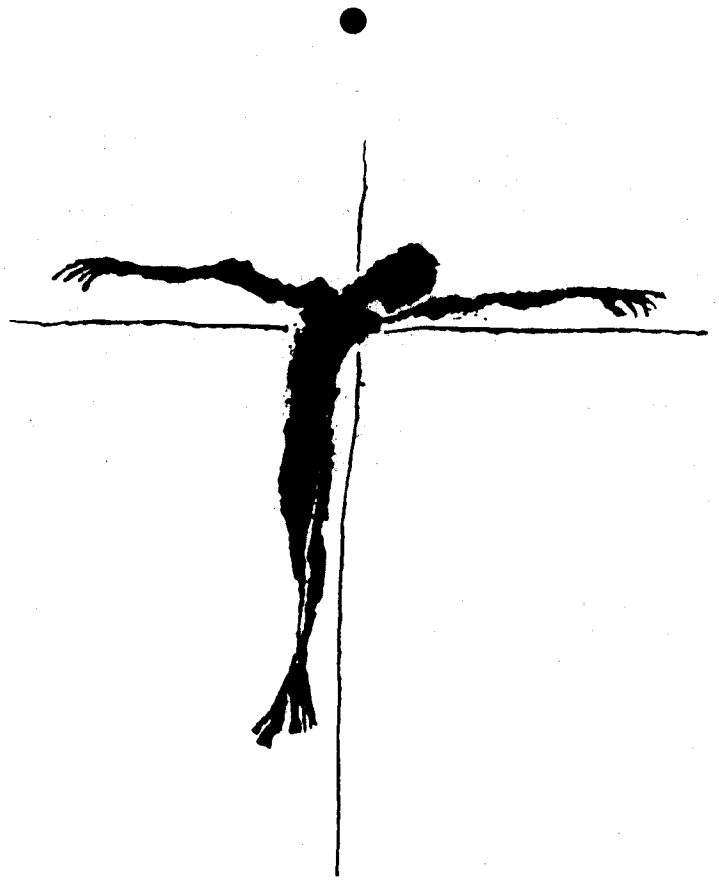

'Pray Unceasingly' according to Indian Spirituality and St. Francis

CECILY PAUL, F.M.M.

Jesus has asked to pray unceasingly (Lk. 18:1). Is that possible at all? Well, it depends on what prayer is all about. If you consider prayer as saying some prayers or reflecting on God's mysteries, then it is not possible to pray always. But if you understand prayer as an awareness of God's presence, a relationship with God Who is ever-present everywhere, an experience of being loved by God and loving Him, and an accomplishing of God's will, then we can think of the possibility of praying always.

Did Francis succeed in praying unceasingly? What was his kind of prayer?

Francis saw prayer first of all as an intimate relationship with the Triune God and a way of being, and then as frequent communion with God in the liturgy and periods of personal recollection. He writes in his Rule of 1221:

> Let all of us
> wherever we are
> in every place
> at every hour
> at every time of day
> everyday and continually
> believe truly and humbly
> and keep in our heart
> and love, honor, adore, serve
> praise and bless
> glorify and exalt
> magnify and give thanks to
> the most high and supreme eternal God.

Sister Cecily Paul Poothokaren, F.M.M., recently attained a Master's degree in Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University. She will soon return to her native India where she has held various administrative posts in her congregation.

Celano says of Francis:

> Francis made his whole time a holy leisure in which to inscribe wisdom in his heart... at times he withdrew to hidden places to pray, and other times he would make a cell of his own by covering his face with his mantle or with his sleeves or he would mnake a temple of his breast... Thus he could pray unseen even among many people in the narrow confines of a ship... often without moving his lips. He would meditate within himself and drawing external things within himself, he would lift his spirit to higher things... All his attention and affection he directed with his whole being to the one thing which he was asking of the Lord, not so much praying as becoming himself a prayer." (2 Cel. 94-95)

Francis seemed to have succeeded in living in the presence of God always. He was able to create the space of solitude even in crowds, and descended to the "cave" of his heart to commune with God who dwells there whether he was in a crowded ship, on the back of a donkey or in the midst of a large group. He told his brothers, "We should make a dwelling-place within ourselves where he can stay, He who is the Lord, God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit." (RNB 22).

Francis prayed with nature. "The Canticle of Brother Sun" is a typical example of his prayer of praise. The beauty of each creature lifted his spirit to the Creator. Bonaventure says of Francis:

> Aroused by all things to the love of God, he rejoiced in all the works of the Lord's hands and from these joy-producing manifestations he rose to their Life-giving principle and cause. In the beautiful things he saw Beauty itself and through his vestiges imprinted on creation he followed his Beloved everywhere, making from all things a ladder by which he could climb up and embrace him who is utterly desirable. (LM 9,1).

Francis was so filled with the Spirit and the intimate love for God that he could remain in a state of wonder, thankfulness, surrender, praise and thanksgiving all the day long.

Indian Spirituality offers different paths that lead to union with God, which is the goal of prayer. Some of the paths are:

> Bhakti Marga — The Path of Devotion
> Gnana Marga — The Path of Meditation
> Karma Marga — The Path of Action.

One may use any particular path or the combination of them in order to achieve union with God, an unbroken awareness of God's presence, as Francis did.

Bhakti Marga is a continuous stream of remembrance of God, uninterrupted like the flow of oil. Such remembrance can be compared to a

woman longing for her absent lover, or a bride longing for the bridegroom who has not returned.[1] The word "bhakti" comes from the root word "bhaj" which means to deal out, to divide, to share, to possess, to embrace and to be deeply interested in. In the religious sense "bhaj" means choosing God as one's own partner, and worshiping, admiring, and expressing one's love in different forms. The attitude of a "bhakta" — devotee would be:

> "O Lord, I want You,
> Nothing else do I want.
> You are the source of all good
> If I have you, I have everything."

A "bhakta" can be compared to:

> — a creeper that restlessly searches for a support and gets itself attached to it and never wishes to part from it.
> — a river bouncing towards the ocean, surmounting all the obstacles. It flows ceaselessly until it attains the ocean.
> — a needle that flies to the magnet attracted by an irresistible force.
> — a devout and chaste wife who lives constantly in the thought of her husband.

According to the mysticism of Poygal Alvar, the mind of a true devote is constantly engrossed in the Lord. Neither time nor place stands in th way of the practice of devotion by her. Wherever she may be and whateve may be the time, she can not but think of the Lord. An uniterrupte thought-stream suffused with intense love for the Lord is Bhakti.[2]

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"Bhakti Marga" suggests different ways of expressing our "bhakti" our Beloved, the incarnate God — Jesus Christ. "Sravana Bhakti" is of the "bhakti" forms, which implies listening to God's Word from scriptures, nature, others and the events of life, with the attitude of "S Lord, Thy servants are listening." "Keerthana Bhakti" is another for singing the Lord's glories in songs and psalms, repeating His name

great love along with our breath, or even calling God by different names. Lovers love to call their beloved by different names. Francis, a great "bhakta", composed his own song of praises, addressing God by many names:

> *You are* holy, Lord, the only *God, You do wonders*. (Ps 76:15)
> You are strong, You are great, You are the most high.
> You are almighty King.
> You, *Holy Father*, the King *of heaven and earth*. (Jn 17:11; Mt 11:25)
> You are Three and One, Lord God of gods; (cf. Ps 135:2)
> You are good, all good, the highest good,
> Lord, God, living and true. (cf. 1 Thes 1:19)
> You are love, charity.
> You are wisdom; You are humility; You are patience; (cf. Ps. 70:5)
> You are beauty; You are meekness; You are security;
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Francis uses many other names for God in his other writings.

Another form of "bhakti" is "smarana" — remembering God's goodness in our lives as we count His blessings each day. *Bhagavad Gita* says:

> "Fix the thought-organ on me alone;
> Make thy consciousness enter into Me
> And thou shall come to dwell even in Me
> Hereafter, there is no doubt of this."[3]

Francis expressed his "smarana bhakti" by meditating on the events of the life of Christ. His goal of life was to imitate Christ and he looked at Jesus as to a mirror and transformed his life according to His image. He used his imagination to recreate certain scenes from the life of Christ. By creating the nativity scene at Greccio at Christmas, Francis helped the people to be the actors in the drama of the nativity event. Considering the same scene, Bonaventure later wrote inviting the reader to become an actor:

> "... embrace that divine manger; press your lips upon and kiss the boy's feet. Then in your mind keep the shepherd's 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]

Towards the end of his life Francis could simply recall what he had read and meditated and said: "I have fixed in my mind so much of the Scriptures that it now suffices most amply for my meditation and reflection." (2 Cel. 105).

"Pada-Sevana" — serving at the feet of the Lord by serving the poor and the oppressed, is another form of Bhakti. Francis met Jesus in the

woman longing for her absent lover, or a bride longing for the bridegroom who has not returned.[1] The word "bhakti" comes from the root word "bhaj" which means to deal out, to divide, to share, to possess, to embrace and to be deeply interested in. In the religious sense "bhaj" means choosing God as one's own partner, and worshiping, admiring, and expressing one's love in different forms. The attitude of a "bhakta" — devotee would be:

> "O Lord, I want You,
> Nothing else do I want.
> You are the source of all good
> If I have you, I have everything."

A "bhakta" can be compared to:

> — a creeper that restlessly searches for a support and gets itself attached to it and never wishes to part from it.
> — a river bouncing towards the ocean, surmounting all the obstacles. It flows ceaselessly until it attains the ocean.
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leper and what was bitter turned to sweetness as he served them with love and devotion. "Archana Bhakti" — is expressed in the offering of the Eucharist, besides the symbolic offerings of flowers, incense or anything else offered to God with great love. A "bhakta" expresses "Vandana Bhakti" by bowing, prostrating, touching the earth with his five limbs or with his eight limbs as an expression of deep love, reverence and total surrender.

Francis often expressed his loving devotion by making deep bows and prostrations in adoration. At San Damiano where the crucifix spoke to Francis, he "went in and fell down in humbling supplication" (2 Cel. 10).

In his Letter to the Rulers, Francis exhorts those who govern to "see to it that God is held in great reverence among your subjects; every evening, at the signal given by a herald or in some other way, praise and thanks should be given to the Lord God Almighty by all people (AB 78). Francis told his brothers, "At the sound of His name you should fall to the ground and adore him with fear and reverence." (Ep Ord 4). In great reverence and deep adoration Francis prayed and taught others to pray:

> We adore you Lord Jesus Christ, here and in all your churches throughout the whole world, and we bless you, because by your most holy cross you have redeemed the world." (Test 5)

The climax of the "Bhakti" is the surrender — "Atma - Nivedana," with Mary's attitude of "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to Thy Word," and that of Jesus who said, "not my will but Thine be done." Thus everything a "bhakta" does all through the day, becomes an expression of one or the other form of Bhakti.

At the end of the day singing God's name or repeating his name the "Bhakta" enters into a state of total relaxation, deep, peaceful sleep while the Holy Spirit continues to call "Abba-Father," rhythmically along with each breath without her conscious awareness. She rises up at the dawn of the day before sunrise during the "Brahma - Muhurta" — God's hour with His thought in her mind, His name on her lips and heart, and acknowledges once again His greatness manifested by the rising sun. She trains her body to be contemplative and to sit in stillness for meditation of the One who dwells in the cave of her heart, through "Asanas" — yoga postures and through "prana-yama" breating exercises. She then enters into deep contemplation of God who dwells in the depth of her being, the One who is beyond all forms and names. Those are very precious moments when she experiences God's unconditional love flowing into her as from a never-drying spring from a mountain. Each in-breath becomes an experience of God's deep love and each out-breath becomes an expression of her love for Him. As she repeats her "mantra" — her favorite

name or phrase for God, along with her breathing with great love, she communicates with God in deep silence. A spiritual person in India is called "Muni" — one who has reached total silence. When one reaches the depth, words become useless, because God who is unutterable and ineffable can not be communicated through words. Any expression of God becomes partial or distorted. At times silence is the only way of communicating deep experiences. Very intimate friends communicate deeply just by being in each other's presence without any words as their whole being communicates.[3] Many devotees sit at the feet of their guru in silence and great truths are communicated through silence. Jesus our sat-guru (true master) communicates in silence in the Blessed Sacrament. Silence is totality. "The pot that is full, will not make noise; it is the half-filled pot that makes noise."

Indian Spirituality offers various means of remaining united with God all through the day.

Francis literally went into the caves, into the forests and to the mountain tops in order to enter into the cave of his heart to contemplate the One who dwells there. Celano has given us the description of Francis' contemplative prayer in his *Second Life* (Omnibus p. 441). He tells how Francis directed his whole attention and affection to the one thing which he was asking of the Lord, "not so much praying as becoming himself a prayer."

A "bhakta" is very much in touch with the realities of the world, as she sees the whole creation in God and God in all creation. She sends the vibrations of peace to all around as she chants Om shanti, shanti, shanti... (shanti means peace).

The "bhakta" continues to do her duties of the day with great mindfulness, one thing at a time, and with dedication and love, as though she is worshipping the Lord through her actions. According to the principles of "Karma Yoga" she does not look for the fruit of her actions. Bhagavad Gita says: "Set thy heart upon Thy work, but never on its reward. Work not for a reward but never cease to do thy work." Jesus says: "Let your left hand not know what your right hand is doing..."

Karma Yoga liberates her from the fear of any failure. If she does not come up to the expectations of others she still experiences peace within,

as she knows that she is not her failures: she is not her successes or fame; she is not her beauty; she is not her status.

She is much more than all these since she still lives when all the above fail. She knows for certain that she is what she is before God, nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else. Francis in his Admonitions says: "What a man is before God, that he is and no more" (AB, p. 33).

With great disinterestedness she serves others as she sees God's form in all things and persons. God's broken form is seen in the sick, the poor, the oppressed and the depressed. Francis encountered God in the leper. Serving others does not become a burden for a "bhakta" but just an expression of her "bhakti." She does not experience any dichotomy between prayer and work. Everything she does all through the day becomes one or the other form of "bhakti."

In the case of Francis, Bonaventure says: Francis "was drawn to Christ with such fervent love, and the Beloved returned such intimate love to him that God's servant always seemed to feel the presence of his Saviour before his eyes" (LM 9,2). Francis saw no disparity between prayer and activity. Prayer was the soul of his activity and activity was the sharing of the fruits of his prayer with others.[5] Ceiano tells us that when anyone came to see him or some unexpected business needed his attention, he would interrupt his prayer at once, and return to it afterwards in his deepest heart. Francis responded to the call of Christ to pray unceasingly by living in the presence of the Lord, always.

What seemed to come so early to Francis can be made ours with some effort. Indian Spirituality offers various means of remaining united with God all through the day: by doing our duties with love, by serving others without expecting any fruit of our actions as a Karma Yogi does, by expressing our "bhakti" in different forms as a "bhakta" does and by spending some time in silent contemplation of God who dwells in the "cave" of our heart.

Notes

[1]Sundarajan, K. R. "Bridal Model and Christian Mysticism," *Indian Philosophical Annual* 17 (1985) p. 4.

[2]Balasubramian, R. *The Mysticism of Poygal Alvar* (Vedanta Publications: Madras, 1976) p. 1.

[3]*Bhagavad Gita* 12:8.

[4]*Bonaventure. The Souls Journey into God. The Tree of Life. The Life of St. Francis*. trans. and intro. by Ewert Cousins. (Paulist: New York, 1978) p. 129.

[5]Eric Doyle, O.F.M. "St. Francis, Contemplation and Hermitages" in *Works of Eric Doyle* (xeroxed copies of articles) Vol. 2, section 47.

Book Reviews

Francis the Incomparable Saint. By Joseph Lortz, St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 1986. Pp. 8-127. Paper, $6.00.

Reviewed by Francis Berna, OFM, Ph.D. (Fordham University), Assistant Professor of Theology, St. Bonaventure Univrsity.

A few years ago several ministers along the New Jersey Shore decided to establish "an ecumenical food pantry" to serve the needs of the many needy people who settle there during the winter months. In proposals to name the pantry the Catholic pastor suggested St. Stephen, the deacon in Acts who oversaw the distribution of food. In sensitivity to the Protestant tradition the pastor wanted to suggest a person from the biblical witness. A Lutheran pastor then spoke up and suggested St. Francis, the lover of poverty and friend of the poor. Francis provided an exemplary witness of ministry to the poor though the pastor's suggestion caught not a few of the other ministers off guard.

Francis' appeal to circles wider than Catholicism already makes him an "incomparable saint." The incomparable witness of the saint to Christianity expands his appeal beyond circles of medievalism extending his influence to the contemporary world. Fr. Cajetan Esser in the Forward to the German edition notes it "to be a sticky task to publish yet another book on Francis" (p. 17). Yet the incomparable relevance of Francis to the modern world — especially as captured by Lortz — certainly warrants yet another book.

Lortz opens his text with the startling reminder of Francis' sixth Admonition: "There is great shame for us, the servants of God, that the saints have performed deeds and that we want to win honor and glory by talking about them" (p. 21). The author perceives the emptiness of simply talking about Francis with yet another book even if that talking has a contemporary message. Thus, from the start he concerns himself with offering a text by which the reader might truly HEAR the witness of Francis.

"How can modern man be told about St. Francis in such a way that he really hears with his innermost being?" (p. 34). Lortz addresses the problem of religious language. The stories, symbols and language can become so familiar that they no longer impact upon one's life. It is all something of long ago. Effective language and symbols must address the person in the immediacy of life. Francis is always in danger of being relegated to the category of "nice story" or the "sentimental lover of animals." Lortz want to paint a picture of Francis which would "produce a response above and beyond an occasional emotional expression" (p. 40). Lortz wants a picture that might lead to a food pantry, to a love of the poor. The hearing he seeks must involve the depths of one's being (pp. 87-88).

To move the reader to such a level Lortz accents a central theme of Francis' life, the cross. He declares that the Poverello knew the love of God only in the form of the hard cross. The Christianity of Francis is scandal and foolishness to the world. Francis was "different from the world to the point of absurdity" (p. 41). Lortz vividly describes the hunger and asceticism of the saint. And the reality leads to the only possible conclusion: all of this was possible for Francis because he fixed himself on God. Lortz's powerful description of the saint's conversion enables one to see it as a total transformation in Christ. He lived with an immediate experience of the Savior. The Strokes of Lortz's brush lead to the powerful portrayal of Francis as "a mirrored image of the Crucified Love" (p. 127).

The words of the author can be heard by modern ears, heard in the depths of one's being. And he offers some suggestions about the contemporary impact of Francis. In the reflection "Sent as an Apostle" Lortz uses two phrases which catch the modern ear. Concerning the foundation of the order, Lortz suggests that the saint *with the Heart of a Mother* would probably delight in giving birth to this way of life. Sensitivity to the feminine in Francis is not always the genius of male scholars. It is certainly out of character for a pre-feminist work originating in 1951. The author is a bit incomparable himself in articulating such an image. And in the same chapter he notes that Francis sent lay and cleric alike to preach. Here one finds implications for structures in the Order and ministry in the Church. And, according to Lortz's perception, Francis understood all of this as arising from the command of God not his own desire. The conscience of the saint was bound to the Church.

This leads to Lortz's own conclusion focusing on the lessons modern hearers can learn from Francis. God alone is everything! Francis has the Crucified Lord as the absolute center of his life (p. 124). Contemporary Christians need the same focus. A second lesson from the incomparable saint concerns the power and beauty of the heroically religious, the person who finds freedom in obedience to the Church. This tenet of Lortz will certainly cause the modern hearer to think. The author suggests, with a high degree of accuracy, that the present generation "is fully caught up in all possible shades and forms of the superficial, the quick, the transitory, the momentary and the mindless" (p. 125). To this the third modern lesson of the Poverello is authenticity. The authentic person aligns self with truth and does not bow to the subjective ego. The authentic person goes to the limits with truth. Thus Francis is incomparable because he "does nothing by halfway measures" (p. 126). Finally, while recognizing that he really has not addressed it within the text, Francis offers a valuable insight about the importance of the laity in building up the Kingdom. The meaning of the saint's piety is not restricted to the clergy. The meaning is the heart of Crucified Love the domain of all believers.

The text is well worth reading—ponderous, prayerful reading. One should not be deceived into thinking it will be easy reading. Lortz's concern with "Preliminary Observations" on the nature of religious language and the ability to hear the message of Francis may put off the casual or hurried reader. But the observations of this section should not be overlooked, They very much account for "yet another book on Francis." Furthermore, these observations drive home the genius of Lortz's insights, the power of his portrayal of Francis.

Finally, a not too significant, but controversial and noteworthy observation. Authors, translators and editors have made serious though sometimes awkward attempts to use inclusive language. It would be nice to see the Franciscan Pathways series make a similar attempt.

Incidentally, the food pantry, an incomparable ecumenical effort for the area, is named in honor of St. Francis!

The Catholic Moment. The paradox of the Church in the Postmodern World. By Richard John Neuhaus. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987. Pp. x-292, including Index. Cloth, $19.95

Reviewed by Fr. Julian Davies, O.F.M., Assoc. Editor of this Review.

The author, a Lutheran Theologian and experienced parish pastor, sees the Catholic Church as central to the proclamation and exemplification of the Gospel. He also sees the Roman Catholic Church in the United States as called to construct "a religiously informed public policy," (p. 183). He argues that it is the task of the Catholic Church to alert the world to the crisis of unbelief. He urges the Catholic Church to continue with Ecumenism, and in particular to reach out to evangelical and fundamental Protestantism. Neuhaus is sympathetic to Pope John Paul's II attempt at "restoration," in the Church and views the future of all Christianity as dependent on "a unity that is not uniformity, and a diversity that is not division" (p. 185). He cites the need for a rapprochment between Church and academe, and calls for academe to move to a postliberal position of service to the Gospel. Neuhaus argues that John Paul II is right in insisting that the dignity of the person is grounded in his free adherence to God, and calls the Church to defend Religious Liberty and not to succumb to ideology. Neuhaus reminds Catholics that their Church has a theology of politics, not a political theology," (187), which means rejecting the dominant forms of Liberation Theology. The Church in its relation to the world, adds Neuhaus, is in a paradoxical relation to the world, of "yes and no, of now and not yet." (188).

The above constitute ten theses that the author either establishes or presupposes in his reflection on the Roman Catholic Church today. He sees John Paul II and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as authentic voices calling the Church away from the dilution of dogma, and from the immersion in politics at the expense of the transcendent. He does not want the Catholic Church to go the way of mainline Protestantism of a few years back, a way of compromise with American society.

The author was present at the extraordinary Synod of Bishops in 1985 and has read all of Pope John's encyclicals and much of his philosophy. He is clearly quite informed on matters Catholic. The book is not easy reading, but it is worthwhile. Perhaps the voice of a prophet from outside must be heard in our church.

Into Your Hands, Lord. By Dom Helder Camara, tr. by Robert R. Barr, Minneapolis, Minn., Meyer - Stone Books, 1987, 72 pages.

Reviewed by Daniel Hurley, O.F.M., a member of the Campus Ministry Team at St. Bonaventure University.

Dom Helder Camara was Archbishop of Olinda and Recife in Brazil from 1964 until his retirement in 1985. Championing the cause of Justice and Peace, Dom Helder became known throughout the world as an advocate for the poor and a champion of the Third World. Jose Comblin, in his Foreward, writes: "Universities grant him doctoral degrees honoris causa, not to honor him, but to have the honor of listing him among their Ph. D.'s" (page 6). *Into Your Hands, Lord* is a small book of prayers composed by Dom Helder. Included in the small volume is the archbishop's message to the people of his archdiocese, delivered on the occasion of his installation as Archbishop in April of 1964. The archbishop's own words reveal his deep spirituality: "Everyone knows and shouts about the need for radical reform in your country... Instead of trying to reform others, let us first reform ourselves" (pages 68 and 69). A humble and prayerful man, Dom Helder expresses his soul in the prayers found in this little book.

The theme of all the prayers in this book is love. The first prayer, "God is Love," illustrates this theme:

Is it for us, your creatures,
to suit a name to you?
A name is not a label
stuck
on persons or things.
A name has to well from within
and ring true!
A name must surge
from the within of the within.
A name must emerge
to cry
the *raison d'etre*
et d'existir
of a thing or person
with a name.
Ah, then your name
is...
can only be...
Love.

Published in 1986 in Portuguese in Sao Paolo, Brazil, under the title, *En tuas maos, Senhor!*, this collection of Dom Helder's prayers was translated into English by Robert R. Barr. The translator has been able to capture the sincerity and the simplicity of the original in the simple English words of the prayers. While this reviewer enjoyed every one of the prayers, his choice of a favorite is "Charity is Love" on page 51. This prayer begins "Charity is love.../ ... and Love is you, Lord God!" To the collection of prayers is added Dom Helder's address to the people of his archdiocese on the day he began his tenure as Archbishop of Olinda and Recife. This address placed at the end of the prayers, readers will find a fitting climax to an inspiring little book. May *Into Your Hands, Lord!* help many readers come closer to God!

Catherine of Genoa: Purgation and Purgatory: The Spiritual Dialogue. Translation and notes by Serge Hughes. Ramsey, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1979. Pp. 150. Cloth, $11.95; paper, $8.95.

Reviewed by Richard Hurzeler, S.F.O., Professor of Sociology at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas.

This book on the teachings of Catherine of Genoa is a timely one. In these writings, which are refinements and redactions of her words, we discover a blend of the mystic who is a contemplative along with the active servant who takes care of the bodily needs of the sick. One thinks of Mother Theresa, who combines these two calls, or even Francis of Assisi. Catherine was a Lay Third Order, or Secular Franciscan, who combined prayerful contemplation and hospital work.

At the beginning of the book we are given introductory notes which are helpful in putting things into perspective. A brief but inspiring message by Catherine DeHueck Doherty, a balanced theological frameworker by Benedict J. Groeschel, O.F.M. Cap., and the translator's notes all presage the text. Father Groeschel offers the reader enough historical background to fill in the picture of the one whose words are given in the text. Serge Hughes, the translator, offers a rather specialized analysis and suggests that reading the book backwards — the last section first, etc. — may make more sense. This was an approach I tried and now I wonder if it would not have been better to read it in the order given. On a stylistic scale, the earlier sections are better, but on a spiritual development scale the later sections went further.

The words on purgation speak of the refinement a soul must go through to be ready for God's presence. The symbol of a fire burning the cross away from the gold is presented for this process, which can take place in this life or the next. The soul is said to put itself into this state because it cannot face God.

There is a joy in this state because the soul is yearning for and seeking relationship in God. But there is the pain of separation and the discipline of burning away impediments that hamper the move to unity. This reader had never, during his Catholic education at various levels, heard anyone say that there could be a joy in purgatory. This truly is good news. The pain part of course remains part of the message, but its being the total message at times may be the reason some Catholics have had difficulty with the idea of purgatory. Instead of a negation it becomes a growth process, a difficult but rewarding task.

Hell is where there is a final absence of that possibility of union with God and seems to be that state of negation.

The Dialogue consists of a separate but related series of words on spiritual growth. Here Catherine expresses something that parallels the tension between the Conscious and the Unconscious in Freudian and Jungian psychology. But in Catherine's scenario the players are Self Love, the Soul and the Body. At first Self Love takes over and the worldly desires of flesh and worldly recognition mean that the body is leading the soul around. Somehow, the soul senses it is missing its mission of awareness of God and through grace it becomes more motivated. There is a tug of war which is finally resolved when the will and soul learn to dominate the self and body. It is really a paraphrase

of the struggle saints go through learning to be in the world, but not of the world.

At the end of the last dialogue we are aware of a Catherine who is so burning with God's love that she eats the lice off of patients and kisses their infectious sores. This is reminiscent of Francis' embracing the leper or Mother Theresa cleaning a diseased body. Catherine, starting with the most menial and dirty of hospital tasks, is finally asked to be administrator. She submits everything to God's will. In the final phase she goes through an intense physical suffering which is her final purgation here on earth. Yet, along with the burning pain of intensity is the joy of being loved by God.

This book belongs in the Franciscan library. In an age when Franciscans are beset by the evils of our culture and the problem is to maintain a spiritual identity without giving up on the world, Catherine is a model. The lives of Mary and Martha are combined in one person, with a time for work and a time for prayer.

The Beach

Water ripples
breeze caresses
sun goldens a tired body.

I sit on my side,
and you sit on yours.
Eyes meet, reflecting blue.

And then a little boy
with fish net
catches us both
in his play

and we laugh
and move together,
discovering we are fish
who swim in the same sea.

Little boy angel
with orange water wings
risks jumping
into the unknown.

We dare to share,
breaking the bread of self
in Word, at Table.

Was this how You
caught up your chosen ones,
knitting them into a net
to catch others
to Your heart?

Christine Diensberg, O.S.F.

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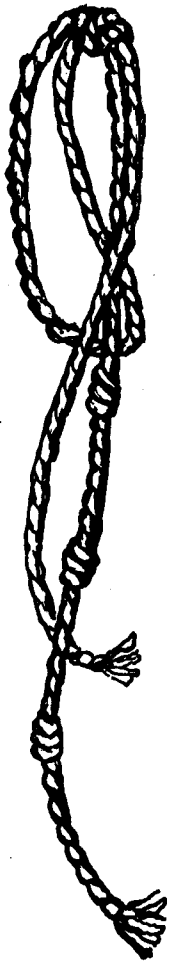
A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW



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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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

SEP 8 '88

REFLECTION:

LIKE AN EAGLE SOARING

SR. FRANCES ANN THOM, O.S.F.

In the canonization process there is one place where mention is made of Clare's ability to listen to and enjoy a rather technical, theological sermon and the comment is that she was probably like an eagle soaring in her own personal theology. I wonder how many persons have ever really watched an eagle when it soars high above looking with its piercing eyes to see if anything of interest is moving below. If there is, it will suddenly drop as if shot from the sky, swoop upon its prey and soar high again to return to its nest with its catch. It is an awesome scene as well as a fearsome one.

What Clare had done by leaving home, family and friends, was also awesome and fearsome. Awesome that a young girl would have the courage and the conviction to serve the Lord and enable her to break all ties in such a dramatic way; fearsome in that she was so young that many of her well meaning family and friends may well have thought that she would become discouraged after a while and then pine away behind the walls of the monastery in which she had confined herself.

Clare was certainly soaring high in order to attain the love of the divinity and fearless in all that it might entail for her personally. Having been ravished by the Almighty within her heart and learning through her discernment with Francis, what was expected of those who followed in the Gospel way, Clare swooped down in great humility upon those things which would help her to soar higher than ever. Each day was a great adventure or a new opportunity to seek new ways to delight the Beloved, to accept new challenges and to dwell within his house.

By this I do not mean that Clare never had a day on which she would have liked to shut off the alarm (it was she who often awakened the others) or go out for a long walk in preference to what she was doing. If she had had a telephone she would probably have liked to give Francis a call once in a while or jump in the car and take a ride to the Portiuncula. Perhaps

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she even missed going into the shops in Assisi, if not to purchase something, then just to chat with a friendly shop keeper. Surely some of these desires were a part of her human nature, too, as a young eaglet just learning to fly goes only short distances and does not have the distinctly sharp vision of a more experienced eagle.

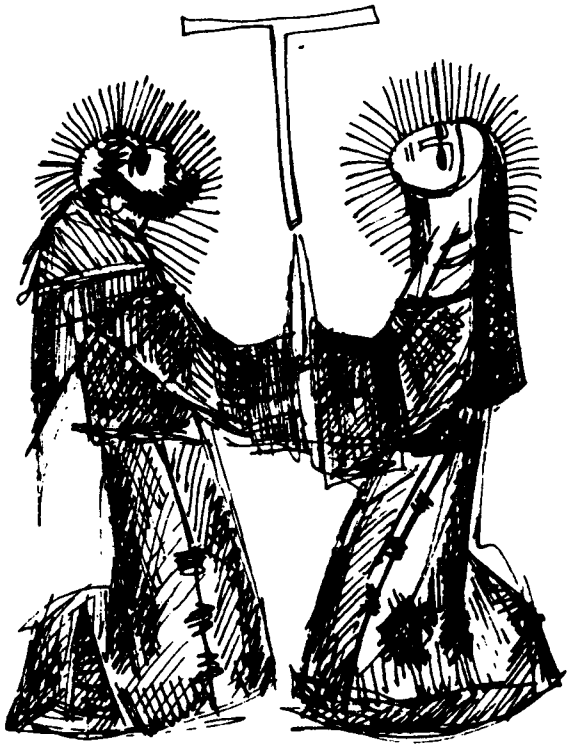
Clare had the advantage of having Francis as a spiritual guide and she learned very quickly. From 1212 when she was received by Francis until 1226 when he was called by the Lord, was a short period of time to learn all that she must know to continue to govern the Second Order, to give counsel and encouragement to the Third Order and even to support Francis' original vision for members of the First Order during that crucial period after his death. She appeared to all branches of the order as the closest possible link with their beloved father like a Mother Eagle who guards her nest from intruders and watches lovingly, piercingly and everlastingly over all entrusted to her care.

Clare seemed to be the one who would never die. She outlived Francis some twenty seven years even though Francis feared an early death for her shortly after she had moved to San Damiano because of her severe fasting and penance. She was a person who would always be there; we all know someone like that and when the person does die it just does not seem right. So when Clare did die it was more of a shock to the town than the death of Francis. It was an awesome and a fearsome thing! She was no longer there when they needed her wisdom, her counsel and her encouragement. How could this be? Many heads and thoughts must often have turned toward San Damiano in unbelief that she was not there. Her soaring had taken her at last to the heights that an eagle seeks. She had, at last, followed Francis to the end of their journey and they must have had a grand reunion discussing all the old days and the old companions. She probably had many messages for him from his faithful friends.

Her Sisters must have reminisced about some of the wonderful things she would tell them in her own quiet way, about the little miracles in her life. (Some of these have been recorded in thr canonization process). As the eaglet grew she began to utilize powers given her by the Most High for his honor and glory. We all know of the most often quoted miracles such as: the crosses on the bread as she blessed it under obedience to higher authority, the driving away of the Saracens as she begged the Lord for protection for San Damiano and for Assisi, the miraculous sights and sounds she heard within her cell on a Christmas eve when she was too ill to go to the services, and the many cures which she effected by the use of the sign of the cross. Francis, himself, had recognized the thaumaturigical powers of his young and dear follower so that he sent persons to her to be healed. Just as an eagle is always an eagle and

continues to grow, to fly, to soar, to swoop, to catch its prey and to care for its own, Clare soared ever higher and higher in her ordinary life and in her extraordinary life. Both developed together to form the perfect balance in a spiritual life that would extend itself far beyond the monastic walls to enhance the lives of many followers all over the world without any personal contact.

Like the fully developed adult eagle, Clare's vision was keen, distinct and perfect in what it was she was about. Evidence of this is, of course, found in the document authorizing the Privilege of Highest Poverty and the acceptance of her own Rule. The eagle may circle many times, it may swoop lower and lower and then slowly rise again, but it never loses its course nor the sight of its prey. On her very death bed, Clare, whose vision had never been obscured by persuasive argumentation or threats, victoriously handed over to her Sisters their own Rule which would never again be questioned. An awesome and a fearsome eagle indeed, who had no other place to go except beyond the heights of the skies which she had already attained here.



Saint Clare: Paschal Woman

Sr. MARY BONAVENTURE, P.C.C.

Our Mother St. Clare is a shining exemplification of the woman called by Christ to withdraw from the world in order to steep herself in the Paschal Mystery of the supreme love of God for man and thereby necessarily to participate in the redemptive mission of Christ's passion (cf. *Venite Seorsum,* I). It is this sacred mystery, this divine momentum, which seized her, swept her up into Gospel living, and carried her out of the Egypt of this world to the Father. The very circumstances of her departure from her parental home dramatize this Paschal dimension of her life. Significantly, she chose to flee from her home on Palm Sunday night. No less significant was her choice to make her exodus through the "door of death," a prophetic choice which clearly shows her conscious decision to die with Christ in order to pass with Him to the Father.

Abandoning home, city and family, she hastened to St. Mary of the Portiuncula (CL 8). Like the Israelites who were told to leave the land of Egypt as though in flight, her whole life was propelled by this holy haste. Celano says, "... she ran after Christ unburdened by any possessions" (CL 13). And she verbalized her desire that her daughters, too, would move with this same swift pace, light step and unstumbling feet so that even their steps stir up no dust as they go forward securely, joyfully, and swiftly on the path of prudent happiness, believing nothing which would dissuade them from their resolve or which would put a stumbling block on the way (cf. Letter II,; 12-14).

Like the Israelites, our Holy Mother was led into the desert. And like the Israelites, she had her Shekinah in which God revealed Himself to her under two modes: a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. This dual manifestation of God's presence suggests that for Clare there was no

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dichotomy between the practical concerns of monastic life and the ultimate concerns of holy prayer. For her, the cloud was the Holy Spirit who went before her and moved her to be mother, nurse, seamstress, soldier, legislator, seeking in all these things only Him and His holy operation. At night — be it the night of suffering, the night of silence, the night of poverty, the night of illness — her Shekinah was perceived more as a pillar of fire. It was Christ she gazed upon, considered, contemplated and desired to follow (cf. Letter II, 19). It was in Him that she immersed herself, setting her soul in the brilliance of His glory, setting her heart in the figure of His divine substance, transforming her whole being into the image of the Godhead through contemplation (cf. Letter III, 12 - 13). And having been so immersed in Christ, having been born of the Passover of Jesus, her prayer then released Easter energy and Easter radiance to others. Did not her own sisters testify that when coming from prayer her face, like the face of Moses, was luminous and radiant (CP Witness IV, 4; Witness VI, 3)?

Again, like the Israelites, Clare was steeped in the solitude of her desert-enclosure for over forty years. To the ancient monastic tradition of enclosure Clare added her own freshness of understanding. Enclosed in body, Clare was liberated in soul (cf. Rule of St. Clare, Bull, 2) because she did not look upon enclosure merely as a fixed position or place where she localized herself but rather as a way, a dynamic way, in which she could continue to go forth outside herself. Christ was the way. He was the desert atmosphere in which she dissolved her attachments, her human supports, and rose up, disenchained from self, in a fragrant offering of praise. There was nothing static about her enclosure. The Shekinah that hovered over her was a moving grace which transported all immobility into spirit and life. Enclosure was both a vehicle that carried Clare, much as the fiery chariot carried Elias, and itself a way of ascending to God in a whirlwind of faith. It was empowered by seraphic love to lift her radically out of the thinkings of this world.

The parallel between Clare's experience of poverty and the Israelites' experience of poverty is striking. As God called the Israelites to trek for forty years a wilderness of material and human insecurity before they were sufficiently formed as a people of His own, so God required that Clare, too, linger for forty years in the desert of uncertainty and insecurity before crossing the Jordan of that papal confirmation which assured the birth and formation of the Second Order. Even in the effectuation of her desire to possess no human security, Clare had to experience insecurity because dependance on anything but God was equivalent to a denial of the sacred origins of her life. As the Church was formed from the pierced side of Christ, so the Second Order was formed only at the deathbed of

St. Clare. In each case new life flowed forth from the Paschal sacrifice which had been accepted.

As St. Clare was assumed so completely into Christ's sascrifice of Himself, so her life was a continual celebration of His Paschal feast. If her life was a desert of earthly fasting, it was only to increase her hunger for the bread of divine love. And God satisfied this hunger in marvelous ways. He multiplied loaves of bread for her when her earthly provisions failed; He made Himself the bread of deliverance for her when evil powers attacked her monastery. He let her taste the hidden manna of his sweetness in contemplative prayer (cf. Letter III, 14). In the interior eucharist of her heart she continually gave thanks and broke the bread of her life in prayer and service of others. Like Moses, she set her soul in the tenting place of His Eucharistic presence and entered the cloud of His glory until San Damiano became, as the meeting tent of the Israelites, a place "outside the camp" where the grace and mercy of God were sought and were poured forth for the entire community, for the entire world.

St. Clare concluded her earthly pilgrimage with the same spiritual grace with which she began it. "Go forth," she sang to her blessed soul. She who had so energetically followed Christ who had gone before her, now, through Him, was ready to enter into His glory. How fitting it was that Clare, who had sought Christ so ardently, who had pierced the cloud of His earthly sufferings by her loving gaze of faith, should now see the cloud of his sacred humanity lifted and behold Him in His luminous glory ready to transport her into heaven. "Do you see the King of Glory whom I see?" (CL 46), she repeated several times in her last days.

For Clare, as for the Hebrews, the Shekinah was just one stage of the journey:

> "By his Shekinah, Yahweh comes down to Israel, He dwells in the tent with them in their earthly pilgrimage, He manifests Himself to them as far as possible for man still held by earth. On the Merkabah of the Cherubim, Yahweh, however, remains free of all earthly bonds: He soars above the highest heavens. But the final hope is that he may call to join Him, carried up to heaven by fiery horsemen, the man [or woman] whom He has condescended to allow, here below, to see something of Himself in the luminous cloud of His Shekinah."[1]

Thus assumed into the cloud of His glory, consumed by the fire of His love, Clare triumphantly completed her transitus to the Father.

[1]Louis Bouyer, *The Meaning of Sacred Scripture*. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1958), p. 153.

Religious Experience in Poor Clare Tradition

SR. MARY FRANCIS HONE, O.S.C.

Methods conducive to religious experience have become something of a commodity these days. Techniques for the purpose of inducing altered states of consciousness are available — for a price. There are strategies for achieving a peaceful resting within oneself as preparation for Christian prayer, too. Yet discernment is needed. Our spiritual energies can become dissipated by formulas directed toward the excitement of new experience rather than toward the bonding of relationship with the living God.

Franciscan contemplative tradition offers directives for a carefully developed prayer-form that provides guidance toward communion with Christ and continued nourishment for a vibrant mystical life. It is a way of praying discovered in the lives of countless Christian saints and has been the particular characteristic of prayer among daughters of Saint Clare of Assisi. Throughout history Poor Clares have exercised a primary role in perpetuating this proven path to authentic religious experience. So much so, that the writings they left can be correctly interpreted and fully appreciated only in the light of Franciscan tradition.

At the time when people are searching for God in many directions, sons and daughters of Francis and Clare need to consider their heritage of prayer and review its special structure and its positive effects far surpassing popular techniques.

This study will certainly not be an exhaustive treatment of Franciscan contemplative tradition, but more precisely, a presentation of some aspects of religious experience as it appears in the teachings of our founders. Its development will be traced, first of all, in its origin, the prayer of Saint Francis; secondly, in its expression through Saint Clare's letters; thirdly,

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in the theology and structure of Saint Bonaventure; and fourthly, in the vehicle of its survival through the centuries — in Poor Clares' writings; and finally, in contemporary developments.

Saint Francis' Contemplation

The source of our contemplative tradition lies within the four elements that characterized Francis' prayer.

1. Contemplation of the Historical Christ.

Francis transformed religious sensibility in the direction of devotion to the humanity of Christ. The place he gave to Jesus in his prayer went further than the way opened by those who had preceeded him.

Saint Bernard had fostered the idea of keeping the image of Jesus in mind and meditating upon him in the events of his life, but he couldn't conceive of the possibility of union with God through these means. Meditation about Jesus, though absolutely necessary, was seen by him as a carnal relationship; something inferior. The Incarnation was considered to have been the result of a transgression, something that was not supposed to have happened, and thus, something that could hardly contain means of divine union.

Francis didn't formulate any particular theory about prayer as Bernard had.[1] Rather, he was so convinced that we can know God only in and through the historical Christ that he attached himself above all else to contemplation of the Incarnate Word. What Francis did was to revive a distinct form of mystical consciousness by parting from existing norms of spirituality and restoring to the Church the kind of Christ-consciousness rooted in early Christianity.[2]

We read descriptions of Francis' prayer in the writings of Celano (1 Celano, 84), how he would "recall Christ's words through persistent meditation and would bring to mind his deeds through the most penetrating consideration." But Francis even went further than that; he would intuitively enter into Christ's life and experience the power of his presence.

Francis taught the people how to do this, too; the most widely known example is his creation of the Christmas scene at Greccio so that the people might actually experience in some manner the birth of the Christ-child. He had live animals brought into the scene to set the atmosphere, but he didn't employ actual persons to take the places of the Holy Family; it seems he left that to their imaginations. We are told that Francis spoke of the child Jesus as if he were truly lying there in the manger he had prepared, so vivid was the re-enactment of the event. Some people claim they saw Francis take a child into his arms.

The humility of God manifested in the mystery of the Incarnation so occupied Francis' memory that he hardly wanted to think of anything else but this and the love displayed in the passion of Jesus. (1 Celano, 84) He would enter into the sufferings of Christ with moans and tears day and night, and he prayed that he might even feel those pains interiorly and physically. His whole being reached out to Jesus, Celano tells us; his whole being thirsted after him.

This kind of mysticism represented a different current than the tradition recognized by the Church at that time. With Francis came the beginning of Christ-Mysticism, a tendency that was to become the characteristic form of Western religions.[3]

2. Francis' imitation of Jesus

Besides entering into Christ's life and being with him, Francis also sought in prayer to become like him. Jesus was his "moulding form" as he strove for deeper union with the Father. He focused upon concrete details of Christ's public life and tried to emulate his virtue in every situation so that he might learn to acquire his spirit. In prayer he kept his eyes on him in order to embody his values and be more able to live them out. Everything was done with this in mind. In this prayer he learned all that he passed on to us: that we have to descend into poverty as God descended into our human condition.

3. Francis and the Christ of Prophecy

A third characteristic of Francis' prayer was that the Jesus he focused upon was not purely an object of his imagination but also of his faith in divine revelation. Jesus was the One proclaimed by the prophets and "the Lord Most High" extolled by the psalmist. In this affirmation of Christ's dual nature Francis was not limited to carnal relationship, for his Christ was divine.

The all-accompassing symbol of Francis' relationship with Jesus is probably his vision on La Verna. The six wings of the Seraph that appeared to him is an image derived from the Prophet Isiah 6:1-13, but it was perceived by Francis with the image of the Crucified.[4] He contemplated the Triune God in the Crucified Christ and this remains the apex of Franciscan contemplation; this was the Christ who embodied the unseen, uncreated Divinity.

4. Francis' Desire for God

Fourthly, the impetus behind Francis' prayer was his longing for God, and his love for this God he could not see was nurtured by habitual

consideration of the mystery of the Cross; the mystery of the kind of love that gives itself as Jesus gave himself. His prayer was the movement of the whole person towards something to which he was drawn with the kind of desire that cannot be satisfied until it becomes one thing with the Object of its love. The presence of this depth of desire is an important element in Francis' prayer because it is an assurance against the danger of seeking the thrill of prayerful experience instead of God himself.

There is an early informal theology that faithfully adheres to the example and teachings of Francis and presents these four main elements of Francis' prayer from another perspective. This is found in the letters of Saint Clare to Blessed Agnes of Prague.

Clare and Franciscan Contemplation

Clare's writings reflect the mysticism of Francis as found in his particular form of prayer, and they do this in the more detailed manner that writing exacts. Her correspondence with Agnes contains guidance for the life of prayer she expected of her sisters, and thus provides a setting for enlargement upon Francis' doctrine.

1. Saint Clare's Contemplation of Jesus

If we read Clare's letters alongside the four characteristics found in Francis' prayer, we see, first of all, that although she may not have created an outdoor display as Francis had, Clare had taught her sisters how to make contact with Jesus in prayer.

In the letter Clare wrote to Agnes of Prague in 1235, she prescribed the use of imagination by expressions such as: "As a poor virgin *embrace* the poor Christ," thereby telling Agnes to make Jesus as real as if she were holding him in her arms. "*See* and follow the One made worthless for you." Clare continued: ". . . *Observe* him carefully. ". . . *see him* knocked about... *fix your gaze* upon him... *see him* whipped many times on his whole body . . . *see him* dying in terrible agony."

The Latin word Clare used for "see" was *intuere* which means to see in an intuitive manner. The use of imagination is implied, the gaze of the spirit and affections towards the object loved until both are one, as in the condition of contemplation. Clare's use of the word "contemplation" also implied both that initial loving gaze and the unitive experience in which it culminates.[5] Clare was telling Agnes to gaze interiorly upon the Crucified until she forgot herself entirely and experienced his love for her.

There is further example of this in the letter of 1238 where Clare wrote: "Place your eyes before the mirror of eternity . . ." The eyes signify

imagination, the eyes of the spirit, and the mirror of eternity is Christ who teaches us to see the deeper meaning beyond the surfaces of life by the light of his Spirit within us. Clare continues: "Place your spirit in the splendor of glory." Christ is the splendor of glory (Her meaning is spelled out clearly in her last letter). And finally: "Place your heart in the figure of the Divine Substance, (Turn all your affections towards Christ) and by means of contemplation transform yourself totally in to the image of his Divinity. Then you will also experience what is reserved to his friends alone, and you will taste the secret sweetness which God himself has reserved from the beginning to those who love him." (3rd letter)

So then, Clare taught that union with God is assured to one who centers all faculties upon Jesus: the imagination, memory, intellect, will, and affections. In mystical literature, to taste implies the feelings; Clare used every part of herself in her relationship with God.

2. Clare's Imitation of Christ

The imitation of Christ traced in Francis' prayer is more carefully spelled out by Clare as a safeguard when applying imagination in prayer. Clare told Agnes that by gazing at the mirror, Christ, every day, and studying herself in comparison with him she would clothe herself in the garments of all his virtues, (4th letter) and she also told her that this is how she would become like the Father. We are to center our energies upon Jesus, then, in order to behave as he did in the practical details of everyday life. This is the condition that determines our capacity for religious experience and transformation: not solely an intuitive looking upon Jesus in prayer but doing so that we might acquire his spirit and live by it.

In the form of contemplation the ernest effort to become more Christlike through prayer is the moral element that guards against our settling into the imagination as an escape into sentimentality. The use of imagination is not an easier way — not as Clare taught it — for she stressed the continual striving necessary if one is ever to experienced the "fruits of love."

3. Clare and the Christ of the Prophets

Clare based her concepts of Christ on sound sources. Throughout her writings there is an artful weaving of the human and divine natures. Notwithstanding the scarcity of her writings, there still remain sufficient references to scriptural sources to demonstrate a contemplation of Jesus established in divine revelation. Just months preceeding her death, Clare pointed to the Christ who is Wisdom, and she drew from Wisdom 7:25-26.

She described Him as "the brilliance of everlasting light, and the mirror without spot," citing the mirror image also found in the Book of Wisdom. This is followed by terms taken from 7:18 denoting the times of Wisdom: beginning, end and middle. Clare wrote:

> Look at the beginning of this Mirror, the poverty of the One placed in the manger and wrapped in swadling clothes... The King of Angels, the Lord of heaven and earth is laid in a manger!
>
> ... and now, in the middle of the Mirror consider the humility, the countless labors and burdens he endured... and in the end of the same Mirror, contemplate the unspeakable charity with which he willed to suffer on the tree of the Cross, and to die thereon the most shameful kind of death. (Brady, 4th letter)

Among other scriptural references in the same letter, Clare quoted the Book of Lamentations 1:12, adding: This Mirror himself, nailed to the wood of the Cross, called passers-by to reflect carefully on these things, (for he said): All you who pass by, look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow."

Christ is God, and what he said, and what he was, especially on the cross, is the most perfect image of God we will ever have. Was it this realization that prompted Clare's concern that the friars' teaching remain accessible to her sisters? In Clare's sound spirituality we have the healthy reminder that contemplative living is doomed without frequent exposure to divine revelation.

4. Clare and the desire for God

Clare's prayer was more than devotion, it was communion with her God. Thus, when she wrote of contemplating Jesus hanging on the cross, something that happened centuries previously, she was speaking as one really present to him, just as if it was taking place in her own lifetime. She was with a dying man she loved with real emotion. This was so much more than meditating upon something that no longer existed.

To do all that Clare proposed, to be with Jesus, to feel his pain, to suffer with him and cry with him though we do not see him with bodily eyes, requires the use of intuition in a manner possible only if we are drawn to him by love. There has to be present in all of this the honest caring that nourishes deeper relationship; even on a simply human level. There must have been some dimension of longing on Clare's part to know the man Jesus so that she might grow increasingly more able to know him in his divine nature. This is the kind of desire that can urge us on also, to see in Jesus the path to the "Kingdom of Heaven" Clare tried to describe for us, and the way to "eternal life."

The Child Francis embraced and Clare contemplated in awe was the same Lord they brought to life once again by their own lives. Entrance into the events of Christ's life was meant to arouse energy for the life-giving happenings of every day reality. Clare called us to this when she reiterated Francis' admonition to become Christ's mothers, sisters and spouses through the spirit-filled actions that witness to our absorption of his compassion, patience and suffering-love through contact with him in prayer. It is in this sense that Christ is the Way to oneness with himself and transcendent union with the Father.

These four elements of Francis' prayer are beautifully summarized in four consecutive paragraphs of Clare's last letter to Agnes. First, Clare instructs her concerning imitation of Jesus, then she recalls events in his life. Next, Clare refers to prophecies about Jesus, and finally, encourages Agnes to desire union with God with all her heart. All of these are framed, furthermore, within reference to Christ as Mirror of Wisdom. Could the mind of Bonaventure improve upon Clare's understanding of Franciscan contemplation?

Bonaventure's analysis of Francis' Prayer

Six years after Clare passed into the embrace of the "King of Glory," Saint Bonaventure set down his perception of Francis' mysticism according to theological principles, prayerfully studying the journey that had brought him to intimate union with God. He shaped his finding into a method meant to lead a disciple to God as Francis had been led. This form of prayer proved to be effective and has been used and taught by the most advanced spiritual masters and most intellectual of saints and mystics.

Bonaventure prescribed no hard and fast rules but, because the imagination can stimulate sentimentality in regard to Christ's humanness if left unchecked, he specified certain qualifications for prayer as he had observed them in Francis himself. In the scholastic language of Bonaventure, the contemplation of the mysteries of Christ must include, as it had for Francis, literal, moral, analogical and anagogical dimensions. This meant the one praying was to recall the historical event, draw out some moral quality to be learned from it, be mindful of divine revelation of Christ as God, and be prompted by desire for God.[6]

Bonaventure wrote two works that expressly teach this form of contemplation: *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, and *Lignum vitae*. In the first, *The Soul's Journey Into God*, he treats of all the forms by which God may be contemplated, ultimately taking the reader to Christ as the highest "door" to mystic union. In the seventh chapter he wrote:

Christ is the way and the door,
Christ is the ladder and the vehicle,
Like the mercy seat placed above the arc of God
and the mystery hidden from eternity.
Whoever turns his face fully to the mercy Seat
and with faith, hope and love,
devotion , admiration, exultation,
appreciation, praise and joy,
beholds him hanging upon the cross,
such a one makes the Pasch, that is, the passover,
with Christ.
By the staff of the cross
he passes over the Red Sea,
where he will taste the hidden manna;
and with Christ he rests in the tomb,
as if dead to the world,
but experiencing
as far as it is possible in this wayfarer's state,
what was said on the cross
to the thief who adhered to Christ;
Today you shall be with me in Paradise.[7]

After using all created things, and after explaining all the accepted paths to contemplation, Bonaventure takes us ultimately to Christ, the form of the divinity, as the highest concept through which we are let into Divine Darkness. Christ is seen in relation to the prophecies concerning the Messiah and the manner in which he fulfilled them perfectly. Here also, desire for God is shown to be the disposition that empowers us to leave everything else and turn all our affections toward him.

The careful manner in which he did this placed Francis' mysticism within the context of the traditional negative forms of mysticism. Bonaventure agreed with all these that from here on in we can let go of everything, but at the same time he pointed clearly to the necessity of using all material things to bring us to a deeper relationship to the One who made them, and is the Lord of Creation.

This is demonstrated in *The Major Life of Saint Francis,* where Bonaventure showed how all things had led Francis to mystical union, even though the God with whom he enjoyed this union was seen by him as far above all that had led him to it.

Later on. Bonaventure wrote an entire work on the contemplation of Christ: *Lignum Vitae*. He called it *The Tree of Life* because Christ is the Tree of life. In this book Bonaventure goes into greater detail on the literal and moral dimensions of contemplation, instructing the reader to paint in his mind a scene from the Gospel so that some truth about Christ

The use of imagination is implied, the gaze of the spirit and affections towards the object loved until both are one.

might be grasped more effectively and thus be brought into the practical dimension of daily life. He focused upon concrete details and then invited the reader to become an actor in the event. For example, in summarizing the scene of Christ's birth in Bonaventure's *Tree of Life,* we find:

1. The historical situation is described. It is the reign of Caesar Augustus at the time of the census. Joseph was taking Mary with him to Bethlehem.

2. The moral lesson is that Christ who was rich became poor as an example for us.

3. The analogical sense is briefly mentioned. The King of Peace like a bridegroom from his bridal chamber (cf. 1 Par. 22:9; Ps. 18:6) came forth from the virginal womb.

4. We are called to take our place with the shepherds and embrace the Child with all the love of our heart.

Bonaventure bids us enter the scene, take the child into our arms as Francis did, kiss his little feet, and sing with the angels: Glory to God in the highest! We are brought to the realization that this is God. We are summoned to look beyond the surface of the historical event to the redemption taking place. All other scenes in Christ's life are approached in this way. By entering into the event and allowing our feelings to emerge the lesson to be learned is more easily impressed upon our memory and we are more likely to put it into effect in our lives.

With the pasasing of Francis something had been started which was to strongly influence the development of prayer in the church. Clare lived and taught this new mysticism, Bonaventure refined and explained it, numberless are those who have come to know God because of it.

Poor Clares and Franciscan Prayer Tradition

Toward the end of thirteenth century an unknown Franciscan Friar of Tuscany wrote a book entitled: *Meditationes Vitae Christi*. Authorship had been atributed to Saint Bonaventure because of the similarity of its contents to his writings, especially those on the passion. There is little

doubt that much in the manuscript had been copied from his work. More recently Ubertino de Casale is considered to have been its author. In some of his proven works he mentioned Sister Cecilia, a Poor Clare of Tuscany, who taught him about the heights of contemplation. This work may well have been composed under her inspiration for it is dedicated to Saint Cecilia and was evidently written for Poor Clares. Saint Clare is mentioned and the entire contents are directed toward the life of a community of nuns living in poverty and humility.

These meditations are held to be the genuine fruit of authentic Franciscan sources and are a sound reflection of the spirituality of Saint Francis and the subsequent teachings of Saints Clare and Bonaventure. They draw the reader to make vivid contact with Jesus, re-create his life, imitate him, and desire to love him with ever increasing ardor.

Material has been borrowed quite freely from them. Rudolf of Saxony used sections when he wrote: *The Life of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,* a book that radically altered the life of Saint Ignatius of Loyola as he lay recuperating from an injury received in battle. Its influence may be seen in the *Spiritual Exercises* he composed, although early followers explained them as intellectual exercises rather than what Ignatius intended them to be: an experience of Jesus in the Franciscan tradition.

Little else is known about this large volume of anonymous meditations except that it served to sustain the tradition of contemplation handed down to us. Even now it offers insights into the employment of imagination in the prayer of early Friars and Clares. Publication has not ceased since its first extravagantly illuminated manuscript. There are about two hundred varieties of these in existance with ancient printed copies as well as contemporary editions available in various languages.

Far less widely known are the pages, and volumes even, written by Poor Clares in the form of journals, spiritual diaries, or instructions to their communities. These contain evidence of loving relationship with Jesus, evidence that they had indeed tasted and experienced what "God has kept from the beginning for those who love him." (3rd letter) In their statements implying that they had seen Jesus or heard him speak, we can recognize something of the extent of their concentration upon him, their desire for union with the Godhead, and the particular form their religious experience assumed, the women who wrote offer testimony of a spiritual life that grew stronger while they strove to be with Jesus, especially in his sufferings and death on the cross.

The earlier sources of Poor Clare spirituality are, of course, the letters, Rule, and Testament of Saint Clare.[8] Apart from these there is only the letter to Clare from her sister Agnes, and the work of Agnes of Harcourt

on Isabella of France. There appears to be little more from the thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth there are actually none that we know of. But the "Springtime of the Franciscan Order" saw a blossoming of writers in the order of Saint Clare, for there were a number of them in the fifteenth century. Foremost among them were Saint Catherine of Bologna, Blessed Eustochia Calafato, and Blessed Battista Varano.

Catherine wrote long conferences for her sisters and many songs and poems. Her contemplation of Christ filled her with an amazement that moved her to exclaim: "Ah, let us contemplate this folly of God."[9] Another of the outstanding phrases emphasizing the centrality of Christ in her prayer was that "the greatest happiness is — above all — to be with Christ."[10]

In her longer works, like *The Seven Arms of the Spiritual Combat,* Catherine advises her readers to adhere to Christ, telling them, in the fourth chapter, that they should always set before the eyes of their understanding the presence of the humanity of Jesus, especially in his sufferings, adding that without this everything else we might do is of little help in the spiritual life.

Blessed Eustochia wrote a book on contemplation of the passion of Christ, among other works. In Blessed Battista we find moving passages by one who was present to the interior agony of Jesus more than to his physical sufferings. She takes us more deeply into Christ and is considered a forerunner of devotion to the Sacred Heart. She wrote: "How sweet and delightful are thy works in the soul which affectionately reposes in the heart of thy crucified humanity, where the fullness of thy Godhead corporally dwells."[11] And in another place:

> I passed the whole time of my prayer in meditating on the passion of Christ and did not wish to think or meditate on anything else: and I used the whole endeavor of my mind to enter into the most bitter sea of the mental suffering of the heart of Jesus . . .[12]

Battista assures us that embracing the Crucified is the securest and shortest way and the one requiring the least effort for growing in union with God.

Blessed Julia of Milan, in the sixteenth century, used a literary tool in her writings; expressing her thoughts as if they were Mary's thoughts about Jesus. Mother Charitas Pirkheimer, also in the sixteenth century wrote, among her other works, a book of prayers addressed to Christ.

There were eight writers in the Order of Saint Clare in the seventeenth century, but here the mention of Venerable Clare Isabella Fornari who penned numerous poetry on the contemplation of Christ, will suffice.

Saint Veronica Giuliani leads the Clare-writers of the eighteenth century with her volumes on contemplation of Christ, particularly on immersion in his sufferings. In his presence she wrote: "He, with that arm which he removed from the cross, put his arm around my neck, and he brought my mouth to his pierced side... while he imparted to me knowledge of his infinite love...[13] There is a section on her interior castle among her fourteen books; an example of the richness that has yet to be appreciated in the English language.

Blessed Mary Magdalen Martinengo expressed her meditations on the mysteries of Christ. Her conciseness would appeal to us today, for she summed up a lengthy conference delivered to her sisters by saying: "This is the point, sisters: Look and imitate."[14]

The nineteenth century overflows with Clares who left some form of writings. Sister Agnes Sorazu offers an explanation of why Franciscans center upon Jesus in his human condition.

> After they have followed him in the course of their mortal life, for a relatively long period, and have succeeded in asimilating his virtues... Jesus will lead them into the palace of contemplation of his divine nature, to asssociate them with his glorious life, and have them graze in the savoury and ineffable pastures of the divine perfections...[15]

All of these brief excerpts bring us to one most pertinent to the topic of religious experience as it is addressed in this paper: that we can be diverted to practices and techniques that are secondary or worse, and deprive ourselves of the help we could have had from the prayer of communion with Christ in his mysteries and risen presence. This "theocentricity in Christ" is the most exact definition of the spirituality of the Order of Saint Clare.[16]

Contemporary Developments

The benefits reaped from imaginative prayer are not relegated to the Middle Ages. Francis' concentration upon Christ and contemplation of the events of his earthly life have been the subject of special study on the part of Ewert H. Cousins, Professor of Fordham University, who sees in it the "mysticism of the historical event," wherein one recalls an event from the past and enters into it in order to draw out its spiritual energy.[17]

The balance afforded by this method is recognized today by the Jesuits who are stressing the place of imagination in the *Spiritual Exercises* composed by their founder, Saint Ignatius of Loyola.[18] Contemporary techniques are being used along with Ignatian contemplation as aids to

prayer. In all of this, Bonaventure is duly cited as its source and reference is made to the book that bore his tradition, *Meditations on the Life of Christ*. Recent articles still quote from its prologue:

> If you wish to gain fruit from this book, you need to let yourself witness the Lord's words and deeds just as if you heard them with your ears and saw them with your eyes... putting aside any concern or trouble.[19]

"Kything" is being revived today, too, a prayer in which one tries to be with another person in a prayerful manner so as to draw energy from their strengths. This person might be Christ, or another holy person, living or deceased, to whom we are attracted, or someone who influenced us, or in whom we see a quality we ourselves are in need of. Imagination is used to make these persons accessible to us.[20]

Similarly, psychologists employ this imaginative approach to advantage by utilizing it to arouse the latent inner energies of their clients so that the world can become for them something they can take hold of. For these professional people it is a technique that brings the unseen realities of life to consciousness; for Christians it can be nourishment for the life fo the spirit.

Conclusion

The Eucharistic sacrifice is a model for the contemplation considered in this study. Two thousand years after Jesus shared a final meal with his apostles, we arrange a table with bread and wine and enter into this historical event again and again. We recall the scriptures foretelling the divinity of Jesus. Having entered into this act of remembering and reliving his final expression of love we are energized to imitate his loving sacrifice more than if we merely called it to mind.

Our founders lived this kind of relationship with Jesus, and have invited us into this same prayerfulness that is the beginning and end of all religious experience.

We transcend our humanness not by setting aside our faculties but by re-directing them toward an experience of the presence, the strengths, and the love of Jesus, so that we might assume something of the proportions of his spirit. The spirit of Jesus is the Spirit of God. As we know the first more fully, we will, in that same measure, be prepared to transcend it for a new kind of knowledge of a Reality whose presence, strengths, and love can never be imagined.

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[2]Notes from "Francis of Assisi: Christian Mysticism at the Crossroads," by Ewert H. Cousins, in *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*, ed. Steven T. Katz (New York: Oxford Press, 1984), p. 166.

[3]Ibid., p. 165.

[4]Ibid., p. 172-173.

[5]From the introduction to *Temi Spirituali*, by Sister Chiara Augusta Lainati, O.S.C. (S. Maria degli Angeli, 1970).

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[7]From *Bonaventure*, The Classics of Western Spirituality Series (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), pp. 111-112.

[8]Clare's writings are examined in *Claire d'Assise: Ecrits*, by Marie-France Becker, O.S.C., Jean-Francoise Godet, O.F.M., and Thadee Matura, O.F.M. (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1985). This would serve well as the history surrounding the first Poor Clare writings.

[9]Ms. Devozione Lodi et altre diverse cose spirituali, bk. 3, n.l., f. 47 r., in Lainati, II, pp. 927 - 929.

[10]Specchio di illuminazione, in Lainati, Intro., p. 21.

[11]*The Spiritual Life of the Blessed Battista Varani*, from a collection of her revelations written in Italian by Matthew Pascucci (London: The Oratory, 1874), p. 407.

[12]La vita spirituale. Lainati, II, p. 1037.

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[19]*Meditations on the Life of Christ*, trans. Isa Ragusa and Rosalie B. Green (New York: Princeton University Press, 1961, 1977).

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St. Francis and St. Clare, and the Custody of the Eucharist

FR. DAVID TEMPLE. O.F.M.

St. Francis in his Testament and in his Letters frequently expressed concern over the places in which the Eucharist is kept and over the manner in which the body and blood of the Lord is reserved.

The strong feeling and the devotion of St. Clare are described in Celano's Legend of St. Clare. In that biography in n. 28 Celano recalls the long illness of St. Clare and he relates that during this she was often confined to bed where she had herself propped up so that she could spin flaxen thread which she wove into cloth so that she might make more than fifty pairs of corporals for the churches about Assisi.

Francis and Clare were dealing with conditions and they were operating in times when the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament was not yet so firmly regulated as would later be provided by the Council of Trent. The Fourth Lateran Council was issuing some canons which would bring about an improvement in the care of the Eucharist. Among these canons the requirement that the hosts always be kept in a well constructed receptacle and under lock and key was most important.

In order to appreciate properly the urgent pleadings of St. Francis and the painstaking work of St. Clare, it is necessary to recall the quite different conditions of the times with regard to the altar, some of the appurtenances of the altar like the antependium, the place or places where the Eucharist was reserved, and the sacred vessels.

The Altar. Altars were well established in the early Middle Ages. The most common form was the so-called block altar. This was set on a firm foundation to which it was connected with massive blocks. St. Francis generally chose as his places of solitude a site where a small church was clearly established, as at the Speco S'Urbano. At La Verna and at the

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Carcedi St. Francis and his brothers built small churches with firm altars. Francis at one hermitage made a frontal for the altar.

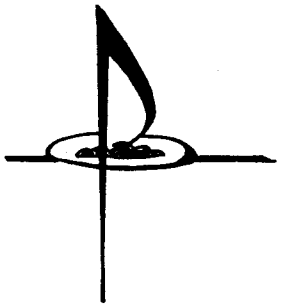
Antependium or Frontal. Fr. Kajetan Esser, O.F.M., in his classic work on the writing of St. Francis includes as an authentic work the Exhortation to the praise of God which was on the frontal of the altar at the hermitage of Cesi. Marianus of Florence said that he saw the text and that he copied it and this version passed on to Wadding. Essentially the same text is given in the 15th Century Manuscript of Cod. VI, p. 33, of the National Library of Naples. This manuscript states: "These praises were on a kind of tablet or panel of the altar in the chapel of St. Francis in the small chapel of the hermitage (of Cesi)... and St. Francis is said to have placed them there with his own hand." Since there were also flowers and birds depicted on the panel (tabula), there is a problem in making out how St. Francis accomplished this production. If it were done on masonry, the difficulty would seem, to be even greater. But during the early Middle Ages it became customary to cover the front of altars with antipendia or frontals of metal, wood or stone sculpted with Christian symbols. We can more easily understand how Francis could have done a wooden panel. While we are quite sure of the words of praise done by St. Francis, we would be further delighted if there has also come down to us the flowers and the birds which he carved or painted.

Sacred Vessels. Both St. Francis and St. Clare were concerned about the sacred vessels. Of this we see some indication in the chalice preserved at Santa Chiara. Francis used this chalice at a Solemn High Mass at which he was deacon. Until the eighth century chalices were made of metal, glass, wood or even horn, but gradually they came to be made exclusively of precious metal. This caused no difficulty for St. Francis or St. Clare from the point of poverty because the chalice was destined for divine service. Just at the time of Francis chalices which had been ovoid in shape became much more elongated.

The objects used to hold the sacred hosts had in the previous history of the church been called *saccellum* (little bag), or *capsa* (box), or *arca* (chest). All these were somewhat different from the *ciborium* which made its appearance in the later Middle Ages. The receptacles in use before the appearance of the ciborium were made of precious or base metals, wood, ivory, and even cork. In shape they were sometimes boxes or round containers and sometimes they were shaped like doves. St. Clare bore such a receptacle when she faced the Saracens in 1240. Clearly on that occasion St. Clare did not carry a monstrance, because the monstrance did not appear until the later Middle Ages. It was a result of the growth of eucharistic piety in the thirteenth century and its inception was in

some manner inspired by the elevation of the host in the canon of the Mass. The establishment of the feast of Corpus Christi was also a contributing factor. It appears that in the beginning of the development of the monstrance reliquaries were fitted with a lunette to hold the host. By the later Middle Ages, monstrances had developed into several distinctive types in the forms of crosses discs and towers. But St. Clare bore one of the box-like receptacles which antedated the ciborium or the monstrance. It is not possbile to indicate its exact shape because there were various types some of which were also round.

The Place. St. Francis and St. Clare were concerned about the place where the sacred hosts were kept. In early Christian times the consecrated bread was sometimes kept by the faithful in their homes. Later, reservation was in the sacristy or in some other place, but this was not always well chosen. Francis in his Testament desired that the sacred species be kept in a precious place. Clare reserved the Eucharist at San Damiano in the chapel of Sancta Maria which she developed and which, at her urgent request, was consecrated by seven bishops. She preserved the Eucharist in the wall cabinet which still remains at San Damiano. Lateran IV would be quite precise about the place where the Eucharist should be kept. Much later the Council of Trent would establish very definite and strict norms. But in the early Middle Ages St. Francis and St. Clare were making provisions as the need of the times required and they became forerunners in respect and reverence for the Eucharist and in great care for the proper reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.



Scented Kerchiefs

A lady's breast is empty.
her kerchief on another lance
and no second chance
will be offered you. The ready
amoured charger stands
proud fourteen hands.

Cradled in the bread palm
of the Umbrian plain the stones
of Damiano are your armour;
with unmailed hands
you build as horns are blown

to sound the maelstrom of battle
calling youth to rattle
their implements of war and death
garlanded with scented kerchiefs
as promises of faithful honour.

Swords bite into the horse's armour,
as clashing steel sings in the clamour
of fiercely wasted breath:
you place another stone
with the sure mortar of belief
that the real battle is not won

until the lances and swords
remain unstained, and kerchiefs
garland the beautiful breast
not the instruments of war and death.

Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.

Two Aspects of Franciscan Celibacy

SR. RITA MARIE HICKEY, O.S.C.,

1. Is there a Franciscan viewpoint on the vow of chastity?

Everybody knows that we Franciscans are especially concerned with the vow of poverty and historically associated with it. So too, the Jesuits are noted for their emphasis on the vow of obedience. But for many years we have thought of the vow of chastity as something all religious "did" and thought of in much the same way. When it came to chastity most religious, regardless of community, resorted to the same manuals on the vows, catechisms and texts on moral theology for instruction during formation. It was pretty much the same for everybody. Then, when on-going formation became more common, instruction and information on chastity often became a matter simply of biology and/or psychology. In reaction to an untheological and sentimental "Bride of Christ" image the vow sometimes became detached from our spirituality and community charism and became a functional value, often much in need of explanation and defense in the sexual climate of our world. And aside from the fact that it "freed one for the kingdom" its meaning as witness was often questioned.

But for most religious the vow of chastity, intuitively at least, remained central to both their original call and the living out of their vocation. The uniqueness of the relationship it established with Christ was the core of their life-style. In spite of the fact that they rejected the flowery language and restrictive climate of the past, in spite of the fact that they were uncomfortable with the idea of the "higher life" metaphor and the implication that the rest of the world wasn't chaste, at the deepest heart of hearts it remained the anchor of their religious lives.

Sister Rita Marie is a novice at St. Clare's Monastery in New Orleans. Formerly she was a professed religious in an active congregation. She wrote this paper as part of a seminar on the vows. It was her attempt to answer the question: Is there a special Franciscan spirituality of celibacy?

In this spirit and in the spirit in which the Church asks us to examine our present ministry and spirituality in light of our roots, we can ask the question: Is there a Franciscan viewpoint on the vow of chastity? One will find that this leads to other questions. In the Franciscan family there are married and single people as well as clerics and religious. Aren't they all called to chastity? Isn't it a witness they are all called to live? If fraternity and poverty are characteristic Franciscan virtues, how does chastity "fit in" with this? Also, Franciscans today feel a special call to peace and justice, to liberation, and they feel that this call is faithful to their unique charism and heritage. Is there any connection between this call and chastity? And lastly, but very importantly, can we find in the lives and writings of Francis and Clare a real Franciscan spirituality of chastity as a positive and formative value?

The first problem in this quest may be the word *chastity* itself. May we opt in favor of the expression "vowed celibacy"? (Sometimes publically vowed celibacy even seems more appropriate.) After all, all Christians are called to lives of chastity, in fact to a life-long commitment to chastity. Obviously there are a variety of ways in which this commitment can and should be lived out. Married life and single life are no less chaste than religious life or priestly life. Neither Francis nor Clare ever hesitated to use the call to a spousal relationship with Christ as the vocation of all Christians, (and therefore all Franciscans) married, single celibate, male or female, religious or cleric or lay.

The witness of each state in life is unique and necessary for the People of God on earth. But in eternity all souls will find their fulfillment in the realization of their individual union with Christ, the spouse, their goal. It is meaningless to talk of higher callings, Christ calls everyone to completeness. There is no state of life which is merely tolerated in the Church. They are all essential in the true sense of the word. The married Christian witnesses to the reality of the union of Christ with his Church. This is an ancient, scriptural teaching, but one that seems to be lost in the rhetoric about chastity. Almost as old and venerable is the teaching that celibacy for the sake of the kingdom is akin to martyrdom because it witnesses to the fact that the fulfillment of this union comes only in eternity, that we have not here a lasting city. And today, when the forces of evil seem to be massed against the value of the individual, the personal worth of each man and woman, aside from their functional value to society, we are seeing a new theology of the single life beginning to evolve.

And so we must return to our question and rephrase it. Is there a

Franciscan viewpoint on the special witness of the life of vowed celibacy and in what sense is it viable and positive today?

To begin at the beginning . . . Is there any way to understand Saint Francis or Saint Clare except as people who were in love with the Son of God made man? Is there any way to understand their lives except as the living out of that love? Especially in Clare, but in Francis also, this love is satisfied only with the image of the soul as spouse. As united in love with the beloved. And it would be a mistake to limit this relationship as appropriate only to Clare because she is a woman. That was the mistake made by so much of the sentimental bridal imagery of the recent past which is now being rejected. All human beings possess both masculine and feminine characteristics, and in a balanced and mature person these elements are in perfect harmony. Modern psychology calls this type of personality androgynous. The characteristics which we call masculine and feminine are necessary to both men and women in living their lives fully. A personality in which one set of characteristics overrides and stunts the other is not a healthy personality.

In their spousal relationship with Jesus this balance is evident in both Clare and Francis. Francis, like St. John of the Cross who specifically cites Francis as an example, speaks of his relationship with Christ in feminine terms. But this gentleness, sensitivity, service is in no way unmanly. It is a sign of freedom and completeness, of maturity. Neither is Clare unwomanly when she characterizes her relationship in more masculine terms of seizing and laying hold of the beloved, when she emphasizes the freedom with which the beloved is chosen. Both achieve in their spousal union with Christ the development of the human personality which should happen in a good marriage. Francis sees himself mirrored in the loved one in the complementary feminine image, while Clare feels the strength of the masculine potential of her completely developed self called forth. Each is the more true masculine or feminine self in the union.

But the spousal union is not just or primarily one of receiving. It is first one of complete self-gift. And so the celibate, self-gift of Francis and Clare is the perfect example of Franciscan poverty. Nothing is retained, sought or appropriated for self. Nothing is looked for outside the Beloved. It is the ultimate poverty, not even to seek to possess one's self, except in the Beloved. Except as one is returned to one's self in love. One learns to take only what the Beloved gives and to give whatever and however the Beloved asks. What is necessary in life becomes very simple. There is little or nothing to threaten or to defend. Such poverty, born of the security of love, springs into true freedom and liberation. From such

vulnerability comes the ability to risk all, to be at peace with all the brothers and sisters.

Out of the poverty of celibate consecration to Christ comes the "perfect love that casts out all fear." With nothing to lose, protect or defend, with complete security in the acceptance of the Beloved there comes the freedom and the courage to face our contemporary "Sultans" and "Saracens." And not only to confront them, but to challenge them and to love them.

It would seem, in fact, that the special spousal union which is the reason for vowed celibacy was for Francis and Clare the root of all that we have come to look upon as Franciscan spirituality. Their union with Christ in love was the first, formative principle of the poverty and fraternity which calls us today to take stand for liberation, for peace and justice. For this union which makes us Christ's and Christ ours is the source of our natural and supernatural fulfillment, the reason for our life-style, the motive of our personal and corporate witness.

And so we can say yes to the question we posed for ourselves. Yes, there is a Franciscan viewpoint on the special witness of a life of vowed celibacy and it is viable and positive today. As people following the Gospel Way of Francis and Clare in celibate witness we find our fulfillment in Christ and in Him we find the challenge and the strength to seek only His Kingdom, in time and in eternity.

2. Franciscan community (fraternity), vowed celibacy and human fulfillment

For obvious reasons I am inclined to use the term Franciscan community or Franciscan companionship instead of fraternity. But whatever the term, what I mean is that free union of brothers and sisters who are drawn together and held together by the love of God. A special love. The love that in this world and in time brings us into a spousal relationship with Christ that is to be fulfilled only in eternity.

But in forgoing marriage and a spousal union with another human being the celibate loses neither the need or the right of fulfillment as a sexed person nor the need for human companionship. God who said that it was not good for us to be alone does not, could not, ask for the gift of a stunted human development. As the Fathers said, "The glory of God is man fully alive." In celibacy we accept Christ's invitation to find our fulfillment in the spousal gift of ourselves to Him and in His gift of Himself to us in spousal love.

Francis and Clare saw clearly that this was a union with the INCARNATE Son of God. And they both used the spousal image to explain it.

Very much realists, neither would have been satisfied with the piety of later times that spoke of this life-style as angelic. Angels cannot be united to spouses as can incarnate beings. Francis and Clare never tried to deny their nature or to deny the implications of the incarnation in their own lives.

"As a poor virgin embrace the poor Christ," Clare counseled her disciple and friend Agnes of Prague. Angels cannot embrace nor be embraced, nor do they have any need of embraces. Human beings, incarnate beings do. Why did Francis embrace the leper? He was repelled by him, by his leprosy. What was it that drew Francis into that embrace? It was the leper's humanity, the humanity which he shared with the incarnate Christ whom Francis longed to embrace. For Francis and Clare the Incarnation was not abstract theology to which the mind was called to assent. The Incarnation was the reality which challenged them constantly in humanity.

In considering Franciscan community and the celibate life-style looking at Mary, "the virgin made Church," as Francis called her, can be very helpful. Mary is the distilled essence of salvation history, of God's plan for us. If Mary had been an angel she would have been of no use in God's plan. It is in herself as a human being, body and soul that she can respond to God. And he does not ask her to be less human, but to surrender her humanity to Him so that he can fulfill it.

He comes to Mary in respectful acceptance of the freedom which He had given her, which was essential to her nature. God asks her to allow Him to embrace her, to take her for His own and to make her fruitful. And when Mary returns God's embrace the Incarnation takes place. God initiates the call, and when Mary freely responds she is fulfilled, body and soul, in that union. "He who would lose his life would save it." This is the first reason for which Francis calls her "Church." She is Church because she is both one with God and the means by which God dwells with His people. In Mary, God is present and active and at one with His people, not only in sign, but in reality. The "virgin who was made Church" is like the Church, both the sign of the reality and the reality itself.

For Francis and Clare such self-gift as Mary was able to make, as they made, was itself a gift. It could only be made in freedom and in response to the freely given gift of God's love. And this brings us to the second reason that Francis had for seeing Mary as "Church." The first effect of this gifted union was fulfillment, both of God's desire to be united to His people and of Mary's need to be fulfilled as a human being. This is another thing that always happens when such a union is established between God and humanity.

It happened to Mary; it happened to Francis and Clare. We will find that it also happens to us. What was the first thing that Mary did after

Christ was conceived? Did she retreat into solitude? Not at all! She was immediately concerned about the needs of others, served them, and drew them into her own song of praise and love. Did not union with their beloved Jesus have the same effect on Francis and Clare? The celibate, filled with Christ, finds himself or herself at the heart of God's people. The first effect of fruitful celibacy is community.

This is the second reason why Francis saw Mary as Church. In her union with Christ she was united with all people who are in Christ. Mary is the sign and reality of the Church as the action of God uniting all the people he wishes to save and fulfill. So too are Francis and Clare who found themselves surrounded with brothers and sisters. So too with us.

The Franciscan life-style, characterized as it is by a commitment to community, grows out of a fruitful spousal union with Christ. We can easily picture Francis and Clare saying to us with Jesus, "Behold your Mother," and counselling us to be like her, virgins that are made Church. Calling us by our celibate commitment, lived out in community, to be both the sign and the reality of God's Incarnate love of all the people to each other and to the world.

Book Review

Clare Among Her Sisters. By Rene Charles Dhont, O.F.M. Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, New York, 1987. Pp. xi - 174. Paper, $9.00 plus postage.

Reviewed by Sr. Frances Ann Thom, O.S.F., Parish Minister — St. Mary's Church, Baldwinsville, NY 13207.

Clare's life as written by Rene Dhont follows so closely the life of Francis that Francis' name could be substituted almost everywhere for Clare's. But, the author makes fine distinctions when Clare acts totally as a feminine counterpart wherein she must interpret for her community and for herself that which Francis can freely do with his brothers outside of cloistered walls. Her inventiveness and creativity in imbibing Francis' spirit of freedom, poverty and joy within cloistered walls makes her life and the lives of her sisters such an exciting adventure. All the elements of growth, of impressionism, of idealism and of hero-worship of an eighteen year old girl are manifested in the author's treatment of Clare in her endeavors to become the faithful disciple of Francis, but the human love, the normal attraction is elevated beyond the human wherein the magnetism of both Francis and Clare draws vast numbers of other disciples. Francis, himself was awed and comforted by the knowledge that the Poor ladies would guard his Gospel message among the people of God. Each of them knew the pitfalls of life and it was just this knowledge which

strengthened them in their holy vocations. Dhont makes us more aware that Francis and Clare knew Christ as a real person and this experience of Christ was gleaned from many hours of mental prayer for which there were no prescribed times since Clare knew that this type of prayer was an affair of the heart and she wished her sisters to be always in communion with Christ. There was no attachment to any particular form of prayer, however; Clare saw to it that her sisters received an adequate amount of spiritual food by scheduling good preachers.

The author stresses Clare's Trinitarian devotion, including the Eucharist, the passion, Christ-centeredness and praise of the Father. She taught mainly by her own example, not in a pietistic and showy manner, but in her extreme simplicity and sincerity. Likewise, Clare's oneness with the church is portrayed by her unusual devotion to the Eucharist during a time in the Church when the Pope was encouraging a Eucharistic crusade. As she was made aware of the advance of the Saracens on the monastery and the town, Clare's immediate response is to have recourse to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

The key, however, to the life of Clare and her sisters is found on p. 30:

> Clare did not want to see her Sisters bound by the fetters of law. Observances are without value unless they are motivated by attachment to Jesus Christ. Their lives were to develop entirely in the dynamism of love, far from legalism, formalism and pharisaism. Their lives were to be a great adventure of love.

Rene Dhont concludes this very fine piece of writing with four appendices; one explains the problem of Rules which were given to the Poor Ladies; second, is an explanation of Clare's attitude toward suffering; third, the type of chant used in the Liturgy of the Hours and fourth, the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

This is an unusually precise, concise and well-written study of Clare and her sisters as they journeyed together in the shadow of Francis.

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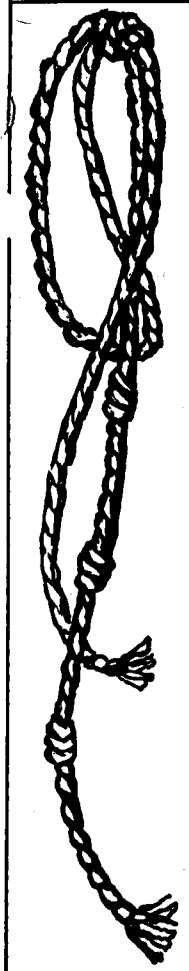
SEPTEMBER, 1988

The CORD

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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

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EDITORIAL

Who is The Holy Spirit?

My current ministry calls me to present and explain the faith of the Catholic Church to other Christians in a dialogue settting. Ecumenical ministry is richly rewarding personally in that one has to reflect on faith and, by the gift of the Spirit, one's own faith is enriched. This immediately comes to mind as we consider the basic theme of this issue of **CORD.** It seemed to me that a franciscan's ministry flowed from one's contemplative stance before God. I think this is true. But I find that reflection on faith, so much a part of my ministry, roots one more deeply in God as well. There is a mutuality in both directions, if you will, between contemplation and action. In my case the mutuality has led me back to basics. As many of you know I am invited to address the topic of spirituality and I do. But only after I was asked to present the Church's teaching in summary form to other Christians concerning the Holy Spirit did I feel a refreshed sense of the power and life of God that does pervade our living—if only we would advert to it more. With this in mind I share with you here the following summary on who is the Holy Spirit which I had the privilege to present the National Council of Churches' Commission of Faith and Order (theology).

It is the will of the Triune God: Abba, Christ and Spirit, three distinct persons in one divine nature to create and recreate humanity so that all become the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Spirit. From the human point of view, the works of creation, redemption and sanctification are attributed to specific Divine Persons, but it is fully appreciated that creation, redemption and sanctification are God's work.

Thaddeus Horgan, an Atonement Friar and **THE CORD** *editorial board member, is the Associate Director of the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC.*

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Sanctification is attributed to the Holy Spirit. God, source of all, gives creation, and humanity in particular, the gift of Christ who is God Incarnate, Emmanuel, the only son and the sacrament of God's presence in history. Through the humanity of Christ, the outward visible sign of God's freely given grace in history, God overcomes all death, separation and sin which humanity has brought or brings on itself. The grace of Christ transforms history. God's purpose in the end will triumph. The efficacious sign of this is God's Pentecost gift of the Spirit who gave birth to the Church. The Church is the visible body of Christ in time, the community of Christian believers and the sacrament of humanity's union with God which witnesses to and engages in God's reconciling work in this world. The Church does this in the power of the Spirit.

According to the data of Sacred Scripture, (e.g., John 15-16-17) what God realized in Christ (redemption) is communicated to men and women by the Holy Spirit just as Christ, God's gift, was incarnate by the Holy Spirit. Christ sent the Spirit into time: 1) to complete God's work of making all the believing People of God (faith); 2) to bring all to the full knowledge of the truth (preaching, magisterium, authority); 3) to transform all into children of God (sacraments) and 4) to transform God's children (Pentecost) into the visible community of faith, (the Church) and into the living dwelling place of God's Spirit in time (holiness, witness, ministry and service.)

At Pentecost the Spirit gave birth to the Church, the believing, worshipping, praying and serving community of God's children. As the Church they are called to witness to redemption according to each one's giftedness in the spirit and to engage in the Spirit's reconciling mission according to each one's charism from the Spirit. In this way men and women share in the very work of God for themselves and for their sisters and brothers.

The Church, the visible community of faith, nourishes, celebrates and renews its life in Christ through worship; and sacraments made efficacious by the Spirit. Baptism confers the Spirit who conforms the recipient to Christ, frees him or her from sin, and makes that one a member of the believing community, the Church. Confirmation renews and strengthens the gift of God's Spirit for a life of discipleship and service. The Eucharist is the Church's worship of God and its members' nourishment in God's life. Penance and Reconciliation renews efficaciously God's pardon and restores the sinner to the life of Christ in the Church. Anointing confers the healing grace of the Holy Spirit. Ordination and matrimony consecrate and celebrate life vocations within the church to loving service. They are signs of God's love and Christ's unity with the church which begets life both in the order of grace as well as in order of nature. The sacraments at once grace our personal and ecclesial lives so that, in the power of the

Holy Spirit, we can grow into the full stature of Christ. All Christians are called to give witness to God's love. Particularly by their witness and service as the Body of Christ, the Church, they serve as instruments for the universal reconciling work of God's Spirit.

This is the common Christian vocation. It is nourished and developed through the Church's sacramental life especially the Eucharist. This is called "Liturgical Spirituality" and means that one lives discipleship by centering self on the worship of God and service to neighbor with all those others gathered by the Spirit into Christ (the church). Worship, or liturgy of word and sacrament in all its forms, is spiritual nourishment and the source of religious growth. One then goes forth manifesting in deeds one's love for God by love for neighbor. To enable all who are the Church to realize its mission both interiorly (spiritual growth) and extensively (service and mission) the Spirit gives gifts or charisms (I Cor. 12:4 — 30 and 14: 1-33; Eph. 4:1-6) and so upbuilds the Church.

These are not to be confused with what Roman Catholics refer to as charisms of religious orders. Just as all are called to be particularly ordained ministry, so too are some called by the Spirit to "religious life." As recognized by the church this is christian life intensely and publicly lived (life in community and profession by vow of the evangelical counsels of chastity, obedience, and poverty/simplicity). This style of Christian life is based on the example of Christ's own life in time, and on Spirit's gift of insight into an aspect of Christ's life given to a particular founder. Four types of officially recognized "religious life" are found within the Roman Catholic Church. These are: the eremetical (e.g., the Carthusian Hermit Monks); the monastic (e.g. Basilian or Benedictine Monks and Nuns); the active/contemplative (e.g., Franciscan/ Dominican/ Carmelite friars, nuns and sisters, etc.) and the apostolic (e.g., Jesuits, Paulists, and other Missionary Orders). The charism of each order is understood as a gift of the Spirit informing a founder of a way of life rooted in a gospel inspiration or adopted to a special apostolic purpose (missionary pastoral ministry, preaching, teaching, etc). In this context there are many "spiritualities" within the Roman Catholic church. Many of these are followed by the laity as well, some in formal lay orders like the Franciscan or Dominican, and others without formal ties (this is especially true of Ignatian Spirituality). A "spirituality" is a gospel centered form of christian living with one aspect of the mystery of redemption as its focus. This informs devotional life, life style and the service or ministry of those living a particular spirituality.

In the Roman Catholic tradition the gifts of the One Spirit are

acknowledged as multiple and the presence of the Spirit is recognized as all pervasive.

Thaddeus Horgan, S.A.

Father Serra

Kind Father Serra, your words are with you now,
Those you have loved and saved from pagan ways;
Rejoice that you have served the Savior well
And reap the golden harvest of those days.

When gazing out to sea on Carmel's shore
Did thoughts of old Majorca stir your soul?
Longing you knew, but not for hearth and home
On this sad earth, — you sought another goal.

Once Father Palou watched you smile in sleep
And murmur words of praise to God most high, —
O Blessed Father, share with us your light;
Like the poor Indian in our need we cry

"Pray that God's help may once more make us free
Of all our latter-day barbarity."

Fr. Theophane Robertson, O.F.M.

Power, Policy and the Franciscan Administrator

SR. MARGARET ELETTA GUIDER, O.S.F.

"Where would we get to,
If everyone said,
"Where would we get to?"
And no one ever went to have a look
At where we would get to
If we went?"

German Proverb

At the risk of perpetuating the cultural hegemony that has shaped much of Franciscan scholarship and theological reflection during the Twentieth Cerntury, I take the liberty of citing this proverb as a means for focusing a brief consideration of the status, role and function of the Franciscan administrator in the 1990's. In and of itself, the proverb is more than provocative. For those who are uncertain about *what to do*, it provides a challenge. For those who are uncertain about *how to be*, it suggests an option. For those who are interested in considering another perspective in addition to their own, it serves as a point of departure.

Sister Margaret E. Guider, O.S.F., is a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joilet, IL. During the 1970's she served with the community in Goias, Brazil, as an educator and pastoral minister. Prior to that time she taught in the inner-city of Chicago. From 1981 to 1986 she was Director of Mission Education for the Archdiocese of Chicago and Catholic Chaplain for the Cook County Juvenile Detention center. She holds graduate degrees in special education (University of Illinois, Chicago) and theology (Catholic Theological Union). She has participated in the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University. Currently she is a doctoral candidate in theology at Harvard Divinity School.

I. Administration: A Consideration of Where We Are

More than once, my involvement with initial and on-going formation programs, has inspired within me a desire to write a book entitled *Money, Sex and Power*. However, during the past year, I have become increasingly more convinced that the real need is not for yet another book on the vows, but rather, for *translators* and *interpreters* of such works — i.e. individuals willing to disclose the reality of their lives, not in the language of a distant and remote expert, but in a nuanced and experiential *vernacular* that represents the "living" language of their own province or congregation. I contend that another name for such an individual is that of *administrator* — one who serves from day to day.

At the present time, there are few Franciscan groups in the United States of America that are not a bit "anxious" about the future, particularly with regard to eligible candidates for administrative leadership. Recently, a jubilee announcement from my own community highlighted the impending crisis. The invitation listed the names of seven diamond jubilarians, eleven golden jubilarians and four silver jubilarians. [Of the latter group, two already have served as full-time congregation administrators, one has served as director of formation, while the fourth has continued in her strategic efforts to forestall the inevitable fate which awaits her!] Clearly, expertise in demographic analysis is not required to ascertain the fact that we have reached a critical juncture — and that this turning point is shared by most of our Franciscan brothers and sisters.

Across the board, statistics indicate that younger members incorporated into our provinces and congregations since 1965 may best be characterized as endangered species. In an unprecedented way, they carry the knowledge, both collectively and individually, that each one of their faces has already appeared once, if not several times, in the proverbial crystal balls of present and past provincials, councillors, treasurers, formators, pastors, presidents, principals, directors and local ministers. In the company of those who have shaped administrative policy and guided decision-making in the past, younger members also find themselves pondering the inverse relationship between the actual "supply" of potential administrators and the growing "demands" of provinces, congregations, parishes, schools and local communites. A serious consideration of this reality leads to further reflection on the lives of our brothers and sisters who have been called to the ministry of leaderhsip in recent years — both those who have served — and those who have declined. Unquestionably, our conclusions impress upon our consciences the realization that one of the most serious tasks which we must assume in the immediate future is the formation of *attitudes about power and authority* at a time in our collective history

when many of the future policies and decisions which will be made have no precedents — and the actual number of individuals capable of withstanding the burden of administrative leadership is limited.

It goes without saying that a great sadness, perhaps even resentment, fills the hearts and minds of past provincials and general ministers, who call into question what they perceive to be an unwillingness or at times, an outright resistance on the part of middle-aged members to assume any position of "internal" or "institutional" leadership. Drawing from their own experience, they emphasize that they too were prepared for careers in ministry, education or health care, which in many cases had to be set aside, if not altogether abandoned, in order to respond to the call of administrative leadership. Frequently, they conclude with an indictment of those who do not respond to such a call — an indictment muted in the form of a question: What has happened to self-sacrifice?

Clearly, such a query addresses itself more to a symptom of the crisis, rather than its cause. For this reason, I believe that before we can begin to address the value of self-sacrifice, we must first consider the meaning of freedom, and secondly, determine to what extent, those who painfully pose such questions were themselves brought to administration by force, coercion, guilt, desperation or acquiescence. Building upon the assumption that authentic "freedom of choice" is foundational to self-sacrifice (thereby differentiating it from victimization or masochism), it is extremely important to look at "call and response" in terms of vocation, rather than institutional obligation.

Before judgements are made on those who will *not* serve, perhaps it is of utmost importance to assess to what extent those who say "yes," are equally *free* to say "no." For if freedom does not exist, is it really possible for authentic servant leadership to emerge? I think not. At this moment in time, we are challenged — as Francis was — to understand *freedom*, not as a commodity to be stored up and guarded, but as a grace to be received and shared. We are not slaves, but brothers and sisters. We are not in relationship because of bondage, but because of love. If this is not true, then there is neither reason to serve, nor to proceed any further with this reflection.

II. Administration: What We Might find If We Went

We live in an age when the grace of freedom in the Spirit is conjoined with the gravity of earthly realities. Whether or not we respond to the call of administrative leadership, we share a common responsibility for *seeing, judging* and *acting* with new eyes, new minds and new hearts — in response to the signs of *these* times and those that await us. A discussion

about what it means "to be free to choose" or "to have freely chosen" cannot be done in a vacuum. Our collective future as vowed religious is not a *tabula rasa*.

It is naive, if not irresponsible, to reflect upon the role and function of the Franciscan administrator within our provinces and congregations, without realizing the ways in which stock market crashes, deficit budgets and the increasing cost of care for elderly members must inform our communal understanding of poverty. Arm-chair theologizing on "poverty of spirit" is a luxury which few of us will be able to afford in the near future.

Gone are the days when reflections on chastity and celibacy could serve as substitutes or detours for long overdue discussions and confrontations about our own development as human persons — individually and collectively. We live in an age that finds us grieving, and sometimes denying, the death and dying of a few of our brothers from AIDS. During the next decade, other brothers who live with the diagnosis — or its threat — will present an unprecedented challenge to each of us. In addition to this reality, we are regularly faced with the fact that the news media has lifted the veil that once covered up paedophilia and paternity suits. Among ourselves, we have begun to break the longstanding silence surrounding clinical depression, suicide, addiction and memories of incest and abuse. No longer can we see ourselves as "apart" from the society and culture in which we live.

There was a point in time when discussions on obedience were confined to community matters and concerns. However, at the present time, our understanding of obedience takes on new meaning as our sisters and brothers face federal indictments for providing sanctuary to refugees and protesting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is further expanded as semi-retired sisters from Philadelphia to Los Angeles, contest pastor/parish decisions that recommend their eviction from the very convents that have housed them during many years of pastoral service. In the past, administrative authority and responsibility was ordinarily challenged by those sisters and brothers who were judged to be "incorrigible" by local or regional ministers, now it is being challenged by religious who are judged to be incorrigible by ecclesiastical authorities.

In addition to these realities, fatigue, disillusionment and frustration, coupled with unmet expectations in community life and ministry, are contributing factors to a resurgence of both anticipated and sudden departures of members under fifty years of age. Though rumblings of a "second exodus" create anxiety responses in the hearts and minds of many, a more serious threat to the future is found in the "ostrich" attitudes of sisters and brothers who refuse to acknowledge that our lives — individually and collectively — cannot go on — unchanged and unexamined.

III. Administration: Where We Have Been

Though more could be said with regard to where Franciscan administrators find themselves today, it is clear that an acknowledgement of the present realities that are shaping our future is more than sufficient food for thought. The questions before us are compounded as we consider the styles of leadership adopted by those who preceded present administrators. In reflecting on their experiences, we must not only discern who among us will serve, but also, how does the past influence the ways in which administrative leadership is perceived in the present.

Drawing upon the work of various power analysts and political scientists, I would like to expand our reflection by providing an "applied" overview of four ways in which administrative power is understood — and how policies are made — for better and for worse.

1) General Perception: Those in positions of administrative power would like to stay there. To the extent that this is true for Franciscan administrators, it is important to note that political theorists suggest that in order to do so, one must appease the interests of those who possess a certain degree of power and authority in their own right — particularly when such individuals turn to adminsitrators for the purpose of securing what are perceived by the community at large to be "special advantages and rewards." This accounts for some of the reasons why administrative leaders adopt policies that have negative consequences for the majority of those whom they serve. It is no secret that administrative decisions that give advantages to a few, without providing "incentives" for all, result in the alienation of those who see themselves as disadvantaged, worthless or forgotten. The powerful minority of beneficiaries ensures that the administrator stays in power. However, widespread instability and malaise is often pervasive in the lives of the majority.

2) *General Perception: Those in positions of administrative leadership are "sharers of power."* However, the question is: with whom do they share power? Are their primary partners members of their own community or staff? Or, are their primary partners bishops, clergy, religious from other communities, lay advisory boards, consultants, development experts, etc. In short, does the professional expertise of "outsiders" end up having more influence on how decisions are made by an administrator, than the opinions of "inside" brothers or sisters? Often in a community where there are competing interests and limited resources, administrators find it easier to become "dependent" on outsiders, than to go through the struggles and controversies involved in an attempt to create networks of interdependency and shared decision-making/problem solving with "insiders." It is no wonder that new policies and procedures are met with active resistance or passive non-compliance.

3) *General Perception: Those in positions of administrative leadership are "data control centers."* These administrators convince themselves and others that no decision can be made without sufficient information *and* that decisions based on *all* facts are inevitably the "best" decisions. However, a reality check on this style of leadership reminds us that decisions that can be made only *after* all of the information is in, often turn out to be decisions that are never made at all or decisions that are invariably made too late. Another twist to this dilemma, is that even when administrators have all the information needed to make an informed decision, unexpected crises or unanticipated pressures — of one sort or another, can cause an administrator to make a decision as though they were completely uninformed. Thus, those who would identify themselves as "rational actors" are as vulnerable as everyone else to the possibility of making less than perfect decisions — even with all the information!

4) *General Perception: Those in positions of administrative leaderships are like actors in a play*. Their roles and functions are well-defined and carried out with precision. Things start on time and end on time. Such administrators are predictable and dependable. Their lines are well-rehearsed and there are no surprises. Yet, when reality strikes — the scenario suggests something quite different. Life changes from a stage, to a game field. Suddenly, the actors are replaced by players... who, if they are to play at all, must play spontaneously and cooperatively — prepared for whatever comes their way. Needless to say, transition is difficult for administrators, who find themselves hustled onto a playing field where both their function and the arena is in a state of constant flux and unpredictability.

Inasmuch as these four descriptions may serve to heighten our awareness of what Franciscan administrators might do — they also represent, at least in part, an overview of what most administrators do, have done and will do — Franciscan ones included.

IV. Administration: Where We Might Get To If We Went

In conclusion, I would like to suggest that the ideas contained in this reflection are more appropriately compared to a package of assorted seeds, than a bouquet of flowers. They hold more in potentiality, than they do in actuality. Though this article does not include an indepth study of what Francis has to say about power, authority and administration, it certainly does not preclude such reflection. Unquestionably, his *Letter to a Minister* coupled with the notion that the "brothers should not hold power or dominion, least of all among themselves" (*Earlier Rule* V:9), provide important insights for an ever-evolving understanding of power, policy and the Franciscan administrator.

Though the essay is complete, the conversation continues. Undoubtedly, there will be readers who disagree with some of my ideas or suggestions. Others will be disappointed that I did not rely more on the "Sources" in developing my reflection. However, there are still others, for whom at least a few thoughts will serve as a starting point for further reflection. For them, I close with the following words of Nicolas Berdyaev:

> "The charm of the future is connected with the fact that the future may be changed and to some extent depends on ourselves. But to the past, we can do nothing, we can only remember it with reverence and gratitude or with remorse and indignation. The future may bring with it the realization of our desires, hopes and dreams. But it also inspires us with terror. We are tortured with anxiety about the unknown future. Thus, the part of time which we call the future and regard as dependent upon our own activity may be determined in two ways. It may be determined by duty, by painful anxiety and a command to realize a set purpose, or by a creative energy, by a constructive vital impulse through which new values are coined... the awakening of creative energy is inner liberation and is accompanied by a sense of freedom. Creativeness is the way of liberation... the creative flight communes with eternity. Every creative act of ours in relation to other people — an act of love, of pity, of help, of peacemaking — not merely has a future but is eternal."
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> The Ethics of Creativity *The Destiny of Man*

Contemplation: Communion with Jesus' Father

PETER A. LYONS, T.O.R.

She is nearing 70, retired, a grandmother many times over, and totally immersed in church ministry. She directs the parish RCIA, holds office in the diocesan council of Catholic women, serves as a stringer for the diocesan newspaper and does charitable work in her neighborhood. And she wants to know how to balance all this with a more prayerful, contemplative spirit. Her story invites my story in reply. Together we share the same dilemma and the same challenge.

I suspect it was ever so, but I also believe that our Franciscan penchant for responding to "the needs of the church" makes it an especially pressing problem today. The church in our country is in an expansionist phase. Commentators are calling this "the Catholic moment." But the ranks of the professed and the ordained continue to shrink. The expansion of lay ministry has helped us to realize that ours is not to do it all. Neither ordination nor profession calls us to ministry. Baptism and Confirmation do. Ours is to order the ministry of God's People, to be in relationship with that People, and to do our fair share of the ministering tasks to which the whole People of God is called.

But the work does not diminish, and the doing constantly gets in the way of the being. Perhaps it is because so many of us compulsives hear the call to religious life. Keeping our balance will always be a challenge. Preachers make much of the prayer of Jesus in the gospels, and rightly so, but an overall impression from reading the gospel is that Jesus did not spend an inordinate amount of time in prayer. It would seem that he spent much more time in his ministry of teaching, preaching, healing, exorcising, forming the disciples, and building up the community. Yet, here again, one does not come away from the text with an impression of Jesus as "super-apostle" whose life was his work.

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Instead it seems fair to say that Jesus' whole posture, in work and in prayer, was one of relationship to the Father. His active work was that of proclaiming and signifying the Father's plan, calling people into the reign of God. His prayer served to strengthen the bonds of that same relationship and connect the Father with the disciples: "As the father has loved me, I also have loved you... You will live in my love if you keep my commandments, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and live in his love." (Jn 15:9-10).

As brothers and sisters who have made a profession of "observing the Holy Gospel in true faith and penance," (TOR Rule, art. 1,2), we have been engaged in a historic effort to understand and apply that call in our times. The variety of expressions of gospel life within our order has surely been a blessing for our church. Let me suggest one very personal interpretation of our charism without in any way suggesting that this is the only one.

Two key insights into catholic belief and practice are the incarnational and the communal approaches to the mysteries of our faith. Both of these elements played a large part in Francis' spirituality and remain central to Catholic life today. The incarnational approach sees prayer, worship, mission, evangelization and church order as instruments for entering into the apostles' experience of Jesus. The New Testament is clear about the normative character of the apostles' experience (Acts 1:21-22). The life of the early church revolved around a sacramental and corporate expression of this experience through the apostles' instructions, community life, the breaking of bread, common prayer and the sharing of goods. (Acts 2:42-47). Through the ages this same pattern obtains, with further embellishment of doctrine, devotion, ritual, mission, the mediation of the saints, sacramental objects and the life. At times these externals seemed to obscure the central mysteries, but with periodic reforms the church has righted the balance between sign and reality. The practices of the faith are intended to provide a tangible and communal instrument for entering into the experience of Jesus' life and death and resurrection.

But the experience of the apostles is still one step removed from the experience of Jesus. If the apostles mediate our experience of Jesus, Jesus mediates our access to Father.

The ultimate end of Jesus' mission is to show us the Father (Jn 14:9) and to lead us to life in the Father's home (Jn 14:2-3).

Our charism of continuing conversion according to the gospel, then, is ultimately a call to an ever growing relationship with the Father. It's what Jesus did, what he instructed the apostles to do, and what the church has sought to do through the ages. Jesus discovered the Father's love in his life experience, his mission, his relationships. The reign of God is a pattern of ever growing relationship with the Father after the example of Jesus

through the power of the Holy Spirit. It flows into relationships at all levels and produces the change of mind, change of heart, change of behavior that are characteristic of God's reign. It is the foundation for the social reality of the reign of God: the call to conversion leads us from personal to corporate to systemic reform.

This is the rebirth (Jn 3:3ff) to which Jesus invited his disciples. The kingdom parables (Matt 13) indicate ways the Father would draw us into his love as he did Jesus, as well as ways our flesh resists the call. The threefold profession of Peter's love (Jn 21) indicates that love is the foundation of apostleship, and it is a continuous process. Reconciliation is not a healing of hurts or a process of moral growth as much as a continuing return to the Father's love in spite of failings. Thus gospel *metanoia* is a lifelong process leading to full and final communion with the Father.

If we seem to have strayed from the original topic, it is time to circle back. This perspective on gospel conversion provides an insight into Francis' understanding of the gospel. For Francis the literal following of the gospel was a means to communion with the Father. In his first Admonition, Francis quotes the gospel text: I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6).

The way of life which Francis embraced and set down for his followers was intended to lead to the imitation of Jesus and through him to communion with the Father. In Article 6 of the Rule of 1223 these two dimensions are related to Franciscan poverty. The brothers are to have nothing of their own "since the Lord made himself poor for us in this world." And this highest poverty establishes the brothers "as heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven." The strictness of Francis' poverty was for the sake of imitating Jesus and witnessing to the reign of God. But his poverty was also tinged with clemency for the sick and those in need. Exceptions are made to the rule of fasting, to the prohibition against riding horseback, even to the acceptance of money for the sake of those who were sick or in dire need (Rule of 1221, VIII; Rule of 1223, III). For Francis the Most High God we serve is also a compassionate Father who does not want to see his children suffer. Without these exceptions poverty might have appeared as an end in itself. With them it is clearly in service of the gospel.

Francis' attitude toward learning was similarly pragmatic. Against the background of medieval monasticism and the rise of the great universities, Francis neither embraced nor rejected learning as such for his friars. Rather he placed it in the perspective of gospel conversion and advised Brother Anthony that he could teach theology to the brothers "as long as it did not extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotion." (Letter to Saint Anthony).

Likewise, Francis' vision of created reality situated all things in relation to the Creator. The Canticle of Brother Sun is an outstanding example of a sacramental spirituality, where all reality mirrors the power, the tenderness, the majesty and the mystery of the Creator.

Francis' profoundly sacramental insight not only recognized God's qualities in creatures but enabled him to see Christ in multiple sacramental expressions; from the leper, to the sacred text of the gospel, to the sacred Host of the Eucharist. Francis' devotion to the humanity of Christ is characteristic of this incarnational spirituality.

Saint Bonaventure gave scholarly expression to the spiritual insights of Francis. In an article entitled "On Retracing the Arts to Theology," Bonaventure states: "It is clear how the manifold wisdom of God, which is luminously handed down in Sacred Scripture, is hidden in every act of knowledge and in every nature. It is also clear how all forms of knowledge are the servant of theology: wherefore this science assumes examples and makes use of expressions that belong to all kinds of knowledge. It is clear, finally, how broad the contemplative way can be, and how God himself lies hidden within everything either perceived or known." (*The Works* of Bonaventure, III, tr. by J. deVinck; Paterson, NJ, 1966, p. 31).

In his *Itinerarium Mentis Ad Deum* Bonaventure related his understanding of the six stages of illumination which begin with creation and lead to God. He came to this understanding in mystical contemplation on Mount Alverno where he had gone to reflect on Francis' vision of the six-winged seraph. The learned doctor had penetrated the spiritual insight of the Poverello. And this same insight is Francis' legacy to his followers.

The heart of Franciscan contemplation is communion with the Father of Jesus, realized in fleeting and incomplete ways in this life, but promised in full and permanent form in the age to come. For the present our call is to point toward this goal in all we do. Our prayer is to keep the Father's plan in our minds and hearts and those of all our brothers and sisters. Our community life is to model in however imperfect fashion the relationships that will finally exist in the reign of God. Our active lives are to act out in mission and service, in worship and witness, all that Jesus said and did in mission and service, in worship and witness, all that Jesus said and did in service of the Kingdom. Our involvement in the great struggles of our age for justice and equity, for structural reform and systemic compassion are to signify to ourselves and all people the Father's plan and purpose in history.

Faced with the burdens of ceaseless ministerial tasks and challenges that can only lead to burnout, we can only do our best and not expect to succeed in everything. Not even Jesus did that. He demonstrated for us that success is not the highest goal of gospel living; fidelity is. Ours is the

mission of representing the mission of Jesus, which is to say upholding the plan and purpose of God in history. We cannot achieve that plan and purpose ourselves; nor do we have to. The Kingdom is God's work. We are God's imperfect agents. And that is good news enough for now.

La Verna

Like Jacob
I have wrestled with God,
And walked away —
Wounded.
I sought to meet Him
Face-to-face;
Embrace in love and joy.
Yet now,
As of old, I limp away
In my body and my heart —
Bleeding.
But in reflecting on
The struggling of that night
I see it change
In my mind's eye
To a sweet waltz,
A lover's embrace,
And the bleeding I do
Mimes that of my partner,
My love.
Wrestling,
Dancing,
I no longer know
The difference.

Fr. Charles Wible, O.F.M.Conv.

The Essential Elements of the Evangelical Life of Franciscans

SR. DOROTHY McCORMACK, O.S.F.

Several years ago a document which came to be referred to as "The Essential Elements of the Religious Life"[1] appeared in the United States in tandem with a study of the Religious Orders in this country, commissioned by Pope John Paul II to be conducted by the Bishops. Reaction to the document ran the gamut of welcome to rejection. At the time of its appearance we were preparing for the General Chapter of our Congregation. This document and subsequent articles in the USIG *Apostolic Spirituality in View of the Kingdom,*[2] became for us the goad of redefining our way of life as Franciscan. I am presently engaged as Director of Initial Formation, and it is in this capacity that the following understanding of our life is taking shape. Hence, with tongue in cheek, I have entitled the article. I am particularly indebted to three of my brothers, Joseph Chinnici, O.F.M., Peter VanLeeuwen, O.F.M., and Jean Francois Godet, for their example and teaching on Franciscan life.

The Experience of God

The heart and dynamism of the life of a Franciscan is his/her experience of God. The experience of God is also the origin, the seed; the fruit of which will be the following in the footprints of Jesus. This initial experience of conversion, which is of divine inspiration, opens the person of faith to a deeper and deeper insight into and appreciation of the mystery of the triune God and the mystery of God incarnate in creation.

A life of penance, the Biblical "metanoia" or on-going conversion, becomes the way through which this experience of God takes root, deepens,

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and expands. This conversion of heart takes place in the concrete — in meeting with people, especially with people who are in need. "... While I was in sin, it seemed very bitter to me to see lepers. And the Lord Himself led me among them and I had mercy upon them." (Francis' Test. 1-2).

As the person's experience of God expands and becomes larger, he/she becomes more and more a person of peace and reconciliation; and this transformation is evidenced in joy of life. The bedrock of nurturing such on-going conversion of heart is prayer, faith-sharing and a sacramental life.

Prayer is not defined in terms of time, or place, or even activity; it is primarily an attitude, a contemplative presence to the Lord, "And let us make a home and dwelling place for Him who is the Lord God Almighty, Father and Son and Holy Spirit..." (Rule 1221, Chap. 22:27)

Franciscan prayer is always an affective response leading to union with God through Christ, and an opening up to the action of the Spirit whether that is apprehended through Scripture, the created world, one another, or the events of one's life. And the fruit of prayer is never for the self alone; it is to be shared.

Jesus in his humanity is the primordial sacrament of Gods's love and, for the follower of Christ, a privileged place of meeting God. The poor, those open to receive the gift and willing to be changed by it, like Mary, become the church, the sacrament of God's love, presence and mercy. It is within the Church, as the body of the Resurrected Christ, and through its sacramental celebrations that Christian faith is especially nourished and challenged.

A Gospel Way of Life

In the encounter with the Lord, the Sister or Brother who would follow Francis and Clare[3] is invited "to live according to the form of the Holy Gospel" and "to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ." "... The Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the form of the Holy Gospel." (Francis' Test. 14).

The Gospel is the good news that God loves us and wants to be in communion with us. The world that God created is good and bears the marks of its creator; we are made in the image and likeness of God. We live in a world of gift. This good news has been revealed to us through Jesus in his life, death, resurrection and giving over of the Spirit. To live according to the form of the Holy Gospel is to welcome this good news, to enter into and to live in the world of gift in such a way as to bring together all that is to the source of goodness; we fail when we appropriate to ourselves, as source, any aspect of the gift. Jesus is our model for this

way of life. "The Son of God became for us the way which our Blessed Father Francis, His true lover and imitator, has shown and taught us by word and example." (Clare's Test. 2).

Jesus came as light to show us how to live in the world of gift, and it was through his poverty and reliance on the providence of God that he opened for us the way to life. If, by divine inspiration, one would live in this world of gift following in the footsteps of Jesus, one begins by letting go of possessions, material and spiritual, and by entrusting oneself to the goodness and providence of God in the person of our brothers and sisters.

Accepting such an invitation implies that one knows the books of the Gospels and makes them the main referent for his/her concrete daily life. It also means that one is familiar with the primary source of the lives of Clare and Francis, especially their own writings.

Francis and Clare believed that only in communion with the Catholic Church could they maintain fidelity to the gospel and be nourished with the sacraments; and so Franciscan life is lived within the Church.

The Franciscan experience is open to all people and, thus, has multiple expressions of living the gospel: religious, lay, married, celibate, itinerant, enclosed, eremetical. All make a public profession to the gospel way of life; some express this profession with vows of obedience, chastity and poverty.

As Brothers and Sisters

The context for living the gospel life as Franciscans is always relational: it is with brothers and sisters. "... The Lord gave me brothers." (Francis' Test. 14). "After the most high heavenly Father saw fit in His mercy and grace to enlighten my heart to do penance... I, together with the few sisters whom the Lord had given me..." (Clare's Test. 7) Brothers and Sisters are part of the world of gift; an incarnate God (Emmanuel) dwells among us and gifts us with life through one another.

Francis is familiar with the Gospel of John, particularly the Last Supper Discourse. We find Jesus' prayer "... that they may be one, even as we are one..." (John 17:11) cited in The First Letter to the Faithful 189, The Second Letter to the Faithful 59, and the Rule of 1221, Chapter 22:45. Clare says, "Loving one another with the charity of Christ, let the love you have in your hearts be shown outwardly in your deeds so that, compelled by such an example, the sisters may always grow in love of God and in charity for one another." (Clare Test. 18) Loving one another is the heart of the gospel project as Francis and Clare understood it. "Brother" and "Sister" are not titles; they convey a social and spiritual reality. We are received into communion and solidarity. This is obedience,

an obedience of love. Within the relationship of obedience, one of the brother/sisters serves as minister and servant. All are bound to serve and obey the gospel and the Spirit of the Lord dwelling in themselves, in the minister, and in one another. Whenever the brothers and sisters meet each other, they are to give witness that they are members of one family, and confidently make known their needs to one another. (Rule 1223, Chap. 6:7-8; Clare's Rule, Chap. 8:9; Rule of the Third Order Regular, Chap. 7:23) All are equal and no one is to exercise power over another. (Rule 1221, Chap. 5:9-12) Authority is based on Jesus' example of washing his disciples' feet.

This way of life implies interdependence and a willingness to entrust one's fragilities and gifts to the brothers and sisters, and a willingness on the part of the brothers and sisters to embrace each other with his/her gifts and frailties. (Admonition 18) The experience of communion and fullness of life toward which the gospel life impels us is not a given; it must be continually created anew.

This fraternal communion and solidarity extends as well to all creatures — sun, moon, stars, wind, water, fire, earth, all of whom Francis addressed as brother or sister. This precious legacy celebrates the unity of all creation and calls us to reverence and work with, rather than, over against or above, our kin in the cosmos.

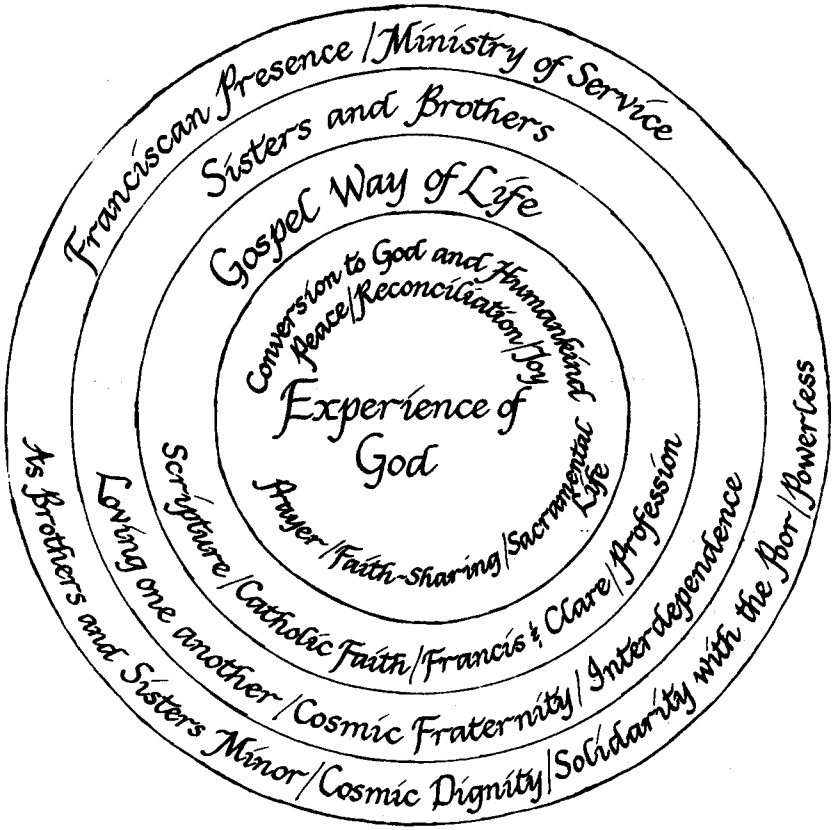
Franciscan Presence: Ministry of Service

What Franciscans are about is participation in the mission of Jesus, which is to realize in our world/history and in our lives the Kingdom of God. We are in the world as witnesses of the good news of salvation. We do this by living the gospel in simplicity and joy, together with the sisters and brothers God gives us, offering others good example by our lives and our words. When we share with others our experience of God, we make transparent to them the God who lives in the heart of the world and beyond it. Thus, we become our true selves, images of God, making the experience of God available to others, or as Francis says, "We are mothers (of Our Lord Jesus Christ) when we carry Him in our heart and body through love and a pure and sincere conscience; we give birth to Him through (His) holy manner of working, which should shine before others as an example." (Second Letter to the Faithful 53).

The sign of the presence of the Kingdom of God is peace and reconciliation. We must first of all be peaceful and strive to preserve peace. (Admonition 15) The "sweetness that Francis speaks of is this inner peace, which he received from God and also from the leper who was, for Francis, the incarnation of Jesus. When we are peaceful, we are able to announce

peace and to become peacemakers in our relations with others and the world. Such a commitment to peace will involve us in the work of justice.

The Franciscan vocation is to a life, not to a ministry. Our identity is not in what we do (there is no common work); rather, it is in how we do whatever we do. What we bring to any ministry in which we are engaged is a quality of presence, an attitude of service. As servants, or minors, we are best able to build relationships of "fraternitas."



Do the people with whom we relate feel that they have gifted us? Do they feel more whole, more happy, in our presence? If so, then we are truly brothers and sisters minor. Do we stand with the poor and those who are powerless? Are they our teachers? Do they manifest to us the face of Christ? If so, then we are truly brothers and sisters minor. Do we

perceive the "cloister" of the universe as the locus of God's revelation and see all created things as having cosmic dignity and grace? If so, then we are truly brothers and sisters minor.

Summary

What binds Franciscans together is their commitment to enter into the relationship of brother and sister in the world of gift, and to live the gospel life by following in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ. This presupposes persons who are open and willing to grow, daily refined by the touch of the spirit, more faithful to themselves and to the One whose image and likeness they bear.

early morning walk in a garden of praise

dawn light
morning dew
baptizing sandalled feet.
waking birds
chanting
angelus praise.
silence...
breakfasting nature —
rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks,
roses, lilies, daisies,
ducks in their pool,
phoebe, robin, sparrow,
garden of praise,
I join your song.

Sr. Lorelei Francis, S. A.

Creating Opportunities for Contemplation

T.O.R. FRIARS OF SAN DAMIANO IN THE SOUTH BRONX

Visitors ring our bell. They notice the welcome sign on our front door, "Peace to this house and all who enter." One of the brothers invites them in, shows them our chapel, and introduces them to the rest of the brothers sitting casually in our common room. They smell the rustic aroma of the wood we burn in the two stoves that heat our home. On this first visit they describe the house as primitive, simple and perhaps even austere. After talking about why we feel the Holy Spirit has called us to live simply, one person asks, "Are you guys contemplatives?" With a quick, knowing glance around the room at each other, we chuckle.

A couple of years ago a similar question was asked the day before our brother David's profession. That day we really laughed. Less than an hour before the first guests had arrived for the big weekend, our friary was dusted with an inch of plaster from the sanding of a new wall we'd built. Library books, kitchen utensils, and furniture were strewn everywhere in cyclonic aftershock. We rushed to ready the house and then sat (fairly) calmly with our guests.

"No, we are not contemplatives," is the simple response. "Mother Theresa's contemplative house is down the street." But that is not the whole answer or even part of it. We are not "contemplatives" in the sense of monastic enclosure. Yet we know we can be as contemplative as these sisters or our own Poor Clares. Our lay friends may be just as contemplative as we.

What does it mean to be contemplative in an active setting like ours? The fact that we six brothers, ages 21 – 39 and at various stages of our spiritual journey, all respond differently to the question belies the notion that there is a pat answer. Just as there is no formula for how Franciscans should live fraternally or how one should grow in holiness, neither is there a formula for what constitutes "contemplative" life. The amount of time and energy we devote to discussing the question reveals that, along with fraternity, it may be the deepest challenge and the greatest mystery in our lives together.

We know that St. Francis wrestled with the question of the balance of activity and contemplation. Once he decided to live "in the world" he spent his remaining years seeking to know God. We have his legacy of the active/contemplative life as one model, but must translate it into a

20th century America that moves quickly and independently. Letting God lead us at God's pace and for God's purpose places contemplation at the heart of the transformation of our activity.

Activity is natural to our humanity. Action in a contemplative life, though, is not simply movement or busyness. Transformed by contemplating God's message, all activity has a mission and a meaning.

Contemplation, on the other hand, is not given for anyone. It is a process and a gift of the Holy Spirit. It not only moves us to serve, but also gives us the grace to act wholly for and with the Lord. Some of us may have been contemplating God while we were scrambling to put the friary in order. Others may have been frenzied with a list of things to do and possibly did not give God a second thought. Contemplation is, above all, being conscious of God wherever and whatever the situation.

"Creating opportunities for contemplation," is how one brother describes our life here at San Damiano. Since it may be easier to think of God in quiet and solitude, we designate at least a couple of days every other month to be with God alone in our hand-built hermitage. This time away from ministry and our rooms (the hermitage is only a few feet from our home) offers a great chance to revitalize our spiritual life. We also retreat one week a year away from the friary.

This solitude may help renew the spirit of God in our active lives. Conversely, contemplation of God within activity can impel one to seek God in prayer and solitude. Therefore, in both activity and solitude we can be contemplative. Balancing and integrating the two is key. There must be time to fish and time to mend the nets.

Our daily schedule is a key means we all have to allow contemplation to transform our activity at San Damiano. First, prayer and fraternity are a priority over monastery work. By not accepting salaried jobs that demand our presence from 9 to 5 or at night, we can stop in the middle of the day and at night for prayer. This helps us remember who we are and why we do what we do. It checks our tendency to become enveloped in work and the many opportunities we have to serve.

Ministry is only one activity we are involved in which, if left unchecked, can lead to a life of lifeless activity. Visitors, special events, and emergencies also call us away from our commitment to private and communal prayer. We must thank God for these opportunities, but continually assess their impact upon our prayer life. When our acitvity seems to tip the balance we have an opportunity at weekly house meetings or in one-on-one conversations to call each other back to focus on God and on fraternity.

The house meeting itself can be a contemplative experience. We begin by calling on the Spirit's guidance and end with a reconciliation service using the words of St. Francis. Between these prayers our discussion may

have caused discord or the loss of one's convictions or ideals. This pain may be healed partly in the embrace of peace, but only fully when we realize that listening and responding to each other is the gospel message. To follow Jesus, spurred on by one another's insights, is to listen to the voice of the Spirit — to contemplate.

God's voice is often difficult to heed when it comes from a brother whose faults we may see more clearly than his insight, especially if what he has to say is corrective. Sometimes it may cause me to understand something about myself I don't like or it may shatter my dream. Yet if it is done out of love I may see a truer reality and be drawn closer to God in prayer. As we discover our true selves we are urged to know the God who has created us and offers the fullness of life.

Our choice to live physically simply can also create the opportunities in our house for contemplation. For example, we usually dress in habit; take off our shoes or sandals in the house; eat generally what God provides; have no television and change bedrooms every six months. All of these choices can help remind us that we are internally poor, dependent and

pilgrim people. They are limited, human means we use to turn our hearts to God in reverence and appreciation.

When we leave the house we attempt to continue the experience of contemplation. For one brother, silently lifting up to God a suffering alcoholic or drug addict he sees on the way to a shut-in's apartment will recall the mercy of the Lord. For another, creating something beautiful in the church may resurrect the beauty of God. Sharing our insights with each other at sessions around the dinner table and in casual chats can help bring the experience of God deeper into our ministeries.

We are fortunate to see contemplation in action through the lives of our shut-ins, whom we have all visited at one time during our life here. They, like many others in our neighborhood, have few possessions but are rich in spirit. These elderly dearly appreciate all they have in life and deeply depend on God as they approach death. Their days offer little variety; Jesus is their consolation. For the six of us, white and from basically middle-class backgrounds, we have found models of contemplation we did not encounter previously — people who live for Jesus Christ and love him as they do their brothers and sisters.

We can always look at the life of Jesus, as well as to Mary, or to Francis, and other saints, as models of contemplation. They first listened to the Word and acted upon it, integrating the human with the spiritual. They illustrated their message with articles and images of the earth — bread and wine, the vineyard, the birds of the air, flowers, etc. — and transformed them into symbols or God and signs of his care for us. We try to appreciate God in creation by cultivating gardens around our friary, molding clay into pottery, and baking bread to support ourselves. We also foster these types of activity because they seem to promote an attitude of contemplation.

Whatever our activity of prayer, the goal is to recollect the presence of God. We know that this presence, sometimes clear but always a mystery, is impossible to measure. However, through our relationships with another we may better discern our relationship with God and the fruit of our contemplation. Fraternity reveals what in our individual lives needs change and healing and subsequently turns us to God in petition. Persistence in prayer then transforms us to see the face of God in each other and those we serve. Our daily lives, therefore, should continually move us in a rhythm of contemplation and action.

Opportunities, many of which we've created, always exist to recall God. Yet we know that each individual must seize and hold the opportunities for himself/herself. The fleeting pace of our country and neighborhood can cause us to easily miss his presence. Contemplation not only enhances that presence in our activity; it proclaims God to the world.

Whistling in the Wind

Listen! Do yo hear?
God is whistling in the breeze,
at times gently whispering in His
whistling, sending coolness after heat.
Chilling, whistling winds ends sticky,
stuffy, muggy days.

Yes, He whistles again and again,
in raindrops dancing on the
windows, staccato-like,
or dripping, legato style,
on parched fields.

He whistles to the flowers
nodding in rhythm with His tune.
Trees clap their hands in prayerful ritual,
bending and bowing.
Leaves flutter as God whistles with the wind.

He plays a part in Nature's orchestra,
a bold basoon, for sometimes His
whistling is not so gentle.
Or He rolls the timpani while thunder
grumbles and growls,
and lightning hopscotches across
the darkened sky, while clouds cry.

His whistling tells of love for His creation,
bespeaking a God of mercy,
— kindness, and goodness.

A loving, compassionate whistling God.

Sister Mary Lenore Baader, O.S.B.

Sister Leaf

Praise to you, O God, for little Sister Leaf

Which focused my attention on you today.
Praise to you for the wonder of how
It shared the life of a large tree
As I shared life in my family.

Praise and honor to you, O Lord,
For how this leaf is made.
It reminds me of the gentle power of your love,
And I offer thanks for the marvel of my being.

This leaf exhorts me to offer praise, O Lord,
And to delight in you
For the joys of my early days,
By its dancing in the wind it calls me
To remember the happy times I have experienced.

Sometimes this little creature
Was buffeted by rains and storms
And thus gave you glory.
Honor and thanks to you my Lord
For strengthening me through the hard times
of life
When your gentle presence was my support.

Praise to you my generous Lord
Who provided water, air and sunlight
For this leaf — tiny though it be.
It never lets me forget that you have provided
For all my needs,
Even when I was unaware.

Thanks and deepest gratitude, Lord, for the aging
Which now appears in this leaf.
It calls my attention to the need to use the time I have,
To love and to give praise, honor and glory to you.

This morning, this tiny portion of God's creation
Lay upon the ground, soon to crumble
And return to earth
To rise again as life for other plants.

Praise to you, O Lord,
Who through this little leaf
Reminds me that dying is just the passage
To resurrection and new life with God.

My God, I praise and thank you for all Creation,
But, today, in a special way
For this little leaf which turned my eyes to you,
As it reflected back to me, my life,
Laced with your graces and your love.

Sister Mary Thomas Ryan, O.S.F.

Book Reviews

The Great Themes of Scripture: Old Testament. By Richard Rohr, O.F.M., and Joseph Martos. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press. 1987. Pp. iv-131. Paper, $5.95.

Making the Psalms YOUR Prayer. By Renee Rust. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press. 1987. Pp. iv-90. Paper, $4,95.

Reviewed by Father Charles J. O'Connor, O.F.M., S.T.D., Assistant Professor of Scripture at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, N.Y.

Richard Rohr's cassette series of 1973 entitled, *The Great Themes of Scripture*, has been recently edited into the first of a two volume work by Joseph Martos. The present volume, *The Great Themes of Scripture: Old Testament*, introduces the general reader to the Old Testament by way of a discussion of themes which include: the Word of God, Faith, History, Prophetism, Good and Evil. The author invites the reader to enter into dialogue with the Scripture which he maintains communicates a message of 'Good News,' i.e., a message "that you are saved, you are loved, you are unique, you are free" (p. 3). Underlying his entire exposé is the conviction that the Scriptures witness to a God who "can alone bring salvation, even from the difficulties that we have to deal with day by day" (p. 52). Moreover, the Word of God calls one to a way of faith which involves the risk of an abandonment of one's life into His hands.

The book focuses a great deal on Old Testament biblical figures from Abraham to Job, and the way that the Word of God is addressed to them as well as their response to it. Such a presentation makes for interesting reading while at the same time acquainting one with much of the important content of the Old Testament that is understood to constitute the story of salvation history. The book is filled with the author's faith insights which serve as a springboard for prayerful meditation by the reader.

A wealth of good, solid information about the Old Testament as well as the proper approach to its understanding makes this small volume worthwhile reading and very comprehensible to the non-expert who is eager to know the real truth about the God of the Old Testament and His ways with His chosen people.

Renee Rust's *Making the Psalms YOUR Prayer* has as its purpose, according to his words, "to lead the reader into the heart of the psalms and to uncover there the world of feelings, imagination and ordinary concerns which give the psalms such a timeless quality" (p. 1).

In a very readable and insightful book Rust familiarizes the general reader with the origin and poetic nature of the Old Testament psalms, the many images of God that they employ, ways of dealing with what he calls the 'Nasty Psalms,' the psalmists' response to God's fidelity and loving kindness as well as their own hardship in the face of such a God, and how the themes of sex, politics, and religion are addressed by them.

The importance of the book lies in the author's presentation of various exercises interspersed throughout the work which help the reader to make the psalmists' prayers his or her own by suggesting ways that one's "modern everyday experience" can be recast "in the psalmist's language" (p. 1).

This informative and creative volume is worth picking up especially by those who pray the psalms and are interested in learning more about these age-old Hebrew prayers.

Catherine of Siena. A Biography. By Anne B. Baldwin. Huntington, IN : Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1987. Pp. 192, including bibliography. Paper, $7.95.

Reviewed by Fr. Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Assoc. Editor of this Review.

Saints are unusual people, but they are real people. St. Catherine of Siena was unusual in her austerity, unusual in her iron will and determination, unusual in her role of "prophet," in 14th century Italy. In her latter role, she dictated letters in the wee hours of the night to scribes who were men. Her will and verbal encouragement encouraged Gregory XI to move the Papacy back from Avignon to Rome. Her bodily austerities, originally intended to deepen her relationship to Christ, were transformed as was her external life to include love of neighbor. Her prayer life deepened as she learned to read and had the Word of God, particularly in the Psalms opened up to her.

Baldwin does an excellent job in tracing the development of the little girl who had a vision of Jesus at age 6 to the mature woman who had to cope with temptations, temptations of obscene thoughts, temptations to despair at what seemed to be a pointless life. When she moved from her hermit-style life to a public life, she endured calumny — and she prayed for and won over her calumniators. She became a miracle worker — and her prayers often performed the hardest of Miracles, the changing of human hearts.

Baldwin follows the narration of Catherine's life with chapters which summarize her teachings, e.g. the universality of the call to holiness, the equality of men and women before God, the love of God and the centrality of Jesus. In a separate chapter, the author examines Catherine's fasting, and the descriptions of her reaction to food as described by her confessor Raymund of Capua and concludes with Rudolph Bell that Catherine suffered from an eating disorder, common in the day, a "holy anorexia," which ended up in her exhausted body succumbing at age 33. Perhaps Cahterine can be a patron to help cure the sickness of so many young people of our day, the anorexia nervosa.

Catherine of Siena, the author points out, is not just a myth, but a model, a model of the importance of contemplative prayer, of zeal for souls, of associating oneself with the sufferings of Jesus, as a woman who put God's work for her ahead of society's expectations, and an example of grace perfecting nature. To these characteristics, the author would

add, loyalty to the head of the Universal Church, the Pope.

Catherine of Siena makes interesting reading — there is a good deal of history there — and inspirational reading as well.

The Prayers of St. Francis. Trans. by Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., Servant Books, Ann Arbor, MI,. 1987. Pp. 7 - 102. Paperback.

Reviewed by Sr. Frances Ann Thom, O.S.F. Parish Minister at St. Mary's Church, Baldwinsville, New York.

Fr. Ignatius has provided Franciscans and all those devoted to St. Francis with a priceless pocket edition of Francis' prayers. The unique size of the book and the easily read print make it possible to be carried and used anywhere. However, aside from it's practicality, the edition is one of the most outstanding works written, containing a very insightful forword by John Michael Talbot as well as a precise and concise overview of Francis' entire life written by the author himself, whose scholarly pursuits on the life of Francis could surely fill volumes. Each prayer is preceded by a short introduction which captures succinctly the essence of prayer and provides the atmosphere in which the prayer should be prayed. It appears that the author has captured Francis' utter simplicity, extreme sincerity and profound humility in his manner of presenting these prayers and has woven a total work which can only enrich those who use it. It is, indeed a companion for those who would pray as Francis prayed; a treasure for those who would seek enrichment in prayer and a tremendous gift of the spirit and for the spirit. Fr. Ignatius has given us the powerful result of years of intense study to savor; the life and spirit of Francis in a nutshell and a brilliant sharing of the knowledge of God's love for us through the heart and mind of Francis. United with John Michael Talbot I, too, "... hope that this book of prayers will lead you to personal prayer, so that by prayer leading to prayer, all will lead to Christ."

* * *

Shorter Notices

By Julian Davies, O.F.M.

Why Jesus Christ? By Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M. Manassas, Virginia. Trinity Communications, 1986. Pp. 531, including Appendices and Indices. Cloth, $24.95.

Lucid explanation coupled with substantial documentation make this work on the Primacy of Christ as taught by the Franciscan School a must for every Franciscan Library. Fr. Carol also explains thoroughly the Thomistic school, and compromise positions. He shows that the doctrine that Christ was first willed by the Trinity is not just an isolated view held by the minority of Franciscans, but one embraced and taught by reputable theologians of differing traditions. Particularly strong is the bibliography of contemporary writings with his annotation for each entry. I would love to see an edition of the doctrinal parts of this work in a separate volume.

Books Received

Berry, Carmen Renee. *When Helping You is Hurting Me*. Escaping the Messiah Trap. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988. Pp. xii - 130, including References. Cloth, $12.95.

Church, F. Forrester. *The Seven Deadly Virtues*. A Guide to Purgatory for Atheists and True Believers. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988. Pp. 112, including Sources. Cloth, $13.95.

Larranaga, O.F.M., Cap., Ignacio. *Sensing Your Hidden Presence. Toward Intimacy With God*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1987. Pp. 286, including Bibliography. Paper, $7.95.

Spong, John Shelby. *This Hebrew Lord*. Revised Edition. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988. Pp. xv-192, including bibliography. Paper, $8.95.

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Francis, The Incomparable Saint. By Joseph Lortz. $6.00 plus postage. The first English translation of a work hailed as "one of the most valuable studies in modern Franciscan literature."

St. Francis of Assisi: Essays in Commemoration, 1982. Edited by Fr. Maurice W. Sheehan, Capuchin. $10.00 plus postage.
This paperback collection has eleven articles on St. Francis by Paul Sabatier, Pius XI, David Knowles, Yves Congar, and others. Three of the articles are new translations; most are difficult to locate.

The Knight-Errant of Assisi. By Hilarin Felder, Capuchin. Reprint. $7.00 plus postage.
Clare Among Her Sisters. By Rene-Charles Dhont, O.F.M. Translation in 1987. $9.00 plus postage.

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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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

REFLECTION:

A Letter from St. Francis

REV. HARRY AVELING, T.S.S.F.

This is a contemporary version of a letter written by St. Francis of Assisi to lay men and women, about 1213 A.D.[1]

The contents of the letter are based on a comparison between those who are willing to take control of their own lives and to dedicate all they do to God, and those who are not.

In common with the people of his time, St. Francis believed that one's death was the best indication of how one had lived. The first part suggests that those who have sought "a fuller life" will have a peaceful transition; the long quotation at the end is from Jesus' own death speech in John 17. The second part, on the other hand, describes the miserable passing of a man who has cheated others all his life and then, at the hour of his death, tried to pass on all he has gained to his relatives rather than make proper restitution. Each part is concerned with life, death and destiny.

The final aim of the translation is "to touch the reader in his own time and to draw him into the life-world of the Middle Ages without seeming foreign, and from there into universal issues that are at the perennial center of spirituality."[2] Certainly we can recognize the call to a life of self-awareness and moral restraint, sustained by regular participation in the Eucharist.

---

[1]The text on which this translation is based was discovered by Paul Sabatier in 1900, and worked into English by R. J. Armstrong and I.C. Brady: *Francis and Clare, The Complete Works* (S.P.C.K., London 1982), pp. 63-5.

[2]These are the words Ewert Copusins uses to describe his own translations, *Bonaventure* (S.P.C.L., London 1978), p. 48.

Fr. Aveling is a member of the Third Order of the Episcopalian Society of Saint Francis. He serves as chaplain at the Institute of Technology and College of TAFE in Swinburne, Australia. His reflection resulted from a course in Franciscan spirituality taught by Fr. Thomas Murtagh, O.F.M., graduate of the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University.

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A Letter from Francis of Assisi about Life and Salvation

Those who practice what I say
will find life,
because God's salvation is to be found
in my words.

In the Name of the Lord!

Part One

The first part of this letter
is addressed to those who want a fuller life
in the love of God.

Men and women —
who love the Lord with their whole heart,
    soul, mind and body,
who love their neighbours as themselves,
who live lives of moderation,
    detesting their sins and vices,
who regularly receive
    the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,
whose actions bear witness
    to the transforming power of God —
will be happy and blessed
if they persevere in these things.
The Spirit of the Lord will rest on them
and God shall dwell with them.

We are children of the heavenly Father,
when we do what He wants.
We are also spouses, brothers,
and even mothers,
of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are spouses,
when our soul is united with His,
through the action of the Holy Spirit.

We are brothers,
when we do God's will
as Jesus did.

We are mothers,
when we carry Him
in our hearts and bodies,
through the power of our purity of heart
and His divine love.

We are mothers,
when we give birth to Him
in everything we do,
revealing the presence of God
in the simplicity of our actions.

How glorious, holy and great it is
to be sons and daughters of the heavenly Father!
How holy, consoling, beautiful and wondrous it is
to have such a Spouse!

How holy, pleasant, humble and peaceful,
how sweet, lovable and truly desirable it is
to have a Son and a Brother
like our Lord Jesus Christ!

Like a good shepherd
He gave up His life
for those in His care.
And as He did, He prayed,
"Holy Father,
protect those You have given me
through the power of Your name.
They were Yours
and You gave them to me.
You gave me Your word
and I gave it to them.
They accepted Your words;
They believed that I came from You;
They know You sent me.

"I pray for them
and not for the world:
bless and sanctify them,
as I am sanctified
for their sake.

"I pray for those here
and those who come after them:
that we all may be holy
and one
as You and I are one.

"Grant that where I am,
they will also be;
may they see my glory
in the coming of Your Kingdom.
Amen."

Part Two

The second part of this letter
is addressed to those who are content
to remain in misery.

Men and women —
who are content with their misery,
who never receive
the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who have no control
over their own actions,
who have failed to fulfill
the promise of life,
who are caught fast
in care and anxiety,
who are children of the darkness
in which they exist —
they are blind
because they cannot see the light,
our Lord Jesus Christ.

They are ignorant
because they do not know the Son of God,
the Father's wisdom.

They have no wisdom,
no interest in God.
All they see, acknowledge,
know and do,
is evil.
Their ruin is absolute.

See, you blind fools,
see how you are deceived
by the world, the flesh and the devil.

Sin seems sweet,
the love of God seems hard.

It is your own fault,
as Christ says in the gospel:
"All sin comes
from the heart of man."

The world appears to be yours,
for a while,
but the day is coming
when you will fall ill,
suffer, and die.
Then you will realize
what you have done
and what you have not done.
You will have nothing
but pain and anguish.
The Devil will have the rest!

Every gift, power,
knowledge and wisdom,
you think is yours
will be gone.

When your relatives
receive what is left,
they will curse you
for giving them trash.

You will be food for worms.

Having lost your body
and soul
you will suffer forever
in Hell.

God is love.
I, Francis, beg you
who receive this letter
to accept it,
for it contains
the fragrant words of Christ.

If you cannot read,
have someone else read it to you,
often.

The words of Christ
are spirit and life;
they will assist you
to the very end.

Whoever does not do these things
will be held accountable
on Judgement Day,
before the tribunal
of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Orison to St. Francis*

Gentle Sir, St. Francis, who loved Jesus so much
and taught of his holy Passion night and day,
of the agony of the wounds so often remembered
which in your saintly body you bore imprinted.

The love of Jesus so enflamed you,
and bathed your heart of pity in gracious light,
that it revealed itself upon your hands, feet and side,
as loving him you conformed to the likeness of your beloved.

How bountiful the goodness of so great a Lord,
who showed such love for a poor man,
and by special privilege did him great honour,
making him herald of his Holy Passion.

Gentle Sir, St. Francis, who hold the Lord so dear,
in the heavenly court you have great influence,
and are able to assist your special friends,
for you are Chancellor, bearer of the great seal.

By that special grace which Jesus accorded you,
among the other saints to have a special place,
signifying your conformity to his Passion:
pray to the gentle Jesus that He have mercy on me. Amen.

*A translation by Dr. David L. Jeffrey which appears in *The Anglo-Norman Lyric,* ed. Brian J. Levy and David L. Jeffry.

Symbols of Ascent in *The Soul's Journey into God* of Bonaventure

ELIZABETH WATTS

The hierarchical ascent of *The Soul's Journey into God,*[1] with its associated symbols of ladder, ascent of a mountain, six-winged flying Seraph, and entrance into the Temple, has been well studied. This paper will concentrate on three other symbols of ascent found in the *Journey* which have not received as much attention: the column of smoke, the rise of celestial phenomena (dawn, moon, and sun) into the sky, and the upwelling of a spring. These images, drawn from the *Song of Songs*, are found in Chapter 4 of the *Journey*, where they are associated with human beings (male and female, at first separate but then as a couple) "coming up" or "arising out of" the wilderness. Before discussing these images, however, it may prove useful to briefly consider the nature of the visionary lift which they symbolize.

The Visionary Lift

Experiences of non-ordinary states of consciousness often involve disorientation of the self. Such realms of consciousness alter the normal operations of the senses, which serve to orient the self in the world. The resulting change in perception is often described by mystical and visionary writers as an ascent or lift. At the same time, for the most part, the writers are careful to point out that the "lift" involved is not necessarily a physical phenomenon. The process underlying this experience of ascent seems to be part physiological, part psychological.

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The physiological aspect of the visionary lift is familiar to students of comparative religion from the Hindu kundalini tradition, in which movement of concentrated psychic energy up the spine and into the brain triggers spiritual experience. This energy can be visibly observed as the rise of a flush through the body, as blood follows the yogi's concentration and moves up towards the head.[2]

Others who experience this phenomenon feel it as an outside force which lifts them up in a literal sense. Thus St. Theresa of Avila says: "... often it comes like a strong, swift impulse, before your thought can forewarn you of it or you can do anything to help yourself; you see and feel this cloud, or this powerful eagle, rising and bearing you up with it on its wings... It seemed that I was being lifted up by a force beneath my feet so powerful that I know nothing to which I can compare it...'[3]

In psychological terms, the inner lift may derive from the universal experience of discovering that better views derive from higher places — whether one climbs a tree, a tower, or a mountain. The ascent experience may thus naturally serve the role of an archetype for better vision. If the human mind should find itself in a state of consciousness where normal sense data do not apply, the archetypes by which one orients oneself in the world of the senses may still come into play. Some sort of vision is necessary to re-center the experience and render his or her experience accessible and meaningful in terms of the ordinary levels of consciousness to which the visionary returns. The visionary lift thus raises one beyond the ordinary limits of perception and simultaneously provides a vantage point to orient oneself within the resulting disorientation that such an ascent of the soul involves.

Bonaventure and the Visionary Lift

Various passages in the *Journey* indicate that Bonaventure felt that his particular map of visionary ascent, together with the contemplation his method involved, should trigger the experience of the inner lift within his reader. Thus he says:

> But you have something here to lift you up in wonder... (ch. 5, p. 98)
> Who would not be lifted up in admiration at the sight of such marvels? (ch. 6, p. 105)
> ... when ...you have matter for contemplation of the highest Truth... you have reason to be lifted up to the highest wonder... (ch. 6, p. 106)

Bonaventure laid stress upon personal experience of the lift, perhaps because he felt that this was necessary for an emotional fulfillment to

match the intellectual fulfillment provided through the philosophical contemplation outlined elsewhere in the *Journey*. He says:

> ... no one can be made happy unless he rise above himself,
> not by an ascent of the body,
> but of the heart. (ch. 1, p. 59)

Furthermore, Bonaventure saw the lift as something more than a physiological or a psychological phenomenon. The lift was also supernatural:

> ... but we cannot rise above ourselves,
> unless a higher power lift us up... (ch. 1, p. 59)

The supernatural lift is a co-operative project with God, because prayer is needed to fuel the desire needed as part of the ascent:

> Prayer, then, is the mother and source of the ascent... (ch. 1, p. 60)
> For no one is in any way disposed for divine contemplation that leads to mystical ecstasy (= ascent) unless like Daniel he is a *man of desires* (Dan. 9:23)... (Prologue, p. 55)

The exercise of prayer (or desire) in this respect rings about co-operation with the divine, because

> Divine aid is available,
> to those who seek it from their hearts... (ch. 1, p. 59)
> ... sigh for it (divine aid) in this valley of tears, through fervent prayer... (ch. 1, p. 60)

Because of this implicit connection of prayer with the emotions, prayer provides a doorway into areas of the mind where irrational events can occur. Bonaventure states that this realm of experience is "more a matter of affective experience than rational consideration..." (ch. 4, p. 89). This aspect of prayer may prepare the soul for the coincidence of opposites which is characteristic of Bonaventure's spiritual thought.[4] Thus prayer leads to such paradoxical states as this coincidence of joy and fear:

> Let us pray, therefore, and say to the Lord our God:
> Lead me, Lord, in your path,
> and I will enter in your truth.
> Let my heart rejoice,
> that it may fear your name. (ch.. 1, p. 60)

Bonaventure, here quoting Ps. 85:11, sees prayer as leading the soul into a state where the coincidence of opposites is not merely perceived as an object of intellectual contemplation, as it is elsewhere in the *Journey*, but is felt as an inward, emotional experience of rejoicing and fear. In this paradox lies the "Lord's truth."

Given the importance of the visionary ascent, Bonaventure feels that this is not something that should be left to chance or spontaneity, but a process to be incorporated into the soul as "hierarchical operations." Bonaventure describes the installation of the dynamic process of the ascent within the self in terms of the classic Christian mystical path of purgation, illumination, and perfection which restore the spiritual senses. The three stages of devotion, admiration, and exultation are also involved:

> The image of our soul, therefore, should be clothed with the three theological virtues, by which the soul is purified, illumined, and perfected. When by faith the soul believes in Christ... it recovers its spiritual hearing and sight... When it longs in hope to receive the inspired Word, it recovers... the spiritual sense of smell. When it embraces in love the Word incarnate, it recovers its senses of taste and touch. Having recovered these senses... the soul is prepared for spiritual ecstasy through devotion, admiration, and exultation... (ch. 4, p. 89)

The first stage, purgation, corresponds to the theological virtue of faith. Bonaventure, quoting *Song of Songs* 3:6, sees the soul in this condition as

> ... (flowing) from the fulness of devotion, by which the soul becomes *like a column of smoke from aromatic spices of myrrh and frankincense*... (ch. 4, p. 89)

This first symbol of ascent, the column of aromatic smoke, demonstrates with precision several important aspects of the initial experience of the visionary lift and the reorientation of consciousness that this entails. As smoke, the initial close encounter with this rising column would cause stinging of the eyes as well as the darkening of ordinary vision. This temporary blindness signals the disorientation of normal vision that accompanies transition to the supernatural realm. This disengagement of one's excperience from normal parameters may be experienced as a painful purgation.

The column of smoke illustrates the upward lift in two ways. Dark and confusing as it may be for its experiencer, the column of smoke rises through its own inward dynamic. This ascent then forms the basic direction by which the soul reorients itself.

This column is described in *Song of Songs* 3:6 as "coming up from the desert." This column of dust thrown up by Solomon's journey, this dark pillar of dust, like the dust from which we are made and to which we return — this column, confusing and blinding as a column of incense-smoke, and like it, dark with promise and purgation, is not found within the settled precincts of a temple, where one would expect to discover

the smoke of incense and sacrifice. Instead, the column rises from the seemingly profane wilderness lanscape. This is because the experience of disorientation is, by its very nature, "untamed" and uncontrollable. The desert-wilderness is often viewed symbolically as a threatening, inhospitable area where human beings may wander and become lost — and its darkness of the process of purgation is also often viewed in a similar way, as an area where one may lose onself, and which is therefore threatening.

... the final state of this ascent brings the experiencer back down to earth ...

The column of smoke does not prove to be as inhuman as all this might suggest. The incense from which Bonaventure sees the smoke arising is associated with Solomon's procession as it comes up out of the desert, "breathing of myrrh and frankincense and every exotic perfume" (*Song* 3:6). Both the formation of this incense and the formation of the inner experience symbolized by the incense are human activities, the result of a journey like that of the king and the merchants mentioned throughout the *Song of Songs*. There may also be a correspondance between the wilderness and merchant/kingly life. Both commerce and politics are often viewed as spiritually barren, areas where the presence of God seems conspicuously absent. Yet the wilderness and profane human society are the background against which the initial experience of God "rises up." That this initial experience of God is dark and confusing in such a milieu is understandable, since God cannot be measured by the standards of wilderness or society. On the contrary, the smoky darkness, with its inherent dynamic of ascent, provides an escape from the limitations of barren wilderness/society.

The column of smoke in the *Song* recalls the pillar of cloud which guided the Israelites on their journey from Egypt to the promised land. This resonance emphasizes the function of the cloud of darkness, not only as a guide up the ladder of being through one's own inner experience, as Bonaventure describes, but also through the flat, barren, everyday desert of ordinary human society. This double function gives such pillars the ability to act simultaneously on two paradoxically opposed levels of

being: inner and outer, sacred and profane, individual and collective. Because of their dual function in these opposed worlds, these pillars are a coincidence of opposites.

The pillar of cloud of the Exodus, resonating with the rising incense of purgation and faith in the *Song*, also demonstrates a coincidence between the vertical and the horizontal, between the journey up to God and the journey through human society. This ever-moving pillar, like the wandering ark of the covenant that is fixed to no single spot, demonstrates a permanent "disorientation" with reference to human geography, and so orients its followers towards a higher dimension.

The pillar of smoke purges its experiencer from reliance on the clearly-perceived objects of the senses and re-orients the self through the upward lift into darkness and faith. This occurs through a coincidence of opposites — the merchant/politician's self-oriented labor in desert and wilderness, which paradoxically compounds the dark incense of mystical experience.

The experiencer is pulled by this rising dynamic into a realm of experience which seems to have no goal. But this presence is discovered to be not wholly dark. Like all good guides, the dark column of rising smoke foreshadows and envelopes its goal. For the *Song* sees not merely a column of smoke in the wilderness, but also the figure of Solomon within it. Solomon is the human face of the dark smoke. He incorporates the supernatural promise represented by the smoke, and thus integrates divine or cosmic dimensions within himself as a king:

> What is this coming up from the desert
> like a column of smoke,
> breathing of myrrh and frankincense
> and every exotic perfume?
> Here comes Solomon's litter... (*Song* 3:6-7)

This image of rulership, of control, opens out beyond itself, for Solomon, king though he might be, is nevertheless incomplete. He emerges from the wilderness, riding up (or on) the column of smoke, in order to find what is missing, his bride, and be wedded to her (*Song* 3:11). Thus the initial stage of the threefold way points beyond itself to its conclusion and center, union.

The Second Stage

In the first stage of the visionary ascent, the soul found its experience to be as dark smoke to the ordinary world of vision. The second aspect of the ascent provides light, as befits a process which so deeply involves experience of the coincidence of opposites. Where darkness is found, light might also be expected to shine. Thus Bonaventure proceeds: "(in)

the second (stage) ... the soul becomes like the dawn, the moon, and the sun..." (ch. 4, pp. 89-90). The original passage in the *Song* upon which he draws reads: "Who is this arising like the dawn, fair as the moon, resplendent as the sun...?" (*Song* 6:10).

This sequence of images of light (dawn, moon, sun) stands in opposition to the smoke of the first stage. These celestial lights also recall the pillar of fire which alternated with the pillar of cloud during the Exodus. This seems to indicate that if the first dark ascent of initial visionary experience, with its accompanying disorientation, is accepted by the soul — first through blind faith in the dynamic of the experience, later on perhaps through the perspective that the passage of time can give — that the dark ascent becomes fully incorporated into the self and therefore, in some ways, part of the self — less unknown, less strange — therefore less dark, and more light.

In the *Songs* quotation, this light-bringing integration of the disorienting visionary lift into the self is described as dawn, moon, and sun. Dawn first of all symbolizes the coming of the new day; not yet its full arrival, but merely the promise. This promise is not dark like the column of the incense of purgation, but rather something clearly visible to an inner eye readjusted to new parameters of vision. And it is vision, and therefore hope, that is the theological virtue associated with this middle stage of illumination on the mystic path.

Like the moon and the sun which follow it in this particular sequence, dawn provides an image of ascent as it climbs up the sky. But dawn is transient, not able to maintain itself. This instability, which is a "darkness" in the sense that no definite form can be perceived, allows a greater light to follow and supercede it. Thus dawn can also be seen as containing within itself a map of the transition it symbolizes and the goal to be reached. Like the treefold mystic path, dawn emerges from darkness, at first barely distinguishable from it. Then dawn rises shining into the sky, only to lose itself in the greater brightness of the day.

Dawn has another function. In a world of endless alternation between night and day, dawn provides a bridge that spans the otherwise irreconcilable opposites of darkness and light. This bridge is unstable and transient in time, but eternal in the realm of symbol.

One might expect the sun to follow the image of dawn, but instead it is the moon which appears next. It is as if the instability of dawn, in terms of inner experience, will first plunge one's consciousness back into darkness, before leading on to the day, in a sort of twilight experience.

Like dawn, the moon brings light to darkness, but the moon also has darkness ("disorientation") built into itself through its phases. The moon is a light which interiorizes darkness, a light that darkness finds approach-

able. The moon represents a way of illumination or a type of vision which is not limited to finite categories, but opens beyond to further darknesses, thereby triggering new purgations and new ascents into the mystery of God.

The moon is also a timemarker for human society, indicating the passage of weeks and months. In its supernatural aspect, it serves as a similar guide for the phases of the mystical journey. The phases of the moon represent the alternation between purgation and illumination on the mystic way, between the mysteries and the revelations of God, between his absence and his presence.

This alternation is associated in the *Song* with feminine experience, since it is the bride who is "beautiful as the moon." Solomon followed an exterior journey through the human world, while the bride experiences the journey, or change, within herself in a superterrestrial realm. The couple illustrate a pair of opposite ways of experiencing the transformative lift into spiritual experience.

The moon's alterations between light and darkness might also be understood as illustrating one of the fundamental aesthetics of God. Here is a beauty of light which is not visualized in neo-Platonic terms as an eternal beauty beyond change, but rather as a sort of kinetic sculpture of higher reality. Contemplation of this draws the mind to higher illumination by using the mechanism of finite alteration that might otherwise serve as a confusing block to such understanding. Even so, lunar light and darkness are both finite experiences, which must disappear, even as the dawn.

Dawn and the moon both provide maps through the confusing dynamics of supernatural light and darkness, within the structure of their own symbolism as well as in counterpoint to one another. Now the sun appears as the third aspect of this middle stage of illumination. The sun drives away darkness to a greater degree than either the dawn or the moon. It also lacks the complex interplay of opposites represented by the phases of the moon. As brightest of all the lights represented in the *Song* list, the sun can reveal more than any other type of illumination. Yet its sway, perhaps because of its very intensity, does not last for long. The moon gives order and sequence to a time period of a month, whereas the brilliant sun rules over a space of time no longer than a day. Then the sun, as well as the soul in the process of illumination which it represents, are plunged once more into darkness. Yet by this time, the ascent out of darkness has become a quotidien resource — by implication, present every day of one's life.

In conclusion, we might say that the second stage of the spiritual life, symbolized by the passage in the *Song* which Bonaventure draws upon, represents the establishment within the self of both light and darkness.

In illumination, the dark pillar of the first stage expands to become the all-encompassing darkness of night. Within this darkness the dawning of the illuminative way occurs, and the dynamic encounter with light is established. Just as the Israelites were in the wilderness, the soul is now guided by ascending pillars of darkness and of light.

The Third Stage

The third stage on the mystic way is described by Bonaventure as one which "arises from the superabundance of exultation, by which the soul, overflowing with delights of the sweetest pleasure, leans wholly upon her beloved" (ch. 4, p. 90). He is quoting in part from *Songs* 8:5: "Who is this coming up from the desert, leaning on her lover?"

Here the initial "coming up from the wilderness" of *Song* 3:5 is repeated. The upward movement from the unknown wilderness of God continues, with the important difference that here what comes up is not inchoate, dark, or puzzling, but the clearly distinguished image of two human beings, the "Solomon" of faith and the "bride" of hope who are now united in love, which is the virtue associated with the third stage of union upon the mystic way.

In sum, we might say that the full journey through all three stages starts from the disorientation which is unavoidable for a finite consciousness as it strives to perceive a universe which is so much larger than it is. From the darkness which results from this perception of the infinite, finite consciousness learns to re-orient itself within darkness and to find illumination. This realization lifts it far above the dimension of ordinary experience. But the final state of this ascent brings the experiencer back down to earth — not alone, or unsupported, but with a counterpart, an opposite-other. Both can now be united in love, because their opposition is overcome by the quality of ascent incorporated in each. This bond forms the final human integration of the coincidence of opposites.

Bonaventure describes this stage as "overflowing with delights" (ch. 43, p. 90). The verb "overflow" recalls the imagery of the fountain in *Song* 4:15:

> Fountain of the garden,
> well of living weater...

This recalls the role of the *fontalis plenitudo* as an image of God in Bonaventure's thought. In any case, the fountain provides our last image of ascent. Although the symbol of the fountain is only hinted at, the word "overflow" might very well carry scriptural resonances in Bonaventure's thought.

The image of the upward-welling fountain differs in some important ways from the previous images of ascent. The column of smoke is mysterious as it billows out against the confines of finite form. The images of dawn, moon, and sun are clearly celestial. But the welling spring, like Solomon and his bride, is earthbound and ordinary. The water does not rise into the air, or high above into the sky, but simply wells up from the depths of the earth and then runs along its surface, "leaning" or supporting itself upon the ground even as the bride supports herself upon her beloved (*Song* 8:5).

Both images, that of the upwelling spring and the human couple "coming up" from the desert, combine two planes of being within themselves, the horizontal terrestrial one of ordinary experience, as well as that of the supernatural vertical (visionary lift). Both Solomon and his bride are upright as they emerge from the wilderness. The couple over the horizontal lands of the earth in the fashion of the pillars of light and darkness, whose dynamic and vision they have incorporated into themselves. In the same way, the water of the running spring travels across the face of the earth, but is able to do this only because of its innate upward flow.

Charity, or love, is associated with this last stage in the mystical path. Love cannot exist without the other, with whom it seeks to unite itself. Bride and bridegroom represent this to each other, as do the spring and the land to which it gives life. When this last stage is well-established in the soul, love can flow through a finite human being in an infinite way, ceaseless as a spring. Water's ability to combine with its like in a total merging, together with its necessity for life, well symbolizes the perfect union of love.

Importance of the Visionary Lift

Bonaventure stresses the important, even inescapable nature of the mystic path, or visionary ascent, by pointing out that if this process is not developed within, the lift or ascent will then appear in a threatening way in the outside world. As modern psychology points out, if important conflicts (in Bonaventure's terms, tension between opposites) are not resolved and integrated within the self as a harmonious, dynamic coincidence of opposites, then these conflicts will be projected outward upon the world as hostile and uncontrollable forces. These unresolved conflicts will then torment the individual until he or she decides to admit the conflicting opposites as part of the self and deal with them on that basis. Thus Bonaventure says:

> ... apply your heart,
> so that in all creatures you may

> see, hear, praise, love and worship, glorify and honor
> your God *lest the whole world rise against you*.
> For because of this (i. e., failure to search for God)
> *the whole world will fight against the foolish*...
> (ch. 1, p. 68, emphasis added)

Bonaventure implies that if the difficult process of visionary ascent is incorporated into the self, then the self will not have the experience of having to fight against the world, or of feeling that the world is in an unalterable opposition to itself. This is because the visionary ascent involves the incorporation of a cosmic aspect into the self. It is as if, in Bonaventure's view, the dynamic of the visionary ascent is so deeply imbedded within creation, throughout all its various inner, outer, and supernatural realities, that if human beings do not recognize the ladder of ascent as an integral part of themselves, and rise to participation and union of their nature with God, that the rest of creation will rise anyway, leaving the soul behind in a state of intolerable conflict with its own inborn nature and that of the entire world.

Bonaventure gives a central position to the power of free will in advising his reader on how to commence aligning oneself with the process of the visionary lift:

> And so those who do not wish to heed these things
> ... are without excuse;
> for they are unwilling to be transported out of
> darkness.
> into the marvellous light of God... (ch. 2, p. 77)

If consent is not given, if the will is unwilling, then the fundamental process of ascent and transformation of consciousness is ignored. True confusion results. This confusion is radically different from the darkness of the initial stage of purgation, where an inner, upwardly rising dynamic moves the state of blindness beyond itself to illumination. But "the fool" does not have this "blind faith," thus his or her confusion is no purgation, but instead a dark prison. Bonaventure sets forth the two alternatives in his usual succinct fashion. Faith ("belief") is pointed out as the expression of the necessary assent:

> The radiation of contemplation
> of this Light
> lifts up the wise in wonder;
> and on the contrary
> it leads to confusion the fools
> —who do not believe that they may understand... (ch. 3, p. 85)

Fortunately, if the dynamics of visionary ascent are inherent within creation, such a sojourn in "foolish confusion" is not doomed to be permanent. The rest of Bonaventure's *Journey* illustrates the many doorways, inner and outer, natural and supernatural, which can lead one into this realm of transformation. In the vision of this Franciscan, one can always open one's eyes and look closely at any aspect of the world and find a column of incense smoke rising towards the sky.

Conclusion

Bonaventure refers obliquely to this sequence of ascent images once again, when he quotes Pseudo-Dionysius' description of the operations of the Trinity:

> ... a *darkness* which is super-resplendent
> and in which everything *shines forth*
> and which fills to *overflowing*
> invisible intellects
> with the splendors of invisible goods
> that surpass all good. (ch. 7, p. 114, quoting *De mystica theologia* I, 1; emphases added)

Here once again we see a pattern which moves from darkness, through light, to a welling up. Thus last, pure motion of ceaseless ascent is not the rising of an incense-smoke which will eventually burn out, or the rising of various celestial phenomena which are all destined to set, but rather a continuous upwelling which goes on without regard for the temporal constraints of night and day, or the demands of conflicting opposites, It is in this mundane image of the spring, which is also the symbol of the *fontalis plenitudo,* that stability in the world of visionary and mystical experience is found. It is as a spring that one "leans upon the breast of the beloved."

In terms of the Exodus theme, this upwelling spring also represents the finding of water in the desert, the fulfillment of the mystical quest for the infinite in the world of the finite. Travel through the realms of time and its restlessly alternating sets of opposites — light and darkness, insight and confusion — is like a journey through the desert wilderness, where nothing can take root, where no human being can find a permanent home, because the surroundings are simply too unstable and too hostile. To incorporate the visionary lift is to "come up from the desert," guided by darkness, light, and human relevance, and to overflow with the water that gives life, love, and is itself a source of outflowing guidance.

Footnotes

[1]All references are to *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis*. Translation and Introduction by Ewert Cousins. New York: Paulist Press, 1978.

Biblical quotations not contained in citations from *The Soul's Journey into God* are from *The New Jerusalem Bible*.

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[2]A vivid, subjective account of kundalini energies is found in Gopi Krishna, *Kundalini*. Berkeley: Shambala Books, 1986. A more formal introduction is found in Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality, and Freedom*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, pp. 244-9.

[3]Chapter 20, pp. 190-1. *The Life of Teresa of Jesus: The Autobiography of St. Teresa of Avila,* translated and edited by E. Allison Peers. Garden City: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1960.

[4]Ewert Cousins, *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978.

Prophetic Witness in the World: Challenges to Franciscan Formation for the Future

ALMA DUFAULT, F.M.M.

INTRODUCTION

The space age has given us a more comprehensive picture of our place in creation: we have been awakened to a new vision of God's Reign and saving power. Salvation begins now! The Church is sign and sacrament of that salvation, continually being shaped by the Holy Spirit through prophetic witness, which breaks through to future visions of the Kingdom. This is a living experience of the creative power of God in the lives of Christians.

New realities are emerging in today's world, and these signs of the times are the context for discerning what is prophetic witness. A crucial aspect of this discernment for Franciscans will be how the charism is carried into the future. Are those in formation now, being prepared to meet the risks and difficulties of the nineties and thereafter so that their lives will be powerful signs of God's love?

For the purposes of our consideration today, I would like to reflect with you about what constitutes this prohpetic witness, and then look at two areas of vital importance: namely the awakening of the poor and the search for peace in the world community. Any number of issues in these

Sister Alma was the 1988 recipient of the Justice and Peace Medal presented by Saint Bonaventure University for her significant contributions to justice and peace. Her life of Franciscan witness together with her unusual gift of Franciscan insight did not escape the notice of the ten thousand Franciscan Missionaries of Mary who elected her as Assistant and then Superior General. Sister Alma now serves as Secretary General of the International Franciscan Conference of the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order established to deepen the values of its new Rule and encourage the pursuit of justice and peace. The present article is the talk she delivered at the Franciscan Formation Directors Conference at St. Boanventure University in July of this year.

areas challenge us to bring forth treasures from our Franciscan tradition, critical for witness and our formation planning.

Perhaps I should note that my reflections have been undoubtedly influenced by my own experience as a member of a Franciscan institute that is essentially missionary and international.

FRANCISCAN PROPHETIC WITNESS FOR THE KINGDOM

The way Francis lived the Gospel was a great insight and uniqueness in the thirteenth century Church. It was a new response, and began a reform in the church.

> No one showed me what I should do, but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the form of the Holy Gospel.[1]

Living the Gospel in the midst of the world is a particular witness required of Franciscans, and it should be characterized by fidelity, ecclesial awareness, disappropriation, and reverence. These are prophetic qualities which question and probe beyond accepted values. They are qualities for the Kingdom which integrate the 'now' and the 'not yet' in the present. Our vocation often puts us at the cutting edge of situations, placing us in tension, especially when the Good News we try to live, encounters injustice, oppression and suffering. Such calls to witness are often surrounded by ambiguity, an ambiguity that must be faced in fidelity to the Word of God. Only in this way will prophetic witness in the world be faithful to the vision of God's Reign.

Both Francis and Clare incorporated the reality of the institutional Church into their life, vision and work. At the same time, they allowed themselves to be permeated by a Gospel understanding reaching back to the foundations, to Jesus and the disciples. Faithful witness requires this ecclesial awareness which is not limited by a particular historical context. Because of such awareness, the Franciscan way became an instrument of reform in the Church, opening new avenues of expression in the way of being Church.

Our understanding of God's will for creation is mediated through discernment from within concrete commitments, but this discernment is predicted on disappropriation, i.e., liberation from anything that hinders freedom. One who is a pilgrim and minor can live with the ambiguity required in the ongoing discernment of God's will. Disappropriation is total openness to God, letting God be God in one's life. Do we not hear Francis say: "Keep back nothing of yourselves for yourselves."[2]

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Francis' vision of how his brothers were

to relate to one another, was founded on true reverence. We have only to recall the Canticle of the Creatures to remember how Francis showed reverence. Although we do not know the ultimate details of God's plan for creation, we do know that God loves all creation with an infinite and gratuitous love. A deep reverence towards all is witness to this wonderful reality. In a world rampant with violence, it is prophetic to stand contemplatively before all things, in an attitude of respect and reverence, acknowledging the sacred, present in the other, however hidden it may be.

CHALLENGES TO FRANCISCAN FORMATION FOR THE FUTURE

The Awakening of the Poor

When the Latin American Bishops met in Medellin in 1968 and took a preferential option for the poor, one can say in retrospect that their choice shook the consciousness of the world church, enabling it to relate human liberation to salvation history in a more meaningful way.[3] In a new and challenging manner since then, the poor occupy a critical place in the Church's mission.

A preferential option for the poor is a recognition that they, by their very position in society, caught in the web of oppressive forces, question our commitment to a Gospel life. Based on a Christian theological understanding of liberation inserted in history, the option for the poor requires that we begin from the experience of the people, where we can discover the action of God present. Our first task is to free their particular gifts for building up society with Gospel values.[4]

A new understanding of contemplation has begun to emerge through solidarity with the poor. This contemplation recognizes that they stand in sacred space, because they are a privileged presence of God who chose the Incarnation as the path of redemption. Their space is not to be preserved, but it is a starting point for solidarity in a journey of collaborating with God to bring about the transformation needed for the Kingdom. Deep reverence accompanied by a continual paring away of privilege, understood in the broadest sense, is the only way to experience a genuine solidarity, and achieve the contemplative stance for this journey.[5]

There are also unresolved questions and new situations which continually challenge us to keep on struggling in our option for the poor. The positive and negative uses of power, the question of power and powerlessness, and those of violence and non-violence continually question us from within painful life experiences of sisters and brothers. The challenges extend from clearly defined situations of oppression and injustice, to those

which are less easily perceived, e.g., the question of sexism, racism, discrimination against victims of AIDS. We can only speak of these questions credibly if we do so from the side of the poor. This is the crux of prophetic witness.

The place of the poor is always a place of violence because of the oppression which makes people poor. Today there are various examples of violence, active and passive non-violence. While we may take a stand for a particular way, and we as Franciscans need to do that, there are times when violence simply erupts. Increasingly, we witness that the poor and those who stand in solidarity with them, trying to overcome the evil affecting their lives, almost inevitably experience the impact of violence. We remember all those who have given the witness of their life.[6]

The option for the poor is a choice which appeals directly to the Franciscan tradition with its challenge to rediscover the impact of simple Gospel life lived with brothers and sisters among the people. Pope John Paul II reminds us in *The Social Concerns of the Church* that solidarity seeks to go beyond itself, to take on the specifically Christian dimensions of total gratuity, forgiveness and reconciliation. One's neighbor is then not only a human being with his or her own rights and a fundamental equality with everyone else, but becomes the living image of God the Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and placed under the permanent action of the Holy Spirit.[6]

The attitude of minority enables one to be inserted powerless among the powerless, and it gives us the basis from which we can seek together with others, alternative witness for our world today. It enables us to become advocates on behalf of the voiceless, and to discover a positive power in the power of weakness joined in solidarity. As Franciscans we need to free ourselves from any position of dominance based on superior strength and more resources. The challenge is to be in solidarity in such a way as to bring about a liberation because we believe in the potential of those who are poor and join ourselves with them. Disappropriation and non-violence are particular perspectives of Gospel life that Franciscans can bring to the option for the poor and the living out of solidarity required today.

Readiness to move from our positions of strength and resources towards disappropriation, requires evengelization and reverence. These moments of evangelization often come about in unexpected ways. A Filipina Sister, working among the poor, remarked: "Working with the poor, I experienced in them the God who listens and who waits. And experiencing God thus, I gradually learned how to listen and to wait."[8] And I recall that once, when I was in India, I was called to the door of the mission where I was staying. There an elderly woman greeted me. She appeared quite

frail and obviously was very poor. As she welcomed me, she held out her hand, offering me an egg.

The question repeatedly cuts across our lives: How do you stand with the poor? In contemporary society we need to open ourselves to hear the cry of all those who are poor, allowing that they send us to Christ; and we need to stand in prayer in such a way that we are open to Christ sending us back to all those who bear the marks of his suffering in some way. How do we prepare ourselves and those who walk with us in formation, to be, as Francis and Clare, "... completely new through the Holy Spirit",[9] pilgrims, minor, powerless, poor, persons who can stand with the poor of the earth and witness to the Kingdom with attitudes of contemplation, disappropriation, reconciliation, minority, fidelity, and reverence?

How do we prepare ourselves and those who walk with us in formation to be . . . persons who can stand with the poor of the earth and witness to the Kingdom with attitudes of contemplation, disappropriation, reconciliation, minority, fidelity, and reverence?

As is any educational process, those being initiated into the Franciscan way of life need to be exposed, at some point, to the realities of the life of the poor, and accompanied by those who can reflect with them on these realities in the light of the Gospel, the teaching of the Church, and their own particular Franciscan charism, in prayer, contemplation, and concrete service along with the poor in view of the Reign of God. During the time of initial formation, as well as throughout life, experiential space must be left for the action of the Spirit so that on-going conversion can take place. I am reminded of some novitiates, such as those I saw in India, which are located in a simple, poor section of a completely Hindu population, in view of formation to a life of service among the poor, of contemplation, and of dialogue with persons of other faith traditions. This type of formation can help prepare the Franciscan for witness to solidarity with the poor throughout life, as one who, in all circumstances, speaks with the voice of the poor, a person completely committed to Jesus Christ alone, who cannot be coopted by others.

The Global Community's Search for Peace

John Paul II in his message at Assisi on October 27, 1986 called upon leaders of all religious faith traditions to journey together towards the unifying point of peace through prayer, pilgrimage, silence and fasting.[10] Peace initiatives from leaders such as Mikhail Gorbachev, make us realize that this search for peace is not limited to a particular group of people, but has become a quest in our times that is drawing people together across all kinds of barriers to focus at least minimally on survival, and beyond that, to a better realization of human community.

These peace initiatives in our present world, where so many thousands of women, children and men are suffering in ways that defy description, remind us that justice is an integral element to any genuine peace. In fact, justice and peace are essentially bound together, and oblige us to move beyond a concept of peace that is focussed only on good relations among the nations, relations often determined by vested interests that support outrages, scandalous even for those who have a very limited understanding of justice.

The human community on planet earth is an image that reminds us how interdependent we are upon one another, and how fragile the infrastructures are which hold us together and sustain our habitat. The Judeo-Christian tradition, among others, teaches us that all we have has been entrusted to us by the Lord: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."[11]

Innumerable signs of destruction and selfishness confront us. Rivers and forests have been ruined because of our desire to have more and better; relatively few nations control large portions of the earth's land, exploiting the natural resources to the advantage fo the rich and powerful. Many, if not most nations, claim an exclusive ownership over the land they inhabit. Increasing numbers of refugees question such a sense of ownership that shuts out homeless peoples. Militarization, in the name of national security, is further evidence of this sense of autonomy. Our attitude toward refugees and strangers is the ongoing test of our faithfulness and commitment to the peace Christ came to bring.[12]

The emphasis the Holy Father placed on prayer, silence and fasting, at the Assisi Peace Event, recalls to us the need to develop our personal integrity which enables us to experience peace within ourselves and then with others. Pilgrimage calls us to move out from ourselves and relate with others in search for a common goal. We look to the day when all nations will come together for the feast of the Kingdom. Such a coming together requires that we help to bring about that peace founded upon just relationships, respect for the human person in whatever condition

and reverence towards nature, recognizing the relativity of ownership when tested against that basic value: 'The earth is the Lord's.'[13] We are stewards of the gift of creation, and share our stewardship with sisters and brothers in a world community.

This image of world community keeps stretching us beyond where we have been. There has been a radical change in our way of approaching peoples of other faiths since Vatican II recognized the active presence of the Holy Spirit among the followers of the different religious traditions.[14] Likewise, the teaching of the Council on human freedom has led us beyond a view that these people were merely objects of evangelizing activity and conversion. Respect for their otherness, their integrity as persons who must follow their conscience have become basic criteria for approaching our sisters and brothers of other faiths, and has opened for us a way to human community until now not realized. A dialogue of life has become an important means of searching together to build a more just and human society for the benefit of all. More and more people of different faiths realize the many basic values which are shared, and this helps to break down centuries old barriers. As the experience of this kind of witness has grown, its intent is to be among a people in such a way that one's life bears witness to the goodness and saving power of God, in respect and humility before what God is already doing among this people.

Here it is of special interest to note the careful way in which Francis described how the friars could go among the Saracens. It is of even more interest that this could have been his way of responding to the call of the Fourth Lateran Council, to do something about providing a common action against the encroaching power of Islam.[15]

In Chapter XVI of the Rule of 1221, Francis notes that there are two ways for the friars to go among the Saracens:

> As for the brothers who go, they can live spiritually among [the Saracens and nonbelievers] in two ways. One is not to engage in arguments or disputes, but to be subject to every human creature for God's sake (1 Pet. 2:13) and to acknowledge that they (the Friars) are Christians. Another way is to proclaim the word of God when they see that it pleases the Lord...[16]

The fact that today we are also faced with a renewed missionary elan among the Moslems, as well as a challenge to collaborate in a search for peace, essential to the survival of the planet, make this caring interpretation relevant to our discernment of how we are to approach those of other faith convictions.

A few years ago a Muslim friend of our sisters in Algeria told how he had perceived Christianity as European, especially since all the Christians he saw around there, were Europeans. This image was further affirmed by the nationalities of our sisters there, who were French, Spanish or

Italian. Then, one day a Japanese sister was missioned to Algeria, and our friend said that suddenly his image changed, and he began to understand something of universality. This is the kind of undergirding needed for building a new world vision, and it is good to note that this kind of living witness in international communities is taking place increasingly.

This search for peace and global community reminds us of Francis' attitude and sense of relationships with God's creatures, which has endured the transition of time, and is a basis for all genuine dialogue and collaboration. Here I would like to say a word about collaboration, which I believe is an important element in our prophetic witness as Franciscan, engaged in this search for peace and world community. We have seen significant development of collaboration in recent years, something that needs to continue and grow. Many of us had the joy of experiencing its meaning when we worked on the Rule for the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order Regular, and in the subsequent establishment of the International Franciscan Conference. Your coming together for these days of study and reflection on formation are another wonderful instance of this collaboration, and you could cite many more, I am sure. You have undoubtedly heard of the international project in the Franciscan Family to apply for NGO (non-governmental organization) status in the United Nations. This is only the beginning, but it opens before us a vast arena of new possibilities for colllaboration and corporate witness. All these efforts bring us together and strengthen our Franciscan commitment, enabling us to impact the world with the evangelical spirit. This corporate witness needs to be given by us, both women and men together, the followers of Francis and Clare.

In the Canticle of the Creatures we see the Holy Spirit universalizing Francis' relationship to all creation.[17] Francis is the romantic poet in the best sense of that tradition. He had a tremendous capacity to integrate the vision of the creative and caring God with the reality he experienced in his life situation. Maybe we need to read the stories of the Fioretti again, and dream with Francis of what could be; of what it would be like to live as sisters and brothers in a loving and caring relationship, based on justice, peace and the integrity of creation. I believe there are moves in that direction. A prominent United Nations' personality has written:

> Some day our planet will be a world spiritual democracy. Today's international community is only an assemblage of power. ... But at some point in our evolution the question of the proper representation of the people in the management of our globe will certainly pose itself, as will the spiritual quest for our proper place in the universe and in the eternal stream of time. There is urgent need to determine the cosmic or divine laws which must rule our behavior on earth.[18]

Two of my Sisters, one Lebanese and one Syrian, both living in Beirut at the time, told us at a General Chapter a few years ago, how they, along with other sisters had forged community there in the midst of war and the continual terror of the situation. Apart from the external difficulties, there were difficulties within the community due to the hostilities which existed between Lebanon and Syria. Close family members of Lebanese and Syrian Sisters were at war with each other, and could not understand how the Sisters could live together. Sensitivities ran deep, and it was not easy. But the Sisters were convinced that if peace were something possible, then they would have to find a way to witness to that hope. And they did, and still do. Through a deep commitment to being a community centered on the Word of God and the Eucharist they forged, in pain and joy, the bonds which unite them in a powerful missionary witness to peace and universal community.

Having reflected upon the world's search for peace, how do we continue to prepare ourselves and future Franciscans to make our contribution? How do we foster openness and readiness for change, and most importantly how do we develop a discerning spirit, with disappropriation and detachment, keeping nothing of ourselves for ourselves?

How do we help those who would be Franciscans understand the interrelatedness of all created reality; that there can be no peace without justice, and no justice without deep reverence and respect for all of God's creatures and the land they inhabit? How do we bring them into contact with the earth, letting them touch the earth and know its feel, so that they can indeed care for it? Here I am reminded of seminarians in Vietnam, whom I visited eight years ago. The government required that all seminarians give a service to their country by tilling the soil for a certain period of time during their training. And all the orders grouped their seminarians together for one year of formation, integrating agricultural service. It was a different kind of intercongregational program, and probably would not have been planned that way, had the government not required it, albeit for its own purposes.

Perhaps we feel at times that there are more questions than there are answers. Yet, daily in fact, we do live with change, and no doubt it is through that simple, yet vital process initiated in an especially forceful way in the life of the Church by Pope John XXIII, that we live and witness to the unchangeable love and care of God for all creation. This witness is given both by reading the signs of the times and continually returning to our founding charisms, trying to distinguish always the essential, what is not negotiable, from what is relative.

CONCLUSION

Both Francis and Clare had a deep ecclesial awareness, and this allowed them to do something new, needed in their time. In our time, solidarity with the poor, common efforts towards a global community, based on justice, peace and respect for all creation, confront us directly with a challenge to live out our witness in fidelity, disappropriation, ecclesial awareness and reverence. These are attitudes which know how to assume the past tradition and the present ferment, enabling them to interact in a way that opens towards the Kingdom. It is this encounter which facilitates the Word of God penetrating the layers of history and culture, which have frequently become impervious to its impact. This poses a very serious matter for formation. We cannot assume the responsibility of our Franciscan vocation to live the Gospel in the midst of the world, and therefore, be prophetic witnesses, unless we understand the history and culture from which we come. This is a first step in questioning the values of this culture, in speaking the Gospel Word in such a way that it can be a transforming power in the lives of people. It is also a first step in understanding other cultures.

Our openness to the Kingdom points towards universality. Women and men are becoming committed to live in a world community. For us who have been given the responsibility to carry the charism of Francis and Clare into the present age, and into the future, it follows that our participation in the world community needs to be informed by an ecclesial awareness. We are growing more aware of what it means to be Church, to be the people of God. This involves a search for greater participation in the life of the Church; it will be most effectively crafted in openness to the universal Church, lived in communion with the Bishop of Rome and with other local churches throughout the world. Sincere appreciation of one another sharing common faith in Jesus Christ, and claiming a diversity of histories and cultural values characterized the pilgrim People of God today, called to give prophetic witness. As followers of Francis and Clare we are part of this mighty and wonderful people on the way to the Kingdom.

Since we are *all* in a constant process of on-going Franciscan formation, our spirits need to be open to let Francis' words ring in our ears and touch our hearts and affect our lives: "I have done my part; may Christ teach you yours."[18]

Notes

[1]Testament, 14.
[2]Letter to the Order, 29,

[3]M. Motte, fmm, *A Critical Examination of Mission Today*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Mission Association, 1987. pp. 57, 60.

[4]*Ibid*., p. 63.

[5]*Ibid*. pp. 58-59.

[6]*Ibid*. pp. 61-63.

[7]John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 40.

[8]Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, *Experiences of the Provinces on Putting into Practice the Orientations of the General Chapter—1984*, Rome, 1988. p. 87.

[9]cf. Julian of Speyer, 18.

[10]*Documentation Catholique*, December 7, 1986, no. 21, p. 1070.

[11]Psalm 24.

[12]*Your Will be Done: Mission in Christ's Way*. Geneva: CWME, World Council of Churches, 1988. pp. 18-23.

[13]*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 42-43.

[14]cf. "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to non-christian Religions," *The Documents of Vatican II*, (1966), nos. 1, 2.

[15]Notes to Chapter XVI of the Rule of 1221, in *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works*, translated and introduction by R. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and I. Brady, O.F.M. New York: Paulist Press, 1982. p. 1221.

[16]*Ibid*., pp. 121-122.

[17]*Ibid*., Introduction, p. 18.

[18]Robert Muller, *New Genesis: Shaping a Global Spirituality*, Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1984. p. 10.

[19]2 Celano 214.

Blind, Yet Seeing

Almost blind, yet seeing,
He lies upon a pallet, in poor clothes
— Not his. He remembers days,
Years gone by. Times of pain.
Times of hardship, times of trial,
But all times of joy. His joy,
God's joy, the joy of a lover.

He remembers being father,
Brother, son, guide, follower, sage, fool,
Shepherd and sheep. He sees himself
As richman, poorman; struggling
Between two worlds. He remembers
Ladies and his Lady, friends
And brothers. He visions a
Small, wet, dark cave where he first heard
The Whisper, and the open mountainside
Where he saw the fire and the lightening.
He remembers the pain of comfort, and
The comfort of pain. Times of illness, times
Of health. He remembers heretics and
Saracens. Lepers, malaria, blood, pain,
Loneliness, fraternity, rejection, acceptance,
Fire, happiness, joy, love, caring,
All were his and His.
He feels the Seraph's embrace,
Leo's awe, the friars' adoration —
His embarrassment.
He visions people, from all nations,
Running to meet him. To wear
A poorman's clothes, and to live a
Beggar's life.
He calls to me, to me, he calls.
I answer, but hesitate, I walk
Toward him, and stop. I run, then
I crawl. He stands there, blind,
Yet seeing, in a borrowed habit,
With open arms, waiting, calling —
Whispering to me.
I will come, Lord let me understand,
I will come, I will come, Lord
Let me give, let me receive with grace.
Let me experience the pain, the joy,
The rejection, the love. Let me be the
Fool who is blind, yet sees.
Let me die a poorman, in a borrowed habit,
On the ground singing:
"Praise my Lord and give Him thanks
Bless Him and serve Him with great humility."
Amen.

Fr. Charles Wible, O.F.M.Conv.

Franciscan Institute 1988

A Family of families reunion
under Frate Sole
and Allegany Moon,
Born to an uncoupled Subasio Duet.
Here it is always Assisi and
nowhere!
Colored countenances of countries
like Autumnal leaves
in July, search the settling of an ablative absolute.
A potpourri of
international incense, unctious study, nonsense.
Is there method to the historico — crypto —
mystical — Myers-Brigg madness?
All here dare an affair
with Lord or Lady Xerox,
for Fra Jacoba's recipe is extant;
Hoping against hope that the Imitation
of Christ
be a cheap six-cent sheet.
Alas, appropriating
the Folignesque coup
de grace.
He has not loved us
in jest!

Robert J. D'Aversa, T.O.R.

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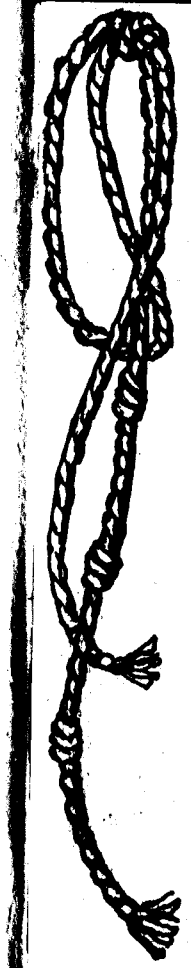

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

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Living Tradition

WILFRED HEPT, O.F.M.

A small boy is up in his bedroom and it begins to thunder and lightning outside. He is frightened and he calls down to his father: "Come here; I'm scared." His father answers him: "Don't be afraid, God loves you and will take care of you." The boy answered that he knew that but at that moment he wanted someone with skin on. What made the love of God unique in St. Francis and the Franciscan movement was not that Francis asked new and profound questions about life and the culture and society of his time but rather, that he gave new and optimistic answers to the perennial questions: Who is God? Who is my neighbor? Who am I?

Francis' answer to these questions was not in a form of a dichotomy between his prayer life and his concern about the culture and society of his time. Rather, his was a holistic approach integrating prayer, culture and society. Even though he felt more inclined to the contemplative life, he discerned the will of God for him after he had asked both Clare and Matteo to pray that he might know the will of God for him and his newly-found order. Both Clare and Matteo arrived with the same answer — Francis was to combine the contemplative life and active life in his Fraternity.

For this reason, and while there are many areas in the life of Francis and the history of the Franciscan movement to clarify this wholeness, the following four principles can serve as the basis for Franciscan witness in justice and peace issues.

FIRST —
FRANCIS WAS TOTALLY DEDICATED TO THE GOSPEL AND TO THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST.

Francis realized that being was more important than doing. Francis realized that it was more important to be like Christ than to act like

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Christ. For Francis, the imitation of Christ is not following laws and abstract principles but in following a vital, living personality. Francis had a vision of life as God had designed it and he was dissatisfied with what his culture and society had made of life. In the twentieth century, we Franciscans must have the same attitude of Christ. Like Francis, we cannot get up in the morning to get our prayer life over as a quick task, so we can get down to the business of our work and everyday life. Our life with God is certainly more than that context for it is life-giving.

SECOND — RECONCILIATION

Did you ever wonder whether Francis was ever reconciled with his father, Pietro Bernardone? I never read in any of the Franciscan sources that he ever reconciled. However, knowing the kind of person he was, I am sure he harbored no residual resentment, anger, or hatred in his heart for the way that his father treated him. All throughout our reading of the Omnibus, we can read about the numerous examples by Francis bringing about reconciliation. I like the one when Francis restored good will between the mayor and the Bishop of Assisi. He called them together and instructed some friars to sing the Canticle of Creatures and he added these verses:

> Praised be thee, O Lord, for those
> who give pardon for thy love and
> endure infirmity and tribulation
> blessed those who endure in peace
> who will be, Most High, Crowned by thee.

Reconciliation through non-violence, whether in Assisi or with the Sultan or the Wolf of Gubbio was his solution to dissension and war. A modern example of the effects of forgiveness is an article in the March, 1988 issue of the monthly periodical *Catholic Digest,* "The Man Who Fights Terrorists with Forgiveness." It is a story of a Jesuit priest who gives spiritual guidance to about 150 - 200 former terrorists from the Red Brigade. This change, this conversion began with a forgiveness talk by a nephew of this Jesuit, at the funeral of his brother killed by the Red Brigade. What a beautiful story. I sincerely believe that our approach to social reform must be non-violent if we are to bring about the message of reconciliation as Franciscans.

THIRD — WE ARE CALLED TO CONSTANT DIALOGUE

Like Francis, we need to seek out opportunities to dialogue with those who may disagree with our Franciscan perspective. For example, Francis went to the Sultan to mediate differences between them. In addition, when Francis talked to the people of Gubbio, the miracle occured not with the taming of the wolf but more importantly that they themselves grew tame. This was evident when the townspeople ran to meet the cold and hungry wolf not with pruning knives and hatchets but with bread and hot porridge. (cf. *I, Francis* by Carlo Carreto, p. 75)

FOURTH — FRANCISCANS SHOULD FOLLOW THEIR CONSCIENCE

Francis recognized that there was an objective norm and a subjective norm to act by. For this reason he had tremendous respect for authority and desired that his friars always submit to the authority of the Pope and the Cardinal Protector of the Order — Hugolino. He also recognized the important place of conscience in the life of his friars. They were to obey everything except those things which were against the rule and their conscience. Our actions must be based on an informed conscience. In the realm of social issues we should know what the U.S. Bishops have to say about the morality of the issues and then form our own conscience as for whom we shall vote. I recommend that we be better acquainted with such papal encyclicals as *Populorum Progressio* by Pope Paul VI and the recent *Solicitudo Rei Socialis* by Pope John Paul II. Finally, we need to be especially concerned about the poor by examining our own lifestyle. Who are we witnessing to and what are we witnessing from? In the Dec. 17, 1987 issue of *Origins*, the Connecticut bishops' conference issued a challenging pastoral letter entitled, "Of Justice and Simple Lifestyle" which called for clergy, religious and affluent laity to temper some of their lavish tastes and use those extra resources for the benefit of the poor. In one particular passage, the Connecticut bishops use St. Francis as an example of living a simple lifestyle and say how much more that example is needed in our present society:

> The example of St. Francis of Assisi has much to say to younger as

well as older Catholics in Connecticut. Francis was the talented son of a wealthy merchant who bought his child the finest clothing money could buy. The young man went through a conversion, publicly gave the expensive clothes back to his father and began a life of simple, poor, joyful following of Christ. With men and women Franciscan followers, he lived in harmony with God's creation and gave an example that is needed even more in our present society. (*Origins,* Dec. 17, 1987 — p. 467)

If the Connecticut bishops can model themselves after our tradition, perhaps, it's time to reacquaint ourselves with our own *living* tradition.

Life in Minority: from Trans-cultural to Trans-economic Formation I

DAVID B. COUTURIER, O.F.M.CAP.

Religious formators have been aware for some time now of the need to think and function from an expanded, multi-cultural perspective.[1] We recognize more now than ever that the cities and towns in which we live and work are multi- not mono-cultural worlds where peoples of many cultures meet, compete and relate. The fact that Hispanics will soon make up fifty percent of the American Catholic population only highlights the fact that the fabric of American Catholicism is already a tapestry of many rich and beautiful religious expressions.

The immediate effects of this multi-cultural sensitivity on religious formation programs have included the increase of language studies and the development of cross-cultural and trans-cultural training programs. Without wishing to minimize the importance of these developments, I will argue in this paper that living in a world church wherever the local church gathers is not fully realized by multi-cultural awareness alone. Beyond the cross-cultural, inter-cultural and trans-cultural challenges of living in a modern world church, Western religious formation is uniquely challenged to develop a *social imagination of minority* which will help us to cross economic barriers as well as cultural barriers. Whereas the crossing of cultural lines implied entering sympathetically into the language and customs of "the other," the crossing of class lines means a spiritual re-allignment of one's horizon of power and responsibility in society, community and church.

This is the first of a two-part article which will be continued in the next issue of **The CORD.** *The author, a member of the Capuchin Province of St. Mary, is a doctoral candidate at the Gregorian University in Rome specializing in clinical psychology and vocational anthropology. At present, he is engaged in part-time teaching for the Office of Spiritual Development in the Archdiocese of New York. He also assists in pastoral planning for his Province. Previous publications of Fr. David have appeared in* Human Development *and* LAURENTIANUM.

After reviewing briefly the justification for the movement from a trans-cultural to a trans-economic formation, I will pose three formation-type questions which I hope will concretize the implications of this shift for formational research and development. The three questions are:

1. Is the presence of a religious vocation (high vocational ideals) a sufficient enough indicator of a capacity for solidarity with the poor and a social imagination that is truly minority focused?

2. What are some of the reactions of individuals who are challenged to move from one horizon of learning (i.e. socio-economic) to another?

3. What might some of the elements of a psycho-spiritual pedagogy of minority entail?

From Trans-Cultural to Trans-Economic Formation: Poverty as the Storm Center

When the dust settles on a very turbulent era and historians have the opportunity of looking back on our age with the luxury of hindsight, I think that one of the most dramatic revolutions they will notice is the way that poverty captured our collective spiritual attention and became the center piece or, better yet, the storm center of our thinking about ourselves, our relationships in society and in the church and ultimately our thinking and living out of our relationship with God.

Because of the development of mass media and the proliferation of communications technology, the human race has become aware as never before of the sheer enormity of physical material poverty in the world today. Just a few years ago, rock musicians helped to focus the world's attention and financial resources toward the overwhelming crisis of hunger in the world. The World Council of Churches estimates that there are over 990 million people in the world today who are hungry. Ethiopia, Bangladesh and Northern Brazil have become household words for an unspeakable global horror: that the world is steeped in famine while the powers of this world's economic systems sit on huge reserves of food. For example, outside of Kansas City there is an underground limestone cave which is the largest surplus food repository in the West. In this cave and other similar large facilities, the government has stored two billion pounds of surplus food.

Recent estimates indicate that one out of every four American children lives in poverty. Beyond this, both the number and the proportion of poor people in the United States has steadily *increased* over the last twenty years.[2] In 1968 there were 12.9 million people living in poverty

in our country. Today, there are 34.4 million people living below the poverty line.

Not only has the incidence of poverty changed, so too has the *quality* of it. Today, unfortunately, we can speak securely of the *feminization* and *juvenilization* of poverty because women and children make up the vast majority of poverty's victims. As a matter of fact, the fastest growing segment of the poor population is children. The face of poverty today is likely to be that of a child living in urban squalor, in a female-headed family, whose emotional health is at risk because of increasing levels of violence, physical and emotional abuse, and unabated stress and whose medical health risks begin before birth and jeopardize this child throughout early life and beyond. As Lisbeth Schorr makes clear in her recent book, *Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage*, growing up poor in America today means not only a childhood at risk but a *lifetime at risk*.[3].

Schorr and other contemporary researchers on poverty in America remind us that there has been a radical change in the nature of poverty in this country. In the past, most disadvantaged families lived in neighborhoods that provided daily evidence that hard work pays off and could lead somebody to the possibility of moving up and out of disadvantage. Today, that is not the case!

The concentration of the persistently poor, unskilled, alienated, unemployed and unmarried in our cities when coupled with the fact that the labor market in these urban areas has shifted dramatically from producing goods to producing information means that those living in extreme poverty today are at risk of becoming a permanent and dangerous underclass of misery in our society.[4] Jobs in our cities are increasingly information oriented. More and more poor people are locked in urban prisons because these high tech jobs far outreach the skills of a population that now has a high school drop out rate approaching 50%. Unable to graduate from high school, unable to find jobs, unable to marry because they cannot support a family, and unable to see any signs that things will get better, young men in our cities increasingly turn to the only successful people they know — drug pushers, pimps and prostitutes.

As William J. Wilson writes in his recent book, *The Truly Disadvantaged*, churches, schools and local support structures have become increasingly impotent in the face of the economic fragmentation going on in our cities.[5] Researchers who once blamed the increasing dislocation of the poor on their own "social pathology" are now beginning to recognize that increased levels of violence in our streets, staggering rates of out-of-wedlock births, disastrous school records may be the end results of accumulated risks suffered by a population that is more and more *socially isolated*

from the opportunities of making it, opportunities that the rest of us can take for granted. What is needed, suggests Professor Wilson, is a radical re-organization of economic priorities and a new allignment of social and economic forces in our country. If the poor are to have any chance at survival, we will have to change our economic habits. Wilson maintains that redistribution of resources will not be enough to save a growing underclass of misery in our society. What is needed is a reorganization of structures and a critique of established economic horizons.

It is not only social scientists who are calling for a conversion of our economic habits. In the past several years, the American bishops and the Pope have repeatedly challenged all of us to take a critical look at the way that we make our economic decisions, at every level of our social life.

In their pastoral letter, *Economic Justice for All,* the American bishops critiqued the American economic system which allows so many to stagger in poverty within its own boundaries and conditions a global poverty structure which imprisons the majority of the world's population in hunger.[6] The bishops did not lay the blame for this at any political party's doorstep. The injustice is not the fault of any individual administration or policy but is rooted, the bishops maintain, in a basic economic horizon (in basic presuppositions about work, profit, privacy, individualism and human dignity).

More recently, John Paul II published his encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis,* in which he also condemns economic structures which continue to leave the majority of the world's population in famine and without any means by which to change their lot.[7] For this reason, John Paul has committed the Church to a preferential love for the poor. It is important that we listen carefully to the Pope's words that we in both the East and the West are now living in "structures of sin." John Paul's moral analysis of the economic condition of the world leads him to conclude that the material wealth of the First World and the social stability of the Second World are maintained at the expense of the poor of the Third World.

We live in structures of sin because our material comfort is kept in place by economic laws and policies which continue to favor the First World. The Pope is suggesting that there is something sinful about the way that we make our economic decisions because there is something wrong about our basic economic visions — the horizon of how the world ought to look economically. The ability to see a different economic world, a conversion of our economic horizons and power distributions, is what John Paul's new spirituality for a world church is all about.[8] The Pope is challenging us to dismantle all immoral structures which keep in place an unjust distribution of the world's resources. Furthermore, he calls for a reallignment of the power relationships which now unjustly lock out

the poor from a participation in the decision-making on the distribution of the world's resources.

The tone of papal interventions on the economic condition of the world has become ever more insistent and urgent. Pope Paul VI in his encyclical, *On the Development of Peoples,* suggested that what was needed was a moral attitude of "development" — a worldwide coalescing of material and spiritual forces directed toward the plight of the poor in the world.[9] It presumed the basic health of underlying economic structures and horizons. John Paul's recent writings appear more radical because their language shifts ever so subtly from an emphasis on the virtues of development to the virtue of *solidarity* with the poor. What is needed today is not simply the conversion of resources but a *conversion of structures*. And such a conversion of structures will not come about until we develop a preferential love for the most disadvantaged in our society, those who have lost their voice and their power to give even a fraction of themselves in full human dignity.

But, as Fr. Joseph Fitzpatrick, professor emeritus of sociology at Fordham University, recently noted — solidarity with the poor that challenges us *to cross class lines* has been the great stumbling block of contemporary ministry.[10] In his article, this country's foremost authority on Puerto Rican culture maintains that Hispanic ministry in this country has stagnated because the Church and its ministers, while willing to cross the *lines of culture* (learning language and customs) have been unwilling to cross the *lines of class* which would lead us from the middle class into an effective solidarity in poverty with our people. He suggests that we have learned the *language* of the poor, but we have not as yet learned their *poverty*. A strong indictment from one of this country's early and leading exponents of inculturation!

I hope that you can see as I do that there seems to be a convergence of thought across disciplines and a growing moral conviction that suggests that ministry for the future must be willing to cross not only cultural barriers but also economic barriers.

It is precisely here that we, as Franciscans, have a unique opportunity to minister and serve the Church and the world at a critical time in history. The Church and contemporary society need models on how to see themselves from the other side, from the down side, of history. And I believe that it was the religious genius of Francis to ask himself the questions: what does the world look like, what is the human person and what is God, when looked at from the position of the *last place?* Francis wanted to look at himself, his world, and his God from an angle and a perspective that no one since Jesus had done: from the lowest place of all! It led Francis to a remarkable journey of faith and it leaves us with

staggering questions: How do we relate to one another and to our God when we have given up our struggle to dominate one another; when power gives way to peace; when suspicion gives way to sacrifice; when competition cedes to compassion; when what was once considered a right is now considered a grace and claim to life gives way to call to life?

It is in our heritage of *minority* that we, as Franciscans, enter into the mystery of solidarity. Francis knew that the glory of God was not to be found in God's majesty nor in God's splendid isolation from the affairs of the world. He realized more intensely perhaps than any other saint in history that the glory of God was humility, kenosis, and the covenant with all those who are poor. Francis' radical insight into the absolute, profound humility of God, his recognition that the nature of God's love is *agape* not *eros*, a love which continually empties itself out, found expression in the covenant with the poor.

The eschatological fervor of our first brothers and sisters may very well lie in their exhilaration at having re-discovered in Francis the nature of God's love — the absolutely profound humility of the Lord who delights in sending the sun to shine and the rain to fall on the least and the most insignificant of all creation. They were buoyed in spirit because they felt that they, the first followers of Francis, were completing the covenant revealed in Jesus. Their mission among and identification with the poor foreshadowed the fullness of the covenant of Jesus and was the first hint of the complete eruption of God's glory in the world.

Perhaps we can understand now the centrality of minority in the Franciscan life. It is the intersection of all our experiences of human diminishment and human transcendence. It is, I believe, our most precious insight into the mystery of solidarity. Therefore, it is encumbent on modern Franciscans to reflect on minority and develop as best we can and with all the modern tools available to us a *true pedagogy of Franciscan minority*.[11]

As a way of making some contribution to this endeavor, let me ask some questions:

What does it mean concretely to enter into solidarity with the poor? What kind of moral and psychic strength would it take for a young person in formation today to cross the economic barriers that divide us from the poor of this world? How do we develop a new "social imagination" less influenced by the enormous wealth, hyper-individualism and violence of our age? What defenses do we as individuals and as religious communities employ so as not to see the true condition of the poor around us? How do we help young people who come to us sincerely yearning to live the Gospel life but with a history of emotional abuse and brokeness which drains some of their energy for the kingdom of God? How do we keep

them from a lifestyle which continually tries to compensate for their brokeness?

Let us now turn to some contemporary research on vocationers in order to understand more clearly the dynamics involed in the construction of this social imagination of minority.

Research on the Capacity of Vocationers to Enter into an Effective Solidarity with the Poor

The first question I would like to treat is the following:

> Is the presence of a religious vocation (high vocational ideals) a sufficient enough indicator of a capacity for solidarity with the poor and a social imagination that is truly minority-focused?

I would like to point to three different studies which I believe are representative of the field of research, at this time.

The first is a study by Remy Van Cottem entitled, "Psychological Vectors and Religious Attitudes of Priests."[12] The research studies the basic worldview of hundreds of priests and relates them to basic attitudes toward authority figures, sexuality and women.

After a thorough psychological study of his subjects, Van Cottem divides the subjects into five major categories expressing five different existential stances or worldviews.

The first group (about 21.5% of the population) has what is called a *gratuitous worldview* in which "God is a person with whom one maintains an intersubjective relationship, which is an experience of love, friendship, and close ties but also of distance, separation and want." In short, these priests maintain a healthy balance between God's mercy and justice, God's immanence and God's transcendence. How do they relate to others? Rather well. Their attitudes toward authority figures allow them to have a basically open, free and confrontative relationship with superiors. Sexuality is acknowledged as an important dimension of their lives, with or without a bit of unease. Women are accepted and valued and the majority of these priests have memories of warm relations with their parents.

Priests who make up the second group (about 22.5%) have what is called a *troubled search worldview* and Van Cottem describes them in the following way: "Feeling that they are unable to live up to God's expectations, they look for reconciliation and pacification because they find the distance and the silence hard to bear." Priests in this group are prone to religious doubts, uneasy acknowledgment of sexuality and a "particular ethic which attributes the utmost importance to self-control and obedience to the law." However Van Cottem notes that these priests

keep struggling back and forth between law and desire. What characterizes their personality style most of all is *ambivalence*.

The third group of priests (24.5%) evidenced a religious attitude based on the need for *support and security*. These priests need constant reassurances. Their image of God is that of an all-powerful deity who helps and protects the human person, providing the asnwers to the problems of evil, but with a certain detachment from human contingencies. These priests tend to shy away from conflict and to spiritualize pain. The psychological characteristics of these priests include: the neutralization of sexuality, idealization of parent-figures, desexualization of women and a clinging attachment to a reassuring but archaic world. Van Cottem says that they seem to wish "to escape from a profane world in order to take refuge in a reassuring world where God makes up for human limitations and satisfies man's need tensions."

The fourth group of priests (18%) has an *intimist worldview* which tries to cancel out the distance which exists between God and themselves. So strong is their subconscious need to fuse with reassuring others that they continually re-create in their relationships with others situations and conditions of dependency. These priests have a difficult time standing on their own or letting anyone else do so, for that matter.

The final group of priests in this research project (about 13% of the population studied) had a *legalistic worldview* which was characterized by a scrupulous respect for order and a marked disdain for any kind of change. Their rigidity of conduct was maintained by a fixation on authority figures and a depreciation of sexuality and women. Although these priests tend to idealize their mothers, they also described them as overly protective, possessive and moralizing.

Just a quick survey of a long and complex study should be enough to indicate that the vast majority of these priests studied (in fact, close to 80%) might have a difficult time in developing an emotionally satisfying and consistent solidarity with those in need. Problems with religious and emotional doubts, the need for inordinate levels of support, security and reassurance, as well as a rigid, moralistic legalism would continually intrude on their capacity to understand the needs of others. In fact, their attitudes toward women is instructive. The majority of these priests studied have an uneasy relationship with women; some priests can relate to women only by desexualizing them. At the same time, some of these same priests can relate to their masculinity only by neutralizing it.

But what about people in formation? Surely, young people untainted by the compromises of adulthood, more in touch with their enthusiasm and ideals, must have a clearer capacity for entering into solidarity with

others and developing a social imagination focused on minority. Two studies caution against this position.

The first study was conducted by Richard Mucowski, O.F.M. and is entitled "A Psychological Study of Today's Applicants to Male Religious Communities."[13] This study of 113 men applying for Franciscan life concluded that these applicants tended to be virtuous, aware, sensitive and discerning of other's needs, energetic and active. So far so good!

What kind of moral and psychic strength would it take for a young person in formation today to cross the economic barriers that divide us from the poor of this world? How do we develop a new "social imagination"...?

However, Mucowski and his research assistants also found more vulnerable aspects which could impede the development of a social imagination of minority. They found the applicants also tended to be "social conformers," prone to seek out the social approval of others. These researchers found that the applicants tended to minimize and overlook faults in themselves, in others and in their local situations. They also manifested a tendency to use somatic excuses to "deflect any anxiety that might force them to seek needed personal change." Mucowski concludes that they can be "clearly described as naive and a bit self-centered" and tend, by and large, to "take the safe course in life."

Despite their high ideals of sensitivity to others and strong ideals of compassion, these young people entering religious life tend to be social conformers rather than social critics. Rather than confront the suffering and injustice around them, they seem to want to ignore them and hope they go away. These young people show significant trends toward harm avoidance, avoidance of censure and failure, affective dependency and grandiosity. They seem a long way from the rudiments of minority and solidarity with the poor that we have been speaking about.

Why is this so? How can young people who sincerely want to lead lives of compassion and love for Christ in his poor, at the very same time, exhibit trends in their personality which indicate more self-serving rather than other-serving attitudes? Why is it that these young people (and the

priests we have also studied) seem to be developing or consolidating a solidarity with themselves rather than solidarity with others?

For over twenty years, Luigi Rulla and his associates at the Institute of Psychology in Rome have been studying the intrapsychic and psychosocial dynamics of religious life.[14] They have conducted the largest, longitudinal empirical research on religious and seminarians in formation yet conducted. Their theoretical insights and empirical data are impressive. What they have found in regard to the conflict between the ideals of religious life proclaimed by vocationers and the actual operationalization in the lives of formationers along the cycle of early religious life are instructive. Let's look at some of their results.

When male religious were tested for their values, they proclaimed the following: deferent service, obedience, shunning of competitive power and control. They strive less for making a place for themselves to get ahead and wish rather to serve God. To do this they are willing to forego personal security, intellectual advancement and doing what is best only for themselves. They value self-sacrifice, self-discipline, duty and show a higher sense of poverty, piety, mortification, responsibility and chastity in their repertoire of proclaimed values.

However, on psychological tests which measure subconscious needs (i.e. TAT) and during in-depth psychiatric interviews, they showed higher trends toward emotionality, dominance, avoidance of censure and failure, autonomy and aggression.

It is clear that these young religious are being pulled in opposite directions, at the same time. They proclaim and strive after values of deferent service, obedience and shunning of competitive control yet, in the latent self, present a picture of greater aggression, domination of others, autonomy and emotionality. They proclaim values and a readiness to sacrifice for a better world while, at the same time, demonstrating conflicts in the area of aggression, domination, avoidance of criticism, etc.

Do things get better with time and experience in religious life? The results of the research (conducted at two year intervals in order to measure growth and the internalization of values) show that the central conflicts exist after four years of religious formation, only 2% of the male and female religious grew in affective maturity. At entrance, 86% of the male religious and 87% of the female religious were ignorant of their *central* conflicts. After four years of religious formation, 83% of the men and 84% of the women were still ignorant of their central conflicts.

Does this internal conflict affect their relationship with others and their basic interpersonal orientation? The research shows that it does. The research shows that almost 70% of the religious establish transferential relationships during the course of their training, distorted pictures of

others based on their unrecognized central conflicts. These transferences have been shown to be an expression of family conflicts which have never been fully worked through. Because these conflicts tend to lie below the level of direct awareness (and because they are hidden by a whole series of defenses), the conflicts tend to perpetuate and affect apostolic effectiveness, the capacity to internationalize the values proposed to them in formation, and their ability to put into effect proper institutional changes when needed.

The three projects that we have investigated indicate that high vocational ideals are *not* enough to presume that individuals within a religious vocation or entering a religious vocation have an effective capacity for solidarity with the poor and social imagination that is truly minority focused. The social imaginations of those studied in these projects are often enough constructed out of a compromise between vocational ideals and inconsistent (and unconscious) needs. It seems fair to posit that the horizon of our social expectations is developed, more often than not, in reference to a solidarity with our own inner turmoil rather than in response to the actual needs of those suffering around us.

The problem is not one of sincerity. All of the religious and priests studied were sincerely trying to live out their Gospel values. Furthermore, the research cannot be used as an indictment against personal holiness. What is clear, though, is the frequency with which dissonant and often unrecognized needs interfere with the sincere desire on the part of religious to enter into mature, dedicated and value-centered relationships.

The vocational research emerging today indicates that resistances to solidarity with the poor are not simply sociological and cultural. Nor are they only moral resistances (that is, within the category of sin). Research indicates that resistances to solidarity with the poor may also be tied to emotional needs within us. Initial research indicates that this may be so far upwards of 60 to 80% of religious.

As Franciscans we have a special obligation to promote the development of social imagination of minority that is theocentrically directed. In a subsequent article, I will outline some steps which formators can take in order to advance the research and development of just such a social imagination of minority.

Notes

[1]David W. Augsburger, *Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986.

[2]William J. Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

[3]Lisbeth Schorr, *Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage*. New York: Doubleday, 1988.

[4]Isabel W. Sawhill, "What about America's Underclass?" *Challenge* 31, no. 3 (May - June 1988), 27 - 36.

[5]Wilson *op. cit*.

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Francis Meets the Wolf of Gubbio

FRANCIS BERNA, O.F.M.

1. The Story and Introduction

The Italian town of Gubbio lies twenty miles north of Assisi. Arnoldo Fortini describes it as "A somber city in its warlike solitude, stretched along the declivity of a steep and rugged mountain, criss-crossed by violent streams under a stormy sky. Guarded by massive towers, it broods at the margin of a silent valley" (Fortini, 243). Francis, the noted saint of Assisi, knew the town from his childhood, spent time there early in his conversion and made the city a bit more famous with the legend of him taming a very fierce wolf.

The *Fioretti*, or *Little Flowers of St. Francis*, tell of the time when Francis was staying in this town which was haunted by "a fearfully large and fierce wolf". The creature devoured animals and humans. Should the townspeople be forced to venture in the countryside they made it a point to take arms "as if they were going to war." While Francis was in the town he "took pity on the people" and decided to go out to meet the wolf. Though the people tried to restrain Francis, they feared for his life; the saint persisted. Having put his faith in Christ, he armed himself with only the Sign of the Cross.

When Francis arrived at the place where the wolf lived, the animal came charging at him. Then Francis drew his weapon, tracing the sign of the cross in the air, and the wolf suddenly halted. Francis called out, "Come to me, Brother Wolf. In the name of Christ I order you not to hurt me or anyone." Then as the wolf lay at the feet of Francis the saint gave this instruction:

> Brother Wolf, you have done great harm in this region, and you have

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> committed horrible crimes by destroying God's creatures without any mercy. You have been destroying not only irrational animals, but you even have the more detestable brazenness to kill and devour human beings made in the image of God. You therefore deserve to be put to death just like the worst robber and murderer. Consequently everyone is right in crying out against you and complaining, and this whole town is your enemy. But, Brother Wolf, I want to make peace between you and them, so that they will not be harmed by you any more, and after they have forgiven you all your past crimes, neither humans nor dogs will pursue you any more (Brown, 89).

The wolf agreed to the pact and its further stipulation that the town's people would daily feed the wolf. Francis added this stipulation because he recognized that the wolf terrorized the people because of his hunger. The wolf walked along with Francis, "just like a very gentle lamb" into the midst of the town's people and renewed his pledge. Francis pledged himself to serve as the bondsman for the wolf.

The encounter with the wolf also provided the saint with an opportunity to preach the gospel. He told the people that God permits such calamities because of sin. He called the people to do penance that God would free them "from the wolf in this world and the devouring fire of hell in the next world."

When the pact was finally sealed, the people raised their voices in praise of God. They lived peacefully with the wolf for several years and when he died the whole town mourned. The wolf's peaceful kindness and patience had been a daily reminder to them of the virtues and holiness of St. Francis (Brown, 89-91).

The story speaks well of an encounter with a ravaging and ferocious darkness. Now that the story has been recounted the tasks of this paper remain to provide the historical context and foundations of the story and to provide an interpretation faithful to what might be appropriately labled a "Jungian Methodology." The conclusion will hold that Francis is the transformative agent, the guide, for the people's encounter with the individual and collective shadow.

II. Historical Foundation

Edward Armstrong, in the text *St. Francis: Nature Mystic,* provides a concise summary of varying historical positions. His summary notes those who stress the literal historical foundation and those who would give a symbolic or allegorical interpretation. Moorman and de la Bedoyere suggest the historical certainty while Sabatier, Englebert and Jorgensen prefer a more symbolic approach. He also notes how Evelyn Underhill,

an authority on mysticism, discusses the story as an event bearing witness to a mystical power over animal life. Armstrong's own position tends to favor the more symbolic stressing elements from the text which disclose its meaning. This hermeneutical position provides support for the Jungian type of interpretation offered by the present study.

While stories of wolves haunting the countryside abound during the time of Francis, and one has no reason to suspect that said wolves did not haunt the countryside, Armstrong argues that there is no evidence to conclude that a real wolf or wolves were involved in an encounter with Francis. That the wolf was actually a man in wolf's clothing is the other argument to be addressed by Armstrong. Sabatier introduced this notion contending that the story is the third stage of telling of Francis' being seized by robbers while on the road to Gubbio.

Some historical facts lend credence to this position. Like the wolves, robbers were known to wander the countryside ready to pounce on travellers and merchants. Armstrong observes that "Medieval outlaws were treated as wolves. 'Let them bear the wolf's head' was the traditional sentence on a man being outlawed. Like a wolf he was to be killed on sight" (Armstrong, 201). Medieval Italy named an outlaw "capo lupino" while the French used the term "loup-garou." A Fourteenth Century author, Bartholomew of Pisa, writes that Francis once converted a fierce bandit named Lupo and renamed him Agnello (Lamb), most appropriate since he became a devout friar. That there may be a connection between Francis, bandits and Gubbio, captured in the story, has some historical foundation in Thomas of Celano's detail of the saint besieged on the way to Gubbio, a detail repeated by Bonaventure. However again there is no substantial evidence to hold Jorgensen's position that the story represents a pact between Gubbio and countryside bandits.

Evidence lies in favor of Armstrong's conviction that the "Wolf of Gubbio is descended from a long line of beasts. He emerges not from the Apennine hills, but from his ancient lair deep within the monastic library and behaves as animal denizens of the Earthly Paradise, living reconciled to mankind" (Armstrong, 210). He points to the evidence of spiritual texts and traditions known throughout medieval Europe during the time of Francis and his later haigiographers. "The lineage of the Penitent Wolf can be traced from the fourth century to the thirteenth, from the Egyptian desert to the forests of Ireland and continental Europe — and to the gates of Gubbio" (Armstrong, 211).

In addition to the countryside wolves and robbers, other problems besieged Gubbio. Fortini further describes the city as "dedicated to warfare, trade and government, to the building of towers and palaces, the making and unmaking of treaties with popes and emperors, the construc-

tion of castles to keep watch on the Apennine passes" (Fortini, 244). The city was fascinated with its bishop turned warrior, St. Ubaldo. The yearly festival procession evoked the great assault led by the crusading bishop. Christian faith and military skill were hammered into the sword of the Crusades and the proud independence of the city. About the time Francis visited the city it was again returning to war with Perugia. The people sought the expansion of their territory and return to the glory which they had known before the previous war with their neighbor. Fortini contends that Francis had come to Gubbio early in his conversion seeking the right place to live his new life. However, after living in its present state of affairs Francis "could see that changing the place he had lived would do him no good" (Fortini, 246). The saint returned to Assisi and began his ministry to lepers.

Relative to the findings of Fortini, it seems appropriate to hold Armstrong's conclusion: "The wolf represents the forces of brutality, lust, greed and power seeking which have always horrified, daunted and sometimes dismayed the Christian... The story has its own truth as a glimpse of the Earthly Paradise" (Armstrong, 216 - 17).

Being transformed himself, making peace with his own wolf, made him a symbol of transformation for the age...

III. Jungian Perspectives

The methodology for interpreting dream symbolism includes an expansion to consider all possible connections between the symbol and its meaning in the dreamer's life. The same methodology will generate a better understanding of the significance of this story. Not only will it confirm Armstrong's analysis, it will also illustrate the transformative function of Francis in his encounter with the shadow of Gubbio.

Edgar Herzog reports that the earliest imagery in the human struggle with the reality of death consists of dog and wolf images. Osiris and Isis are frequently portrayed in the company of dogs while in other traditions the dead are made into wolves. The wolf appears with the coyote as the "Lord of Death" in the Native American tradition while the black wolf of Europe images death and the demonic. He contends that one can find

"evidence everywhere in Asia that wolves and dogs were representatives, or at least attendants, of the demons of death and the underworld" (Herzog, 47).

Angelo De Gubernatis confirms this position. He cites the Rigvedas and Vendidad where the wolf appears as a demonic figure on the path of devotees. He also cites the previously mentioned Medieval custom of naming outlaws as wolves and forcing them to wear the "caput lupinum" as a sign of their condemnation (De Gubernatis, 142, 149).

After detailing the more conventional approach to wolf imagery Barry Lopez provides an interesting insight:

> We create wolves. The methodology of science creates a wolf just as surely as does the metaphysical vision of the native American or the enmity of a cattle baron of the nineteenth century. It is only by convention that the first is considered enlightened observation, the second fanciful anthropomorphism and the third agricultural necessity (Lopez, 203).

Lopez proposes that anything that threatened the peasant's precarious existence in Medieval Europe was "the wolf." The term applied to avaricious landlords, nobles, outlaws, famine, death and disease.

But the wolf is not only a symbol of darkness it is also the symbol of transition. In this capacity Lopez contends it was particularly appropriate that it flourished in the Middle Ages. This time stands between the "ignorance of the Dark Ages and the illumination of the Renaissance," between the dimly lit Roman cathedral and the windows of light in the Gothic church (Lopez, 208). The wolf is a creature of twilight and serves a transitive function. The beast is transformed by sanctity and even offers healing powers.

Medieval apothecaries offered parts of the wolf for medicine. The powdered liver eased birth pains, the right front paws relieved swelling and illnesses of the throat, teeth were used for teething while the dried flesh relieved aches in the shins.

The duplicate nature of the wolf finds an echo in Marion Woodman's *Addiction to Perfection*. The wolf prowls the modern masculine countryside of humanity needing to be balanced by the feminine. The rational self of day gives way to the animal of night. Woodman observes how modern society upholds the wolf attitude in the professional jungle but does nothing to feed the hungry wolf at night. Thus modern people simply go with the crowd to alcohol, sex, food and drugs. Relying on von Franz, the author further suggests that the wolf represents that pressing desire to eat up everybody and everything. The wolf prowls until it is transformed by ritual.

Following the psychoanalytical route, one encounters the work of Michael Deguy, "Anagramme du Loup." An analysis of the dream symbol in a variety of clients clearly shows the transitory function with the animal appearing in crisis situations. It carries a certain ambivalence with its appearance and the studied crises concern separation, oedipal struggles and general parental difficulties. As such the wolf appears as an important figure in the process of individuation. First, often wreaking havoc then becoming the protector or guardian.

Patricia Dale-Green sees the dog as both "Hound of Hell and Hound of Heaven." She observes, "In outer life the wolf, alone among canines, dominates man. The lupine aspect of the dog archetype hounds man's ego" (Dale-Green, 185). Modern experiences would include feeling "hounded by work." One tradition has it that demonic dogs will seize a man's soul if he rests from his labors. Dale-Green sees this as a parallel to being hounded by time and ultimately death. This hounding is intensified the more one runs. But, as she notes, one who stands still in acceptance of life's limitations will not be pursued. One is hounded only if they refuse pain as one is guilty only in the omission of responsibility. The fierceness of the creature does not allow one to confront the beast alone. The guide of a god, goddess or hero alone allows one to meet the beast and tame it. In this regard Dale-Green points to Christ as the one who bounds toward greater consciousness as the dog deities of Marduk and Gula presided over the rebirth of the human person (Dale-Green, 190). The archetypal dog or wolf is best seen as a threshold animal. In stories and dreams it haunts boundaries, crossroads and bridges. The canine guards gateways to the underworld sometimes as a carrier while at other times the link. As the doorkeeper the canine controls both exits and entrances.

There is much in the historical context of "The Wolf of Gubbio" to argue for a psychological interpretation. The expansion of the symbol provides many possible connections.

While actual wolves roamed the countryside for attention, the greater wolves of human creation were the ones hounding for attention. The passion of the age was for war; the wars often fought for greed. With beginning changes in the economy it became an age of new wealth for some, the merchant class, and of renewed poverty for another, the peasant. The new wealth brought its new pleasures. It was the age of transition form an agrarian to merchant economy; an age of guild and usury. And all the darkness of the age was covered in the name of religion. Pope and emperor, bishop and governor fought for power and claimed the authority of God. Towers, palaces and churches hid the darkness of war. Warrior bishops covered the shadows of the age. As Fortini observes, "They (the

people of Gubbio) could not even imagine a faith that was not sustained by military skill" (Fortini, 244). For this feigned goodness the people needed to do fitting penance. But while the darkness was hidden with feigned glory, the ferocious world came charging from the forest. Francis, another Christ, served as the symbol of transformation, meeting and taming the darkness.

Certainly the age was raced with the other concerns of humanity. Death and disease ever cry for attention because they are fought and starved by conscious humanity. Gubbio carries not only the legend of the wolf. From Gubbio Francis returns to care for the lepers he has only recently learned to embrace. Through the invocation of Francis, it is also the place of miracles — paralytics walk, crippled hands work and the blind see. And it is Francis who eventually cries, "Welcome, Sister Death!" The transformation of the microcosm of Francis, his own conversion, provides the foundation for the transformation of the macrocosm of Gubbio and indeed all of Medieval Europe.

The ritual of transformation involves laying aside the weaponry and going out to where the wolf lives. One approaches the wolf in poverty, in powerlessness. It involves the honest confrontation and perhaps even a reprimand to the wolf for his violence. Yet, as Seamus Mulholland observes: "Even though Francis reproaches the wolf for killing animals and people, he makes a conciliatory advance without preconditions, without anger, fear, prejudice and without holding any firm immovable position" (Mulholland, 147). In dialogue one makes a pact and agrees to no longer hunt the wolf while the wolf agrees to no longer harm or ravage one's life. Furthermore one agrees to feed the wolf daily while in turn one receives the wolf's protection. Daily attention to the wolf protects one from feigned goodness, inauthentic religion and false integration. The presence of the wolf guards the gateway of life, authentic individuation.

IV. Conclusion

The present study has established some correlation between a Medieval story and a psychological interpretation from the psychoanalytic perspective of Carl Jung. The correlation of the extended study of the symbol with the historical context and the text itself support this type of interpretation. This suggests possibilities for further interpretation and understanding of this kind of Medieval literature especially the Fioretti. The interpretation offered in this study can prove helpful for grasping, and being grasped by, the spirituality of Francis and other figures.

A careful study of the life of Francis would indicate his own struggles with the shadow, the darkness of his own life. It would also show his

embrace of the darkness such that what once seemed bitter to him was turned into sweetness (Testament, 1). Being transformed himself, making peace with his own wolf, made him a symbol of transformation for the age, a point gleaned from the history of Western Europe. "The Wolf of Gubbio" tells a story not only to Medievals but also to Moderns.

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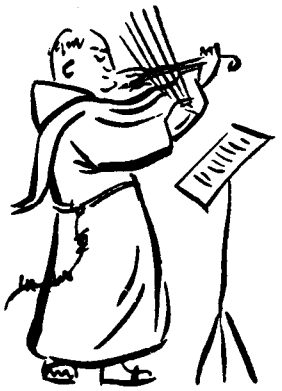

Book Reviews

Sensing Your Hidden Presence: Toward Intimacy With God. By Ignacio Larrañaga, O.F.M.Cap. Translated by John W. Dierteksmeier and Rigoberto Caloca-Rivas, O.F.M. Image Books. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1987. Pp. 287. Paper, $7.95.

Reviewed by Peter F. Macaluso, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History at Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, N.J., and Adjunct Professor of History, St. Peter's College, Jersey City, N.J.

This book is the result of Father Larrañaga's desire in 1974 to start a series of retreats whose object was "to find the living and true face of God" and to introduce the retreatants to a deep experience of God. (It is estimated that a hundred and thirty thousand people attended his week-long retreats).

His books have had combined sales of more than a million copies. *Sensing Your Hidden Presence* itself, has sold two hundred thousand copies and has been described as "An electrifying book from the first line" and a "powerful witness to the power of living faith in Christ founded on an intense life of prayer." (p. 10).

There is nourishment on every page as the author has us confront our own mystery but with confidence for we are not alone. The true face of God, our best friend, is grace, liberation, joy and strength. "The God of the Bible is a God who challenges, questions and causes conflict. He engenders not children, but adults" (p. 204). He is the liberator who pulls us from our insecurities, ignorance, and injustice, not avoiding them, but confronting them and overcoming them.

Faith is not feeling but knowing, and it is this that confirmed believers to the awful silence or God. The secret recipe of believers in faith was the profound spirit of surrender, not resisting but delivering themselves. They surrendered, in silence, to the silence.

The author reminds us of the fearful apostles in the storm tossed boat who did not reach the certainty of faith even as Jesus slept in their boat. He tells us of our prominent exponent of this faith of surrender: Thérèse of the Child Jesus. "The most absolute aridity and even surrender were my dowry. Jesus as always, remained asleep in my little boat." And again, "I do not wish to see God on earth... I prefer to live in faith" (p. 52).

The author suggests that the terrible contradiction of humanity is that we have the wings of sparrows and the hearts of eagles. We cannot comprehend God, as an object of the intellect but as an object of faith. We can not overtake Him but must be conquered *by* Him.

The author provides steps to the encounter with God and describes the difficulty of prayer and how it is an art which demands technique. Our patience will engender perseverence, however, and help us to surrender to the Father. "Hidden in the golden coffer of faith, we carry the magic wand of surrender. Surrender causes one to live in a spirit of prayer. At its touch, failures cease to be failures, death ceases to be death, misunderstanding becomes understanding. Everything it touches, it transforms into peace" (p. 81).

The author reminds us how Jesus experienced the same laws and conditions as we, the law of mediocrity, the law of loneliness, and the law of death. He descended to the lowest levels of the human condition.

Jesus appears as a total offering of love. Trusting, loving, surrendered into the hands of His Father, Abba.

There is much more in Father Larrañaga's remarkable book and it should be read, for its spiritual and psychological wisdom will touch the hearts and souls of many people.

A Blessed Weakness: The Spirit of Jean Vanier and l'Arche. By Michael Downey. San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1986, 131 pp., hardback, $13.95.

Reviewed by Friar Thomas Bourque, T.O.R., Chairperson of the Philosophical and Religious Studies Department of Saint Francis College of Pennsylvania.

Blessed are the lowly;
they shall inherit the land."

The challenge of the Beatitudes serves as a topic for many homilies, books, retreats and songs. The true challenge of the beatitudes is not in the reflection process. Rather, it is found in the living out of the beatitudes. Jean Vanier is one individual who lives a life which embraces the spirit of the beatitudes.

Vanier invites all women and men to reflect upon their journey of faith with God. In light of our relationship with the Creator, each individual is to embrace the calling which the Lord has given to them. Vanier does not challenge all to leave their present lives and begin active ministry within his faith community. He clearly states that this is not always an authentic response to the call from God for all people. Women and men can make a difference by recognizing God's love and power in the weak and lowly of the world.

Michael Downey truly captures the spirit and disposition of Jean Vanier in *A Blessed Weakness*. His book is a clear and articulate presentation of the servant of God, Jean Vanier. Canonization or praise is not the purpose of Downey's reflections on the ministry of Vanier. Rather, Downey describes the love and power which compels Vanier to live in the manner he has chosen. The compelling force in our lives should be this same love and power. For it is in the ordinary life experiences we encounter the love and power of God.

Both Downey and Vanier clearly see the role of the weak and lowly as a part of their lives. They are a part of our lives as well. Too often, individuals think they have to look for them in the out of the way places. Vanier reminds us all that the lowly and weak are a part of our world and everyday routine.

Downey sets the mood and tone of his book by having Vanier provide the reader with an introduction to the book. Vanier captures the reader's attention by describing himself a catalyst for God. The reader then understands that he is not the founder of a movement or ministry. Rather, the individual comes to know Jean Vanier as a prophet crying out in the wilderness. As well as, a disciple struggling to understand God's will.

Jean Vanier is known throughout the world as an individual who ministers to the poor and lowly. Downey presents to the world, his experience and reflection on the life of this servant of God. As an individual begins reading *A Blessed Weakness*, the reading becomes time for prayerful reflection and discernment.

An individual reader will find **A Blessed Weakness** to be easy and enjoyable reading. The author of this book provides the Church with the example and witness of a Christian leader in action. Jean Vanier possesses many of the qualities of Christian leadership. Downey does not write a biography or historical survey of Vanier's life. His book captures the person of faith, hope and affectivity.

Any person interested in learning more about Christian leadership and the spiritual life, will find this book most beneficial. Vanier possesses the gifts and talents of a leader. He calls forth from others their gifts and talents. The vision embraced by Jean Vanier consists of the primacy of love, an understanding of justice and the embracing of the weak.

Downey provides the world with a reflective tool to use in the journey of life. *A Blessed Weakness* is necessary reading for those engaged in active ministry. This book is for all ministers, not only those in a specialized ministry. The message is one for the universal Church and the world. Jean Vanier is servant of the church. His life with the weak and lowly is a challenge to all people. *A Blessed Weakness* provides us with an example of an individual's life with the weak and lowly. How do we live with the weak and lowly in our lives?

Conversations with God: A Catholic View of Prophecy. By Robert Baldwin. Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor. Publishing Division. 1988. Pp. 5-167. Paper, $5.95.

Reviewed by Father Charles J. O'Connor, O.F.M., S.T.D., Assistant Professor of Scripture at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, N.Y.

The author of this book, Robert Baldwin, a convert to Catholicism, attributes his embrace of Catholicism to his association with the Catholic charismatic renewal movement. His contact with charismatic Catholics at whose meetings he heard their prophecies caused him to question the authenticity of these prophecies. His attempt to answer that question led to his writing of the present volume.

Baldwin's work is basically a brief overview of the history of prophecy. It covers the prophetic witness in the Old and New Testaments, in the early Church, throughout Christian history, and ends with the present times. Despite periods during which prophecy was unpopular and prophecies few, Baldwin's main thesis is that prophecy has always been part and parcel of the witness of the Hebrew Scriptures as well as that of the New Testament and the Church throughout the ages.

In defining the nature of Christian prophecy, the author says that "prophecy isn't a form of fortune-telling but is described by early Christians as a gift of the Holy Spirit given to members of the Church for the purposes of building up the Church and empowering it to proclaim the Good News revealed by Jesus" (p. 21). In stressing the present day importance of prophecy for the Church, Baldwin makes mention

of the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* of Vatican II which declares that "these charismatic gifts, [of which prophecy is one] whether they be the most outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are exceedingly suitable and useful for the needs of the Church" (p. 17).

Specifically, Baldwin sees within today's Catholic Charismatic Movement, comprising an estimated seven and a half million Catholics world-wide, "God... speaking to his people... through prophecy, just as he did in the time of Isaiah or in the church of the first century" (p. 16). According to the author such prophecy cannot be dismissed outright, but must be tested so as to properly discern whether it is truly from God. Furthermore, Baldwin maintains that all Christians, whether or not charismatic, even though they may not be "called to be prophets, at least not in the sense of delivering God's word to others," nonetheless, "can learn to hear his voice" (p. 149).

The book has much to commend it. Geared especially to the interested Catholic layperson with no particular expertise in this area, Baldwin not only helps his readers to became familiar with the manifestation of prophecy in the Old and New Testaments as well as throughout Christian history, but also informs and sensitizes them to such important questions as modern day prophecy, one's own role as prophet within the Church, criteria for judging between true and false prophecy, the hierarchy's own role in determining the authenticity of prophecy, the Church's distinction between "public" versus "private" revelation, and the authenticity of the Marian apparitions of the 19th and 20th centuries including Medjugorje.

Despite its small size *Conversations with God* contains not a small amount of information about prophets, prophecies, and revelations for the average reader. It's worth picking up, and if you do, I don't think you'll be disappointed. The present reviewer wasn't!

Julian: Woman Of Our Day. Edited by Robert Llewelyn. Mystic, Connecticut: Twenty-Third Publications, 1987. Pp. xii-144. Paper, $6.95.

Reviewed by Peter F. Macaluso, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History at Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, N.J., and Adjunct Professor of History, St. Peter's College, Jersey City, N.J.

Julian of Norwich's (1342-c1420) theology was described by the late Bishop John Robinson as "astonishingly whole and extraordinarily modern." It speaks across the centuries and across continents and oceans to an ever increasing number of people today. Herbert O'Driscoll in *The Mystics Quarterly* depicts Julian as "not only a great lady of the past; she is also a great woman in our future. What Thomas Merton was to spirituality in the 1960's, Julian of Norwich will be to the 1980s and 1990s." Thomas Merton described Julian as a 'true theologian,' and this book is an excellent study by authors who feel Julian the mystic has much to offer and much to do with the humdrum lives of ordinary people. Her wisdom has been 'saved up' for our generation.

In this book, eight authors explore aspects of the Church, and her mystical insights. She was the first woman to write a book in the English language and her work the *Revelations of Divine Love* (1375), was expanded from its first version of 20,000 words.

The authors tell us that as a mystic Julian is not offering a sort of escapism. She was aware of the pains and ambiguities of life and was firmly anchored in the love of God and obedience to his will. Conformity to the will of God, rather than just spiritual consolation, is fundamental to the *Revelations*.

She is not a blind unrealistic Pollyanna, but has a realistic understanding of our sin and frailty. She does not gloss over our betrayal of true humanity and the will of God. She knows God is in control and permits evil only in so far as it is capable of transforming it into good.

Optimism pervades Julian's writings but she repeatedly makes it clear that her cheerfulness rests on God. "All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well" are words repeated several times in her writings and remain her underlying assurance informing and sustaining all she has to say.

Robert Llewelyn's essay "Woman of Consolation and Strength" says that Julian's teaching that there is no wrath in God is basic to the theology of her *Revelations of Divine Love* but too seldom appreciated. It rests on the main thrust of her book — "the deep and wonderful knowledge of the constancy of God's love" (p. 121) God looks on us with pity not with blame.

In "God Alone Suffices," Elizabeth Obbard compares and contrasts Julian with Teresa of Avila. Julian like all genuine mystics has a sense of joy and optimism, and a strong affinity with the human and transcendent aspects of themselves and others. They 'see' visions but stress that *seeing* is not essential, *being* is. Julian relates explicitly that one is blessed for living by faith and love, not by sight. Faith enables her to accept whatever happens particularly the painful ones, since they are the means of identity with the passionate Christ and work together for good.

Julian recognizes the Creator's love through the vision of the crucifix.

> The face of the suffering Son is a proof of God's 'friendliness', and we must hold on to this in faith. The helplessness, the lowliness, of the crucified reveals the condescension of the Lord... He has become out of love our equal and our comrade. By gazing upon the cross we develop a better sense of proportion. It is to him we must look if we are to understand ourselves aright and see life in its true light. (p. 115)

By fixing our eyes on Christ we are raised above cowardly and timid thoughts and enabled to say 'yes' to life. Having given us his own Son, God can refuse us nothing else. There can be no grounds for doubting when we have received a proof such as this. (p. 113).

Julian's thought is based on her own experience and she does not direct but share her thoughts with us. She discerns and rejoices in the motherly aspect of the care and love of God, and is famous for her image of the motherhood of God. This is part of her description of the infinity and completeness of God's love, which is overwhelming; beyond our imagining.

Much of Julian's wisdom is presented in these eight essays and they are an excellent introduction to her *Revelations of Divine Love*. Julian, finally, is the apostle of reconciliation, for her wisdom transcends all national and denominational boundaries. She speaks of

a substantial one-ing experience at creation. We have been 'one'd' with our Creator at our making. The stuff of humanity is already of God. No matter what we do, it remains true that we *have been of him*. The one-ing is the work of God in our very creation. It is the fulfillment of our divinely-created humanity, not something added. And now, with the Incarnation, Julian says, "When God looks at humanity God sees Christ!"

"Only to do His Will": Life Story of Rafael Cardinal Merry Del Val. Audio Casette: Playing time approx. 75 mins. Catalogue No. 7. 359. Cost in United Kingdom £4.20. (Price overseas incl. packing & postage £4.85 — Banker's draft only in British Sterling). Obtainable from Christus Vincit Productions, P.O. Box 17, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 OJU England.

Reviewed by Elsa Hurschler, S.F.O., Solothurn, Switzerland.

Back in June, 1985, **The CORD** printed an article I'd written about St. Francis and Cardinal Merry del Val. Although I touched on the life of the Cardinal, I had had St. Francis very much in mind, and the biographical details were short.

Now an audio casette has come my way which appears exceptionally well done. The introduction is spoken in English by H. E. the Most Rev. Peter Canisius van Lierde, Vicar General for Vatican City of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. Inter alia Bishop van Lierde tells how Pope Pius XII agreed to the opening of the Cause for the Beatification of Rafael Merry del Val, and how he had personally presided over the initial process. He places emphasis too on the supernatural virtues of Cardinal Merry del Val. Virtues so many of us could use as an example.

Sadly most books about the Cardinal are out of print and difficult to acquire, so the casette supplies a need if one wishes to study and learn from the life of a truly holy priest, one who spent eleven years as Secretary of State to Pope St. Pius X; then to spend the rest of his life as Archpriest of St. Peter's, Rome.

The text has been written very humanly and with great love by Professor Robin Anderson of Rome, and is beautifully presented by British actor Barry Morse and his actor son Howard Morse. An additional bonus is that some of the spiritual music written by Merry del Val is interposed with the text.

A replay of the casette, almost a small spoken book, indicated a splendid acquisition, not only for one's personal library, but perhaps as a gift to blind Catholic friends or societies, or even for missions.

It is always edifying to learn about a totally dedicated priest burning with love for Our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist, and His heavenly Mother Mary; schooled in obedience to Holy Church and the reigning Pontiff, Merry del Val overcame many difficulties in his seemingly glamorous life. No wonder the Cardinal's spiritual direction, some of which is dealt with in the casette, was so sought after by religious and laity.

For those with a Franciscan outlook there is mention too of the Cardinal's love of Fonte Colombo, where St. Francis wrote his Rule, and of Assisi: the casette contains much to interest a variety of people.

London and Assisi

In my heart's eye I see
how gospel and history
meet
    as the sandled
feet beat against
the grass and stone
of your valley home.

Our times are fraught:
the gun and bomb
replace lance and swords —
and multinationals
are new feudal lords:

but the tears are the same,
the wounds and the sores.

In this I can hear you calling
from the past to my present
asking that my feet
beat against my concrete home
that gospel and history
may meet
in me
    and that is the harmony
    between London and Assisi.

Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.

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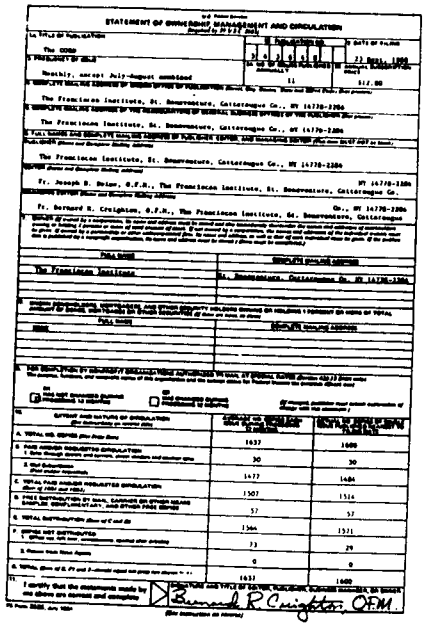

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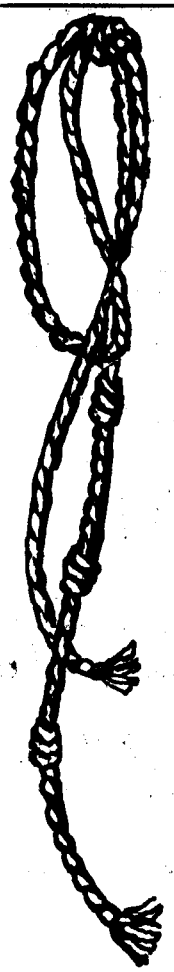

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

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
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
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).

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

JAN 9

REFLECTION:

On How Some Brothers From Rome Celebrated the Advent of the Lord on African Soil

HERMANN SCHALÜCK, O.F.M.

As the Year of the Lord 1987 was coming to a close and while Sister Snow and Brother Wind were visiting the countries of Europe, lo there was heard in the place known as the "Curia" of the Brothers Minor the voice of one who called from beyond the desert of West Africa: "Brother John, come over and visit us" (cf. Acts 16,9). So it happened that the Minister and servant of the Brothers set out in haste, bringing with him his secretary, Bro. Peter as also Bro. Transalpinus. On the wings of brother Wind they flew noisily towards that Coast where many years ago ivory had been found. Then, on the same day on which the Church of Rome began to intone the famous O Antiphons, they set out for another country called Togo.

While the three brothers travelled through the darkness of the african night, filled with the joy which is a quality of the time preceding the feast of the Birth of the Lord, they meditated upon the experiences of hospitality, fraternity and "inculturation" — so it was called in those days — which the Lord would bestow on them on that continent.

And in their breviaries, which they always carried with them in accordance with a precept of our Rule, they found the words of Scripture which opened their hearts and eyes to the meaning of some events which the Lord, in his wisdom, had prepared for them: "Brothers, be patient until the coming of the Lord. Behold how the sower patiently awaits the precious fruits of the earth while the early and latter rains fall. You likewise must be patient, for the coming of the Lord is nigh (James 5,7-8).

The author is a General Definitor of the Order of Friars Minor with the General Curia in Rome. Readers will find this reflection both informative and inspiring.

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Enlightened and wonderfully consoled by these timely words, Bro. John and his companions set foot on that continent and from then until the Feast of the Nativity they traversed innumerable cities, villages, forests and plains known there as "sabanas." Their purpose was to see and meet the Brothers, to inform themselves on the growth and progress of the "African Project," as it is called, and what is more important, to allow their hearts to be touched and converted by the Gospel of Jesus.

First of all, the Brothers from Rome were amazed and over-joyed by the hospitality showered on them wherever they went. On arrival at any place they would give and receive the greeting of Brother Francis: "The Lord give you his peace." As they entered the churches and chapels of the various regions, they were covered with flowers by young girls who were both gracious and God-fearing. In the towns through which they passed, they were invited by the men, young and old, to take a seat beside them. Quite often they had the privilege of drinking delicious beer prepared in clay bowls from maize and millet. By way of contrast, on the occasion of another very opportune visit, an eminent Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church gave them a drink which tasted very much as if it had come from distant Scotland. And again, on another courtesy call, a certain Archbishop had killed a sheep in honour of his guests and offered them a piquant roast seasoned with rare Spanish and French wine.

So the brothers praised the Lord, asking themselves whether such african hospitality might not be a sign of the kingdom, to come, to be sure but, in fact, already present: a prelude to that promised banquet of which rich and poor. Africans and Asians, christians and muslims, men and women of other faiths, prelates and simple friars will partake on an equal footing. And wherever the three brothers set foot, be it in some elegantly rich episcopal palace, built to receive the Lord Pope during his visit of a day and a half, in the cabins of the natives or in the simple dwellings of the friars, they constantly put into practice the words of Brother Francis, when he says: "Wherever they are and in whatever place the friars meet, they should treat one another in the spirit of love and mutual honour, without murmuring" (RnB7, 15).

Thus the brothers from Rome gave thanks to the Lord for this sign of the Kingdom.

* * *

Forthwith the Brother Minister wished to be better informed on the progress of "Project Africa" and of the implantation of the Fraternity in those regions. For that purpose he and his companions visited all those fraternities into which, after long years of "drought," many brothers from different tribes, nations and languages had been received. These wished to come to know our form of life and to follow out the Gospel, the Rule

and the third priority of the Six Year Plan. In all those places Bro. John celebrated a fraternal Eucharist with the candidates, explaining to each and all the commandment received from the Lord, namely, that we should be the pioneers of an inculturated fraternity, at once international and intercultural, in which all are called to be brothers and sisters under the One Lord; also that we should bestow on the universal brotherhood and on the Church those values which are characteristic of the african continent: authentic "minority" and that sense of of family in which mutual respect, maternal charity and fraternal corresponsibility hold sway (cf. RB 6). In all these meetings and reunions, celebrated in various languages but in one sole spirit, all became aware that Africa was not so much a "project" of the Order as a gift and project of God for the Order, designed to inculcate in, and to recall to, the Order its catholic and apostolic character, and to grant it the gift of renewed and committed young members.

The african brothers, on their part, taught the brothers from Rome a proverb which says: "If you believe in the future, plant a tree." So while there arose from venerable curial churches of Rome the sound of the solemn and vibrant antiphon, "O Radix Jesse," the Minister General of all the Brothers decided, as a sign of his determination to implant the fraternity in a new and lasting way on african soul, to plant various trees in the brothers' garden, palms and hibiscus among others.

Meanwhile Bro. Peter and Bro. Transalpinus had to be content with planting smaller and less imposing, but not less useful, shrubs. Since it was the month of December and sitll a time of drought, they watered the plants generously, conscious of that other Gregorian melody which is wont to be sung in Rome: "Drop down dew, ye heavens." In addition, with a view to better representing "Project Africa" to the Brothers, on one of those days the Brother Minister decided to write an Encyclical Letter which should bear the name of another african proverb: "In order to encircle the baobab tree, many hands are needed."

So all the Brothers gave thanks to the Lord also for this sign of the kingdom.

* * *

In short, the visitors had ample motives for meditating on the word "Inculturation," much used by theologians of that epoch. In all humility they were anxious to know what its meaning might be. And the Lord led them through one of those great parks where, according to the vision of the prophet, elephants, monkies, lions and gazelles lived together in peace (cf. Is. 11, 6-8), and where they might step upon serpents and vipers which were unable to do them any harm (cf. Mt. 16,21).

So they finally came upon the tribe of the MOBA in the north of the

country where a well had been sunk. A crowd of people with many animals had united for the purpose of saluting Sister Water, ever so welcome in these regions. A priest, a son of the tribe, blessed the water and explained that water is the origin of all life, that which causes the desert to bloom and the savanna to shoot forth an abundance of precious crops, maise and millet especially. Then he related the conversation between Jesus and the woman at the well of Samaria (cf. Jn. 4, 5 - 45), and spoke about that water which, according to the word of the Lord Jesus, can satisfy all thirst, the water by which we must be reborn. Having said all this the priest told a woman who carried a child on her back, to take water from the well for the first time. He then blessed the water and with it sprinkled both people and animals. All present, whether christians, muslims, animists, catechumens or friars, admired this timely method of evangelization, known to some brothers in those days as "liberating and integral Evangelization."

Both in their meeting with the Poor Clare Sisters in the Capital and in their visits to numerous out-stations, the Brothers felt especially moved by the beauty of the instruments and of the african melodies and dances, to the point of forgetting, at least for the moment, the roman melodies. Full of spiritual contentment, they allowed themselves to be carried away by these dance rhythms.

In yet another capital the Brothers had the privilege of celebrating the Solemn Eucharist of the birth of the Lord, this time embellished by the gregorian melodies and by other Christmas carols brought to these shores some one hundred years ago by German missionaires. These were so familiar to Bro. Transalpinus that to his pleasant surprise he was able to sing with his brother Africans, all through Christmas Night, the carols of his beloved Saxony. Tied to the Crib were two sheep and a goat. For everybody's edification, neither did these remain silent. They finally ceased to bleat only when they had been solemnly incensed by Bro. John! Thus all recalled that night in Greccio when Bro. Francis, full of tenderness for the humanity of God, had represented for the first time in history, the birth of Jesus, poor and suffering, in the midst of his people (cf. 1 Cel. 84-86; 2 Cel. 199)

Thus all gave thanks to God for this sign of his coming.

Having come to the end of their pilgrimage, the brothers from the "General Curia," as it is called, came to realize very clearly that they had received a special grace from the Lord of Mercy in so far as they had lived through some new experiences which there would be very little chance of enjoying at the "centre," namely:

— that the same seed of the Gospel and the form of evangelical life of Brother Francis should be planted in all the continents. However, its fruits will always be varied and distinct, producing rich tastes and odours according to time, place and temperature in zones which in Rome are still called "peripheral;"

— that according to the wise words of the Lord Pope Paul VI (cf. Evangelii Nuntiandi), the "Evangelizer" must first of all be evangelized;

— that the Lord is always present when two or three or more nationalities are united in his name in one fraternity in order to plant the Gospel and cause Jesus to be born in today's world:

— that all races , tribes, tongues, religions and cultures can find a common ground in those fundamental values which the Lord instills in all people and which make possible an authentic "Inculturation" in accordance with the Gospel, to wit, mutual respect, love for life and for all creation, hospitality and the desire for peace.

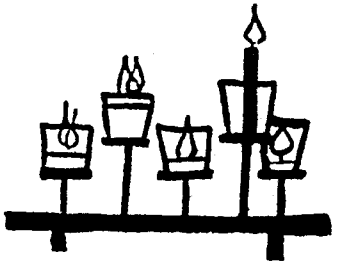
So the brothers gave thanks to the Lord for these intuitions as well as for his presence among all men and women of good will.

* * *

The Brother Minister and his companions returned to Rome by the same way as they had set out. They landed at the city called holy and eternal on the feast of St. Stephen, Protomartyr, replete with spiritual gifts, interiorly purified and knowing that their african brothers had confided to them the wisdom of another of their proverbs which says: "Mother dear, carry me on your back. When you are old, I will carry you."

To the praise of Christ. Amen.

Haec omnia vidit, audivit et fideliter conscripsit frater Hermannus Transalpinus in die Octavae Nativitatis Domini, 1.1.1988



Life in Minority: from Trans-cultural to Trans-economic Formation II

DAVID B. COUTURIER, O.F.M., CAP.

In the first part of this article, I argued that the peculiar challenge facing Western religious formation at this time is the movement from trans-cultural to trans-economic formation. The change in the incidence and the quality of poverty in the world today necessitates a basic re-orientation of economic priorities and a conversion of our economic structures. To accomplish this we must develop, according to the recent teaching of John Paul II, the virtue of solidarity. The particular entrance of Franciscans into the mystery of solidarity is minority. However, as I tried to show in the first part of this article, contemporary research on vocationers indicates a dimension of resistances to this kind of minority which has been rarely studied before now. In this article, I would like to address myself to formators interested in moving young religious toward the development of a worldview which is more minority-focused and more sensitive to the real condition and needs of the poor both in our country and in the world. As indicated in the first article, the challenge we are facing goes beyond the crossing of cultural lines and learning new languages. The real challenge facing us is the movement across economic barriers into an effective solidarity with the poor in their economic world. The task is to help conduct our brothers and sisters from one horizon of learning (in their economic class of origin) to another (their new economic class of solidarity). What do we know so far about this kind of transition?

One of the strongest and, I believe, least tested notions current in religious formation today is the one that implies that giving a person a provocative or shocking pastoral experience will, in and of itself, lead to vocational maturity, growth and pastoral insight. And so, in an attempt

Part One of this article by the Capuchin psychologist appeared in the November issue of **THE CORD.** *All members of the Franciscan family and especially those engaged in the ministry of formation will find the complete article of great benefit.*

to set a new course for religious formation or because we are faced with an individual who seems intransigent to traditional formational initiatives, we set up (and with some frequency) a whole host of "shocking" pastoral experiences for them to go through. We hope that the inner city, the Third World, a rural parish, a sensitive pastor, a challenging DRE, a quiet neighborhood, a multi-ethnic environment, learning a new language, studying local customs will somehow shake this individual from formational lethargy. Before long, our formation programs become an endless series of experiences, showing very little coherence one to the other, with little tangible results, almost no research, and higher and higher costs.

Research conducted at the Institute of Psychology in Rome indicates that experimenting with various pastoral roles has little positive effect (and perhaps even some damaging effects) *unless* the individual's intra-psychic dynamics are disposed already to learn from experimentation with various pastoral roles.[1] What this means is that vocational maturity is dependent not so much on the practice that one gets from different pastoral roles as on the capacity of the individual to learn and to profit from the pastoral roles provided. What is needed is a clear emotional, cognitive proportionate *fit* between the role to be assumed and the individual's capacity to learn from this particular role. This capacity to profit from pastoral roles is linked directly to the balance of inconsistencies and consistencies in the personality.

Furthermore, if this practice of pastoral roles is not based on a pre-existing capacity to internalize values, not only will it not have any tangible effect on the development of vocational maturity, it may actually compound an already difficult situation. In this way: the person will of necessity continue to rely on vocational roles (outside situations, persons and circumstances) for self-fulfillment rather than on the strength of his or her internalized values. This reliance on the strength of vocational circumstances means that the locus of control and responsibility remains outside of oneself. This can lead to the familiar situation encountered by religious superiors over and over again — the entrenched minister who cannot be moved because service of the kingdom of God has been equated with a particular job, role or position in the Church.

It is not enough to provide vocationers with better field placements. Justice is not arrived at simply by being exposed to shocking pastoral situations. Formation for solidarity with the poor must include, among other things, an opening up of the individual's *readiness for learning* which, as we have seen, is for a good number of people in formation frozen by unconscious inconsistencies in the personality.

Formation personnel can be of great service to their brothers and sisters by becoming more sensitive to the way that self-transcendent values (such

as solidarity and minority) and dissonant needs (for aggression and domination) interact in the life experiences of those they are called to serve. We must begin to see how values for humanitarian service and love of neighbor collide with needs for abasement, agression, domination of others and harm avoidance.

What is needed is not a new pastoral placement but a new horizon of learning. But, research is mounting that pastoral ministers are having a more and more difficult time adjusting to the new challenges facing them in ministry. Two years ago, the rectors of major seminaries in the Midwest got together at a conference to talk about the growing crisis of disillusionment and burn-out among newly ordained priests. They expressed their concern over the growing number of young priests who, within one or two years of pastoral ministry, find themselves isolated, disillusioned, burned out or on the way out of ministry.

E. L. Mickan, in a recent study in the *Australian and New Zealand Theological Review*, wrote about the pheomenon of *transitional disillusionment* facing young ministers as they try to cope with the enormous differences between the horizon of learning and ideals expressed in theological schools and the horizon of learning and ideals which meet them in their local pastoral assignments.[2]

Mickan found that some ministers do well and integrate what they have learned in theology with the needs and problems of the local situation. But, a growing number of ministers either ignore what they have learned, go native and offer their communities nothing more than a mirrored reflection of where they are at already (offering support but no challenge) or they hammer the vision expessed in learned texts without integrating them to the difficult and lively pastoral circumstances of the parish. Whether they get lost in the practical details of pastoral life or lost in the theological concepts of pastoral vision, over time these ministers develop an inceasing sense of disillusionment. For some ministers, the discrepancy between ecclesial vision and ecclesial reality is too great. They opt out and become pastoral loners who neither challenge themselves nor others to grow anymore. They are simply biding their time.

Again, I think it should be clear that mowing from one horizon of learning to another is not automatic. If it is so difficult for young, dedicated and vibrant people to move from schools of theology to pastoral placements, we should not be too quick to pressume that individuals can automatically move from the horizon of learning and expectations developed in their economic class of origin to that horizon of learning and expectations in their economic class of solidarity. Solidarity with the poor across class lines will entail learning a whole new set of social boundaries and norms. Power relationships are different when one is sitting in the

last rather than the front seat! In short, trans-economic formation must confront the problematics involved in the transition from one horizon of learning to another. Failure to recognize those dynamics of transition will result in increased levels of disillusionment and stress among vocationers.

Let us now consider some of the elements that might make up a psychospiritual pedagogy of minority. I believe that there are four steps which need to be taken with each individual who wishes to develop a new social imagination of Franciscan minority.

Step One: The Assessment of the Intrapsychic Capacity for Franciscan Minority

As we have seen throughout this essay, the vocational capacity for solidarity with the poor and a social imagination that is minority focused cannot be presumed simply because a person enters a Franciscan community. High vocational ideals and proclaimed values of social compassion reveal only a partial picture of the total motivational dynamic in an individual's life. Beyond these are specific complexes of emotional needs of which the vast majority of entering vocationers are only vaguely aware of in their personality. It is important that each vocationer be assessed for the particular and unique interaction between values and needs from the perspective of Franciscan minority. There will be no lasting and effective solidarity with the poor until individuals are helped to free themselves a bit more from their unconscious tendencies to consolidate solidarities with their archaic needs. I believe that there are three parts to this first step.

(1) The assessment of *proclaimed values for solidarity and minority* in the individual. Formators should be able to distinguish between proclaimed values which are natural, those which are psychosocial, and those which are theocentrically self-transcendent.[3]

If the range of a person's professed values reaches no further than self-centered concerns for security, achievement or being sociable to others, we should not expect any further self-motivated operationalization of effective solidarity with the poor or Franciscan minority. Franciscan minority confronts the values embedded in what has been called a "culture of narcissism."[4] Therefore, we cannot presume that all professed values are religious in orientation.

(2) The assessment of *conscious and subconscious needs* which might interfere with the living out of Franciscan minority. Each of us grows up and develops a unique complex of personal needs, some of which are conscious and some of which are unconscious; all of which are operative. We should be able to name as early on in formation work as possible what are the particularly *dissonant needs* in the personality of our brother or

sister which makes living in minority extremely difficult or threatening. For example, a person who has been emotionally abused as a child and comes to religious life unknowingly starving for attention and affection, will not spontaneously seek out moments for taking the last place. Especially when the needs are unrecognized but still operative, the individual will resist any attempts by life to aggravate what is already an emotionally starving interior life. More often than not, these individuals will begin to compensate for their brokenness and seek the community's tacit permission for such consolation.

It is clear that simply emphasizing cognitive values of minority will have minimal positive effect on these individuals. First of all, they may already know and accept these self-transcendent values as primary motivators in their religious life. But, more importantly, it is often the case that the problem is not at the level of beliefs or values. The problem resides in the area of emotional dissonance. For that reason, classes on social justice will develop insight but will fail to provide a sufficient impetus for consistent change. What is needed is some resolution of the interior struggle going on between proclaimed values and unrecognized needs.

There is no getting around the fact that each individual develops a unique social imagination (expressing a unique horizon of values, attitudes and needs). For that reason, attention must be paid to each individual's construction of social expectations and the symbols which represent them in the day to day traffic of human interchange.

(3) The third part of this first step is the development of an *effective solidarity with the formator*. Because the development of a social imagination is unique to each individual and because we can so easily defend ourselves against threats to our preferred horizon of expectations, we need to be with one other person who can help us to face the transition from old ways of seeing our world to new, more Gospel-oriented ways of seeing our world. This effective solidarity must be directed towards awareness, acceptance and change. First, this formational solidarity allows the individual the time and space to get to know himself or herself (and all of the self). Here, like Francis in the cave or on the road with the leper, the individual finally meets themselves in a more comprehensive and less defensive manner. They confront the worldview they have constructed for themselves and the protection and comfort that it provides them. They also recognize some of the damage which this limited worldview has caused in their interpersonal world.

Secondly, this formational solidarity provides an opportunity for the individual *to accept* himself or herself (including the less favorable parts of the self). The unconditional positive regard of the formator when matched with the formator's sensitive understanding of the centrality of

Franciscan values provides the vocationer with a "zone of safety" in which to come to loving terms with one's actual stance in the world.

Finally, this formational solidarity encourages the individual to make changes in the direction of Franciscan minority. The solidarity with the formator provides a crucial locus of insight and testing for individuals who must learn what it means to empty oneself out more deeply for the sake of the kingdom.

This effective solidarity with the formator is an essential ingredient for formational growth. Over and over again, both formator and vocationer confront the challenge of breaking through the psychic numbing which keeps us from recognizing the true condition of poverty around us. Life experiences, as the intersection of proclaimed values and emotional needs, are the subject for this solidarity. Individuals will continue to need some help in recognizing which actions in their ministry are truly a solidarity with the poor and which ones are still a solidarity with archaic needs.

Once an individual has strengthened this basic capacity for internalization of Franciscan minority, he or she is ready to move to the next three steps in the development of a social imagination of Franciscan minority. These next steps are predicated on the successful resolution of basic inconsistencies in the vocational personality. If a person has not successfully negotiated this first step, the following three steps will be nothing more than intellectual exercises which provide some cognitive stimulation but little internalization.

... the vocational capacity for solidarity with the poor and a social imagination that is minority focused cannot be presumed simply because a person enters a Franciscan community.

Step Two: The Development of Founder-Shock

This formational step seeks to develop in the individual a systematic and critical awareness of the gap which exists between the social imagination of Francis and the social imagination of his contemporaries. We seek to develop in vocationers a sensitivity to the critical distance which existed between Francis' lived Gospel experience of peace and brotherhood and

his contemporaries' lived experience of wealth and violence. Here, vocationers are introduced to the dynamics of our founding Franciscan mythology.[5] At this point, vocationers enter more deeply into the world of Francis (through historical analysis) and recognize how shocking his message of peace and brotherhood were to an age steeped in bloody, feudal conflict. They come to recognize how dynamic theological principles and values shape a religious imagination that is truly prophetic and transformative.

Step Three: The Development of World-Shock

A contemporary social imagination of minority cannot remain in the thirteenth century. It must understand and confront the ethical challenges of our own "structures of sin." It is important, therefore, that vocationers develop a "world shock" — a critical awareness of the gap which exists between the social imagination (horizon of expectations) contained in the parables of Jesus and the message of Francis and the social imagination (horizon of expectations) of our own times (i. e. violence, wealth, hyper-individualism, secularism). The techniques of social analysis and a critical reflection on our socio-economic condition are critical tools for the development of this development of world-shock.[6]

Step four: The Development of Congregation-Shock

One of the most critical and yet least studied areas of religious imagination is the analysis of the forces which keep religious congregations in a state of psychic numbing in regard to the condition of poverty in the world. The work of Gerald Arbuckle and others on the refounding of religious life provides an important new tool for the construction of a critical awareness of the gap which exists between the social imagination of minority in Francis and our own lived social imagination of minority in community life.[7] With the tools of family systems theory, we might begin to understand how we come together as a community and construct a horizon of expectations, rules, roles and defenses which obscure a deeper commitment to the concerns of those who are marginalized in our society.[8]

Conclusion

The challenge of religious formation today is to develop in our brothers and sisters a new social imagination less tied to the violence, hyper-individualism and class structures of our era and more consonant with the social imagination of minority expressed in the parables of Jesus and the life of Francis.

Present research indicates that entering religious have already constructed a social imagination which protects, at least in part, certain underlying defensive needs which they have. An understanding of the complex dynamics involved in the collision of transcendent values and dissonant personal needs and a clearer pedagogy of Franciscan minority is essential if we are to have any substantive impact on our times and develop that marvellous spirituality of solidarity which John Paul II is calling us to.

Notes

[1]For a discussion of this point, cf. Luigi M. Rulla, Joyce Ridick, and Franco Imoda, *Entering and Leaving Vocation: Interpsychic Dynamics*. Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1976, 233 - 247.

[2]E. L. DeFinance, "La hierarchie des valeurs," in World Union of Catholic Philosophical Societies, The Mediation of Christian Values. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America. (in press).

[4]Christopher Lash, *The Culture of Narcissism*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1979.

[5]For a discussion of the contemporary crisis in religious life concerning founding mythologies, cf. Gerald A. Arbuckle, *Strategies for Growth In Religious Life*. New York: Alba House, 1987. John R. Rathschmidt provides an interesting socio-phenomonological reading of Franciscan founding mythology in his "The Embrace of Radical Poverty: Roots of Franciscan Mission," in R. Bechtl and J. Rathschmidt, eds. *Mission and Mysticism*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Maryknoll Press, 1987, 97 - 116.

[6] Joseph Holland and Peter Henriot, *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Concern, 1980.

[7]Arbuckle, *op. cit.*

[8]Alan S. Gurman and David P. Kniskern, eds. *Handbook of Family Therapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1981.

Ingmar Bergman and the Search for Greccio

JOSEPH DOINO, O.F.M.

One would wonder, and rightfully so, what possible connection could exist between a world-reknown Swedish film-director and the name that immediately awakens so many simple and powerful images in the Franciscan memory. The story of Francis' Christmas celebration that brought unusual light to the darkness of a cave, and more so to the darkness of human hearts, seems worlds apart from the deep, probing films one usually associates with Ingmar Bergman. However, the last of his many highly acclaimed films, *Fanny and Alexander*, is a kind of final statement of the great Swedish director and it does awaken special Franciscan interest because the symbol that seems to control its exploration of the great human issues of life and death, of hope and despair, of light and darkness, is the great feast of the Lord's birth.

This typically imaginative work of the provocative film-maker seems to direct its cinematographic powers from beginning to end toward engaging the viewer, both visibly and ideologically, on the level of the Christmas theme. Like Greccio, it speaks a powerful message regarding the impact of the Incarnation upon the Christian imagination and its perceptions of reality. Unlike Greccio, the world of the ten year old Alexander and his younger sister, for all of its festivity and flights of the imagination, suggests a perception of the Christmas story that somehow reduces God's awesome embrace of human and cosmic reality to the artificial. And out of that artificiality emerges a strange feeling that for all of its external symbols of celebration, life for this small town theatre family of the early nineteen hundred has never ceased to be just that — theatre; and bad theatre at that. Simply put, the celebration of Christmas at the home of the matriarch of this family cannot but strike the Franciscan viewer in an unusual way.

The film opens on the afternoon of Christmas eve with the family theatre's traditional presentation of *The Play about the Joyful Birth of Christ*. As the action moves from the theatre to the festive family celebration, one wonders whether this title is confined to the theatre. Could Bergman be suggesting that life in the world of Fanny and Alexander is nothing but a continuation of the play? It would seem so. In fact, as often as references to the Incarnation occur in the play, the lingering impression is that the joy inspired by the birth of Christ is itself a stage-production. True joy never really invades the world of a ten year old boy and his younger sister.

Alexander is a sensitive and imaginative child who resonates unusually to the many and varied sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches of his circumscribed world, especially those special to Christmas. He has a natural talent and penchant for theatre and for the theatric as did Francis. His imagination, however, is almost capricious and he is readily attracted to whatever will allow him to engage in flights of fancy. Reality does attract him but rather than enjoy its simply being there it serves him as an occasion for escape into strange fantasies. There is no real wonder, real mystery, real awe. All is *Dream Play*, the title of a play Alexander's grandmother Helena reads to him as he rests his head on her lap. This final image of Bergman's film strengthens the impression that the future harbors further outlandish nightmares for this young boy who is committed to keeping the family theatre going into the third generation. The Christmas story, one feels, will be forever confined to stage and artificial lighting: it will have no effect on the meaning of life.

"Everything is acting," says Helena, the matriarch of the theatre family, and this best crystalizes the empty show that results from a failure to encounter the birth of Christ on the deep level of faith. For all of the family ritual, its Christmas sights, sounds, smells, touches and tastes, one could never imagine any of the gathered celebrants entertaining in any way whatsoever. Bonaventure's invitation in the *Tree of Life*: "... 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 asembling host of angels, join in the heavenly melody..."[1] Even their practice of listening to a reading of the Christmas gospel seems to be empty ritual. There is little to suggest that they live from the conviction that our humanity and our history have been indeed radically embraced by our loving God. So there is no power to enable them to move beyond the limited perspectives of magic, play acting, art for its own sake. There is no such thing as "a pervasive realism, a tender earthiness in all its characters, and a sometimes ironical appreciation of their existence at their age in that spot on earth in that period of cultural and historical determination."[2] The Incarnation does not lead Bergman's characters to a trusting encounter with reality. Rather, they overplay it: sex, family relationships, children's games, food, dance, family rituals. Even the bishop, the hated stepfather of Fanny and

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Alexander, must say to them: "I love you but my love is strong and harsh." God's play in the mysteries of creation and incarnation creates no space in the bishop's world for joyful celebration. Certainly one could never imagine him picking up two sticks and moving one over the other like Francis, as if playing a violin.

If the home of Alexander's grandmother turns the birth of Jesus into bad theatre, that of the bishop removes it so far from the human world as to make life a grim submission to a God totally without compassion and mercy. Love is mimed in both homes. There are no memorable images of true human enjoyment. The final communal celebration, a christening, evokes neither joy nor hope; the newly born child will enter the make-believe world of those standing about. Baptism into Christ will in no way change one's perception of the realities of love and death.

What is the crucial statement Bergman seems to make in and through his final film? There is real significance in the fact that he selects the birth of Christ as a controlling symbol in this unusual family drama. The issues of love and pretense, imagination and fantasy, reality and artificiality, true celebration and empty ritual, real hope and useless escape, cheap and costly grace — are all played out against the backdrop of the feast of the Incarnation. Like Francis, Bergman seems to be telling us that only an imagination that is illumined by the burning torches of Greccio can find the power to "sing" reality even in the midst of suffering and pain. The make-believe aspects of Francis' Christmas celebration paradoxically lead to a heightened experience of the real. But it is the make-believe of the Christian imagination that is rooted in an extraordinary conviction that God has in fact taken our humanity and our history as his own. The make-believe of Alexander's imagination, the product and symbol of his supposedly Christian environment, leads to a world of false hopes, illusions, the fear of death and a fatalism regarding life. *The Play about the Joyful Birth of Christ* will continue to be performed in the family's theatre: but it will remain just that — theatre. The story will be correct, the script will speak of joy and mercy, of light and radiance, but it will never get beyond the confines of the stage. Is Bergman suggesting by a negative argument what Francis intuited so positively? Is he possible saying that one can only truly perceive and experience reality in its richness, one can only truly dream dreams and see visions, one can truly experience the depth of the mystery of human life only when one, like Francis, has surrendered to the "sublime humility and humble sublimity" of the joyful birth of Christ?

As Franciscans we must face the question of Greccio's impact upon our experience of reality. Or better, how much does my faith in the birth of the Lord effect my perception of the human, of the world, of God? Greccio

can become empty theatre for us and be robbed of the incredible impact that we can share with those who witnessed that remarkable celebration. Thomas of Celano tells us in his First Life (85) that those who came to Greccio "were filled with new joy over the new mystery." It was through Francis that the Child Jesus "was brought to life again .... and stamped upon their fervent memory." (1 Cel 86). Giotto depicts the event in one of the frescoes in the Basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi. The scene is one of peace and reconciliation, of awe and simplicity: men and women, singing friars and diocesan clergy, even live animals and hay, are there with Francis before the crib and the viewer is made to feel that in the midst of this the richness and beauty of life have been rediscovered. What Bonaventure describes as a "venerable night rendered brilliant and solemn by a multitute of bright lights and by resonant and harmonious hymns of praise"[3] is given feeling and life in Giotto's magnificent painting. It is that feeling and life that are so suffocated by the empty ritual that pervades the world of Bergman's characters.

There is certainly much more that can be said and has been said regarding the message of Fanny and Alexander.[4] I would claim, however, that for Bergman as for Francis, our perception of reality, our ability to live joyfully and truthfully within the circumscribed world of time and space, our ability to commit ourselves to the search for value and meaning even in the midst of pain and suffering, — these and much more can only occur in the hearts of those who have surrendered themselves in word and deed to *The Play about the Joyful Birth of Christ*. Bergman and Greccio are really not that far apart.

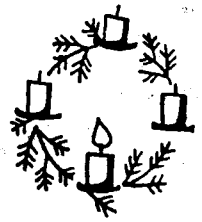
Endnotes

[1]*Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God, the Tree of Life, the Life of St. Francis*. Translation and Introduction by Ewert Cousins. New York: Paulist Press, 1978, p. 129.

[2]Erik H. Erikson, "Dr. Borg's Life cycle" in *Daedalus*, Spring 1976, p. 3.

[3]Cousins, ibid. p. 278.

[4]For a fine review of the film see, "Fanny and Alexander," Barbara and Leonard Quart, *Film Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 1, (1983) pp. 22 - 27.



From Christmas to New Year

Evergreen shrubbery
in a rural graveyard
sways restfully alert
'neath the pine tree.
Ivy, turned darksome for Winter,
wreathes upright slabs
where the world of our childhood
nestles
preparing us as ever
a cradle.
Boughs burnished with frozen snowdust
are hung with cones,
the concentrate of Autumn's cornucopia
and the hope of Spring shoots.
Squirrels entwine the tree
with their garland of tails.
Holly berries bead on the surface
while root-level sap
stores generations' distillation.
All-year sparrows
ruffle against the cold
with auburn parkas.
Then a cardinal may alight
flutter and settle
in portrayal of our heart.
Catchall crèche,
at year's end,
of images.
Spadework for tomorrow.
Star silver
illuminates a fir-tree nocturne
at whose base there await us
gift-wrapped lives.

Here Christmas has crystallized its joy.
From the depth that we lie
to that height will we rise:
We are what we remember.

Hugoline A. Sabatino, O.F.M.

St. Francis As Dramatist and Poet

SÉAMUS MULHOLLAND, O.F.M.

As a poet I am keenly interested in the way in which St. Francis perceived the world, how he expressed in word and deed his experience of that world, and how, with his poetical mind, he translated inter-active experience into the concrete and the visual. This has led me increasingly to look at St. Francis as a 'dramatist,' one who takes the abstract or conceptual and crafts from it a visible experience and expression in word and deed so that the abstract becomes enfleshed and the drama itself becomes the experience.

Recently, I took a group of 14 year olds from our local Youth Centre here in East London to the Cockpit Theatre (a theatre designed and specially built for Youth Theatre) where they were to perform their one act play *"Leaving Home"*. The youthfulness of the players was more than made up for by the confidence and surety with which they acted and expressed their experience of the world of East London, which is a hard, tough inner-city area with the problems associated with such areas: high unemployment, drug abuse, local government spending cuts, inadequate housing etc., racism and so the list goes on. The play concerned the breakdown in family relationships between the teenage daughter of an alcoholic mother; it involved the sons of the family in trouble with the Police, as well as the problems of the elderly depicted in a marvellously accurate portrayal of the grandmother.

The accuracy of observation and the naturalness of their acting, combined with a first-hand experience of what they were "fictionally" portraying, brought them massive acclaim, applause and encouragement to con-

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Besides his ministry in London's East End, Fr. Séamus writes poetry, produces plays and composes music for a folkband. He has contributed poems and articles to **The Cord.**

tinue dramatizing their experience of the world as 14 year olds. There was no sense of shame in the children about being who they were or what they were, nor was there any sense of shame or guilt about the way in which they showed what was obviously their own family experiences. Indeed when I was directing and producing the play one of the girls (who played the alcoholic mother) spoke with a stage Irish accent. When I pointed out to her that she might be guilty of a little racist stereotyping she replied, in all innocence, "But Father, my Mum's Irish and she's an alcoholic!!" It was this sense of experience and the truth of it for them coupled with the truthfulness in which they acted it out for strangers that forced me to reflect upon the way in which St. Francis was in a sense actor and dramatist — for he too "acted" out the experience of his world, time and culture and the problems within it, with truthfulness and integrity.

This does not mean that Francis was insincere — of course he was not — but he did have a powerful sense of imagination, or rather his intuitive imaginative response to thought, feeling and experience provided him with a "poietas," a method of crafting, of making visible in concrete actions what was originally unformulated abstractions. It is this true imagination which in a sense sets his dramatic expression of these experiences free from the confines of pure thought, or better still, which does not limit the experiences to speculative metaphysical reflections. In the case of Francis, Marx's dictum "Do not contemplate the world, Change it!" is most obviously true; for Francis not only changes his own world, the world of his imagination, action, reflection and inner space but through his own changing, changes the world around him.

This dramatic approach to God, creation, his own culture and the Church brings from Francis expressions in concrete forms of experiences which need to be visualized. Drama exists not only as a vehicle for a particular playwright to share his thoughts and vision of the word, but also to present in 3D that experience as objectivity to the subjectivity of the audience who watches — drama, like poetry, is objective in form and function. The creative imagination of Francis is itself objective in form and function, rooted in the subjectivity of his own experience and made visble in word (his poetry and writings) and action (Greccio, the wolf of Gubbio, the removal of his clothes before the Bishop and his Father).

As poet, Francis is eloquent and articulate, his poetry reflecting his experience of contemplation yet also having within it a pragmatic dimension, for the Canticle was used by Francis to bring visible peace between the bishop and the Podestá of Assisi. As dramatist, Francis' actions, objectified from subjective experience makes his life a riveting fascination.

Anyone who has been held spellbound by an actor on stage will understand how his every action is watched, appreciated and applauded, how his every word is taken as gospel as from some Oracle at Delphi and how the actor ceases to be actor and becomes in actuality and in conceptuality that which he acts, to the extent that one forgets one is watching a "fiction" and unconsciously accepts the fiction as fact.

The creative imagination of Francis is itself objective in form and function, rooted in the subjectivity of his own experience and made visible in word (his poetry and writings and action. ...

In the same way Francis' actions, words and every movement become a "fact" within a fiction — the fiction is the powerful imaginative response and the fact the externalising of fiction. In this sense the dramatic representation of the Bethlehem event at Greccio is all at once both fact and fiction — it is in the best sense a "poietas," a crafting, a making and also in the best sense it is "drama," a play written by a master playwright of imaginative depth and perception. Francis takes a fact — the birth of Christ — and reflects upon it; he then moves the fact from the realm of the factual to the imaginatival fictional — the representation of the birth and all that surrounded it — by presenting a 3D objectivity in the cattle, straw, people etc., who are all at once actors and audience. He successfully blends to the point of non-recognition fact into fiction and vice versa, so that, like the actor above, conceptuality becomes actuality.

In the same way that Francis is a "dramatist" so too is he a most convincing "actor." By this I do not mean that the words and actions of St. Francis are untrue or lack integrity — they most certainly are true and unaffected. They are genuine because they are his and no one else's and are therefore integral to the wholeness of his personhood. What I mean by saying that Francis is a convincing actor is that in all his "actions" he becomes actuality — becomes what he "acts," he becomes peace, he becomes fraternity, he becomes poverty to the extent the the fiction (i.e. the objective externals) become the fact (i. e. the subjective experienced and expressed). The life of Francis is all dramatic and poetic: it is dramatic

because the events which shape his life are "dramatic" i.e. his initial conversion, the God–Francis dialogue at Damiano, the founding of the Order, La Verna. These are unquestionably unique experiences which are not ordinary in the sense that they are everyday events. They are dramatically decisive: they provide in a way the stage, setting and backdrop to how the visible drama of Francis' life is lived out — they are within the context the objective fiction which Francis reflects upon and in his expression of their effect upon him they become the subjective fact lived out in history in a factual life.

Before everyone rushes to contest the "fact" of the encounters with the Lord that Francis had and which I have referred to as "fiction" I do not mean that they did not happen; I accept and believe that they did, but they happened because Francis showed us that they happened in the way in which he responded to them and changed direction according to each of those dramatic encounters. The "poetic" dimension of Francis' life is not found simply in his writings in either prose or poetry but on a much deeper level. Poetry exists to present verbal ikons to the reader or listener. It is an art which uses imagination and concretization to present those images and as it presents the images in its particular form i.e. words within rhythm, rhyme, stanza etc., the words themselves are subjugated to the imaginary content which in turn moves beyond the imaginary to become symbol. Here the symbol acts upon the unconspicuous psyche feeding it, sustaining and helping it to grow so that wholeness and integrity are brought about unconsciously.

Francis' combination of dramatic and poetic through the subjectifying of objectivity means that what is presented for our audition and visual appreciation is on the one hand unsentimental but yet intensely moving in its honesty, integrity and totality. For example, I am a great fan of Humphrey Bogart and for me he can do no wrong. I do not think he was great as an actor but he was great as a dramatist. His every laconic smile, laugh or movement can spellbind the fan to the extent that one fails to see Humphrey Bogart as Sam Spade or Rick in *"Casablanca"* — one simply sees Sam Spade attempting to work his way through the deviousness of Mary Astor or Sidney Greenstreet, or Rick at last understanding that sometimes to understand what it means to love one must sacrifice freely that which is loved, and so he tells Elsa to get on the plane which will take her away from him for ever. In much the same way Francis' actions are not separate from himself: they are not what he *does* but rather they are what he *is*. In the imagination that brings a picture of him to our minds as we read his writings, poetry or stories concerning him, he is the sum total of his actions and words — the fiction becomes the fact and thus the imaginary becomes reality.

It is this continuing movement between "fiction" and "fact" this "poietas" of dramatizing that ensures that Francis' actions and words will be enduring for ever. Further, it ensures that the image — the poetic ikon of Francis will be as lasting as any of the great figures of poetry, art or literature: for as Vladimir and Estragon have been waiting for Godot since Beckett first wrote the play, so too will they be waiting for Godot for eternity. As Michelangelo's Madonna will forever cradle the dead Christ of the "Pieta," and Shakespeare's Caesar is urged not to go to the Capitol and to Beware the Ides of March — or that Eliot's Waste Land for ever remains here and barren, or Yeat's 1916 for ever be the birth of a terrible beauty — so too will Francis of Assisi be the talker to animals, the inventor of the Crib, the healer of the conflict between the bishop and the mayor, or the townspeople of Gubbio and the Wolf.

As a poetic and dramatic figure the uniqueness of Francis lies in his totality of actualizing objective fiction to express subjective fact. His quality as a dramatist is the sincerity and genuine integrity of his conviction that the experiences he underwent were such that his life could never be the same. The life of St. Francis of Assisi as he plays it out is not only powerful drama, or profound imagist/ symbolist poetry, it is all of these at once and more — it is in microcosm what openness and truthfulness can be made to become and that is Alter Christus — the greatest of the Poet — Dramatists.

The staff of the Franciscan Institute
joins the Editors
in wishing you a very blessed Christmas
and every grace and good
from our heavenly Father
throughout the new year.

Book Reviews

From Intuition to Institution: The Franciscans. By Theophile Desbonnets. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press. 1988. v + 155 pp. $12.OO (cloth).

Reviewed by Fr. Dominic Monti, O.F.M., Ph.D. (University of Chicago), Professor of Church History Washington Theological Union, Summer Professor Franciscan Institute.

As someone who has to teach a survey of Franciscan history, I avidly delved into this contribution by the prominent editor of medieval Franciscan sources Theophile Desbonnets. The book first appeared in French in 1983; although over the past several years I have had occasion to refer to it briefly, I welcomed this translation as an opportunity to go through the whole work more carefully. After completing it, I must confess my reaction alternates between enthusiasm and exasperation.

Let me say that I am very enthused to see a book like this: a concise attempt to illustrate how the initial vision of Francis and his first few companions ("intuition") evolved into a prominent, highly structured religious order of 30,000 men ("institution") — all in the incredibly brief period of fifty years. But what was obscured in the process? Desbonnets rightly sees the story of the evolution of the Friars Minor in the thirteenth century as probably the most dramatic example in the long history of the church of how a vibrant intuition became institutionalized (for good or ill). He calls us to recognize this process for what it was so that we might be better able to grasp again the initial vision. After all, the structures of any religious order arise out of an attempt to express and guard its inner charism. What might have been a valid expression seven hundred years ago may well no longer be so today. Hence, the ever-present call to renewal demands that we break out of encrusted habits and attempt to recover the originating charism which gave rise to those structures in the first place. That is the reason for this little book.

Yet while going through this story, I often found myself exasperated by the author's exaggerated judgments. It might have spared myself some of this reaction if I had looked first at his concluding chapter. There, after characterizing many histories of the Order as pious institutional self-justifications, Desbonnets confesses that his own book too "has not been a venture in objective history" (p. 136). He is certainly correct. It is an exercise in what the French would call *parti pris* — and at which they excel: a passionate attempt to justify a preconceived image of the way things should be (or, in this case, the way things were). Unfortunately, this approach often generates more heat than light.

The author states at the outset that describing the process of the institutionalization of the Franciscan movement cannot be "a matter of opposing intuition to institution, since this would be an abusive simplification" (p. 1). However, he goes on again and again to do precisely that, pitting them against one another as mutually opposing realities. This tendency leads Desbonnets to violate another of his own principles. He claims that the work of the historian demands "both justice and charity" (p. 135), But his black-and-white view of Franciscan history leads him to use such loaded terms as "betrayal" and "insidious" when assessing the motives of some of the principal characters in the story — hardly charitable, nor does it do justice to a complex reality.

The reason for this, I believe, is Desbonnets' reluctance to follow his own announced method: "we have to distinguish the instution properly speaking, i.e. following in the footsteps of Christ, from its concrete manifestations that can be either essential or non-essential in nature" (p. 135). Instead, he continually identifies Francis' intuition with its earliest expression. This makes it very difficult for him to see later developments in any other way that a sad abandonment of the pristine form, rather than as attempts to express that same intuition in changed circumstances. Nor can he admit the possibility that Francis's intuition itself might have undergone a certain refinement or clarification over the years. It seems to be frozen in 1209.

The prime example of all of this is Desbonnets' dichotomy between "fraternity" and "order": Francis wanted a brotherhood; he opposed the friars' becoming an order to the bitter end. There is certainly no doubt that Francis founded a brotherhood of penitents; there is also no doubt that as it expanded and demanded more institutional forms, Francis strongly rejected the idea that his fraternity assimilate itself to the pattern of existing forms of religious life.

But a good case can be made, contrary to Desbonnets, that Francis wanted his brotherhood to be recognized as its own unique "religio" — an approved way of religious life within the church. Brotherhood ("fraternitas") cannot be totally set against order ("religio"). Desbonnets neglects to mention that the Humiliati — a brotherhood — were recognized by the church as a canonical order in 1201. The church saw Francis as the founder of such a "religio" at least from 1216 (to judge from Jacques de Vitry); the first papal bull dealing with the friars refers to them as a "religio" in 1219. Francis himself can refer to his community as *both* a "religio" and a "brotherhood" in the 1221 version of the Rule. The terms apparently were not mutually opposed to him. The Francis of 1223 that Desbonnets paints — as being "the only one" (!) left among the friars opposing a definitive canonical recognition of the Brotherhood — is a figment of an overly romantic imagination. It belongs in Kazantzakis's novel, not an historical essay.

My feelings of frustration were not helped by a very poor translation of the last five chapters. The meaning of phrases is often distorted, sometimes totally contrary to the French original. The most glaring example: "The friars inquired if they would be under obligation to observe the *Testament*" is translated "the friars demanded that they would be under obligation..."! "Guardian" comes out as "doorkeeper;" "Clares" as "Claretians."

Despite these reservations, Desbonnets gives us a challenging (if partisan) portrayal of a critical period of Francis-

can history. He challenges us to free ourselves from past institutions to experience the continual newness of intuition.

The Narrow Gate. By Dom Francis Byrne, O.S.B. Spectrum Publications, P. O. Box 75, Richmond, Victoria 3121. 1987, pp. 87, no price given.

Reviewed by Sr. Marie Francis Gallagher, O.S.F. Sister is presently working with the poor in the Ministry of Caring in Wilmington, Delaware.

Whenever I pick up a new book, I feel it, I look carefully at the pictures, read the introduction and try to find out what the author is all about. The title intrigues me, and as I read *The Narrow Gate* I thought of the Scripture text: "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." (Matt. 7:13, 14).

On the cover, there are figures of men and women whose faces are long and thin, some eyes are reading from an open book, and others are turned toward the sky. Expressions are frightened and poignant.

I divided the contents into three sections: ideas, people and places. Unbelievable that there are eighteen expositions in eighty-seven pages. Dom Francis whets the reader's desire to explore the ideas further. Virtues considered are hope, most needed today, patience, purity of heart, prayer meditation. Contemplation-in-action, Chapter One, presents a modern version of those praying in a contemplative manner. It is not an atmosphere of peace, but areas of death and bloodshed as found in your next door neighbor. TV covers it every night, but when you see it happen, the need for a peace truce is urgent and possible.

Places in which noteworthy forms of monasticism began and have survived until now are presented — namely Irish Monasticism, Benedictinism and New Norcia's influence — a center of Christianity in the Australian outback. In each of these thriving communities, all members, present and potential would do well to remember the motto of St. Benedict, "Let nothing be preferred to the Word of God."

People portrayed are great well-knowns: Thomas Merton, Julian of Norwich, Vincent Pallotti, Michaelangelo, Thomas A. Kempis, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, Saint Catherine of Siena, and Dom Columba Marmion. All these giants are worthy of our imitation. Catherine was able to combine action and contemplation. We recall that she prevailed on Pope Gregory XI to leave Avignon and return to Rome.

In the documents of the Second Vatican Council, there is much thought given to prayer and work. When Christ advised his apostles, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place," (Mk. 6:31) he meant nothing other than a special way of living and expressing the paschal mystery of Christ. Today, not only men and women religious, but many others through the grace of the Holy Spirit, reach contemplation. A major part of the Church's witness in the world today is in the areas of missionary work. Numberless people are laboring in many parts of the globe to spread the Gospel message. Yet the Council tells us that there are two billion people who have never heard the message of Jesus. Looking more closely at men's and women's activity in the world, the Council states "that the monumental effort of men and women through the centuries to improve the circumstances of the world, presents no problems to believers..." And considered in itself, it corresponds to the Plan of God. When men and women work, not only do they transform matter and society, but they fulfill themselves. When this does not happen, it is well to reflect on the late Pope Paul VI's warning:

> "Commotion, din, feverish activities, outward appearance and the crowd threaten man's inner awareness. He lacks silence with its genuine voice speaking in the depths of his being... He lacks order, he lacks prayer, he lacks peace, he lacks himself... (text p. 39)

Every day of the week throughout the world, the celebration of the Eucharist takes place. It is the focal point of worship and our total life. No one but Christ could issue such an invitation to come, and He will not turn him away. Christ calls to the market places of the world, but people must turn their gaze in His direction. Come without money, just come to Me, and I will be your life. We are pilgrims moving along and greatly influenced by side attractions. We need to concentrate on the real meaning of the Mass and actively respond to it in thought, word and deed. Then the Word will be enfleshed in each one of us. We must "prepare the way of the Lord" as John did and be ready to lose our head for what is right and true. No easy thing to do.

If anyone can write a more interesting text with numerous aspects of prayer and exemplify it with real people, Dom Francis has excelled himself. It is a book worth reading and contemplating because you will find yourself and the Spirit at one.

Love In A Fearful Land: A Guatemalan Story. By Henri J. M. Nouwen. Ave Maria Press: Notre Dame, IN 46556. Pp. 116.. Paperback, $5.95.

Reviewed by Friar Thomas Bourque, T.O.R., Chairperson of the Philosophical and Religious Studies Department of Saint Francis College of Pennsylvania.

> *So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*
>
> *Ephesians 2:19-22*

These words of Paul to the Ephesians captures the spirit and foundation of Henri Nouwen's book, *Love In A Fearful Land*. This book invites the reader to reflect upon the paradox of friendship and servanthood in the midst of a confused world. Nouwen shares the friendship which has grown among four individuals in a mysterious way as each has attempted to serve God and the people of God.

The two sojourners and prophets whom Nouwen speaks of are two American priests who served the people of

Guatemala. Father Stan Rother served the Tzutuhil people in Santiago Atitlan as their priest and was martyred for his concern and love for the people. Father John Vesey followed the ministry and service of Stan in response to God's call. His ministry led him to much soul searching and remembering of the saints who had gone before him. Stan was a modern day saint and martyr for John and the Tzutuhil people. The stories of Stan's and John's encounter with God's poor is a story of prayer.

As one begins to enter into the spirit and purpose of this book, one quickly realizes that Nouwen is more interested in recounting the active service of these two individuals than in supplying the reader with a biographical sketch of their lives. The fellow citizens who shared this journey shared by Nouwen are three friends united in the presence of the Spirit and memories of their struggles to serve God. The journey is one of a martyr, Stanley Rother; a servant of God, John Vesey; and two compassion-filled onlookers, Henri Nouwen and Peter Weiskel. Nouwen, a professor of pastoral theology and the author of numerous books, and Weiskel, a photographer and colleague of Nouwen's, capture the story of this journey through vivid photographs and a memorable narrative.

This journey of faith is one of struggle, prayer, survival, risk, friendship and hope. Nouwen and Weiskel attempt to understand the struggle of two servants of God who were striving to proclaim the gospel to the least of their sisters and brothers. In doing so, they challenge the reader to struggle with a response to the gospel. A major question focused on throughout the book is: "What have you done for the least of mine?" It is a question not only for each individual, but for each community and nation as well.

As Nouwen shares the situations of these two priests, he captures for the reader a very important insight for reflection. It is only after one has spent time looking into self that one is capable of turning attention to others. In responding to the needs of the people of Guatemala, Stan Rother and John Vesey learned the price of Christian freedom. Although the gospel and their ministry demanded risks of every sort, both servants of the people learned the true meaning of service and hope. Through the act of opening up to others and God, both Stan and John learned to live with and to go beyond the confusion they found surrounding them. It was in prayer and faith that they both began to accept their situations, one in which they found themselves confronted constantly with oppression and threats by the government of Guatemala.

Love In A Fearful Land challenges the individual to approach prayer and service by asking. "Why does one pray and serve?" Reflection upon this question allows one to find out what the price and the risk involved in living out the gospel message is. That price and risk for Stan Rother was martyrdom. For John Vesey it was separation from a people he loved and served because of the threats made upon his life. Nouwen shares the journey of God's mysterious plans for two men in *Love In A Fearful Land* and challenges us to reflect upon our own call. If God prepares us for our service in his kingdom, have we taken the opportunity to prepare ourselves to serve? Stan Rother and John Vesey prepared themselves after being sent to Guatemala. Now the challenge is left up to us.

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Downey, Michael. *A Blessed Weakness: The Spirit of Jean Vanier and L'Arche* (T. Bourque), 314-15).

Ghezzi, Bert. *Becoming More Like Jesus* (M. F. Gallagher), 125-26.

Larranga, O.F.M. Cap. *Sensing Your Hidden Presence; Toward Intimacy With God* (P. F. Macaluso), 313-14.

Llewelyn, Robert, Ed. *Julian: Woman of Our Day* (P. F. Macaluso), 316-18.

Lortz, Joseph. *Francis the Incomparable Saint* (F. Berna), 187-89.

McInerny, Ralph. *Miracles: A Catholic View* (SN, J. A. Davies), 189.

Neuhaus, Richard John. *The Catholic Moment* (J. A. Davies), 189.

Nouwen, Henry J. M., *Love in a Fearful Land* (T. Bourque), 347-48.

O'Neil, Dan, Ed. *The New Catholics* (J. S. Davies), 189.

Pennock, Michael F. *The Ways of Prayer: An Introduction* (M. F. Gallagher), 125-28.

Rohr, Richard. *The Great Themes of Scripture: Old Testament* (C. O'Connor), 254-55.

Rust, Renee. *Making the Psalms YOUR Prayer* (C. O'Connor), 254-55.

Saint Sing, Susan. *Living with Sickness* (M. F. Gallagher), 93-4.

Seitz, Ron. *The Gethsemeni Poems* (D. Kocka), 89-93.

Death Eat (D. Kocka), 89-93.

THE SAN DAMIANO CENTER,
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Jan. 20 – 22
Spirituality Of The Secular Franciscan Rule,
Donna Marie Kaminsky, S.F.O.

Jan. 27 – 29
Sadhana Experience Weekend
Salvino Briffa, S.J.

Feb. 3 – 5
Paying Attention To Tension
Mary Ellen McAleese, O.S.F.

Feb. 10 – 12
"The Spirituality Of The Absence of God";
Job, Jesus, John Of The Cross, and Therese of Lisieux
Anthony Godzieba

Feb. 17 – 20
Enneagram: A Personality System
Virginia Sampson. SUSC

Mar. 10 – 12
Weekend of Directed Prayer
Center Staff

Mar. 17 – 19
Birthing The New Creation:
An Introduction To Creation Spirituality
Marie Lucey, O.S.F. and Kathleen Parisi, O.S.F.

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