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A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

ARTICLES

FRANCISCAN MISSION TO NON-CHRISTIANS AND THE RULES OF 1221 AND 1223 4
Michael Tripka, T.O.R.

FIRST CELANO AND THE MIRROR OF PERFECTION: SEEING FRANCIS WITH DOUBLE VISION 18
Sr. Roberta McKelvie, C.S.B.

FEATURES

HOW TO BECOME "WORTHY MEN" 1
William W. Buechel.

BOOK REVIEWS 26

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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).

All: 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).

How to Become "Worthy Men"

WILLIAM W. BUECHEL

Pope John XXIII liked this saint so much that he wanted to proclaim him a Doctor of the Church, but he never got around to it. Saint Bernardino of Siena was a marvelous priest, preacher and writer. He lived from 1380 to 1444. Pope John loved his written sermons. The saint preached from one end of Italy to the other. Everyone who heard him was enthralled with him and what he was doing. He was a Franciscan who deeply loved his Order. He was also a learned man dedicated to the values of a Christian university education. In a sermon he proposed to students seven rules that would help them become "worthy men."

The first rule he proposed was "*esteem*." By that he meant that students should really esteem study as something sublime. The student must have a healthy respect for study, not just because he wants to get good grades in his subjects, but because he really and truly believes in acquiring culture, and not just for what money might eventually be in it for himself, but because he wants to live a full and cultured life. He should read the books of great masters to help get their thinking about life to become a rule of action for himself.

The thoughts of the great masters of literature can so mold one's life and lifestyle that all will recognize the culture he has acquired. He must not only read these great works of literature but also discuss them with others of like mind, thus learning to convey his ideas to others in an orderly and even scholarly fashion. I think it was Pascal who said that if you climb onto another's shoulders, even if you are shorter, you will see

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William Buechel, a retired Postal Clerk in Rochester, New York, has been a free-lance writer for sixty years. Now in his eightieth year and in his fifty-sixth year of married life, he continues to add to the over 700 articles he has published not only in the Catholic Press but in Protestant and Jewish periodicals as well. This article, based on a sermon St. Bernardine of Siena preached to university students, reveals the Christian humanism of the remarkable fifteenth century Franciscan preacher. The original is found in Sancti Bernardini Senensis Opera Omnia, Volume IX, 406.

farther. It is far greater to have possession of great ideas, even if they are someone else's, than to be the one to invent ideas that are mediocre.

St. Bernardino went on to his second rule for those who would become "worthy men": *separation*. This sounds like an ominous word, but it maakes a lot of sense. What the saint meant by this was that the student should keep himself somewhat apart from those around him so that his study would not be unduly interrupted by other students and other things. There were many things that he put on the "stay-away" list: indecent books and bad company. Had the saint lived in the twentieth century, his list of "stay-aways" would be much longer. He would have mentioned, among other things, drugs, certain movies, magazines, books, videos, and entertainment. A good student needs to keep his standards high, very high. Culture is not found everywhere.

And, by making use of this second rule proposed by the saint, his third rule falls right into place. That rule advises that we remain *calm*, and not let ourselves get stirred up in our minds by the various characters and plots and whatever that our use of the media will certainly excite in us. The mind cannot do both things: retain the vital information we get from school books and other good books, and still dwell on the lurid scenes from these other polluted sources.

Ordination is the saint's fourth rule looking toward "worthy men." That doesn't mean you need to become a priest. It means that the student have order and protection in things of the body and of the spirit. There should be a balance in everything. Neither too much nor too little. Not too much sleep, nor too little. Not too much pampering the appetite nor yet too little eating. Not too much reading, not too little. The best way is always the middle road, neither too fast nor too slow. Too much study can be as bad as too little.

Going just a bit further in this rule: It is better to acquire a little knowledge and know it well, than to work for a lot of knowledge and know none of it too well. The saint tells us to go ahead and have personal preferences in books and authors, and stick with them, but never to despise any of them, whether they are favorites of yours or not.

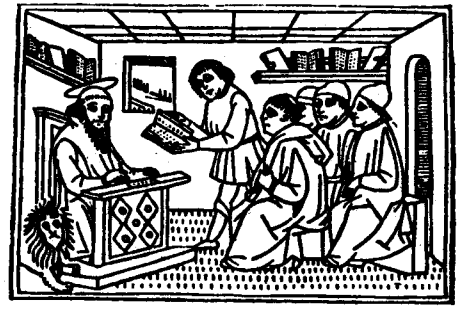
All these four rules as proposed by St. Bernardino are really great, and can play an important part in one's life, but not unless the fifth rule, "*continuation*," is skillfully and artfully employed. "Continuation" means nothing more than perseverance. Without perseverance, nothing we do will or can have any lasting effect. It is not enough to embrace any course of studies unless we have an unrelenting purpose to stick with it, even though at times we may want to "chuck it all." Life is that way: we determine to start something and, after a little while, we want to give it up, and start something else. This type of person will never get anywhere.

He is doomed to failure. Unfortunately, even he doesn't realize it until it is too late. It is so easy to give in to laziness, and just sit back and take the easiest way. But that way inevitably leads to failure and remorse. The person who has a strong and tenacious will always succeeds. Coupled with the grace of God, there can be no failure.

And that brings us to the sixth rule proposed by St. Bernardino of Siena, looking toward "worthy men." *Enjoyment*. Every one of these rules is useless if one does not enjoy what he is doing. To study, to read, to think, none of these will ever fulfill their purpose if they are not enjoyed. In the beginning the enjoyment may not be so pronounced, but as the activity goes on, life goes forward, enjoyment becomes more and more pronounced so that life itself takes on new and accelerated meaning making life itself worthwhile.

The saint gives *discretion* as his final rule. This rule demands careful insight into one's own inner self. How often a person sets his sights on a goal that really is beyond his innate abilities? Everyone wants to be first in everything, but it is an unrealistic goal. There have to be persons in second, third, fourth and other places. You may be just as good as the next fellow, but he may come in first because he had just a wee bit more on the ball than did you. But that doesn't make you any worse than he is. You're still tops, and certainly should be in your own estimation. It pays, for a full life, not to have too much going for you, for then life becomes unbearable, and that is a tragedy. Live life to its fullest, without keeping an eye on a competitor. He may not be a competitor at all, and you've wasted the joy of living.

St. Bernardino gave these seven rules to university students of the fifteenth century. But they can and do apply to anyone interested, student or not. There is a reward for the effort made, and that reward makes of life a real enjoyment.



Franciscan Missions to Non-Christians and the Rules of 1221 and 1223

MICHAEL TRIPKA, T.O.R.

From its origins the Franciscan movement was missionary in nature. It was a matter of time before the gospel zeal of the friars, at first aimed at the revival of faith in European Christendom, began to turn toward the non-Christian world. In the early years, this meant the Moslem domains of Spain, Africa and the Near East.

The development of Franciscan missions to non-Christian lands paralelled the development of the order itself. The sending forth, or simply going forth without being sent, of friars armed and equipped with nothing more than zeal, gradually gave way to definite structures and procedures for missionaries, as reflected in the rules of 1221 and 1223.

Missions to Moslems before 1221

The beginning of Franciscan missions to non-Christians must be traced to Francis of Assisi himself, who desired greatly to go among the Moslems and to be worthy of the glory of martyrdom. (1 Cel 55-56) This was a very real possibility for any Christian willing to risk going among the Moslems, as the Crusades were in progress and Christian-Moslem enmity was at its height.

Celano records that Francis set out for Spain and Morocco with the desire to preach to the rulers and earn martyrdom, probably in 1213 or 1214, but was able to go only as far as Spain:

Brother Michael Tripka recently completed a Master's degree in Library Science at the University of Pittsburgh. He holds an undergraduate degree in history from John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio, and has studied theology at St. Michael's College, Toronto, Canada. Before entering the Third Order Regular of St. Francis, Brother Michael was employed for four years by the Cleveland District of the Internal Revenue Service.

> But the good God, whom it pleased in his kindness to be mindful of me and of many others, withstood him to his face when he had traveled as far as Spain; and that he might not go any farther, he recalled him from the journey he had begun by a prolonged illness. (1 Cel 56)

There is no record of friars having been sent to Moslem lands by Francis prior to 1217, and Francis himself did not attempt to go again to the Moslems before then. "A certain brother... who, we believe, is to be venerated among the number of martyrs" (2 Cel 208) is referred to, and unnamed, who could have gone to the Moslems anytime after 1209. A date prior to 1217 is, however, unlikely for this anonymous mission.

Missions to the Moslems by the friars began in earnest after the Pentecost Chapter of 1217. Brother Elias, later to become the minister general of the order, led the first group of friars to the Holy Land in 1217. Brother Giles had been to the Holy Land as early as 1215, but on his own and without leaving record of his activities there.[1]

> It was natural that the friars should wish to get a footing in the Holy Land. The capture and possession of the places associated with the earthly life of Christ had been one of the chief objects of the Crusades. It was also an idea which appealed strongly to the followers of St. Francis. One of the distinguishing features of Francis' teaching had been the emphasis which he had laid upon the incarnation and the events of the earthly life of Christ. That Christians should be free to visit these holy places, to kneel in the stable of Bethlehem or on Calvary's hill, was to him an ideal worthy of all that he had to give.[2]

The friars were able to establish their presence throughout the Holy Land, but for only so long as the Crusader states remained as a power in the region. Their fortunes suffered with the advance of the Moslem armies and the decline of Crusader power, and in 1291 the friars were forced to flee to Cyprus with the last of the Crusaders, not to return permanently to the Holy Land until the seventeenth century.[3]

Francis himself was at last able to go to the Moslems after the chapter of 1219, and in the same year sent out to Spain and Morocco that group of friars which has become known in Franciscan history as the Protomartyrs (first martyrs). It is notable that at this time, even though the order had become large enough to warrant the formation of geographic provinces, Francis was still able to personally send missionaries to the Moslems.

The Protomartyrs set out in March 1219 to go to Spain, making their way to Seville. These "excellent friars,"[4] five in number as a sixth had remained behind ill in Aragon, promptly made their way to the principal mosque of the city and attempted to enter. Needless to say, this enraged the local moslems (and revealed an incredible ignorance of Islamic belief

and practice, which indicates their degree of preparation for the mission), since for an unbeliever merely to enter a mosque was the height of sacrilege, let alone trying to preach the Christian Gospel therein. The friars were brought before the king of Seville, who would have had them beheaded, but was prevailed upon to send them to Morocco.

In Marakech, the friars began to preach to the populace in the marketplace, which led to their arrest and imprisonment. When after twenty days they refused to renounce the Catholic faith, they were brutally tortured and beheaded. Word of their deaths reached Francis on his return from Egypt in 1220.[5]

Francis set out in May 1219 for Palestine, landing at Acre and then going with a Crusader army to the siege of Damietta in Egypt. He was able to make his way to the court of the Sultan, although there is no record of what common language they might have spoken and no record that Francis spoke any Arabic.

> But who can narrate with what great steadfastness of mind he stood before him, with what strength of spirit he spoke to him, with what eloquence and confidence he replied to those who insulted the Christian law? ... But though he was treated shamefully by many who were quite hostile and hateful toward him, he was nevertheless received very honorably by the sultan. (1 Cel 57)

Francis was unable in this encounter either to convert the Sultan or to become a martyr, but did earn the respect of the Sultan who, though disputing his Christian claims, regarded Francis as a man "different from all others." (1 Cel 57)

Francis did not return to the Moslem countries or to the Holy Land. The responsibilities of trying to hold a growing and changing order together were increasing. Just as Francis could no longer personally form and send forth all the men who were coming to the order, so too it was becoming impossible to personally send forth everyone who desired to go among the Moslems, or to determine even if any given friar should be sent. Also, given the potential dangers into which a missionary friar might be entering, it was no longer possible to allow friars to go to the Moslems on their own without being sent by proper authority. This need to balance inspiration with order, affecting all areas of Franciscan life as well as missionary endeavors, was shown clearly in the section on missions in the ***Regula non-bullata*** of 1221.

Non-Christian Missions in the Rule fo 1221

Chapter XVI of the ***Regula non-bullata*** concerns those friars "going among the Saracens and other infidels". This is one of the longest chapters

in the entire document, and is more an exhortation to those who are to expect persecution for the sake of the Gospel than a specific outline of mission procedure. There is, nonetheless, a definite guideline set out for the sending of friars to the unbelievers, as well as definite ways in which the friars might proclaim the Gospel in alien lands.

In a spirit of exhortation and practicality, the fervor of Francis and his followers reveals the sobering and tempering effect of hard-learned lessons. The chapter begins with Matthew 10:16:

> The Lord says: Behold, I am sending you as lambs in the midst of wolves. Therefore, be prudent as serpents and simple as doves. (AB 12)

Indeed, anyone who would go into the hostile Moslem world of the time might well find himself as a lamb among wolves, but the exhortation to prudence is significant. The Protomartyrs' approach in the mosque of Seville had been anything but prudent.

> Therefore, any brother who desires to go among the Saracens and other nonbelievers should go with the permission of his minister and servant. And the minister should give these brothers permission and not oppose them, if he shall see that they are fit to be sent; for he shall be bound to give an account to the Lord (cf. Lk. 16:P2) if he has proceeded without discretion in this or in other matters. (AB 121)

No longer was it possible to go off to the Moslems on one's own and leave no record of the journey, as Brother Giles had done in 1215. Discretion and caution are uppermost here. There is, however, no definition of what was meant by fitness to be sent. In 1221, and for some decades thereafter, it was still possible for a Franciscan to go to non-Christian lands with no knowledge of the language, culture, or religion of the country, and in fact with little learning or credentials at all except for being esteemed a good and holy friar. Only in the later half of the thirteenth century, especially in the work of blessed Ramon Lull, did Franciscans begin to become educated for the non-Christian missions.[6] As late as 1245, when the Mongol Empire began to apear as a formidable power impinging both on Christiandom and Islam, John of Piano Carpino was sent as a papal emissary to Mongolia without knowing any oriental language.[7]

Education and language skills, however, were not of prime importance to Francis. He set forth two ways in which the friars might proclaim the Gospel, and the one which required no words was of equal standing with the one which called for speaking:

> As for the brothers who go, they can live spiritually among them in two ways. One way 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 are Christians. Another way is to proclaim the word of God when they see that it pleases the Lord, so that they believe in the all-powerful God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the Creator of all, in the Son who is Redeemer and Savior, and that they be baptized and become Christians, because whoever has not been born again of water and the Holy Spirit cannot enter into the Kingdom of God (cf. Jn. 3:5).

They can say to the Saracens and to others these and other things which will have pleased the Lord, for the Lord says in the Gospel: Everyone who acknowledges me before men I will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven (Mt. 10:32). And: Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in His majesty and that of the Father and the angels (Lk. 9:26). (AB 121-122)

Presence and preaching are both presented as valid Gospel witnesses. The friars might, as God led them, simply live as Christians, in quiet humility. They might also proclaim the Gospel, as appropriate to their circumstances "when they see that it pleases the Lord." One is not presented as higher or more perfect than the other. For those who do preach, "when they see that it pleases the Lord" might well be a call to prudence and caution.

Yet the friars are not to be so cautious or prudent that they become unwilling to risk their lives and health for the sake of the Gospel when this is appropriate and necessary. The remainder of the chapter is an exhortation to be ready for persecution and suffering.

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 for my sake will save it (cf. Lk. 9:24) in eternal life (Mt. 25:46). Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs (Mt. 5:10). If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you (Jn. 15:20). And: if they persecute you in one city, flee to another (cf. Mt. 10:23). Blessed are you (Mt. 5;11) when people shall hate you (Lk. 6:22) and malign (Mt. 5:11) and persecute you and drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as evil (Lk. 6:22), and utter every kind of slander against you because of me (Mt. 5:11). Rejoice on that day and be glad (Lk. 6:23) because your reward is very great in heaven (cf. Mt. 5:12). And I say to you, my friends, do not be frightened by these things (Lk. 12:4),and do not fear those who kill the body (Mt. 10:28) and after that can do no more (Lk 12:4). Take care not to be disturbed (Mt. 24:6). For through your patience, you will possess your souls (Lk. 21:19) and whoever perseveres to the end will be saved (Mt. 10:22; 24:13). (AB 122).

The scriptures here are drawn from every possible source on persecution in the Gospels; some from the Sermon on the Mount, some from the sending forth of the Twelve, and some from Jesus' discourses on the last days. To Francis, they seem to have formed one prime thought, that the preaching of the Gospel by words or by life was bound to draw hostility and persecution. The friars were to anticipate this when going on mission to the Moslems, and later to other non-Christians, and to rejoice in persecution when received.

As much as prudence and discernment are enjoined in the first part of chapter XVI, it is possible that this last section reflects some remaining desire of Francis for mission and martyrdom himself. Even though he never returned to the East after 1220, and although his health was soon to begin failing, there is no sign that he gave up wanting to be a martyr. Also, although it was no longer sufficient for a zealous friar to simply go off to the Moslems, prudence was not entirely a limitation on zeal. Ministers were accountable for their discretion, or lack thereof, in allowing friars to go to the missions, but the primary initiative still rested with the friar who desired to go among the Moslems. While responsible for making sure the would-be missionaries were fit for their desired task, the ministers were urged not to oppose those who would go, and readily give permission to them if found fit, however fitness was understood. As is typical through the 1221 rule, authority in this matter is hedged with restraint.

This tone of Scriptural exhortation, restrained authority, and giving the benefit of the doubt to the friars who sought to go among non-Christians changed completely in the rule that was finally approved for the Franciscan order in 1223.

Non-Christian Missions in the Rule of 1223

The *Regula bullata* of 1223, approved by Pope Honorius III, retains the practicalities of the *Regula non-bullata* while trimming the exhortations, prayers, and elaborations of Francis. This is as true of Chapter XII, the chapter pertaining to non-Christian missions, as of the entire rule.

Chapter XII, "Those who go among the Saracens and other nonbelievers," is stripped down to presenting the role of the minister toward those friars desiring to go to the unbelievers:

Those brothers who, by divine inspiration, desire to go among the Saracens and other nonbelievers should ask permission from their ministers provincial. But the ministers should not grant permission except to those whom they consider fit to be sent. (AB 144)

(The remainder of the chapter concerns the cardinal-protector of the fraternity.)

There is a significant change in tone here. The rule has moved from urging the minister not to oppose the friars, if they are fit to go, to urging the minister not to grant permission unless the friars are fit to go. A more restrictive standard of fitness to be sent is implied, although it is still not clear what was meant by fitness.

Bonaventure records that Francis saw in a vision that the rule had become too long, and was inspired to shorten it for approval. (LM 12, 11) In fact, Francis had considerable help from Cardinal Hugolino, who as bishop of Ostia had been a friend and admirer of Francis and the friars, and who later became Pope Gregory IX. (2 Cel 73) Far from wishing to dampen the spirit of the rule, Hugolino. who knew the mind of Francis as well as any of his friars, made the rule a compact and practical document. Francis did not oppose this.

If the emphasis shifted from inspiration toward authority, this was true of the entire rule. Warnings and exhortations on persecution were not necessary to friars who were learning by experience what persecution meant. There is an exhortation to perseverance, not in the chapter on the missions, but in the chapter on fraternal correction:

> And those who are illiterate should not be eager to learn. Instead let them 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, because the Lord says: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute and slander you (Mt. 5: 44). Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 5:10). But whoever perseveres to the end, he will be saved (Mt. 10:22). (AB 144)

Persecution and struggle are not unique to those who go among unbelievers, but to anyone who truly would follow the Gospel life according to Francis, whether in Christian Europe or Moslem Asia.

Francis remained suspicious of education, as shown by the sentence on the illiterate. Not long after the approval of the *Regula bullata*, Francis wrote to Anthony of Padua:

> It pleases me that you teach sacred theology to the brothers, as long as — in the words of the Rule — you "do not extinguish the Spirit of prayer and devotion" with study of this kind. (AB 79)

This reference to chapter V of the *Regula bullata* touches again on the question of fitness for missionary work. Increasingly, talented and learned men were going forth to the missions, but it was still possible for the

unlearned and untrained friar to be sent into a situation for which he was unprepared. Increasingly, however this would become less common.

The rule of 1223 places definite structure on the sending of the friars. Within two decades, Franciscans were being sent on missions to non-Christian lands as bishops and papal emissaries.

The sending forth of friars armed and equipped with nothing more than zeal, gradually gave way to definite structures and procedures for missionaries...

After the Rule of 1223: Missions to Moslems and Mongols

Already in 1217, the Franciscans had established a definite organized presence in Palestine. Increasingly, Franciscan missions among the Moslems were not individual friars, but groups of friars setting up a house in a particular place, or in several places organized into a province. The province of the Holy Land was the first of these.[8] Despite being driven out of Palestine with the fall of Acre in 1291, the friars retained a significant presence in Cyprus, where friars had established houses since the 1220s.[9] The Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land exists to this day.

Despite the early setbacks in North Africa, by 1235 a number of Franciscan houses existed in Marocco and Algeria. The province of Barbary was formed in 1235.[10] A Franciscan, Brother Lupo, was made bishop of Morocco in 1246,[11] and the Franciscan presence in North Africa continued into the late fourteenth century despite increasing Moslem hostility and insignificant numbers of native Catholics.[12]

Late in the thirteenth century, Ramon Lull established a school for missionaries in Mallorca.[13] Lull believed that the Moslems could be converted if Christians would learn their language and culture, so to explain the Christian faith in a way that Moslems would understand. He translated Catholic theological writings into Arabic, including some of his own writings, and went himself twice to Algeria. On his first journey he was imprisoned and eventually deported after debating for some months with the local rulers. On the second journey he died, having fallen ill at sea, his body stoned on reaching shore.

A contemporary of the Franciscans who were studying and teaching at the rising universities of Europe, Lull had a significant effect on Franciscan missions. The school at Mallorca was established about 1276.[15] By the end of the thirteenth century, the day of the uneducated, zealous missionary friar was over for those going to the Moslem world.

While the earliest Franciscan missionaries had concentrated on the Moslems, these being the unbelievers closest at hand, "other infidels" were rising in the east. The Mongol conquest of Asia had already overrun Russia in the 1220s, and in 1240-41 reached into Hungary and Poland before being driven back.[16] Both Islam and Christendom seemed in danger of being overrun.

Pope Innocent IV, hoping to forestall further attacks, sent two Franciscans as messengers to Guyuk Khan in 1245. John of Piano Carpino and Lawrence of Portugal were to go to the Mongols, but in fact Lawrence never went.[17] John was a friar of high reputation, having been largely responsible for establishing the Franciscans in Poland, Hungary, Bohemia and Norway, and a man of advanced age and learning.[18] He did not, however, know any of the languages of Asia, and so took with him brother Benedict the Pole as companion and interpreter.[19] The two friars made their way into Russia, meeting with "Tartars" who captured them and then sent them on their way (often a clear distinction was not made between Tartars, mongols, and various other Central Asian peoples):

> On the First Friday after Ash Wednesday we were putting up for the night as the sun was setting when some armed Tartars rushed upon us in a horrible manner, wanting to know what kind of men we were. When we replied that we were envoys of the Lord Pope, they accepted some of our food and went away immediately.[20]

John and Benedict continued onward, and were eventually sent on to the court of Guyuk Khan himself, bearing a letter from Innocent IV urging the Mongols to become Christians and to cease attacking Christian Europe.[21] This was refused by Guyuk Khan, who sent the friars back with a letter of his own:

> You have also said that supplication and prayer have been offered by you, that I might find a good entry into baptism. This prayer of thine I have not understood.[22]

Guyuk Khan did know something of Christianity, as there were Christians in many of the Asian lands conquered by the Mongols, especially Nestorians in central Asia and Syrian Jacobites in Persia and India. Guyuk Khan apparently had little respect for these:

> Though thou likewise sayest that I should become a trembling Nestorian Christian, worship God and be an ascetic, how knowest thou whom God absolves, in truth to whom He shows mercy?[23]

A more definitely religious mission was that of brother William of Rubruck in 1248. Sartak, the son of Batu Khan of the Golden Horde (modern Russia), was said in the West to be a Christian.[24] William had letters of introduction to Sartak from Louis IX of France, and was sent specifically to make contact with the Christians of the Mongol Empire. William had these letters translated into Persian and Syrian. Although well received by Sartak, who was very curious about Christianity, William found his Christian faith dubious:

> As for Sartach, whether he believes in Christ or not, I do not know. But I do know that he does not wish to be called a Christian.[25]

William was sent on to the court of Mangu Khan, where he observed the relations among the many religions current in the empire. The Mongols themselves had as yet a primitive religion, and followed a policy of tolerance toward the religions of their conquered peoples. As to the Nestorians, William had much to say about what he perceived as their laxity and ignorance.[26]

A definite Franciscan presence in Mongolia did not become firmly established until the appointment of John of Monte Corvino as archbishop of Khanbalik in 1307.[27] John had gone to Mongolia in 1291, bearing letters from Pope Nicholas IV, and remained in Mongolia until his death in 1329. Active centers of Roman Catholicism, stimulated by the Franciscan presence, remained in the Mongol Empire until the invasions of Tamerlane in the 1380s.[28]

From the beginnings, the contact of the Western Church with the Mongol Empire had been sought by popes and kings. This was an attempt to meet with a major power on a high diplomatic level, and to engage in effective evangelism among diverse and often highly civilized peoples. It was never a place for simple friars equipped only with zeal. The choice of Franciscans for such a mission points to a development which Francis would not likely have anticipated, given his cautions toward education and toward the seeking of high status. Already by the middle of the thirteenth century, Franciscans had gone from being men who were considered simple and often ignorant to being men who were important contributors to the major intelectual and theological currents of the time. The Franciscan approach to non-Christian missions developed in similar way. Friars had gone from being wandering preachers, going at times on their own and ignorant of the places to which they went, to skilled and learned preachers and administrators whom the highest powers of Chris-

tian Europe might seek out for sensitive missions. This was an evolution well beyond the scope foreseen in 1221 or 1223.

Evolving Missions: Were the Rules Reflections or Causes?

The *Regula non-bullata* and its distillation in the *Regula bullata* cannot be said to have changed the direction of Franciscan missions to non-Christians. Already before 1221, the Franciscan missionary enterprise was moving in the direction of organization and control. The division of the order into provinces in 1217, (L3S 57) of which the Holy Land was one of the earliest, was a change which laid the groundwork for 1221. Francis did not create ministers provincial anew in 1221; they were already in place in the various parts of the order. The same factors which made such structures necessary in Europe made them even more necessary in non-Christian areas. If a friar going off on his own into a Christian country, not knowing the language or customs, might be exposed to danger by being taken as a heretic (as hapened to the friars in Germany),[29] even greater danger would be posed among hostile Moslems.

Giving Ministers the authority to approve or disapprove the sending of misisonaries definitely would restrict the friars from wandering on their own, but did not necessarily make them more wise, learned, or competent. In the *Regula bullata,* as noted above, Francis still cautions the friars against being too eager to learn if illiterate. Also, for friars to be sent out by kings and popes, and be made missionary bishops, would have dismayed Francis, who did not want the friars to become bishops for fear that this would lead them to pride and arrogance. (2 Cel 148) Such an enterprise as Ramon Lull's school for missionaries at Mallorca, which involved learning Arabic and translating significant intellectual Christian writings into that language, would have been quite beyond the scope of what Francis envisioned for friars going among the unbelievers.

If the later developments could not have been anticipated by either the *Regula bullata* or the *Regula non-bullata,* neither could they be considered to go against the rules. Both rules mandate obedience to the Pope and to the successors of Francis as minister general. (AB 137) The needs of the Church, and the situation of the world around the friars, were changing. If Francis woud have been disturbed by the changed ways in which the friars were going to the unbelievers, he would have been disturbed by many changes taking place in all aspects of the order. Francis found himself in a constant struggle between the ideals of the early years of the fraternity, and the later years when he found the fraternity becoming something much larger than he could have imagined and quite different from what he had envisioned. The battle between the desire to return to

the simplest form of his original inspiration and the need to establish some workable structure for the enlarged community was often painful, and can be seen in the *Testament* with its alternation between the vision of the "good old days" and an almost severe stress on obedience to the Rule and to proper authority. (AB 154 - 156). Even in his lifetime, Francis found the friars moving farther and faster then he was himself willing or able to move.

This is reflected in the developing non-Christian missions. Just as the rule of 1221 reflected what Francis saw as the needs of the church and the friars at the time, and just as the rule of 1223 condensed and clarified these needs, the later developments in which friars were sent as bishops and ambassadors reflected the needs of the Church later in the thirteenth century. The rules of 1221 and 1223 did not cause changes which they could not have anticipated, but neither did these changes mean that the rule of 1223 was being ignored. If any line of cause and effect can be seen here, the structuring of the order which began with the chapter of 1217, which was reflected in 1221 and 1223, was what permitted the later missions to grow and be effective. Such a fraternity as the Franciscans required some measure of structure in order to become sufficently effective in the work of evangelization that it could be possible for the highest leadership of the Church to entrust the friars with complex responsibilities.

Conclusion

The activities of the early Franciscan missionaries may be divided into three phases. The earliest of these, from 1213 to 1217, was the period in which Francis attempted unsuccessfully to go to Morocco, and in which Brother Giles went to the Holy Land. These travels to the Moslems were purely according to individual inspiration, with no organization or coordination, and with few recorded results.

The second phase, from 1217 to 1221, was the period in which the entire order was finding the need for structure. Provinces were beginning to be formed, including that of the Holy Land. Chapters, and ministers provincial had the authority to send or not to send friars to the unbelievers. Francis himself still had enough direct involvement in the affairs of the friars, although the order was becoming ever larger, that he was able to personally send missionaries to Morocco. This was the period in which the Moslem missions began to take on some recognizable structure, although friars might still be sent forth with more zeal than preparation.

The final phase, from 1221 onward, marked the period of definite structure. The *Regula non-bullata* of 1221 marked the attempt of Francis to balance fervor and order. Francis himself was no longer sending friars to

Morocco or to the Holy Land. This was now the responsibility of the ministers provincial. At the same time, Francis showed clearly his own zeal for the conversion of non-Christians and his expectation of persecution for the sake of the Gospel. The *Regula bullata* of 1223 put a definite order on this, giving more firmly to the ministers provincial the authority to send or not to send friars, and in fact encouraging restraint in deciding whom to send.

The later developments in Franciscan missions to non-Christians were an evolution of this final phase. As the order itself became more organized, the needs of the friars going to non-Christians became more complex. And the types of works undertaken became more diverse as well. Such new endeavors as the diplomatic missions to Mongolia, and Ramon Lull's teaching Arabic to the missionaries, were not a turning away from the early Franciscan ideal, but a response to the changing needs of the Church and of the friars. The missionary enterprise, like the Franciscans themselves, had come through a progression from lesser to greater organization; from greater to lesser individualism; and from little or no knowledge of the peoples and places to which the friars would go, to high levels of intellectual preparation and at times high ecclesiastical and political contacts and appointments.

A learned intellectual is not necessarily a better friar than simple and illiterate friar who is good and holy, but there are some tasks which the simple and illiterate one is simply not able to accomplish. Had the friars remained individualistic, unorganized, and untrained, the significant missionary movements of the middle and late thirteenth century would have been impossible. The rules of 1221 and 1223, while not the cause of the effectiveness of the later Franciscan missionaries, sealed and codified the trends which made this effectiveness a realistic possibility. □

Endnotes

[1]John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968, p. 227.

[2]*Ibid*

[3]*Ibid*.

[4]*Analecta Franciscana*, vol. 3, 15-19, in *Proper Offices of Franciscan Saints and Blesseds in the Liturgy of the Hours*, New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1973, p. 36.

[5]Moorman, p. 229.

[6]*Ibid*., p. 230-232.

[7]Christopher Dawson, ed., *The Mongol Mission*. London: Sheed and Ward Ltd., 1955, p. xv.

[8]Moorman, p. 227.

[9]*Ibid*., p. 228.

[10]*Ibid*., p. 229.

[11]*Ibid*.

[12]Raphael M. Huber, OFM, Conv., *A Documented History of the Franciscan Order*, Milwaukee: Nowiny Publishing Apostolate, 1944, p. 770.

[13]Moorman, p. 229.

[14]Moorman, p. 231 - 232.

[15]Huber, p. 779.

[16]Dawson, pp. xiii-xv.

[17]Dawson, p. xv.

[18]Moorman, p. 232.

[19]John of Piano Carpino, *History of the Mongols*, prologue; Dawson, p. 4.

[20]John of Piano Carpino, chapter IX; Dawson, p. 53.

[21]"Two Bulls of Pope Innocent IV Addressed to the Emperor of the Tartars," Dawson, pp. 73-76.

[22]"Guyuk Khan's Letter to Pope Innocent IV," Dawson, p. 85.

[23]*Ibid*.

[24]William of Rubruck, *Journey of William of Rubruck*, chapter I; Dawson, pp. 91-92.

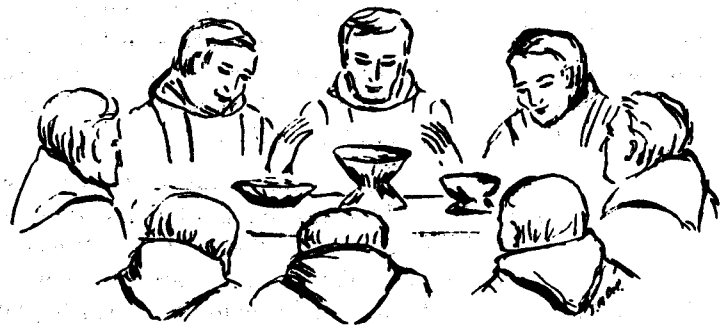
[25]William of Rubruck, chapter XVIII; Dawson, p. 123.

[26]William of Rubruck, chapter XXVI; Dawson, pp. 144-145.

[27]Dawson, pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

[28]Dawson, p. xxxiv.

[29]Jordan of Giano, *Chronicle of Brother Jordan of Giano; XIIIth Century Chronicles*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1961, pp. 22-23.



First Celano and the Mirror of Perfection: Seeing Francis with Double Vision

SR. ROBERTA A. MCKELVIE, C.S.B.

If ever there has been someone who typifies the breadth of the expression "become all things to all people," it is probably Francis of Assisi. It is relatively safe to assume that no single "real Francis" exists, and equally safe to say that who Francis "is" very much depends upon who the person speaking or writing about him is.

Although one of Francis' most cherished values was simplicity. He seems to have been a most complex individual. Part of this complexity, of course, is due to the disparity evident in how he has been portrayed in the primary sources for his life. Two of the most dichatomous of those sources are the *First Life*[1] written in 1228 by Thomas of Celano and *Mirror of Perfection*[2] which dates from 1318. The Francis of *First Celano* is human, weak, vulnerable, compassionate, saintly, and ultimately lovable. The Francis of the *Mirror* is somewhat legalistic, a paragon of perfection, a rule-giving visionary, and ultimately, a figure tormented by the growing differences between his dream and the reality of the brotherhood. *An examination of the Francis portrayed in these two sources reveals a dichotomy in the following aspects of life: "first among brothers"/founder, former of community, and saint-mystic/exemplar.*

I. *First Celano* places some measure of emphasis on the Francis Bernardone who lived in Assisi as the child-youth-young adult tainted by, if not corrupted by, the evil of his familial and social relationships. We are told he "was brought up by his parents proud of spirit, in accordance with the vanity of the world... (1 Cel. 1). He lived in an environment which exposed

Sister Roberta, a Bernardine Franciscan, is a high-school teacher in the diocese of Scranton. She is a graduate student at the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University.

him to "shameful practices" and "every kind of debauchery" (1 Cel 1), as well as token Christianity. Consequently he "squandered and wasted his time miserably" (1 Cel. 2), outdoing "all his contemporaries in vanities," and he came to be a promoter of evil... (1 Cel 2). He looked forward to a day when he would be both wealthy and famous (1 Cel 4); being "eager for glory" (1 Cel 5), he embarked on a never-completed journey to Apulia. This Francis is also an "unreliable steward" (1 Cel 2), prodigally generous with things, yet too sensitive to be anywhere near someone so repulsive and noisome as a leper (1 Cel 17).

His conversion, therefore, is believable. Certainly, there was much to turn away from. And Celano does not produce an "instant saint." Francis Bernardone goes through a slow, painful, uncertain-of-where-he's going process which becomes a spiral of starts and stops, of searchings and findings, ending only at death. There was the dream about Apulia, "an omen of great success" (1 Cel 5) which did not bring the expected happiness it should have. There was the period of restlessness and inner withdrawal from business as well as the constant secret prayer which exhausted him so much that "one person seemed to have entered, and another to have come out" (1 Cel 6)). The trip to Foligno and an overwhelming desire to be rid of its profit followed; Francis stayed at San Damiano until his father hauled him first home, then before the bishop of Assisi. Francis willingly "put off everything that is of this world" (1 Cel 15) so that "only the wall of flesh should separate him from the vision of God" (1 Cel 15). *Francis, the holy man of God, is born. ...*

Of this Francis Bernardone, the *Mirror of Perfection* says almost nothing. We are told only that "he had been accustomed to comfort in the world, was frail by nature, and was further weakened by overmuch fasting and hardship" (SP 18). Of the process of conversion, this source reveals nothing. Francis Bernardone the layman seems never to have existed; Francis of Assisi is already "friar minor" and one of twelve brothers in the earliest chronological passages in this work.

II. How did Francis become a "friar minor," one of a brotherhood of many? Celano gives a fairly thorough sequence of events. After "he had gained his freedom from the hand of his carnally-minded father" (1 Cel 18), Francis worked at rebuilding several churches, "put on a new kind of habit" (1 Cel 21) and, in the third year of his conversion, began living at the Portiuncola. "At this time he wore a kind of hermit's dress, with a leather girdle about his waist; he carried a staff in his hands and wore shoes on his feet" (1 Cel 21). At Mass there one day he heard the gospel about "how the Lord sent his disciples out to preach" (1 Cel 22). It is explained to him in some detail that the disciples of Jesus "should not

possess gold or silver or money; nor carry along the way scrip, or wallet, or bread, or a staff; that they should not have shoes, or two tunics; but that they should preach the kingdom of God and penance..." (1 Cel 22). This was what Francis had been waiting for, or seeking; it confirmed and validated the experience of the immediately preceding years of his life. So immediately he began to carry out these prescriptions for himself. Taking the words literally, he put aside staff and shoes, donned a rough, poor, mean tunic which bore a likeness to the cross, began wearing a small cord, and set out "to preach penance to all with great fervor of spirit and joy of mind, edifying his hearers with his simple words and his greatness of heart" (1 Cel 22-23). Celano reports again that Francis seemed "completely different from what he had been" (1 Cel 23), that he began greeting all with "The Lord give you his peace" (1 Cel 23), and that he was soon joined by others.

The conversion experience in *First Celano* makes only passing reference to the famous encounter with the leper, and then only as a retrospective comment integrated into the account of his going to live with the lepers and serving them (1 Cel 17). That encounter with the single leper seems almost a pre-conversion experience, and does not seem to have apparent relationship to the reading of the Gospel passages which inspired Francis' pursuit of evangelical perfection. And we are really not sure of the time-frame reference between that encounter and the hearing of the Gospel passage which so profoundly changed his life. It seems, because of where and how it is related, far removed from Francis as *"first among many brothers."*

Quite the contrary, however, is the Francis portrayed in *Mirror of Perfection*. Although he does greet others with "The Lord give you his peace" and instructs his companions to do the same, this is a fact revealed in retrospect (SP 26) and seems therefore less significant than if the greeting were presented as the end-product of a conversion process. The Francis on whom the *Mirror* focuses is Francis as founder, with the nuance of Rule-giver. The *Mirror's* Prologue immediately presents a theophany in which God "owns" the Rule as His, with Francis the intermediary between God and the Order. This is followed by a narration that is apparently intended to reveal the core element of that rule, poverty: "I assure you, brother, that it has been and remains my first and last intention and desire — had the brethren only believed me — that no friar should possess anything but a habit, a cord, and an undergarment, as our Rule allows' " (SP 2). Within the same section, the role of Francis as founder/interpreter of God's will is further delineated: "For the guidance of the order he also caused many things which he had learned from God by constant prayer and meditation, to be written in the Rule, declaring them to be in accordance with God's will" (SP 2). A point to be considered here is what is meant by "things... learned from God by constant prayer and meditation. ..." Does this mean further direct revelation from the Lord? Or does it mean Francis' inner spirit rising to the surface from the depths of his being, and that these things originated with his inner response to what was going on around him? The latter seems very much possible, if one reads "declaring them to be *in accordance with God's will*" as an attempt to verify their *validity* as *God's* will, not Francis'.

Mirror of Perfection presents Francis not so much as first among many brothers, but more as *founder*, which has a very different connotation. Francis tried to establish the priority of poverty from the very first days of his new life. The *Mirror* relates that Francis and his followers "observed the Holy Gospel to the letter in all things and through all things from the very day when Our Lord revealed to him that he and his friars were to live according to the pattern of the Holy Gospel (Sp 19). In conjunction with this evangelical poverty Francis insisted upon striving for perfect humility. "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" (SP 44). However, in many passages of the *Mirror* it seems that humility is an end in itself rather than a means to an end, rather than a grace that leads to greater compassion. Even in his own life, this seems to be true: "In order to preserve the virtue of holy humility" (SP 39), he resigned "the chief office" during a chapter, remaining subject for the rest of his life and "behaving himself more humbly in all things than any others" (SP 39). This quest for humility is supported with an account of Francis asking for a personal guardian and of his docility in accepting the reality that "some of the brothers did not provide for his needs, or spoke to him in a way that usually provokes a man." (SP 46) The closer he came to death, "the more careful he was to consider how he could live and die in all humility and poverty, and in the perfecting of all virtues" (SP 46). It is interesting, and somewhat significant, that the chapters in the *Mirror* which cover the themes of charity and compassion precede those on humility rather than follow them.

III. Thus far, it could be said that there are few similarities in the two pictures of Francis revealed in these works. However, both *First Life* and *Mirror of Perfection* present Francis as *former of community*. Some of the same incidents are recounted, although the context in which they are presented are very different.

Celano's former of community is "blessed father Francis" (1 Cel 26), who received daily consolation and grace from the Holy Spirit and who taught his new sons "to walk with undeviating steps the way of holy

poverty and blessed simplicity" (1 Cel 26). He reassured the brothers that God had many wonderful plans for their future (1 Cel 27-28), while "telling them many things concerning the kingdom of God, the contempt of the world, the renunciation of their own will, and the subduing of their own body... (1 Ce; 29)." After their return from their first mission, they:

> ... gave an account of the good things the merciful Lord had done for them; and, if they had been negligent and ungrateful in any way, they humbly begged and willingly received correction and punishment from their holy father. For ... they did not hide from him the least thought or the first impulses of their hearts. ... (1 Cel 30)

As a result of this bond of trusting love between Francis and his sons, they quickly learned from him "how to do useful, holy, and just works, [although] they knew not at all how to rejoice vainly over them." (1 Cel 30) Celano gives us a Francis who is a *member of the community* being formed.

Although one of Francis' most cherished values was simplicity, he seems to have been a most complex individual.

The approval of the First Rule by Pope Innocent III is also recounted here, but appears as part of the process of Francis' teaching his brothers how to live. The narrative immediately continues, identifying poverty, joy, humility, patience, and simplicity as the qualities of a "friar minor" formed by Francis. Near the end of Book 1, in a sort of oblique reference to the rule, Celano writes:

> Francis' highest intention, his chief desire, his uppermost purpose was to observe the holy Gospel in all things and, with perfect vigilance, with all zeal, with all the longing of his mind and all the fervor of his heart, 'to follow the teaching and the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ'. (1 Cel 84)

However, this passage is more an introduction to the story of the manger at Greccio as it is anything else. It really is not an indication of Francis as Rule-giver. Francis, in *First Celano*, teaches his sons/brothers to *live the Gospel personally and communally*.

In sections 54-84 there are many events and incidents which reveal the compassionate charity, the desire for martyrdom, the union with creatures

which were the fruits of evangelical life both in Francis and in his brothers.

On the other hand, *Mirror of Perfection* repeatedly places before us Francis the Rule-giver, the recipient of direct revelation, and the guardian of the integrity of that revelation. As earlier stated, the Prologue to the text is a theophany; the succeeding 26 chapters all deal with specific "guidelines" for living out the God-given Rule. The feeling one gets from reading these passages is not that of compassionate at-one-ness among the brothers. Francis appears rather fearsome, if not irately unrelenting. " 'I assure you, brother, that it has been and remains my first and last intention and desire... that no friar should possess anything but a habit, a cord, and an undergarment, as our Rule allows.' " (SP 2) Section 3 adds sandals, when needed; and a more strident tone emerges:

> 'The Friar Ministers think they can deceive God and me. On the contrary, in order that all friars shall know themselves bound to observe the perfection of the Gospel, I wish it to be written at the beginning and at the end of the Rule that friars are bound to *the strict observance of the Holy Gospel* of our 'Lord Jesus Christ.' (SP 3) [emphasis mine]

There seems no loving tenderness for the Gospel here, nor in Francis' response to the novice who repeatedly asks for a psalter, nor in the repeated emphasis on observing poverty in books, beds, cells, clothing, buildings, building sites, etc. The *Mirror* highlights a Francis who "hated money above all else" (SP 14) and, it would seem, jealously guarded his version of being a "Friar Minor." This is certainly not the Francis of *First Celano* who was "blessed father Francis."

IV. Finally, there is a strong difference in what each author apparently intended as the "final imprint" of Francis for the reader. Again, some of the same material is presented, and again, the sequence is different. *First Celano* closes with an account of the sufferings of the last two years of Francis' life, culminating in the reception of the stigmata (Book II) and the canonization/miracles narration of Book III. There is no doubt he wants to leave the reader with the impression of Francis as saint and mystic. Francis is identified as following the "example of the Apostles" (1 Cedl 89), "this new evangelist" (1 Cel 89), who was "not content with obeserving the common precepts, but overflowing with the most ardent charity" (1 Cel 90). Those wishing to "strive after the greater gifts" (cf. 1 Cor 1; 27-28) should "look into the mirror of his life and learn every perfection" (1 Cel 90). So great was Francis' love that the marks of the Passion and of the cross marked his body "as though he had hung upon the cross with the Son of God" (1 Cel 90).

Such a tremendous grace would seem incredible except for the collective

effect of the earlier components of Celano's Francis: the converted sinner, the "blessed father" first among many brothers, the humble and compassionate teacher. In an early "celebratory" passage *First Celano* gives this accolade:

> So great was the faith of men and women, so great their devotion toward the holy man of God, that he pronounced himself happy who could but touch his garment. When he entered any city, the clergy rejoiced, the bells were rung, the men were filled with happiness, the women rejoiced together, the children clapped their hands; and often, taking branches from the trees, they went to meet him singing. (1 Cel 62)

Reminiscent of the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem just before his Passion, these words precede that section of Book I dealing with miracles Francis worked while alive (1 Cel 64-70), and serve as remote preparation for Francis' suffering, "passion," and death. Book III then simply reaffirms Francis' sanctity, telling of the miracles which occurred at his death and afterward. The final image perceived is that of Francis as another Christ, because even these cures echo those contained in the Gospel. *Evangelical perfection was achieved in Francis of Assisi*.

The *Mirror of Perfection* makes no reference at all to the stigmata, although sections 91 - 93 relate Francis' "fervor and love for the Passion of Christ." (section title) Rather than a portrayal of sanctity, the *Mirror* ostensibly chooses *Francis as exemplar* as its most significant image.

> But we who were with him cannot express either in words or writing how many great necessities he denied his body in order to give good example to the friars, and help them bear their poverty patiently. For once the friars began to increase in numbers, he made it his chief concern to teach the brethren what they should do or avoid by his own actions rather than by words. (SP 16)

This concept of example is woven throughout the entire *Mirror*, apearing frequently enough to be considered a major motif. (See SP 17-20, 27, 28, 71, 75, 81). Francis repeatedly identified himself as the example of how to live; and he achieved perfection in following the example of Christ. Arrangement of the rest of the *Mirror* (82 ff.) covers admonitions never to leave the Portiuncola, his love for the Passion, Francis' zeal for prayer and spirit of joy, his temptations and sufferings at the hands of devils, his spirit of prophecy, his miraculous relationship with the created world, and finally his death. It is as if the reader should expect to see, if he/she truly reads the pattern of Francis' life, a progression through ascetical struggle to awareness of the miraculously providential care of God. But the tone, while less dissonant than the rest of the work, certainly does not attain the smooth texture and softer qualities of Celano's *First Life*.

Where, then is the root of the paradox of double vision? Is it in Francis himself? In those who wrote about him? Or in those who now read what has been written? Probably in all three. Undeniably, Francis was a complex, contradictory individual who had to struggle with his own weaknesses and sinful tendencies. Obviously, each author had a specific intention in mind behind the verbal montage he created. Likewise, any given reader will bring his/her own agendas (hidden or obvious) to such material. How did the unconverted Francis metamorphose into a Friar Minor; how did the first among many brothers become "THE FOUNDER"? The passage of time between the writing of Celano's *First Life* and the spiritualist *Mirror of Perfection* obviously was important. Ninety years changes many things. Distance and time, one's angle of vision, memory itself — all influenced the differences in these two portraits of the saint. □

Endnotes

[1]Thomas of Celano, *First Life of St. Francis*, trans. Placid Hermann, O.F.M., in *St. Francis of Assisi Writings and Early Biographies*, edit. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M. Fourth rev. ed. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983). All material by Celano is taken from Habig.

[2]*Mirror of Perfection*, trans. Leo Sherley-Price, with an Introduction by Theophile Desbonnets, O.F.M., in Habig. All material for *Mirror of Perfection* taken from this version.

We apologize . . .

The July/August (1989) issue of **The CORD** carried an article entitled *"Pilgrims in the World, Close to God's People, Inspired by Clare."* The original article was written in Italian by Fr. Dario Pili, O.F.M., and translated into English by Sr. Agnes van Baer, O.S.C. A failure on our part to communicate with the translator resulted in our publishing a manuscript which unaware to us was unacceptable to both the author and the translator. Fortunately Poor Clare nuns had received the authorized version of the translation in the Quarterly Bulletin "Communion and Communication" (nn. 3 & 4, 4th October, 1987) which is edited by Fr. Dario for distribution to the Poor Clares throughout the world. The editor of **The Cord** regrets the error and offers his sincerest apologies to the author, the translator, our readers and to all Poor Clare nuns.

Book Reviews

Facing Codependence: What it is, Where it comes from, How it sabotages our Lives. By Pia Melody. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989. Pp. 222, including indices. Paper, $10.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard Mucowski, O.F.M.. Ed. D. Executive Vice President of St. Bonaventure University, teacher in the Community Counseling and Psychology Departments, researcher in the field of adult children of alcoholics and codependence.

The author sets out to share her pioneering and careful study of the etiology and treatment of codependence. The book is written in four parts. First, Melody deals with symptoms. The next section of the book flows directly into the nature of the child and how the child's formation is either supported or compromised in the family unit. The third area of the book focuses on the various forms of abuse including physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual abuse. The last section of this work begins to address movement toward recovery which, she notes, has been dealt with in more detail in another book she has written on the subject *(Breaking Free: A Recovery Workbook for Facing Codependence.)* Finally, an appendix contains an historical account of the codependence movement and an overview of the psychological literature which is available to those who may be interested in studying the subject matter.

One of the most striking items in this book is its accuracy of description in the development of codependence symptomology, formation and manifestation in its various strains. The interesting problem with this particular disorder is its tendency to manifest itself in the extremes. Specifically, either low self esteem or an arrogant and grandiose posture both reflect dysfunctional behavior patterns. In addition, this is the first book on the subject matter from a theoretical standpoint which has some validity based in scientific fact (Mucowski and Hayden, 1988 presentation on Adult Children of Alcoholics and Learning Styles to Eastern Educational Research Association).

Perhaps the weakest section of the book is the last part which is devoted to recovery. The author may have believed that this was covered sufficiently in another work. However, the reader was clearly left with the expectation of the need to go through a significant process to change one's life. Such a process, although outlined, was not thoroughly developed. Because of that, this reviewer was disappointed in where the book left him. Other positive points included the book's easily read style. Some people object based on the pain generated from their life's experience which the text tends to conjure up.

Certainly any keeping professional, doctor, clergy, mental health counselor and those involved in chemical dependency treatment programming will find this book to be an exceptional book for diagnosing the problem of codependency. The general public may also find the book to be helpful in gaining an awareness of what happens when abuse of any kind occurs, both to the abuser and those abused. For the money, I would have to say that Melody has published one of the very special books in the field which might, someday, become the prime text for describing the development of the codependence disorder.

Clare of Assisi: Early Documents. Edited and translated by Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M., Cap. New York: Paulist Press, 1988. Pp iii - 345. Paper, $12.95.

Reviewed by Mother M. Francis, P.C.C. A well-known writer, Mother M. Francis is abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery in Roswell, New Mexico.

Father Regis, already long hailed as loyal brother and good friend of his sisters in the Second Order whom he serves so well not only with his contributions as historian and Franciscan scholar on things Clarian, but perhaps even more with his loving understanding of the mind and heart of Clare, has now done them and all Franciscans a lasting and preservable service with his **Clare of Assisi: Early Documents.**

It is good to have it "all together." And Father Regis' insights into the prayer of Clare, as instanced especially in his commentaries on the letters to bl. Agnes (currently looking toward canonization) and Ermentrude, which show his appreciation of Saint Clare's completely feminine (as opposed to feminist!) approach to prayer and her relation to Christ are themselves worth many times the price of the book.

The translation of the Rule and Testament are clearly far superior to an earlier translation done in tandem, although there are still some renderings that raise the eyebrows of another translator, and some really painful offerings like, "... exhort my sisters to always wear cheap garments." (Rule, 24) Even to one without a working knowledge of Latin and an eye to the original, this would have to offend not only the ear but more importantly the heart and understanding of a daughter of Clare. Father's earlier translation of Clare's "vestimentis vilibus" as "the poorest of garments" is assuredly a happier and truer translation than this new one.

Much less important but still causing one's shoulders to hunch a bit is rendering Clare's direction about land outside the enclosure garden that it remain "undeveloped" which is more the language of real estate than of the foundress. (Testament, 55).

Baffling and amazing is the translation of Clare's "amatrices dei" as, first, "lovers of your souls." But perhaps the translator had reason to omit her first directive here. Or, happily, it is a printer's omission undetected by the galley proofs reader. (Blessing, 14) And to render the saint's "labore brevissimo" as "with very little effort" is more than distressing. (Testament, 23)

But there is so much gold here, so much cause for gratitude. And Mother Veronica Namoyo's preface is itself worth a lot more than $12.95.

Did Jesus Know he Was God? By François Dreyfus, O.P. Translated by Michael J. Wrenn. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989, 154 pp. $13.95.

Reviewed by Francis Berna, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Fordham). Associate Professor

of Theology, St. Bonaventure University.

There was once a teacher who taught the same student over three consecutive years. When the student had graduated he came to spend a few moments with his teacher. Tears soon filled the young man's eyes and the teacher being sensitive person himself allowed the student to cry assuring him that such behavior was good for a man. Then the teacher asked if there was something the young man wished to talk about. The young man replied, "It's kind of silly, but I'm crying because in my twelve years of school you are the only teacher who never told me I was stupid." The teacher was surprised because he could recall moments when he was tempted to say something harsh to the sometimes troublesome student. The teacher was aware that someone greater had graced his words and thus the student was given new life.

Did the teacher's lack of consciousness, his sense of surprise at the student's disclosure, in any way diminish what he really was for the student? Other than developing the teacher's awareness, did the student's comments really alter the teacher's identity? No, the teacher's reality was ontologically and categorically the same despite his self-consciousness or the student's articulation of the teacher's significance in his life.

Why then would the question, "Did Jesus know he was God?" be such a burning issue? Fr. Dreyfus insists that he wants to prove this was the self-consciousness of Jesus to assure believers that the disciples did not misrepresent Jesus. But is it really an issue of possible misrepresentation? Did the student misrepresent the teacher in proclaiming something more than the self-consciousness of the teacher?

To establish the fact that Jesus knew he was God Fr. Dreyfus builds a foundation on the Fourth Gospel, the Fathers of the church, medieval and contemporary theologians. One cannot dispute that the tradition of the Church maintains a conviction that Jesus had a self-consciousness of divinity. The author articulates this position quite clearly.

What immediately becomes a question, however, is what one is to understand by this tradition. One has to wait until Chapter thirteen to get some understanding of the significance, the meaning, of this fundamental assertion. Until then Fr. Dreyfus gives an impression that the historical Jesus clearly identified himself as the eternal Logos of God, the second person of the Blessed Trinity. Such a notion remains rather incredible.

Concentrating on the Gospel of John the author is anxious to establish that the Christ proclaimed by the evangelist is the very historical, factual reality of Jesus of Nazareth. Again the position of Fr. Dreufus seems rather incredible. In his exegesis this noted scholar never once develops the highly symbolic and theological imagery so immediately apparent in the text. The analysis tends to reduce the gospel text to an accounting of the historical consciousness of the pre-resurrection Jesus.

One has to compliment Fr. Dreyfus for the creative way in which he suggests that the revelation of the self-consciousness of Jesus was a gradual unfolding of the truth on the part of Jesus relative to people's ability to understand. The people at large were told as much as they could understand. The wide circle of disciples a bit more. The

inner circle of Peter, James and John were given a still clearer understanding. And finally, Fr. Dreyfus suggests that the fullest understanding was given to that disciple who rested his head on the bosom of Jesus. His analysis does serve the theological consideration of the Scriptures regarding an understanding of Jesus. The question of historicity and the post-resurrection faith of the authors, however, remains a question.

Fr. Dreyfus is at his best in Chapter Thirteen when he explores the meaning of the notion that Jesus knew he was God. What he offers here sounds quite different than the sort of knowledge he suggests in the whole previous section of the text concerned with historical analysis.

Section three of the chapter focuses on the "filial love and self-awareness of Jesus." For the first time the author admits that Jesus is not concerned with proclaiming himself, "but only his relationship to the Father" (p. 106). Fr. Dreyfus articulates the very conviction of contemporary theologians when he writes, "Jesus doesn't have an awareness of being God by some sort of reflex consciousness, but through his glance and look of filial love toward his Father" (p. 106). Jesus interprets his existence, establishes his identity, always and everywhere in relationship with God as "Abba." Fr. Dreyfus admits the inadequacy of the formula that Jesus knew he was God and states, "It would be better to say: In his look of love toward the Father Jesus sees that the Father has given everything to him, everything that he is, everything that he possesses and that this total gift is completely reciprocal" (p. 107). The notion has a classical understanding of the Trinity as its foundation. This is the definitive and absolute truth of Jesus, a truth which the Scriptures can readilly establish as the self-consciousness of Jesus.

And in the same breath one can also recognize that all else is somewhat secondary in an analysis of the question. One wonders then why so much effort was given to the effort of "proving" as historical particular points of the gospel, especially when the proofs remain rather questionable.

The text would prove to be a good exercise for a biblical exegete. The text at least stirs the thought of the systematic theologian. Most everyone would benefit from section three of Chapter thirteen. While Fr. Dreyfus has a sound reputation as scholar and teacher he did not attract this student of Christology to come to class.

The Marginal Catholic Challenge, Don't Crush. By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1989. Pp. 155, Paper, $8.95.

Reviewed by Fr. Donan McGovern, O.F.M. St. Anthony's Shrine, Boston, Massachusetts. Father Donan is in the Ministry for Divorced, Separated, Remarried as well as to all Alienated Catholics.

For any Priest, Religious, Deacon, Lay Person, involved in pastoral Ministry, indeed for any Catholic this is an excellent book. It is excellent because it deals with what's happening today in the lives of our people, it deals with reality. It states the problems, the salient pastoral problems of today and gives some practical solutions or suggestions for solutions. It comes from the pen — the wisdom of practical pastoral experience of Fr. Champlin himself,

not from the wishful thinking of the "Ivory Tower' mentality.

Besides offering papal Documents, Bishops Statements, Canon Law, Local Pastoral practice, Fr. Champlin wisely asks the Pastoral Agent to examine his/her own attitudes towards the Marginal Catholic, as one of the positive steps toward developing effective Christlike Ministry with and for these people. He also mentions the importance of developing a "Like on Liker" — called "Peer Ministry" — by the North American Conference of Separated/ Divorced Catholics — that Marginal Catholics who have returned to the practice of their faith often make excellent pastoral agents, for they have been there.

A basic question relating to the above —

"Why have potentially joyful events, like the baptism of a child, or the wedding of a couple, become such worrisome, difficult, even unpleasant experiences for the clergy and others involved? How do we respond pastorally to those we call Marginal Catholics when they seek a sacrament or service of the Church? What direction does the Church give us for dealing with these gray, borderline situations?"

Who are "Marginal Catholics," so that we may find ways to effectively minister to them? Fr. Champlin leads the reader to a working definition:

"... by Marginal Catholics we mean those who have only a tenuous link with the parish. This fragile bond is manifested when persons seeking a sacrament either overtly reject a major Church tenet, or do not participate weekly at Sunday Mass, or seldom receive communion or penance, or rarely volunteer for Church activities, or never formally register with a particular parish. The presence of any one of these negative characteristics is sufficient, for the purposes of our discussion, to place these people in the Marginal Catholic category."

To be practical, no sooner was I asked to review this book than the following happened:

I received a phone call from a rather anxious grandmother looking for a priest to baptize her newly born grandson. Would I be so kind as to baptize him or could I find a priest and a Church where the infant could be baptized? She would be so very grateful if I could do this. She then proceeded to tell me the story — common enough these days — her daughter is a divorced Catholic remarried outside the Church to a Christian of another denomination, by a "J. P." The couple lives in a different state, but they wanted to have the baptism in grandma's parish, since this is where most of the family lives. The pastor knows the family and would do the baptism, but he took seriously ill, was hospitalized and could not do the baptism. The priest, taking the pastor's place refused to baptize the child because of the marital situation of the parents. How was I to deal with this case without putting the priest who refused in a bad light, since he surely acted in good faith, and to see what could be done to attend to the request of these people. I found out that the parents live near a parish where there is a Separated/ Divorced Catholics group and Come Home program for alienated Catholics. The parents went to the parish, spoke with the pastor, and at his request I did the baptism — most certainly the requirement to bring the child up in the faith is present, along with the parents willingness to reconcile "fix-up" the marriage.

Since there are an estimated 15 million alienated, unchurched, marginal Catholics, and the number one reason for this alienation is marital difficulties, it is a blessing to have a guide book on hand to help handle the situations that will surely arise in pastoral ministry today.

While praising the much needed and often times very helpful programs for Sacrament preparation, yet attendance at these programs, parochial or diocesan, cannot of itself be the criteria for acceptance or rejection of the sacraments in given cases. For example:

"The imposition of Local Regulations more Stringent than Canonical Directives... Fulfilling Whose Needs?"...

Champlin then presents, "What Are The Church's Directives?" In so doing he quotes from the following sources:

The 1969 Rite of Baptism for Children,

the 1980 Instruction on Infant Baptism,

and the 1983 Code of Canon Law;

Regarding Marriage:

The 1969 Rite of Marriage,

The 1981 Apostolic Exortation by Pope John Paul II "On the Family" (Familiaris Consortio),

and the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

I suppose I liked this book so much because I am one of the over 15 million who used on many occasions Fr. Champlin's book "Together For Life," for marriage preparations and agree with a "don't crush" attitude toward those who present themselves for the sacraments.

Father Champlin includes in his work some insights into the interpretation of Law, how understood in the European mind and the American viewpoint of law — very helpful for the non-law student.

The sum in the author's own words:

"Priests, Deacons and Pastoral Ministers need to challenge, but not crush those who come to them seeking the Sacraments and services of the Church... they need above all to be like their Master, the suffering Servant Messiah, extremely careful not to break the bruised reed or to snuff out the smoldering wick".

Shorter Notice

Julian Davies, O.F.M., Associate Editor

Faith & Fame. Celebrities Talk About Their Lives and Spirituality. By Edd Anthony and Curtis E. Johnson. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1989. Pp. 192. Cloth, n.p.

Eighteen first person narratives from the entertainment world comprise the substance of this interesting and easy to read book. Steve Allen, Dick Butkus, June Haver MacMurray, Shari Lewis, Monty Hall, Deneica Williams are just some of the well known people who share their views and practice in regard to God and religion, and how this fits into their lives. Among the themes that emerge are the importance of prayer of gratitude and of meditation, of service, of the evidence for God in love and family, of the Providence of God guiding them. While more than half of the eighteen contributors are Catholics, there is a spectrum of perspectives. Young people in particular might benefit from this book which tells how God is, has been, and will be for real in this world, and in a world often assumed to be Godless.

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FEBRUARY, 1990

The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

ARTICLES

THE SOUND OF SILENCE: EMPOWERMENT FOR FRATERNITY AND MISSION 37
Sr. Roberta Agnes, O.S.F.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI'S UNNOTICED LEGACY 44
Sr. M. Francis Assisi Kennedy, O.S.F.

THE THIRD ORDER REGULAR AND PARISH MINISTRY 57
Roland J. Faley, T.O.R.

FEATURES

GUEST EDITORIAL:
THE CRY OF THE POOR 33
Stephen Lynch, O.F.M.

THE PLENARY COUNCIL IN INDIA AND ITS UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORDS: "LIGHT FROM THE EAST" 51
Hermann Schalück, O.F.M.

POETRY:
YOU HAVE NURTURED LOVE 43
Rita Kristina Weinheimer, O.S.F.
MY PRAYER 50
Sr. Mary Thomas Eulberg, O.S.F.

Volume 40, No. 2

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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
FF: 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

Abbreviations: 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).

Abbreviations: 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).

GUEST EDITORIAL

The Cry of the Poor

STEPHEN LYNCH, O.F.M.

The rich and powerful too often take the side of society's well-off. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, has chosen to side with the poor, the oppressed, and the powerless. Vatican II made a preferential option for the poor that was ratified by the Latin American Bishops at Medellin in 1969 and at Puebla in 1979. But, the price tag for siding with the poor in efforts to change evil structures is high and bloody.

On November 16, 1989, while the world's attention focused on Eastern Europe, six Jesuit priests and two lay people were brutally murdered in a death-squad raid on the Jesuit residence in El Salvador. All six Jesuits were learned men, dedicated to academic pursuit who lined up on the side of the poor because they saw Christ in suffering humanity. Unlike some intellectuals who live in ivory-towers detached from the life and struggles of the ordinary people, these Jesuits were creative thinkers who brought learning and imagination together in a way that proved they heard clearly the cry of the poor.

Along with love and compassion, they brought a remarkable courage and willingness to make personal sacrifices to change a repressive power structure where human rights were violated without guilt or remorse. The Jesuits insisted that Christian values, especially the beatitudes of Jesus Christ, must be part of the equation for social justice in El Salvador. They paid for this conscious moral choice with their lives. They died because they were working for justice and fairness in a country where all too often the few who are rich oppress and tyrannize the many who are impoverished and dehumanized. As Jesus picked his hill on which to make his stand, these six Jesuits picked theirs, and we, too, must pick ours. In their willingness to give up power for the sake of the Gospel,

Rev. Stephen Lynch, O.F.M., is Rector of St. Anthony's Shrine, Boston.

these martyred Jesuit priests attained ultimate power. Their belief in the transcendent forever transformed them.

These barbaric murders silenced some of the most vocal advocates of reconciliation that could have ended the decade-old civil war. The suffering caused by the heavy fighting in the capital and the murders of the priests and others seems to have compounded a sense of collective guilt and war weariness. For the U.S., it has again raised the moral dilemma of aiding a country where such acts of violence have repeatedly gone unpunished and where violence itself seems out of control in spite of the four billion dollars we have given to make democracy work.

The killing of the Jesuits recalls the assassinations of Fr. Rutilio Grande in 1979 and of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero in 1980. On December 2 of the same year that Archbishop Romero was assassinated, three American nuns (Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, and Maura Clarke) and a lay worker (Jean Donovan) also gave their lives for the people of Central America. All were martyred advocates of the poor and oppressed against the rich and powerful.

In the killing fields of El Salvador, much too frequently the messenger is killed to silence the message: human rights and social justice. Human nature's propensity for evil all too often erupts in violence, taking on the metaphor made famous by the Irish poet William Butler Yeats:

Mere anarchy is loosed
upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide
is lossed...
(The Second Coming)

In the article in the New York Times (9/20/89), Professor of History, James Hijiya, of Southeastern Massachusetts University reports that Fr. Ignacio Martin-Baro, one of the six murdered Jesuits, once told him that when he came to El Salvador after completing his studies in Spain, "he thought that he would teach the poor peasants about Christianity. But he was wrong. They taught him because they possessed a courage and a dignity that he had never seen before, never imagined. They showed him the meaning of suffering and faith. They taught him who Jesus was. After that, his life was never the same."

Fr. Martin-Baro was a social psychiatrist whose special field of research was the psychological rehabilitation of children who were orphaned by the war, displaced or traumatized by the endless mayhem. Conducting sociological surveys and analyzing the social evils of the oppressed in El Salvador, Fr. Martin-Baro discovered that the social structure was so awful that to say what was reality was subversive.

By giving pastoral support and encouragement to the landless peasants

and desperate slum-dwellers, Fr. Martin-Baro and his colleagues were not only following Jesus' example, but they were also faithfully complying with the explicit policy of their church which has made a preferential option for the poor. Death came as the price for such total love. They were convinced that between the dispossessed and their privileged tormentors non-partisanship or neutral arbitration were not options.

Writing in the Boston Sunday Globe on November 20, 1989, Harvard's Harvey Cox points out: "These Jesuits were rediscovering the central impulse of the Gospel: Jesus' unconditional love for the poor and his willingness to risk confrontation with the heartless elite of his day at whatever cost. In Jesus' case, it was the cost of his life. The Jesuits followed in the footsteps of their Teacher. After all, Jesus himself was visited by a death-squad that also took his life".

Archbishop Romero prophetically predicts his own demise: "There would be something wrong with the Salvadoran church if its priests were not dying alongside the people."

A country is in trouble when the law of the jungle replaces the rule of law. Right wing and left wing death-squads, escalating the spiral of violence during ten years of civil war, have produced the senseless slaughter of more than 70,000, most of them civilians. In a previous conversation with Harvey Cox, Fr. Martin-Baro told him, "Instead of the church making an option for the poor, we found that the poor had already made an option for the church, or — more accurately — for the gospel the church is supposed to teach and represent."

Fr. Martin-Baro used to say, jokingly, "In the U.S. it's publish or perish. But for professors who speak and write on behalf of social justice in a totalitarian society, it's often publish *and* perish." He also pleaded for human beings to see each other as neighbors committed to caring about one another. Then, "nobody's pain and nobody's joy will be alien to you."

In October of 1989 the Catholic church lost another outstanding advocate for the poor and an extraordinary witness to the Gospel message of human rights on behalf of those Latin Americans oppressed by structural forms of poverty. The remarkable Catholic journalist, Penny Lernoux, died of cancer at age 49. Penny understood the cry and the helplessness of the Latin Americans poor and marginalized. She was a voice for the exploited and chronicled their lives during the past twenty-five years. Her book, *Cry for the people*, (1980) was a monumental contribution to the cause of human rights in Latin America. Penny told the stories of people who were murdered because they supported a farmers' cooperative or the construction of a sewer system in a slum or because they repeated God's commandment, "You shall not kill."

Her last book, *People of God*, (1989) tells heart-wrenching stories of

people living in the midst of terror and death in the El Quichee region of El Salvador. But, she also points out that the quality of their deaths was "drenched with the possibility of resurrection." Penny concludes her report: "In such a community of faith, people fear not death but infidelity — to one another and to their beliefs. They daily live the drama of Christ on the cross, yet they are convinced of the possibility of transformation because their struggle itself is a sign of resurrection. They love one another and are prepared to die for their communities.... They possess a sense that there is a moral way of life."

Some see Penny Lernoux as a kind of journalistic Joan of Arc holding up the mirror of truth in the face of violent opposition from the forces of cruel and unjust oppression. Penny sounded a clarion call to involvement and solidarity with the poor in their struggle for liberation and for the advancement of human rights.

From those regions of inaccessible light, may the men and women who have laid down their lives out of love continue their transforming ministry of liberation that God's kingdom of justice and peace may reach its fullness.

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The Sound of Silence: Empowerment for Fraternity and Mission

SR. ROBERTA AGNES, O.S.F.

In the midst of the outer chaos that surrounds us and the inner chaos that sometimes overwhelms us, we are called to silence. Or, better yet, stillness. And we seek it out, at various times, because we know that unless we can surrender ourselves to it, with it, through it, we will be estranged from the presence of God forever. Francis of Assisi embodies this truth.

The sources reveal a Francis whose journey took him from the role of "typical product of his times" as a youth to that of a loving, lovable, compassionate, and challenging model of complete conversion, a holy man of God. Among the many contributing factors in that process of change was Francis' continuous return to silence. As heirs of the Franciscan tradition, we, too, must recognize that our journey will call us repeatedly to periodic returns to silence, not just for its own sake or as a meeting place with God, but *for the sake of that empowernment in mission it generates.*

Within the Franciscan tradition, "silence" presents an interesting dilemma. One does not find multitudinous references to silence in the writings of Francis, Clare, or Celano, among others. What references do exist almost universally place silence in the context of "solitude" and in conjunction with the development of a prayerful life. According to CETEDOC, "silentium" is used only four times, and "sileo" twice, within the writings of Francis and Clare. The references are equally divided between the writings of Francis and those of Clare.[1] These references seem to address silence in terms of an essential prelude to prayer or

Sister Roberta is a member of the Bernardine Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis. She is a member of the writing team for the revision of the Bernardine Constitutions. Her present assignment is at Bishop Hoban High School in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., where she teaches English and Religion and also serves as Director of Public Relations. Sister Roberta studies in the Franciscan Institute summer program.

contemplation. However, silence can also be examined in terms of being a counter-balance to mission or ministry or work.[2] It is within this framework that a Franciscan concept of silence will be addressed.

Legislative specifications about silence are few until the Chapter of Narbonne in 1260. Why? Actually, to understand this, one would do well to go back *before* Francis to examine the eremetical tradition. Within the framework of the Desert Fathers, "silence and speech were directed to a better understanding of Scripture which leads the monk to God."[3] Silence was prescribed for specific times and places, and, in the vision of Augustine, helped make one an "inner tabernacle for the Word of God."[4] Benedictine tradiiton involved three specific areas where silence was essential to the spiritual life; it contributed to better learning, increased self-control, and supported the practice of temperance and continency.[5] Ultimately, then, silence helped one avoid sin, maintain seriousness of purpose, and listen to the voice of God. However, by the eary Middle Ages monasticism had so thoroughly separated itself from the people that contemplation seemingly became an end in itself and not something to be shared with others for the sake of the Kigndom. By the 10th century, to fill their need, "laypeople or secular clerics began to withdraw directly into solitude without passing through a period of monastic formation."[6] Somehow they became associated with itinerant preaching, especially to the poor and rejected. These "preaching hermits" who became itinerants are easily recognizable as precursors of the primitive Franciscan eremetical life, as are some elements of the earlier monastic eremetical tradition which are also present in the life of the fraternity.

So how is silence related to itinerant Franciscan preaching? It seems that each (silence and preaching) is a mirror (*cf. Itinerarium, Prologue*) for the other. Silence is a way to empty oneself so as to be filled with God, and that fullness then overflows and is taken into the world to reveal the reality of God to all. At the same time, Franciscan fraternity in its earliest form was "non-monastic and completely open to the world of the poor and the outcast."[7] Silence and solitude beautifully nourished warm fraternal love. Fraternal love nourished the poor and hungry in the world through the friars' witness and preaching. The cycle was really a complete circle. Ignatius Brady writes: "Prayer was considered by St. Francis so much a part of the Franciscan vocation that he saw no need for formal legislation. No one, he claimed, can make progress in the service of God unless he is a friend of prayer."[8] Actually, the *Regula non Bullata* states nothing legislatively about prayer or silence, and is "content to state the ideal."[9] The only context in which the word "silence" appears in *RNB* refers more to fraternal charity than to anything else: "And all the brothers should beware that they do not slander or engage in disputes (cf. 23 Tim 2:14); rather they should strive to keep silence whenever God gives them

[this] grace." (*RNB XI*) There is a faint echo here of the monastic concept of the practice of silence as an aid in avoiding sin. It seems fair to say that for Francis both inner and outer silence, or at least the cultivation of it, was a *given*. It simply was unthinkable that silence would be missing for any length of time in any friar's life. And where it *was* missing, Francis had some very real difficulties:

> "1. Blessed is that religious who takes no pleasure and joy except in the most holy words and deeds of the Lord 2. and with these leads people to the love of God in joy and gladness (cf. Ps 50:10). Woe to that religious who delights in idle and frivolous words and with these provokes people to laughter." (*Admon. XX*)

These words echo a second monastic tradition, maintaining seriousness of purpose. But Franciscan silence has more significance than that. From the earliest days, friars minor treasured silence because in silence they were able to value more deeply and integrate more completely into their lives the words and deeds of the Lord — that is, the Gospel itself.

Francis *heard* the words "Take nothing for our journey..." (Lk. 9:3) precisely because the previous months and years had been ones of inner growth, much of which occurred in a milieu of silence, alone. And when joined by his first brothers, he (and they) sought to become

> free from everything of this world, lest the serenity of his [their] mind be disturbed even for an hour by the taint of anything that was mere dust. He [they] made himself insensible to all external noise... and... therefore frequently chose solitary places so that he [they] could direct his mind to God... Walking, sitting, eating, or drinking, he was [they were] always intent upon prayer." (*1 Cel 71*)

Once having accepted his mission as itinerant preacher, Francis never forgot that he should return to silent communion with God and nature, nor that he should then return again to his preaching mission. In his *Rule for the Hermitages*, he arranged that the four brothers living together alternate the role of pray-er and "mother." Silence is enjoined in terms of "they should be eager to keep silence," and is immediately followed by "and to say their hours, and to rise for Matins...." (*Reg Er 3-4*), that is, to lift their voices in prayer for and with the whole Church. There is also time to be "free from silence" so as to "speak and go to their mother." (*Reg Er 4*) ("Mother" refers to the brothers who served the needs of the pray-ers). This alternation of service and prayer in the microcosmos of the hermitage is a model for the alternation of ministry and contemplation on a larger scale.

Francis had learned two things about silence: in it he could "cleanse himself of any dust that may have clung to him from his association with

men" (*1 Cel 19*); and, he was called to re-enter the world to preach whatever truths God had shared with him in prayer. So, too, the other friars. We are told that they had "gathering places... located apart from the city to provide them with the solitude needed for prayer, yet they were close enough to make the cities easily accessible to them for their apostolate."[10] Franciscan tradition consequently provides that times of solitude are surrounded by times of fraternal care (cf. *Reg Er*) and times of apostolic preaching. The Franciscan pray-er encounters Christ in Word and solitude, absorbs the love of the Crucified, and pours out this love in whatever manner his/her ministry requires.

If Franciscan life is a covenanted life which balances a sense of mission and service with a regular return to silence and contemplative experience, silence must be re-examined in light of this purpose. It is not merely an end in itself. Walter Brueggemann, in an article dealing with "Covenanting as Human Vocation," comments that "Covenant does not happen in silence."[11] Covenant requires the speaking of One who is Other, and ".... *a faithful human action is to listen*.[12] Isn't that what Francis did on the feast of St. Matthias in 1208? And in response to that listening, a choice was made. "Listening to the voice of another with seriousness is, then, a decision to live by grace, to let [ourselves] be impacted and defined by the other voice."[13] So our understanding of silence must take on another shade of meaning: one does not listen well without silence, silence serves many purposes, and silence leads to action.

This may seem to some extent disjointed, but it is not. When a person becomes submerged in true silence, however briefly, interior change occurs. One cannot, I think, deny the change implicit in a truly contemplative experience, although its fruits can be rejected. Silence teaches things that can be learned through no other medium. For me, one of the most meaningful paradigms of the value of silence exists in a novel by Chaim Potok, *The Chosen*. In this story a father raises his son in silence (as the father himself had been raised), never speaking to the son except within the parameters of Talmudic discussion. The silence lasts from the time Danny Saunders is four until the spring of the year he is to receive his rabbinical degree. In the seven years of friendship between the Danny and another major character (Reuven Malter), there are several references to this silence, but there is never a full explanation of what it means until the very end of the book. At one point close to the conclusion Danny says to his friend: "You can listen to silence, Reuven. I've begun to realize that you can listen to silence and learn from it. It has a quality and a dimension all its own. It talks to me sometimes. I feel myself alive in it. It talks. And I can hear it."[14] Eventually it is revealed that Danny's father had recognized his son's briliant mind and knew that Danny lacked com-

passion. Danny was destined to take his father's place as *tzaddik;* "... of all people *tzaddik* especially must know of pain. A *tzaddik* must know how to suffer for his people.... He must take their pain from them and

Silence teaches things that can be learned through no other medium.

carry it on his own shoulders."[15] As a child, Daniel was a mind without soul. In the years of imposed silence he "learned to find answers for himself. He suffered and learned to listen to the suffering of others. In the silence between us, he began to hear the world crying."[16] Finally, Danny's father can allow his son to leave the Hasidic fold to study psychology because Reb Saunders knows that Danny will always have the soul of a *tzaddik*. "All his life he will be a *tzaddik*. He will be a *tzaddik* for the world. And the world needs a *tzaddik*."[17] Within the realm of his painful silence, Danny has grown into an awareness of his own suffering and the suffering of the world. It has changed him, and, one can suppose, will make him much more than a brilliant psychologist. In his loneliness and separation, Danny had found a hidden place within himself which became the "center" to which he could return at will for nourishment and strength. And, as Brueggemann's article suggests, listening to the silence led to a decision to respond to the painful sounds Danny had heard in the years of silence — in his own voice as well as in others' voices.

A resonant story in the *Legend of Perugia* describes Francis celebrating those brothers he called Knights of the Round Table; "The brothers who hide in abandoned and secluded places to devote themselves with more fervor to prayer and meditation, to *weep over* their sins and those of others." (*LP 71a*) [emphasis mine] In addition, Bonaventure tells us in the *Legenda Major* that Francis "had learned in prayer that the presence of the Holy Spirit... was granted more intimately to those who invoke him, the more the Holy Spirit found them withdrawn from the noise of worldly affairs. Therefore seeking out lonely places, he used to go to deserted areas... to pray at night." (*LM X, 3*) Further, at another passage, Francis "... sought out a hidden place of solitude where alone and in silence he could hear the secrets God would convey to him." (*LM II, 5*) And hear the suffering world as well, so as to suffer with it in compassionate understanding.

It might be worthwhile to reconsider the ideas about silence cited earlier: the *Regula non Bullata* is "content to state the ideal." (p. 3) Silence and prayer are inseparable, and in the Franciscan tradition are balanced against ministry and mission. Fraternal support enhances the richness of the contemplative experience. I submit that the concepts we learn from these sources about Francis are not all that different from what Danny Saunders learned in *The Chosen*. A hidden place in one's heart is just as valid as a hidden place in the woods, or a desert.. Silence has many faces. It enters one's life in many different ways. It produces an infinite variety of graces. Compassion is one of them; courage to go to the world and share the benefits of suffering is another. And the Franciscan tradition never excludes the possibilities of anyone's encounter with God producing a new kind of presence in that world. Is there not a current in our ministry which is charged by the energy of solidarity with the poor? Does not our social action stem from Gospel values? And is not our regular return to silence the source of empowerment for mission?

It seems that a contemporary Frnciscan theology of silence would have to rest on two components: becoming an "inner tabernacle for the Word of God," and learning to "feel myself alive" in silence or the pain or whatever that might drive one to seek out silence once more. It seems that an experientially-based integration of these two aspects of silence makes one the "good soil" wherein the seed of God's presence will be carefully nurtured and will eventually bear fruit. If the Benedictine tradition cultivated silence as an aid to solitary study and prayer for the sake of individual salvation, it can be said that the Franciscan tradition cultivates silence as a break between moments of ministry or mission, and as a form of discipline in which the individual discerns the voice of God and the call to new experiences of being Christ in the world. Silence teaches us compassion for all who suffer, and enables us to see the world as God sees it. □

Endnotes

[1]*Corpus Des Sources Franciscaines*, Jean-Francois Godet et Georges Mailleux, eds. Vol. 5: *Opuscula Sancti Francisci Scripta Sanctae Clarae* (Louvain: Universitie Catholique de Louvain, 1976).

[2]Thomas Merton, "Franciscan Eremetism," *The Cord* Dec. 1966: 361.

[3]Matthew Stark, "On Silence," *Monastic Studies* Advent 1975: 132-33.

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[5]DeDrueille, 187-88.

[6]Merton, 359.

[7]Merton, 360.

[8]Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., "The History of Mental Prayer in the Order of the Friars Minor," *Franciscan Studies* 1951: 319.

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[10]Dacian Bluma, O.F.M. Cap., "Franciscan Life of Prayer. St. Francis' Thought on the Place of Contemplation in the Franciscan Vocation," *The Cord* Feb. 1963: 51.

[11]Walter Brueggemann, "Covenanting as Human Vocation A Discussion of the Relation of the Bible and Pastoral Care," *Interpretation. A Journal of Bible and Theology* April 1979: 119.

[12]Brueggemann, 121.

[13]Bruegemann, 121-122.

[14]Chaim Potok, *The Chosen* (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1967) 262.

[15]Potok, 278.

[16]Potok, 280.

[17]Potok, 280.

* * *

You have nurtured love,
O Lord, when there was
No nourishment,
No watery light, no
Stray kiss to feed upon.
You have fed me with
Dry biscuit crums and
Chips of olive wood.
I have sucked the
Marrow from the words,
Tasted momentarily
A gush of fertile sweetness
Inside my mouth of clay.
You have nurtured love,
O Lord, when there was none
To feed, none to raise
A coral droplet to
My lips, none to kiss
The leper well again.

Rita Kristina Weinheimer, OSF

Francis of Assisi's Unnoticed Legacy

SR. M. FRANCIS ASSISI KENNEDY, O.S.F.

The world knows Francis of Assisi for his love of poverty. It knows him for his devotion to the poor. It heralds him as a champion of peace and social reform, as preacher of the Gospel and imitator of Jesus Christ. There is a facet of Francis' personality, though, which remains largely unnoticed among the lines of his earliest legacies to his followers. That hidden side of Francis warrants more attention, for it is a side that the saint himself cherished greatly. It is Francis' great devotion to the Liturgy of the Divine Hours.

Both the Rule of 1221 and that of 1223 admonished the friars to recite the Divine Office, or if they were lay brothers, to substitute "Our Fathers" for each hour of the liturgical cycles. Section 95 of *The Legend of Perugia* tells how when Francis travelled "on foot from place to place, he always stopped to recite the hours." If he was riding on horseback, "he dismounted to say his office." The *Legend* goes on to relate how on one occasion, Francis was drenched doing so.

Brother Leo testified in a note in the Breviary of St. Francis that when sickness prevented his saying his office, he wanted at least to hear it and was faithful to this practice all his life. Francis himself in his "Letter to a General Chapter," toward the end of his life, wrote:

> ... I have sinned in many ways, through my own most grievous fault, and in particular by not keeping the Rule which I promise to God, and by not saying the Office, as the Rule prescribes, through carelessness or sickness, or because I am ignorant and have never studied.

Like many things which the world has found attractive about the little poor man from Assisi, then, this lesser known gift, too, is evident chiefly

The author is archivist for the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg and English Department chairperson and senior English teacher at Immaculate Conception Academy in Oldenburg, Indiana.

from his actions and a few words, rather than from a lengthy explanation from the saint as to why the office was so important to him.

This minimal testimony, even though clearly significant, leaves present day followers of Francis, eager to discern his spirit and consequently take it on, with two choices. They can either simply heed their holy founder's advice, imitate his habit of prayer, and consequently experientially learn its value. Or if they are given to more modern methods of investigation, they can analyze this object of Francis' love and then, analyzing what else they know of his personality, attitudes and ideals, attempt to see how the two dovetail, and thus discover why a prayer such as the Liturgy of the Hours was so sacred to the saint. It is this writer's hope that having spent all of her religious life thus far pursuing the former course will make the latter method much easier.

Francis must have loved the Divine Office, first of all, for the same reason that he loved the poor, poverty, and all creation. It enabled him to find the will of God in its Scripture and joined him to the Word incarnate. This psalm and Scripture-based prayer was Jesus' prayer. Not only did Francis know it was Jesus' because Jesus was after all a devout Jew and revealed that even at His death by reverting to Psalm 22 in that moment of His greatest distress when he cried out to his Father in the anguish of abandonment in His final agony on the cross. In that instance Jesus' words are those of the pslms: the Fatherhood or Provident care of God (Psalms: 103,13; 125,2; 134,4-6,12,13), His transcendance (Psalms: 111,1-3; 113,4-6), His holiness and man's submission to it (Psalms 113,1-3; 115,1), the imperative coming of the kingdom (Psalms: 50; 128; 132,7,8; 132,13-18). That Francis understood this, at least innately, can be surmised from his substitution of "our Fathers" for those unable to recite the regular office.

Francis of Assisi was no shallow, superficial imitator of Jesus Christ. Spurred by months, days and eventually years of contemplation, this herald literally put on the mind of his Lord. Francis grasped fully the import and implications of Jesus' admonition to pray always. He noted that Jesus prayed before each major event in His life, before His miracles and not only before but also during His final discourse to His faithful followers. Francis recognized that this constant prayer was Jesus' unitive life with His Father, the source of His love and its ultimate goal. To Francis, the Church's institution of the Divine office to carry on this constant prayer of its Head provided a welcome opportunity to imitate his beloved Master. Since he longed with all his being to embrace Jesus and thus be taken up with Him into the Father's divine embrace, it was only natural that he should freely, gladly, even excitedly take on the prayer habit of Jesus. He, too, his biographers tells us, rose at dawn to

begin the day with his God; he too, gratefully ended the day by commending its gifts to the God Who supplied them, and he, too, Bernard of Quintavalle tells us, sanctified the night as Jesus had by incessant prayer. Nor does it detract from our thesis that Bernard's story is not specifically of Francis praying the office. Perhaps on other nights he did so. The point remains: though he personally may have modified the form either occasionally or even frequently, it was natural for Francis of Assisi to love the structure of the office, the sanctification of each day's several parts by the lifting of mind and heart to God. Nor could he ever drink enough of the Divine Word. Francis' was indeed the insatiable thirst of the psalmist. (Psalms 43 and 63)

If Francis learned when to pray from Jesus, the many things which are very well known about his life tell us that he also learned from contemplating Jesus what God had inspired in the psalms, what Jesus Himself as Jewish boy and man loved in them and passed on to His New Covenant community. Here are prayers which exalt God's creation, God's gifts of beauty, life and sustenance to this world.

Bless the Lord, O my soul!
O Lord, my God, you are great indeed!
You are clothed with majesty and glory,
  robed in light as with a cloak.
You have spread out the heavens like a tent-cloth;
  you have constructed your palace upon the waters
You make the clouds your chariot;
  you travel on the wings of the wind.
You make the winds your messengers,
  and flaming fire your ministers.
You fixed the earth upon its foundation,
  not to be moved forever;
With the ocean, as with a garment, you covered it;
Above the mountains the waters stood
.....
You set a limit they may not pass,
  nor shall they cover the earth again.(Psalm 104, 1-6, 9)

Here is testimony of God's predeliction for the poor:
  I will speak my thanks earnestly to the Lord,
    and in the midst of the throng I will praise him,
For he stood at the right hand of the poor man.
  to save him from those who would condemn him. (Psalm 109, 30, 31)

Lavishly he gives to the poor;
  his generosity shall endure forever;
  his horn shall be exalted in glory. (Psalm 112, 9)

He raises up the lowly from the dust;
  from the dunghill he lifts up the poor
To seat them with princes,
    with the prices of his own people.
He establishes in her home the barren wife
  as the joyful mother of children. (Psalm 113, 7-9)

The psalms repeatedly proclaim God's nearness to His people in distress:

I love the Lord because he has heard my voice in supplication
Because he has inclined his ear to me the day I called
The cords of death encompassed me
  the snares of the nether world seized upon me;
  I fell into distress and sorrow,
And I called upon the name of the Lord,
  "O Lord, save my life!"
Gracious is the Lord and just;
  yes, our God is merciful.
The Lord keeps the little ones;
  I was brought low, and he saved me. (Psalm 116, 1-6)

Psalms 121, 123, 124 and others proclaim again and again the Creator's understanding of human infirmity:

O Lord, you have probed me and you know me;
  you know when I sit and when I stand;
  you understand my thoughts from afar.
My journeys and my rest you scrutinize,
  with all my ways you are familiar (Psalm 139, 1-3)

How Francis must have thrilled to that intimacy of his beloved.

The psalms embody the fullness of the human heart; they were perfect prayers for the saint who embraced all of his Father's children. They also might be called paradigms of hope for humanity. The very structure of many of them is such that midstream in humanity's cries of anguish, suddenly intervenes the promise of rescue, of salvation.

God is our refuge and our strength,
    an ever present help in distress.
.....
Though its waters rage and foam
  and the mountains quake at its surging.
The Lord of hosts is with us;
  our stronghold is the God of Jacob.
.....
though nations are in turmoil, kingdoms totter,
  his voice resounds, the earth melts away,

The Lord of hosts is with us;
our stronghold is the God of Jacob. (Psalm 46, 1,4,7)

It was such hope that both sustained and emanated from Francis.

... it was only natural that he should freely, gladly, even excitedly take on the prayer habits of Jesus.

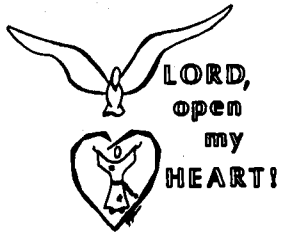
Lastly, the psalms both in themselves promise the kingdom, and as the prayer of the Church, incarnate that kingdom at prayer. Like all things sacramental, the office tends to effect what it promises. Surely this endeared it to Francis, who loved the Church as the Body of Christ so much that he left behind everything else he loved in order to bind up its wounds and build up again its weakened walls. Francis literally espoused himself to the Church, the Bride of Christ. Gladly he must have entered into the Church's prayer: taken up the cry of its poor (Psalm 54), lamented its communal sinfulness (Psalm 51), and joined its paean of praise and thanksgiving. (Psalm 150). Altough Francis did not always recite the office communally, he knew that it was the prayer of the Church for the Church, the people of God, that he prayed wherever he was when he said the psalter.

Although, like Jesus, he often went apart to pray, Francis knew too the value of two or three gathered in One name. Like Jesus, he gathered others to support him in both his joys and his sorrows. Like Jesus, he came from both solitary and communal prayer refreshed, renewed, inspired, clearer about the Father's will, ready to walk the road stretched before him. Jesus found in prayer the meat of his Father's will, the strength to lay down His life. Having pondered and striven to imitate that supreme gift until its marks signed his own flesh, is it any wonder that Francis of Assisi loved the prayer that allowed him to say in 150 ways:

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!
My soul yearns and pines for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest
in which she puts her young —
Your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God!

Happy they who dwell in your house!
continually they praise you.
Happy the men whose strength you are!
their hearts are set upon the pilgrimage:
When they pass through the valley of the mastic trees,
they make a spring of it;
the early rain clothes it with generous growth.
They go from strength to strength;
they shall see the God of gods in Zion.
O Lord of hosts, hear my prayer;
hearken, O God of Jacob!
O God, behold our shield, and look upon the face of our anointed.
I had rather one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere;
I had rather lie at the threshold of the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.
For a sun and a shield is the Lord God;
grace and glory he bestows;
The Lord witholds no good thing from those who walk in sincerity.
O Lord of hosts, happy the men who trust in you!

Psalm 84 might very well have been Francis' epitaph; it so describes his life. Perhaps, in the end, it is the best key to what it was that the little troubadour loved in His Master's and his Bride's favorite formulary of prayer. The psalter was a song fit for his poetic heart, a song which captured the Good News and shouted it to the world, a song encompassing the cry of the poor, the hymn of God's people united in His praise for all time, the chorus of creation, the anthem of the heavenly choirs. The Divine Office sang the glory of God, resplendent in words echoing down through the ages. It embodied the loving exchange of an ever-promising God and an ever-trusting people. It was ideally the song that filled Francis' own heart; he gladly joined his voice to this sacred chorus. □



my prayer
punctuated
by the cardinal's hymn

I dust
the statue of St. Luke
my finger bleeds

'three Hail Marys'
the child broods over his penance:
I know only one

praying the Psalms
wears down the rock
in me

ruffled apron tied
to the headstone
of a girl's grave

Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg, OSF

On How the Plenary Council of the Fraternity, Meeting in India, Strove to Deepen its Understanding of These Words of Wisdom: "Light from the East"

HERMANN SCHALÜCK, O.F.M.

After the Chapter of Pentecost which took place in the Porziuncula in the year of Our Lord 1985, 1001 days and nights had come and gone in Rome when, lo, from hills and valleys all over the world, and from the five continents, "over land and from the sky" the brothers gathered in KRISNAJARAPURA near Bangalore in distant India. They gathered out of obedience to a venerable custom, enshrined now as a rule of the new General Constitutions, articles 193-195, which refer to celebration of the Plenary Council of the Order.

Mindful of their mission of advancing the work of inculturation (cf. GG.CC. art. 92) and the evangelization of cultures (cf. GG.CC. art. 94), the brothers had opted for holding this important meeting in the distant and mysterious land of India. Many undertook the difficult journey with the secret expectancy that, faced with so many problems which weigh upon the world-wide Brotherhood, they might have a profound experience of those hope-filled words: "Ex Oriente Lux" ("Light from the East").

On the vigil of the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker a large number of ministers and servants met in KRISHNAJARAPURA, in a seminary belonging to the sons of Don Bosco, because the Brothers Minor of the Province of Saint Thomas in that country live in "places" which are poor and simple. When the brothers from all over the world arrived at that seminary which is called KRISTU YOTI, they were filled with holy joy

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The writer is a former provincial and professor of theology of the Province of the Holy Cross in Saxonia (Germany). He is now a member of the General Council of the Order of Friars Minor in Rome. Many of his Fioretti-like reflections have been published in previous issues of **THE CORD.**

at learning that YOTI, in one of the many languages of that country, is the word for LIGHT. Because, in fact, it was the light of Christ for which they were all searching, and it was a torch kindled with this light that they all so ardently desired to bring back with them to Rome.

With the love of brothers and mothers the sons and daughters of that immense country devoted themselves to caring for the friar pilgrims with a smile always hovering on their lips. The friars themselves remained almost one whole month in that part of the Indian sub-continent. There they learned that, before undertaking the evangelization of cultures and religions, they must first listen to what the Lord God in his goodness wishes to reveal to them by means of those cultures and those religions. This helps every fraternity to come ever closer to the Gospel and become more credible in its catholicity.

Tired from such a long journey the brothers retired early to enjoy a refreshing sleep.

The real-life lessons, which they were called upon to learn during the following weeks, began on that very first night: lessons all the more enlightening and surprising in so far as they were not the result of lively debates and subtle reasonings about "The Procedure of the Plenary Council"; rather were they the fruit of a new encounter with nature, religions and cultures, without forgetting the brothers and sisters of that vast country.

The encounter with nature took place during that night or rather at the crack of dawn with the cawing of brother crow looking for food (cf. Ps. 146,9) and the lowing of their sisters, the sacred cows, which were happily grazing around the house. Those members of the brotherhood who had come from cold climates, were not a little surprised at the multitude of small creatures which shared the same cell with them and filled the place with a sheer variety of sounds. There were ants, frogs, reptiles, locusts and mosquitoes, — all eager to feed on brother Friar. The brothers who had come from the so-called developed countries very quickly asked for insecticides, all set for chemical warfare without mercy. It was then that Brother Fidelis, Provincial Minister of the Indian Fraternity, smiled in his most brotherly way and proceeded to impart his first lesson: "True to a tradition at once brahmanic, hindu and franciscan, we ought to harbour sentiments of peace towards all creatures, including those little beasts which may appear unintelligent and useless." He based this statement on GG. CC. art. 71, which says that "the friars are to maintain a reverent attitude towards nature, threatened from all sides today, in such a way that they may restore it completely to its condition of brother." He appealed to them to allow the hard-working ants to continue their laborious activity — what a good example for everyone! — and to carry the other little creatures out to the garden if their company

should prove a burden to them. Finally, to the surprise of some, he sowed in the hearts of the brothers the seed of a soutra of PATANJALI, the celebrated author of aphorisms on yoga; one which says: "He who is a firm believer in non-violence creates around himself an atmosphere of peace which disarms the violence of all who come near him" (II Soutra 35). Some of the brothers who like to think that Francis had come to India in some mysterious way immediately went leafing through the Franciscan Sources to see if they could find any point of contact with that country so full of mystery and so rich in traditions. Their professional investigation lead them to a sermon of Jacques de Vitry (1180 - 1240), that good friend of the early friars. In 1240 this cardinal preached to the brothers his sermon on the Book of Proverbs 30, 24-28:

> "Four things are among the smallest on the earth,
> and yet are exceedingly wise:
> Ants — a species not strong,
> yet they store up their food in the summer;
> Rock-badgers — a species not mighty,
> yet they make their home in the crags;
> Locusts — they have no king,
> yet they migrate all in array;
> Lizards — you can catch them with your hands,
> yet they find their way into kings' palaces."

The preacher compared the brothers to these creatures: The friars who are unselfish workers and feel obliged always to seek the good of others, particularly that of the weak: these are the ants. The friar who is not ashamed of his weakness but places his confidence in the help he receives from others, especially from the Lord, the true rock: he is the rock-badger. The brothers who have received from God the gift of building the Christian community and who make great strides thanks to study and contemplation, these are the locusts. Finally, the indefatigable itinerant preachers who distribute the bread of the Word among the People of God, these are to be compared to the lizards who are to be found in the palaces of kings.

The brothers gave thanks to the Lord for these lively instructions and, thanks to them, learned to understand their mission in a new way. Had not Brother Francis, indeed, shown the greatest respect for all creatures, including the very smallest and those apparently deprived of reason? (cf. 1 Cel. 58; Sal. Vir. LP 110). And had not Christ Jesus, himself the model of all inculturation, appeared in the Third World, far from the centre of the Roman empire, among the animals and among the poor?

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The meeting with other RELIGIONS also brought with it its harvest of new experiences. To the brothers convened in KRISTU YOTI college the Lord gave such confidence in their hindu brothers that they went one day to pay a visit to an ASHRAM. They asked a SWAMI, who was dressed in his sari, to speak to them about his great master, SRI RAMAKRISHNA, about his love for all creation, about his radical poverty and the way that leads to illumination. To their great surprise they learned that just as Francis, the elder brother of RAMAKRISHNA, had despised money and had thrown it far away from him (cf. 2 Cel 65), in like manner the hindu monk had trodden it underfoot, and, as if it were no more than the dirt of the street, thrown it into the Ganges. On the banks of the sacred river he had cried out: "If at any time I should have money in my hand, may it wither and may my breathing fail." Therepon the swami told them of a disciple who wished to put the great master to the test. One day when Ramakrishna was not in his cell, he placed a coin beneath his mat. When the master returned and sat on his mat, he let out a cry of pain. It was as if an arrow had pierced him. He looked around him bewildered, unable to find an explanation. Then the disciple came in and saw his guru. At the same time, a servant entered and found the silver coin beneath the mat.

These meetings and anecdotes had quite an effect on the brothers, even to the point of confusing them. On the one hand, they thought of the preferential option for the poor, which they had so joyfully embraced and, on the other, of the financing of the General Curia and of other houses which the fraternity has in Rome.

In the city of MYSORE the brothers paid a visit to a second ASHRAM, one maintained by a son of St. Ignatius and so, a most catholic one. There they celebrated the Eucharist resting on their haunches, according to local tradition. There were many reverences, flowers and much incence in an atmosphere of strange words and exotic chants. During a homily the Indian priest invited the brothers to deepen their vocation in an asiatic context. "In accordance with hindu tradition," he said, "the thought-process of Francis is more associative than logical, more intuitive than analytical, more subjective than objective, more inductive than deductive, especially if one compares his thought with the reasoning processes of western scholasticism." With great patience the christian guru explained to the brothers that the true "theology of liberation" of the East is the fruit of a pure interior and of contemplation. It springs up from within and overflows on to the poor and suffering. However it always tries to appear before the Goodness of God with empty hands. At this the brothers never ceased to give thanks to the Lord for the "communion of saints of all the religions of the world." Neither did they cease to marvel at the words

written by an Indian poet, Rajjib, some four centuries ago: "All the religions of the world are like streams which flow into God, the only Ocean."

Among the many meetings with brothers and sisters which were a means of evangelization for the brothers of the Plenary Council, allow me to mention the visit of one brother of St. Francis, a man called DAYANAND, dressed in a sari. His manner of living was based on that of the hindu monks. Like a SANNYASI, he lived with the poor in an attitude of absolute non-violence (AHIMSA), the kind which our brother MAHATMA GHANDI had displayed before the whole world. Brother DAYANAND gave a description of SANNYASI in accordance with the "Treatise of the Equivalents."

"Free as an infant newly-born, without any ties to property, place yourselves resolutely on the road of BRAHMAN. With purity of heart and as a means of sustaining a languishing life, fill the receptacle of your stomach with the alms which you receive. Whether it is that you receive something or absolutely nothing, always maintain an unchanging disposition. You may live in an abandoned house, in a temple, in the shade of a tree or in an abandoned ant hill, among the roots of a tree or in a potter's cabin, beside a bivuoac or in the sand of a river-bed, on a hill or in a cave, in the cavity of a tree or beside a waterfall, or, finally, on the bare earth with no cover. Without self pity, without constraint or tension, in an attitude of deep contemplation, and concentrating on the great YES, you should apply yourselves to face up to the consequences of evil actions of the past, abandoning yourselves to renunciation" (Jabala Upanishad 6).

These words recalled to them the life of Francis. The brother also referred to the life of Gandhi in prison who would continue to repeat: "The disciple of non-violence is never afraid. Although his enemy may deceive him twenty times, he is ready to trust the twenty-first time."

On hearing such things the brothers gave thanks to the Lord for the many delicious fruits still growing on the tree of franciscan living. Those who were most grateful were the brothers who have dedicated themselves in a special manner to the gospel priority of Peace and Justice, and who have suffered so many contradictions of all kinds. These felt very consoled and encouraged by such a testimony.

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After the brothers had studied and deepened their knowledge of "the things of God" (RnB 18, 11), after their encounters with the nature, the culture and the religion of that country, it was easy for them to enter upon the themes which they had chosen while still in their beautiful, spacious house in Rome.

1. In the light of their experience, they renewed their commitment to carry out in their lives the priorities of the six-year plan, viz.
   — to taste the sweetness of contemplation, even by adopting new forms of prayer more in keeping with today's religious sensitivity (cf. GG. CC. art. 29);
   — to become intrepid defenders of Peace and Justice, overcoming evil by the practice of good (cf. GG. Cc. art. 68, 1);
   — to be heralds of the Gospel in word and deed, by promising to seek out new forms of living the franciscan charism (GG. Cc. art. 115, 2).

2. They decided to begin renewal in their houses of studies along the lines of the encyclical of the Lord Pope, "SOLLICITUDO REI SOCIALIS" by putting these at the service of the evangelization of cultures, and of listening to the voice of the poor. They would not neglect, however, SOLLICITUDO REI MEDIEVALIS which, in the opinion of some, should be given a new impulse, especially in Rome.

3. As regards finances, they decided to put into practice not only a more equitable system of contributions in favour of the Curia, but also a more radical sharing with the poor. All Provinces, without distinction, were invited to adopt this.

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Before concluding, we must not fail to mention the fact that the day before the departure of the brothers, just as they had joyously made a synthesis of their new projects and plans in the format of A MESSAGE FROM BANGALORE to be the ripe fruit of their stay in India, lo and behold, the well ran dry, the well which had served the needs of all the brothers and of the sons of Don Bosco alike! For half a day, beneath a broiling sun, they suffered severe thirst, and were unable to avail of their customary ablutions. Then they began to pray to the Lord in the words of the psalm which says: "My flesh pines and my soul thirsts like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water" (Ps. 62,2), and they solemnly promised for the future to follow brother Francis in all cultures with a pure heart, limpid eyes and a great openness of spirit (cf. Ex. 15, 22-25). And behold, the spring of water began to fill the well. All saw in this a sign of the goodness of the Lord, who is constantly trying the fraternity only to promptly bless all their efforts at renewal.

Refreshed and purified interiorly and exteriorly, the ministers and the brothers returned from the Plenary Council, some to Rome, others to their home countries, convinced that the Lord had shown them once more what he hoped from them. They were grateful for that light which they had seen in the east and which had guided them on their way.

In praise of Christ. Amen.

The Third Order Regular and Parish Ministry

ROLAND J. FALEY, T.O.R.

When John O'Malley, SJ, wrote his telling article on religious priesthood a year or so ago, he had little idea that it would reverberate so loudly, even in the halls of Catholic officialdom. The article looks at diocesan and religious priesthood, finds the diocesan model very much in possession, and alerts religious to the importance of rediscovering their proper sacerdotal identity.[1]

For our purposes of looking at parish ministry in the Third Order Regular tradition, O'Malley's conclusions are helpful. I would like to summarize them briefly here.

1. Since the high middle ages, ministry has been central to religious orders' and congregations' self-understanding. This includes priesthood and the manner in which it has been pursued.

2. There are at least two distinct traditions of ministry that have shaped priesthood, found today in what we term the diocesan and religious clergy. There was a healthy "division of labor" which in earlier times clearly distinguished the two. O'Malley locates the diocesan clergy in a ministry principally centered on word and sacrament, within a stable community designated officially, at least since Trent, a parish. Religious were also involved in this type of ministry, but generally had a quite different locus,

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Father Roland J. Faley, T.O.R., has a remarkable background in education and administration. A trained scripture scholar, he has also served as General Minister of his Order and continues to carry on a most impressive ministry on a national and international level. He serves as Executive Director of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men in the United States. Though this paper was delivered to a workshop of his confreres, it has something very important to say to the entire Franciscan family as well as to the Church at large.

different groups, and different circumstances — schools, charitable works, retreats, missions (home and foreign), works with the spiritually alienated, etc.

3. The model of priesthood which has become normative is the diocesan. Vatican II in its documents which treat of priesthood refers exclusively to the structures and life which characterize the diocesan clergy. The parish becomes the locus of ministry *par excellence*.

4. If such a theological position were to prevail, without reflection, it would certainly result in an impoverishment of the whole idea of priesthood, would situate ministry for religious more in ordination than in religious profession, and run the risk of leveling important distinctions between religious and diocesan priests. This is not to place the blame at anybody's door, but rather to place it at everybody's door.

A word of clarification is necessary. At this point you might be inclined to conclude that this discussion of Third Order work in parishes begins by raising the question as to why we are even there. I would not espouse that position. The manner of our presence is, however, conditioned or should be conditioned by the historical nature of religious priesthood. We do have a valid parish ministry, but it is vital that we come together and examine it.

But having said that, I do submit that I would be hesitant, or at least very discerning, before taking on new parish responsibilities. This represents a development in my own thinking which I believe is well grounded. It is my belief that our services to any local church can be more specific and at the same time more flexible if it flows directly from the charism of the Order and not molded by parochial structures. To say that the present need for priests should move us to respond positively to diocesan needs is, I submit, a well intentioned but dangerous premise. To my knowledge, the Church has never indicated that religious should assume parochial responsibilities in the absence of clergy. This is not to deny the serious problem which the Church faces, a problem which at some point is going to have to be faced squarely and solved. Religious should not be seen as the interim solution.

What the Church has done and continues to do is to call religious to fidelity to their original spirit and tradition. This can be done best by living priesthood in a fashion that flows from our distinctive charism as members of the Franciscan penitential tradition. There are countless ways in which a diocese can be served by our religious apart from parishes.

PARISH MINISTRY

With all of this as background, let us now look at parish ministry within the Order and the ways it might best respond to our founding spirit.

1. **Community.** To the greatest extent possible, a parish ministry should be a community expression. Without getting into the numbers game, I would nonetheless submit that single man parishes do not really fit this definition. The presence of a number of friars makes a broader ministry possible, inviting forms of outreach broader than the parish, while at the same time it facilitates the living of a common life envisioned by the constitutions.

In this regard, I would see the role of the brother as invaluable. To be quite frank, the brothers' involvement in ministry helps us to avoid total clericalization. It forces us to look beyond the more traditional parish duties toward a more pronounced religious ministry. Where community is being strengthened and enlarged, we are in a better position to evaluate our contribution to the local church, within which the parochial ministry is one dimension.

2. **Conversion of life.** With the research done in the seventies and the early eighties, especially in relation to the New Rule of the Order promulgated in 1982, the charism of the Order as mentioned or conversion of life is indisputable. We are the direct descendants of the earliest Franciscan penitents, who were directed in their evangelical pursuit by Francis himself. Both our personal and communal lives should find this spirit central and that centrality should emerge in ministry as well. Some ways in which this can be done suggest themselves. This list is by no means exhaustive; a creative spirit will surely open other doors as well.

A. **The Sacrament of Reconciliation.** A TOR parish could well give considerable attention to a pastoral renewal of this sacrament in both traditional and innovative ways. I woud think of effective and coordinated preaching on the meaning of this sacrament; a more extensive and caring availability to people for reconciliation, even beyond parish boundaries; the use of the communal penance service in a timely and creative way.

B. **The order of Penitents.** This has become a developing pastoral expression in U.S. parishes. Just as the Rite of Christian Initiative introduces people to the life of the church over an extended period of time, the Order of Penitents follows a similar communal path in reconciling sinners to the church. In extending reconciliation over a period of time, e.g., the Lenten season, the Christian community joins humbly with Catholics being re-membered or reinserted in walking the path of reconciliation.[2] Further particulars can be found elsewhere; suffice it to say that the program is worth exploring, especially for Franciscan religious dedicated to reconciliation as integral to their founding vision.

C. **Outreach Ministry.** The Tertiary Tradition is strongly rooted in the corporate works of mercy. It is strongly marked by a concern for the poor,

the sick, and the needy. When this is coupled with the charism of conversion with its inherent concern for the spiritually alienated, possible outreach ministries come readily to mind. American society today has more than its share of the spiritually wounded, those alienated from the church, those scarred by bitterness. These are the spiritually homeless. This may mean pastoral "welcome home" programs such as that for the adult children of alcoholics, divorced Catholics, single people. It seems very evident that dedication to the AIDS ministry is well suited to our charism and tradition, the reason being that such a ministry combines the corporal works of mercy with a ministry to those who often feel isolated, misunderstood, and alienated from all segments of society, including the church.

Admittedly, a sort-out is necessary on this question. Any single parish is limited in what it can do, but the point remains. An outreach ministry is important for a variety of reasons, but what the ministry does is move our thinking beyond the stable, fixed parish community. Our work becomes less parochial (no pun intended). At the same time, it enlivens the sense of our charism in moving toward people beyond the pale of the customary parish ministry.

D. **Lay Bonding.** Historically there was one Order of Penance, comprised of the single and married laity (TOS, OFS) and those in community (TOR). The separation into two distinct ecclesiastical entities came about through Church decision accompanied by the growing line of demarcation between laity on one side and priests and religious on the other. Initially a single rule governed the life of both.

Many religious congregations and orders today see their life and ministry in the future as closely allied with the laity. Bonding between religious institutes and their counterparts is becoming increasingly common. As Franciscans of the penitential tradition, we realize that the lay component has been present from the beginning and should be maintained. Our relations to the secular Franciscans is stronger than any of the other Franciscan families. For this reason, I wrote a pastoral letter to our Order when the new secular Franciscan rule was approved. What I said then remains, I believe, equally valid today.

A revitalization of the secular Franciscans may well require new structures, a two track system, or something similar. But man was not made for structures, but structures, for man — forgive the lack of inclusive language. The Franciscan lay movement can move ahead because of the strong and lasting appeal of the spirit of Francis for all people. And that it has to do at times in spite of structures. This may require some very radical and innovative thinking.

What can we model in terms of lay collaboration? First of all, it should be genuine collaboration and not simply lay assistance in our tasks. It is

not simply a question of altar ministries or stronger parish associations. Rather, how can we genuinely plan our ministry as religous and lay people — coequal and coinvolved. Have we begun to think of lay management of parish temporalities, of collaboration in marriage preparation, RCIA, education, and outreach ministry? Is the parish council more than "window dressing," is it an undertaking of genuine shared responsibility? This all means sharing our lives in many different ways, including our spiritual life and Franciscan traditions.

Some may see this as a blurring of the distinction between religious and laity, between priest and laity. I do not share their view. Roles can sitll be clearly defined, but the concept does spell unity in diversity in service to God's people.

THE WORD OF GOD

Franciscans have no corner on the scriptures. Therefore, much of what I have to say here is applicable to all involved in ministry, but I would make the *a fortiori* point. Francis rooted the direction of his life and the direction of his fraternity in God's word. This was normative. He had an incredible intuitive insight into the meaning of Scripture for one who lacked formal training. The inspiration for the Minors' Rule was deeply Scriptural. The tonsure which he and his confreres received from the Pope was in the interest of preaching which he saw as integral to his mission.

Today one of the people's strongest laments deals with the quality of peaching. To say there is widespread dissatisfaction is something of an understatement. In the past homiletics was an "also ran" course in the seminary; one wonders how much better it is today. Years ago when I was teaching at the Protestant seminary in Pittsburgh, I never ceased to marvel at the time and attention, on an interdisciplinary basis, that was given to preparing the Sunday homily.

The Sunday homily holds primacy of place and should be given considerable attention in terms of preparation. The daily homily should not be neglected, although it should be brief and focus on a single idea. Preaching means three things: a contemporary understanding of the scriptures, a knowledge of the cultural and social setting of the listeners, and good communication skills. Above all, it means a love for the Scriptures themselves.

Lay formation in the scriptures has a singular importance today. This means to form people in those biblical insights, recognized in *Divino Afflante Spiritu* and reaffirmed at the Council. Our people still have to learn to be at home with the results of literary criticism; otherwise we will be beset by that type of biblical fundamentalism about which we

currently lament. For this reason, continuing education of the laity should take a good look at programs like ABIL (Adult Biblical Interdependent Learning) which is gaining increasing recognition as a method of biblical instruction. The program has been developed by Dr. Eugene Trester and is gaining acceptance in an increasing number of U. S. dioceses.

CONCLUSION

There are real challenges connected with parish ministry today. Studies show that in this country the parish remains the locus of religious identification for most Catholics, even though it may not be the territorial parish of one's residence. People are more prone today to cross lines at will, but the parish is still in possession.

Where religious are responsible for the parish, it is an important moment to do some critical and creative thinking. There is always the danger of settling into a "business as usual" mentality. Religious parishes, I would submit, have a responsibility to maintain a distinctiveness derived from their founding spirit. The charism of the institute can be creatively brought to life within the established parochial structures. The present paper has offered some suggestions. What I would really like to do is invite your own participation. Understanding the charism of the Order, I would ask you to raise the question: In my corner of the vineyard, how might I give a wider berth to conversion of life? Each new insight, each step forward enables us to carry out the Council's mandate: to rediscover the spirit of the Founder and to read it in the light of the signs of the times.

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[1]O'Malley, J., "Priesthood, Ministry, and Religious Life: Some Historical and Historiographical Considerations," *TS*, June, 1988, iv.49, n. 2.

[2]Lopresti, J., *Penance: A Reform Proposal for the Rite*, Pastoral Press, 1987.

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MARCH, 1990

The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

SPECIAL ISSUE: FRANCISCANS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

ARTICLES

AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME 68
Phil Kelly, O.F.M. Conv.

NEW GENESIS: BUILDING UP OUR PLANET 71
Robert Muller

REFLECTION ON THE VISION STATEMENT FOR FRANCISCANS AT THE UNITED NATIONS 82
Donal O'Mahoney, O.F.M. Cap.

FEATURES

GUEST EDITORIAL:
FACING THE SULTAN 65
Phil Kelly, O.F.M. Conv.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE 'FRANCISCANS AT THE UNITED NATIONS' INITIATIVE? 88

HOW BROTHER FRANCIS PREACHED IN THE RUINS OF THE FORMER FRANCISCAN CHURCH IN EAST BERLIN 90
Hermann Schalück, O.F.M.

POETRY:
VARIATIONS 94
Lisa Biscaine
BLANCHE AND WILLIE 96
Anthony Chiarelli

Volume 40, No. 3

The CORD

A Monthly 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).

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Facing the Sultan

PHIL KELLY, O.F.M. CONV.

I have never met anyone who is easily able to explain just why he or she chose to be the particular 'brand' of Franciscan one ends up being, but I can say that being a Conventual Franciscan does not have many advantages. We spend a lot of time trying to explain the black habit, even more time trying to get people to even say 'conventual' correctly, and worst of all, completely waste our breath trying to explain the differences between 'us' and 'them.' Quite frankly, the only time being a Conventual has made any difference to me at all was the two summers I spent where it all started, in the Sacro Convento of Assisi. There it makes a difference; there you 'work the basilica.'

Being a tour guide in the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi is unlike an assignment I have ever had in the Order. I have never done anything I enjoyed quite as much. Day after day you talk to people about Christ and St. Francis, backed up by the greatest visuals in creation, the Giotto frescoes. It is not unusual to have twelve or fifteen friars tell the story of St. Francis in various sections of this three-level basilica, each group in a different language. People, and the friars to talk to them, come from all over the world. There are pilgrims, but there are also tourists, there are art lovers, there are peace lovers, there are nature lovers, there are the converted, the searcher, the believer, the agnostic. Everyone seems touched by Francis and his message.

There are countless frescoes of Francis throughout the basilica, two of which portray his meeting with the Sultan. In the upper basilica, the

We are most grateful to Fr. Phil Kelly of the Canadian Conventual Province for his initiatives in making possible this special edition of **THE CORD**. *We commend him and all of our Franciscan sisters and brothers engaged in the United Nations project. Among the many benefits to be realized is, I believe, a deepening consciousness on the part of all of the dynamic potential of the Franciscan Movement.*

sultan is shown surrounded by his priests, and Francis is challenging them to walk over a bed of coals... the Bonaventure version of the encounter. The other fresco, in the lower basilica, is much more damaged and the story line open to interpretation. The people of Assisi connect that figure with the artifacts in the relics chapel to recount:

> "The saint crossed the lines between the Moslims and the crusaders, he met the sultan and asked him would it be possible that the fighting could stop. The Sultan told him: "You are a holy man, you have not come to do me any harm. I am the leader of these troops because I am the bravest of all. I can only stay in power by fighting, if I do not fight, they will choose someone who will. I want to ask a favor of you. You pray to your God, I will pray to mine. and through our prayers we will have peace." He guaranteed Francis safe passage and as a token of his appreciation, gave him that very ram's horn which is in the relic case."

It is a legend which contains an excellent dynamic for discussing the causes of war, and I was able to use it frequently. I quote that story only because it was one of many which helped me move Francis from "Founder of the Franciscans" into a much larger context, as a friend of all searchers after truth.

It was here, in Assisi, where the idea of Francis as the universal spiritual figure first became clear to me. Because this insight came to me in the eighties, I would claim this decade as the one in which this concept grew; others will, no doubt, differ. The last half of 1986 was a measure of confirmation of this expanded world attitude toward Francis; The World Wildlife Foundation celebrated it's twenty-fifth anniversary with a series of events, cluminating in a splendid worship service in the Upper Basilica, hosted by prince Philip and involving the five major religions of the world in a stirring evocation of our inter-relatedness with creation.

The city had only a month to catch it's breath before the World Day of Prayer for Peace, where Pope John Paul II hosted representatives of all the major spiritual belief systems in an unprecedented out-pouring of prayer for global peace. With these two events, Francis seems to have added to his previous betrothal to lady Poverty, by being popularly proclaimed a world symbol, the patron of ecology and peace.

In the same decade, some of his daughters and sons, in amazing divergent paths, began a process to share his message in a daring new area, the United Nations. This initiative achieved a first stage on February 3, 1989 when we were granted standing at the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organization. The story of how *that* came about, and an insight into some of the possibilities, is the material which makes up this edition of **The Cord** magazine. I think the sultan would be happy.

Just imagine: Franciscans walking the halls of the United Nations. Serving on its committees.

Regularly transmitting information on critical international issues.

Communicating concerns about and offering possible solutions to pressing social problems.

Operating an international office to help channel the energy of the Franciscan family and respond to the needs of the powerless and marginalized on a global basis.

Just imagine: A concrete, unmistakable Franciscan presence at the United Nations, the world's foremost international forum for conflict resolution!

Conferenza Francescana Internazionale dei Fratelli e delle Sorelle del Terzo Ordine Regolare, October 1989

An Idea Whose Time Has Come

PHIL KELLY, O.F.M., Conv.

An idea whose time has come, great timing, and plenty of hard work were the elements which have presented the Franciscans of the world with what Cardinal Arns calls: "The obvious direction for Franciscans to pursue into the twenty-first century." When you spend a little time around the United Nations Headquarters in New York, you learn that this is no vague generalization, this is fact.

As far as it can be determined, the first person to see the potential for a Franciscan presence at the United Nations was Elizabeth Cameron, O.S.F., who realized the implications of such a move while she was involved in a United Nations support organization in Iowa. She brought the idea to the Social Justice committee of the Franciscan Federation of the USA, who began by investigating the framework such a move would involve, by forming a committee to draft a potential constitution, to seek incorporation, to obtain tax-exempt status, and to put into motion the application process. There was wide-spread support for the idea, and they went to work. They identified three areas which they saw as Franciscan concerns: *Peace, Poverty* and *Care for Creation*.

While this effort was underway, the Justice and Peace co-ordinators of the O.F.M. family were having their association foundation meeting where Dionysius Mintof, O.F.M., of Malta, had a most interesting challenge for them: "Why don't you North American friars seek a Franciscan NGO status at the United Nations?" Eventually Capuchin and Conventual co-ordinators joined in the process and in the fall of 1986 a meeting was held at which representatives from all the interested families and associations formed a Preparatory Commission. The co-chair people were Bernadette Sullivan, S.F.P., and Thomas Grady, O.S.F.; other members were John Quigley, O.F.M., Elizabeth Enoch of the Poor Clares, Richard Zelick, Capuchin, and your correspondent, Phil Kelly, Conventual.

Since that time we have been meeting quarterly, first in Cincinnati, then in New York. The co-chairpeople share a common office address which has become the Prep committee's (135 Remsen St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201). Early on we retained the services of a group-processor (George Wilson, S.J.). We have revised and expanded the vision many times, we have produced a copy of Mustard Seed outlining the concept which has been translated into a number of languages and disseminated to the appropriate groups.

In the autumn of 1988 we applied for department of Public Information (D. P.I) NGO status and in February 1989 we were accepted. The next step is to apply for Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) status which will allow a much greater level of participaiton. The formulation of our presence is a much more complicated process. We see four areas of concentration:

POLICY: We have to set up our constitution and by-laws, which will determine how this organization will function, who will speak and act on behalf of whom. This is a most complicated question, and one which will be more properly the concern of the first Board of Directors, which will replace the Preparatory Commission when its mandate ends.

STAFF: Job descriptions and names of potential staff people will have to be developed.

MEMBERSHIP: Very early on the Prep Commission became aware of the complicated possibilities of membership. Organizing by continents and geographic entities is compatible with UN principles and practices, but a new idea for those of us accustomed to headquartering everything out of Rome, or whereever the headquarters of each family is located. At a very early meeting, for instance, Franciscans from the Third World were most anxious to discuss the three topics from their point of view, having, for the first time, they said, "an opportunity to do so with their First World sisters and brothers." The organization which will provide dialogue around these three areas will, in itself justify the effort. Whether we achieve UN status or not, we welcome the opportunity." Some other organizational concerns are: a. Second World Franciscans. Given the changes of the past few months behind the Iron Curtain, how will this effect this organization? b. What kind of feed-back mechanism does one set up to give voice to the over one million Secular Franciscans of the world?

FUNDING: Initially we appealed to every Franciscan province and family we knew, and we have been quite successful. A Development Committee has been formed and it has begun the task of preparing a development package. One sentence from the Mission Statement reads:

Through the United Nations we (the Franciscans) would like to share with all peoples of the world the challenge of Francis: to resolve conflict, reverence the environment and empower the poor.

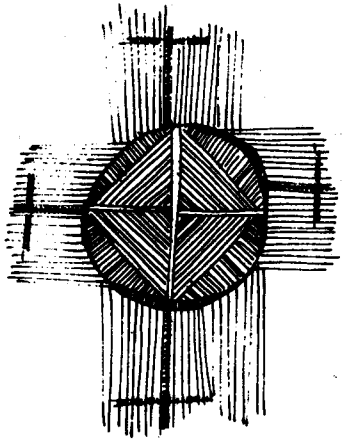
A five-year budget is being prepared, potential funding sources within the Franciscans are being developed and the search for foundation money is underway.

The most amazing single facet of the journey to this point has been, from my point of view, the universal acceptance of the concept. Over a hundred Franciscans have spent considerable time and effort with this initiative, and I have never heard a negative criticism. I have had no one refuse to become involved, even the virus of "Seraphic Confusion" has been unable to dampen the enthusiasm. I believe Cardinal Arns spoke for the whole million and a quarter of us: it is the idea to get us through this decade with a vision and a challenge large enough to take us into the twenty-first century.

We are presenting you with two insights into that challenge. On May 15, 1989, Robert Muller, the former Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations addressed the International Franciscan Conference in Assisi. His address was entitled THE NEW GENESIS, BUILDING UP OUR PLANET.

In October, 1989, Donal O'Mahoney, O.F.M. Cap., the worldwide coordinator of peace and justice activities for the Capuchins spoke to an international gathering of Franciscans in Rome. They had come together to learn some of the implications of U.N. membership and his talk is also a *tour de force*, a graphic setting-forth of the potential of this movement.

We will present a brief "What can I do" section at the conclusion of these articles. □



New Genesis, Building Up Our Planet

ROBERT MULLER

It is a great joy and honour to be again in the holy city of St. Francis and of St. Clare, and to be invited to participate in your important assembly. I would have much to say about the relations which exist already between the United Nations and the Franciscans, especially the part taken by the United Nations in 1982 in the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the birth of St. Francis; the encounters between the Secretary-General of the UN, the Mayor of Assisi and representatives of Franciscan orders engaged in international peace missions; my own unforgettable and so inspiring visits to Assisi; and the movement born here in favour of a universal prayer for peace, each year on the third Tuesday of September when the UN General Assembly opens, a day declared International Day of Peace.

The movement started in Assisi in 1982, spread to the Franciscan cities of San Francisco and Los Angeles, and yielded last year more than a billion minutes of silence for prayer or meditation for peace in the world!

But limited time obliges me to concentrate on the contributions which your Conference and the Franciscan Family can make to the work of the United Nations to which you have just been accredited as a non-governmental organization. This news was received with joy by the international community, particularly by the Secretary-General of the UN who has asked me to convey to you his deep satisfaction and great expectations.

A native of Alsace-Lorraine and a citizen of France, Robert Muller holds a doctorate of law and economics from the University of Strassbourg. He is the Chancellor of the United Nations University for Peace and was, for 40 years, an official of the United Nations from which he recently retired as Assistant Secretary-General. Co-recipient of the 1989 UNESCO Prize for Peace education, Dr. Muller in countless lectures and publications offers the world the blueprint of a new spiritual vision of human destiny. **THE CORD** *is privileged to print here the inspiring message presented to the International Franciscan Conference at Assisi in May, 1989.*

I will be at your disposal during the entire conference to study with you programs of action and of cooperation, to answer your questions, to develop ideas and to help fulfill together the dreams, hopes and prayers of St. Francis, St. Clare and the United Nations. There is no shortage of subjects. The problems have considerably increased since their time. The Union of International Associations in Brussels has published an Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potentials which lists 10,233 world political, economic and social problems! None on earth can complain that there is nothing to do on this planet!

The preoccupations, priorities, actions, thoughts and feelings of St. Francis, as well as his spirituality reinforced by the pure monasticism of St. Clare, make him an astonishingly modern saint who is of great relevance of our time. The problems with which he was concerned were peace, the giving up of arms, poverty, simple living, respect and love for nature and the environment, all being conceived within a spiritual order of divine essence, humans being children and instruments of God blessed with the privilege of life on a divine Earth, a marvellous Creation of God. Pope John Paul II has rightly proclaimed him saint of the Environment in 1980. He would similarly deserve to be the Saint of the Poor, the Saint of Peace, the Saint of Disarmament and the Saint of the United Nations. I will examine with you under three titles what we can do together to fulfill his vision:

1. The new genesis of humanity;
2. The new genesis of the Planet;
3. The new spiritual genesis.

It is as if God would say to us, the disciples of His beloved Francis: "Reconstruct my Family; reconstruct my Planet; reconstruct my Church."

The New Genesis of Humanity

How different is the humanity of today, compared to that of the time of St. Francis and St. Clare! We would have to say to them: "Instead of loving and caring for the few million humans of your time, we must today love and care for more than 5 billion men, women and children who will number 6.2 billion in the year 2000 and 8.5 billion in the year 2025!" Within the last 35 years we have admitted 2.5 billion more brothers and sisters to the human family. To obtain the well-being, peace, happiness, justice and fulfillment of life for this vast and growing human family would leave our saints speechless. But quickly they would rise to the challenge, as we must do ourselves. They would be no less astonished to learn that humanity was able to eradicate all the great epidemics of their time and to increase considerably the length of human life, up to 73 years in the rich countries and 60 years in the poor countries. In the latter, in 1950,

life expectancy was only 43 years and a newly born had three times more risks than today to die before the age of 5. But this success will mean the arrival of more that 400 million additional elderly people of more than 60 years of age by the year 2025!

They would be no less astounded to see the tremendous extension of our senses and capacities, due to scientific and technological progress: Our eyesight extended into the infinitely large and the infinitely small through telescopes, television, space probes, microscopes, atomic bubble chambers; our hearing become planet-wide thanks to telephone, radio and communication satellites; our hands and arms reinforced by machines and huge factories: our legs multiplied by astonishing means of transportation by land, sea, air and outer-space: our brain aggrandized by artificial memories and electronic computers. St. Francis would see in this the miracle of human destiny and the designs of God. But he would be sad to see that this immense progress was not accompanied by similar progress in the realms of the heart and of the soul which are no less necessary for the progress of humanity. Hence he would conclude that the latter should be priority objectives for Franciscan action.

He would notice much more progress: The discovery that Brother Sun does not turn around the Earth, but the contrary; the discovery that our planet is round; the discovery of the North and South American continents, a discovery marked by many Franciscan missions; humanism become a matter of daily political concern, political heroes being no longer war heroes, power holders and the rich, but peace heroes, humanists and public servants; the creation of the first world institutions as meeting grounds for thinking, concern and action for the whole of humanity and the entire planet. He would undoubtedly love the United Nations and its specialized agencies which deal with practically every human objective on a world-wide level: peace, food, health, education, employment, children, refugees, the defense of human rights, natural disasters, etc. He would consider the Untied Nations and its 32 specialized agencies and world programs as one of the major conquests of humanism, as a response to his fervent prayers and a manifestation of the will of God. But he would also see with sadness the other side of the picture, the worsening of the situations since his time and the immense tasks still to be accomplished. A few figures will illustrate these tasks: more than a hundred armed conflicts since the end of the second world war, costing more than 200 million dead; thousands of atomic weapons circling around this Earth, marauding in the seas and oceans, ready to jut out of the soils, and stationed perhaps tomorrow in the starworld; one trillion dollars of military expenditures each year, equivalent to the total expenditures on this planet for health and education; 500 million hungry and undernourished humans; 800 million illiterates; 300 million handicapped people; 150 million or-

phans and abandoned children; 100 million registered unemployed; 12 million refugees; 20 million drug addicts in the United States alone; 200,000 children used in conflicts; uneasing violations of human rights; the advances of medicine being fouled by new diseases due to the deteriorating environment (cancer, birth defects, and the first manifestations of a breakdown of the immunological system of the human body which is unable to adapt to the rapid and numerous changes in the environment), etc.

The divine optimist would exclaim: "But this is a whole road map laid out for work and action of the Franciscans as a non-governmental organization with the UN! You will help that noble organization to obtain the disarmament of this beautiful planet created by God; you will appoint a representation to the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, if you have not already done so, and help that organization in its fight against world hunger; you will appoint representatives to the World Health Organization in Geneva and help in its efforts for better individual and world health; you will assist UNICEF in its actions for the underprivileged children of this world; you will follow the work of the United Nations in favor of the handicapped, of the elderly and of refugees, and so on, and so forth. Mr. Muller will give you the list of institutions, organisms and world programs which require your help. Every year you will submit a report to these organizations on the pax et bonum work of the Franciscans in the world, on your own suggestions and proposals to the United Nations and to its specialized agencies. And you, the Sisters of St. Clare, in your direct mystical communciations with God, you will pray with all your soul for the success of these efforts. And I admonish all Franciscans on the planet to join in the world prayer for peace on the third Tuesday of September, the International Day of Peace, calling for the success and for God's blessings of the work of the delegates from all around the world about to embark upon the vast planetary agenda before them.

You will labor with all your strength, all your mind, all your heart and all your soul. Together with the United Nations you will construct the human family into a loving, cooperative, communal family, geared to making this planet of God a true masterpiece in the universe. You must now achieve in the realms of the heart and the soul the same exploits which I see already accomplished in the fields of knowledge, intelligence and material progress."

The New Genesis of the Planet

At this height of St. Francis' optimism, we would have to interject the following: "Alas, this is not all." The drama of our time is that humanism, the great page of human evolution, is far from having achieved its objectives, when already evolution overtakes us and confronts us with totally new challenges which one may group under the name "planetism"; the science; the survival; the safeguard, the care, the good use of our planetary home, of its resources, its climate, its airs, its seas, its waters, its souls, its forests, its delicate interdependence between inert matter and life forms, including our brothers the animals and sisters the plants which you have loved so much." Here are a few figures to illustrate the problem:

Every minute of this planet 21 hectares of tropical forests are destroyed; every minute humanity consumes 34,725 tons of petroleum; every minute 50 tons of top soil are eroded by air and waters; every minute 12,000 tons of carbon dioxide are flushed into the atmosphere;

Every hour 685 hectares of productive soil become desert; every hour 55 people are poisoned by pesticides and five of them die; every hour 60 cases of cancer are due to the deterioration of the ozonosphere; every 5 hours, a living species dies out on this planet, the rythm of disappearance being likely to attain every twenty minutes at the end of this century; everyday 25,000 persons die from lack of water or contaminated water; every day 250,000 tons of sulfuric acid fall on the northern hemisphere in the form of acid rain; every day ten tons of radioactive waste are produced by hundreds of nuclear plants; and so on and so forth.

At the General Assembly of the UN, environmental problems have overshadowed for the first time political, economic and humanitarian problems: climatic changes, depletion of the ozonosphere, greenhouse effect, deforestation, desertification, biological and immunological degradation. These were the dominant themes of that Assembly, to the point that the USSR called for the creation of an environmental Security Council. These problems will stand in the way of progress in humanism. We will enter a totally new period of relations between the human species and the planet. We discover all of a sudden that this planet was not created for us, but that we were created for the planet. It is mind-boggling to think of the implications of this copernican revolution. Our integral belonging to the Earth's process, to the cosmic evolution of this planet give rise to a new concept of life, according to which humans are the nervous endings, the consciousness, the sensitivity and the instruments of care, management and evolution of this planet towards a goal we have not even tried to define. We are entering a new, prodigious, fascinating period fraught with many major transformations and costly changes.

Listening to such a UN talk, St. Francis would exclaim: "But this is what I have always said, namely that the Earth, human beings, the sun, the wind, the waters, the animals, the plants are all brothers and sisters, true creatures of the eternal and all powerful God; that we must love and care for His sublime Creation; that we must love one another and treat

all life and nature with respect and love." Well, here again, my dear Franciscans, your way is all mapped out: you will help the United Nations with all your soul and all your prayers to save nature and the environment of this beautiful planet. You will appoint a representative to the UN Environment Program in Nairobi and in New York. You will help in the preparation of the second world environment conference which will be held in 1992, twenty years after the first one in Stockholm. You will obtain, study, teach and disseminate the principles adopted in Stockholm, in Nairobi and the remarkable charter of Nature adopted by the UN General Assembly. And you will seize the United Nations, all international and regional organizations, as well as government and the public at large with an approach which is dear and very fundamental to us and which is totally neglected or ignored by the present western society: frugality, simple living, austerity and humility, out of respect for nature and the creation of God following the example of Christ.

And he would further exclaim: "O God, what wonderful things we are going to do for Your glory!" The United Nations will offer us an infinity of opportunities. I am thinking for example of the University for Peace created by the United Nations in Costa Rica, a country totally disarmed and demilitarized by constitution since 1949. That University is known under the name "Poverella," but even without resources it will, like me, inspire the world with the grace of the Lord. I am overwhelmed that a St. Francis Chair is foreseen in that University, in order to inspire the young leaders of tomorrow who will study on its campus. And then there is the Year 2000, the second thousandth anniversary of the birth of Christ. How well and intensively we will prepare that celebration of life, of the Earth and of God's Creation! Franciscans, I expect from you a plan of action, of thought, of love and of spirituality for the advent of the third millenium which we shall make be the Millenium of Peace, of love, of the Planet of God.

St. Francis would go from astonishment to astonishment, from discovery to discovery, from exaltation to exaltation if he lived in our time and he would turn to St. Clare and say to her: "You must pray. All the sisters of St. Clare must pray and intercede with God for the success of our enterprises."

The New Spiritual Genesis

And we thus arrive very naturally to the core of St. Francis' vision, to his astonishing penetration to the original roots of all things, to his interpretation and living example on Earth of divine, cosmic, fundamental laws which should govern our behavior, namely: that we are children of God, that all the Earth, its living creatures and its nature are the creation of

God, that we are on this Earth to chant the glory and praises of God, to thank Him for our miraculous life and testify to the greatness of His Creation, that the Holy Spirit animates all these marvels and that the incarnated Christ gives us the example to follow until sister Death will welcome us again.

The drama of our time is that humanism, the great page of human evolution, is far from having achieved its objectives...

The current society has cut up foolishly and artificially the terrestrial and human reality into physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual worlds. Nothing of this sort with St. Francis: for him all is spirituality, all is divine Creation, all is communion with God. It is the message brought to the United Nations by Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, exhorting the UN to become the culmination of the road begun 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. It is what the Secretaries General, one after the other, have discovered: U Thant for whom there was no distinction between spirituality and the life of every moment; Dag Hammarskjöld who found God in the United Nations, became one of the great mystics of our time and who said shortly before his death: "I see no hope for permanent peace. We have tried and failed miserably. If the world does not undergo a spiritual Renaissance, our civilization is doomed."

This is the plane on which the Franciscans can make their greatest contribution to the mission of the United Nations, by proclaiming the centrality, the beauty and the immense riches of spirituality for the healing of the wounds of this world. There are many groups and people who help the poor, who promote and advocate peace and disarmament, who defend and help save the environment and nature, but rare are those who like the Franciscans have an integral spiritual vision of humanity, of all life, of nature, of our planet and of our place and role in the universe and in time. And very few are those who like the Franciscans open up in front of us the offer of untold spiritual riches, in contrast to material wealth which none will take along to paradise. St. Francis has offered us a vision towards which even scientists are moving in recent times. Here are two examples: the first pertains to the nature of human life. The advances of science have revealed or confirmed the miraculous nature of a human

being, made of trillions of cells and biological mechanisms of incredible complexity, working automatically and harmoniously on the basis of mind-boggling genetic plans, each human person being unique in all the universe and eternity. Respect for human life and for all life has been considerably enhanced by progress in the biological sciences which confirm the intuitive or mystical perceptions of all great thinkers, sages, poets and religions in the course of history regarding the divine nature of human life. St. Francis is thus joined by the scientists in his views and it is to be hoped that science will again be considered as a spiritual search, as an aggrandizement of human consciousness and of the miracle of life.

Recently I congratulated a young nuclear physicist for his decision to become a Franciscan, but he told me that most people were astonished by what they considered a rather abnormal decision. It behooves the Franciscans to teach humans, including political leaders and diplomats no longer to be ashamed or to consider abnormal to be labelled spiritual beings; quite the contrary. The second thesis relates to a new interpretation of the phenomena of nature and of life on this planet. Suddenly we are being told that our planet is a living cell in the universe, an entity of which we are an integral and responsible part. St. Francis would rejoice over that thesis and would add to it, by saying: "It is not all. You are not going far enough. This planet is a cell of the body of God, of the incarnated Christ, our lives are functions at the service of that body, each of us being an instrument of God, be it a mother, a father or a member of any profession agreeable to God. We must all respond to the mission and fulfill the cosmic or divine function which lies deep down in our self. And earthly and heavenly happiness will be our reward."

Such is the mission, the contribution Franciscans can make to the United Nations, to the Renaissance of the heart and of the soul for all our human brothers and sisters, for our beautiful planet and for the marvellous universe of God. Our time is too pathological: of course, we must see and heal our miseries and evils. St. Francis was devoted to it body and soul. But there is also the "ethos", the "theosis", the joy of Creation, the immense gratitude for having been admitted to the banquet and marvels of life, the elevation towards God and the heavens, our exalting consciousness of the universe, of the cosmos and eternity from this tiny planet, invisible at a distance of a few million kilometers in space, but on which there are beings of God capable of embracing all Creation and to derive from it a joy that penetrates deep down to the last fiber of our body, heart and soul.

As St. Francis at his moment of death, we should chant the universe and say with him: "Let us begin, for until now we have done little or

nothing." Yes, the real human destiny, the "apotheosis," our metamorphosis into spiritual beings, our real reason for being on this planet, chosen among all others in the universe for a unique cosmic experiment and success is only beginning. □

VISION STATEMENT
FOR FRANCISCANS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

We Franciscans,
men and women,
followers of St. Francis of Assisi,
believe
that all of creation,
from the smallest organism to human beings,
is in interdependent relationship on planet earth.

We are aware
that this relationship is threatened by
a refusal to admit this interdependence,
exploitation
and
domination.

We commit ourselves
to foster interdependent relationships
so that all creation may live
in harmony.

We will do this
by service
to our own members
and to United Nations personnel,
as well as others,
through education and stimulation
on the topics of:
Ecology — Environment
Peacemaking Methods — Conflict Management
Poverty — Concern for the Poor.

We will seek to collaborate
with United Nations personnel
and
other non-government organizations
in these efforts.

Our efforts
will reflect Franciscan values
regarding
care of the environment,
peacemaking,
and concern for the poor,
which, in turn, are values expressed
by the United Nations
in its Charter
and
in its Declaration on Human Rights.

Reflection on the Vision Statement For Franciscans at the United Nations

DONAL O'MAHONY, O.F.M. Cap

It was in the year 1208. Francis was in the Marian Chapel of the Portiuncula in Assisi listening to the priest reading the Scriptures: It was the discourse of Jesus to the 72 disciples. In this discourse, the Lord has said: When you go into a house, let your first words be "Peace to this House." The saint's face lit up when he heard these words, as if by the light of the sun. At that moment the concept of peace and his desire to spread it became all important. He was, of course, well prepared to receive this personal "revelation" from God. He had already renounced the use of all forms of violence. Throughout his life, Francis adapted this text from the Lord's Discourse to suit the situation. For instance, he sometimes said that God "revealed" a form of greeting to me that I should say: "God give you peace." But whether he used: "Peace to his house" or "God give you peace," or any variation of these, there was one central conviction in his mind: that God wished him to be a "messenger of peace."

As members of the Franciscan family, we, too, are called to be "messengers of peace" to the world. Like Francis, the whole Franciscan family must profoundly understand that the mission of peace has been entrusted to us by God and so is an essential part of the spiritual program of the

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Fr. Donal is stationed at the Capuchin Generalate in Rome where he serves as Peace and Justice Coordinator for all of the Capuchin friars throughout the world. Prior to entering the Capuchin Order in his native Ireland, Fr. Donal worked as a professional journalist. He has been active in peace and justice issues since his ordination in 1966. The December 1989 issue of MUSTARD SEED named him Franciscan of the Year. We are happy to publish the talk he delivered to an international gathering of Franciscans in Rome of 1989.

order or Congregation. The service of peace is so much a characteristic of the Franciscan family that all those who are called to join are thereby automatically dedicated to peace. And so, if we read the first biographer of St. Francis — Celano — he states that when Bernard, the first follower of Francis decided to follow him, it was not to become a Franciscan, but rather to take up the mission of peace and to joyfully follow the saint of God. (1 Cel 24).

To take up the Mission of Peace and follow joyfully the saint of God is your essential vocation and mine. Perhaps in our formation programs this fact is not often stated strongly enough. But there is no doubt about it that then one looks at primary sources of Franciscanism, this fact is highlighted. How many times does Celano state that Francis formed his first brothers, not by words alone but above all in deeds and in truth. And what kind of deeds did Francis want his followers to exercise? Celano says that they were "to strive for peace and gentleness with all people." Obviously, he put great stress on the subjective dispositions and this occurs in many other places in his writings also. But nowhere so strongly as in his Rule which he wrote in 1223 for all the friars. In Chapter 3 of the Rule, Francis writes as follows:

> "And this is my advice, my counsel and my earnest plea to my friars in our Lord Jesus Christ, that when they travel about in the world, they should not be quarrelsome, or take part in disputes with words or criticize others. But they should be gentle, peaceful, and unassuming, courteous and humble, speaking respectfully to everyone as is expected of them."

Note well, this long insertion was put into the Rule of Francis. Now the Rule has only 12 very short chapters and words were used sparingly. Nevertheless, the above text was given extraordinary importance, as can be seen by the prefixes... This is my advice, this is my counsel, this is my earnest plea that Franciscans should be "gentle, peaceful, and unassuming, courteous and humble, speaking respectfully to everyone..."

Without prolonging this point about subjective dispositions that Francis wished his followers to cultivate, it may be helpful for us to recall a small historical note about the period of time that Francis lived in. It may explain why Francis put such emphasis on how Franciscans should bear themselves in the world. There were many evangelical movements springing up in the 13th century. Most of them were rigid, some of them fanatic. The followers of these movements usually publicly and severely rebuked people, especially those in public office, demanding renewal as if by force. Francis did not want his followers to do the same. Rather he wished that they would greet all people with the words "may the Lord give you His Peace." This greeting often caused astonishment in people's ears, and

sometimes they would ask in an offensive tone of voice: "What is the meaning of this kind of greeting?" For they were unused to hearing this from evangelical groups.

Another point about Franciscan peacemakers, which is vital. Peace must first be in the heart. This is an absolute precondition for becoming a "messenger of peace." And so the importance of a spiritual foundation in our work for peace. Francis was not led by philosophy or even humanitarian concerns, but rather by the "most High Gospel!."Now central to the spirituality of the Gospel for Francis was: refusing the status condition of Lord Master, and opting for the role of servant. This alone enables him to have a right relationship with God, with people, and with nature. Peace is about right relationship. Right relationship between persons, groups, nations, and also it can extend to right relationships with nature. But the test case for right relationship for a Franciscan must be with his own religious brothers and sisters. The prophetic witness of fraternal living among the Franciscan family is as the very heart of our evangelization for peace. If we psychologically "break" from our Franciscan family when working for peace, we are telling "a lie" to the world. This is not always an easy test, especially when respected members of the community refuse to see peace as an important work.

There are many practical areas to be tested out in Franciscan peacemaking, e.g. the significance of reconciliation; the commitment to non-violence; solidarity with the poor; identification with Christ crucified; the art of Franciscan dialogue with the so-called "enemy"; protest and confrontation; the role of social analysis; our functions as mediators in conflict situations; conscientious objection and capital punishment; etc. All these points need to be thought through by Franciscans involved in peacemaking. But today is not the place nor the time. We only wish to confine ourselves to some reflections on the significance of peace for Francis and his followers, drawing where we can from primary sources and from a spirit which lies behind his actions.

So as we move toward some concluding remarks about peace, I would like to highlight one point which is rather remarkable about the approach to peace by Francis. Nowhere does he link peace with justice. This may create horror in the ears of many committed to social change today. In fact, some people today prefer to leave out the word peace — feeling that it has become a "conservative" concept. So we often hear linked the words "Truth and Justice;" or "Faith and Justice;" or at best "Justice and Peace." Was Francis unconcerned with justice? To postulate this would be quite untrue. However, Francis linked up the word "peace" with "love" and this word "love" for Francis was all embrasive and included justice and truth. Can one love while being unjust? Can one love while being untruthful? And so we read in his letter to "All the Faithful in the Whole World" that he personally implores for them that they would receive "true peace from heaven and sincere love."

I believe some further insight on this special Franciscan approach to peacemaking can be gleaned from a quotation of St. Paul to the Romans (14:17). He says that "the Kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking, but justice, peace and joy brought by the Holy Spirit." The important words are "brought by the Holy Spirit." Now Francis was a person totally imbued with the Spirit: "God inspired me and still inspires me.... Again: "No one told me what I ought to do but the most High made it clear to me...". In the Admonitions he says: "Because God is a Spirit, He can be seen only in Spirit. It is the Spirit that gives life; and so, it is really the Spirit of God who dwells in His faithful, who receive the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord."(Admonition 1). Even the Minister General of the Order, he once said is the Holy Spirit. The role of the Holy Spirit is to be the bond of love, not only between the Persons of the Trinity, but between heaven and earth, and between people and people, and people and nature. So for Francis, the important thing is to let the love of the Holy Spirit dictate all his relationships — be it with the robbers in the woods, the Moslems who spat on the face of the crucified Christ; the lepers in distress and begging, or the rich women who attended him, even on his death bed. It is the unlimited love he had in his heart for all — rich and poor; just and unjust — that had its origins in the Holy Spirit, which caused conversion to peace. It was this extraordinary unselfish love which moved the unjust to repentance and consequently peace. That is the reason I believe why Francis linked peace with love, rather than peace with justice. It also gives a unique approach to our Franciscan peacemaking, and which certainly has created in the minds of many from diverse backgrounds and religions, that the way of Francis is the way of peace.

But not only is the Franciscan way of peacemaking unique in this approach but I believe also that there is a Franciscan approach to the ecological problem. To make this more clear, we make a basic distinction between the problem of ecological degradation on the one hand, and the integrity of creation on the other. The problem of ecological degradation is a matter of fact. But affirming the integrity of creation is a matter of faith.

Observation and science are clearly demonstrating the fact of ecological degradation, and are indicating many practical ways to deal with it. The church however, and in a special way Franciscans, must affirm the integrity of creation after the manner of Francis, who clearly saw all creation as a closely knit family. Both human and sub-human creatures are all brothers and sisters. This is not a metaphor. The vision of Francis was that God's uncreated loving energy is responsible for deep-down interconnectedness

among all creatures. That whatever has been is filled with God's spirit; bonding, uniting and enriching us all. The whole universe is bound together in communion, each thing with the rest. Modern day physicists are now beginning to support this truth of faith.

But perhaps the most outstanding aspect of the harmony and relationship that Francis enjoyed with all earthly realities was his submissiveness to them. He scanned creation attentively, listening to its mysterious voices, prying into the mute language of things and growing all the while in vital spiritual enthusiasm (*Mirror Perf.*, 113). This was surely the highest level of liberation that creatures ever enjoyed at the hand of a Christian mystic. Unlike the Benedictine tradition, for example, which strove to domesticate nature and to bring it under control, Franciscans were expected to live lightly on the earth, a burden neither to the earth nor to those who met their subsistence needs. The natural world is not seen from a utilitarian perspective, as providing food, clothing and shelter for human beings, rather what emerges is a fellowship approach to creatures. There is no will to dominate, transform or domesticate nature lurking behind Francis' approach. Rather, as exemplified in the Canticle of the Creatures, Francis had a profound kinship with all creation. In terms of relationships, his way of life was the ultimate in global inclusiveness.

Finally, the third element of the vision statement — concern for the poor — has also a special Franciscan interpretation about it. The point of view of the poor is the privileged place from which all Franciscans view the world. Jesus showed Francis that being poor was a way of being human. Riches enslaved. He saw how human nature was dehumanized by affluence. He saw it in his own father. It is important to recall that Francis was not interested in poverty as such, but poverty inasmuch that he believed it to be fundamental to the Gospel message to follow the poor, humble and crucified Christ. His dedication to poverty is a direct result of his mystical identification with the poor Christ, naked on the Cross. The poor Christ — note, not the poverty of Christ. Poverty for Francis was lifegiving rather than life-denying. It enabled him to share totally with others, just like it did for Christ, who emptied himself, it also enabled him to better experience his absolute dependence on God's goodness, as it also did for Christ. So Franciscan poverty enables us to renounce in our lives bourgeois values, ambition, triumphalism, privileges. And without any tongue in cheek, we can speak to society and say (as we must to the first world, for example) that everything superfluous belongs to the poor, not only in charity but in justice. So our concern for the poor as members of the Franciscan family should express itself as a "spiritual solidarity" with the poor Christ, Head and Members. It should begin in every Franciscan life by the expression of "compassion." It is this compassion which will subsequently create within us a strong desire to be of

Francis linked up the word "peace" with "love" and this word "love" for Francis was all embrasive and included justice and truth.

service — be it offering some relief for the immediate poor around us or by giving food or clothes, etc. However over time (psychological time) questions will arise within us about the deeper reasons why the poor are poor; in other words, to the causes of poverty. We will come to see the "strength" of the poor and be ready to form a new relationship with them, not just one of service, but of human solidarity. Our ultimate maturing will finally manifest itself, as it did with Francis, when we grow into spiritual solidarity with the "poor Christ." This, I believe, is the right subjective disposition of the fully developed Franciscan. So concern for the poor will not become "a cause," but rather our way of following Christ after the manner of Gospel and Francis.

That concludes our personal evaluation of the three elements in our vision statement: Peace, Ecology, Concern for the Poor, which we now wish to bring to the world through the forum of the United Nations. It is an excellent forum to do so, because it is a global one, equipped to preserve and promote peace; our habitat on this world, and the imbalance between the poor and the rich. Through this forum we can have access to its 40,000 world servants, not to mention representatives of 150 nation-states and the development of policies. No philosopher, prophet or social reformer could ever have dreamed of such an organization even 100 years ago. It is the first universal, global instrument humanity has ever had. It is the place where new ethical and spiritual values for the nations and humanity are being formulated. It is a forum that is enhancing immensely through its charter on Human Rights, a planetary acceptance of the racial equality of all human beings. It is to this forum we are coming to offer something — a little contribution, perhaps, but a needed one, as a Franciscan family. □

HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE 'FRANCISCANS AT THE UNITED NATIONS' INITIATIVE?

1. Write a letter supporting the idea to your provincial, president, council, whoever is in a decision-making position in your organization. Send a copy to Mary Teresa Plante, Franciscans at the UN, 135 Remsen St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.

2. The UN is plannning a conference on the environment in 1992. Brazil has offered to host it. The Prep. Committee is urging every community of Franciscans throughout the world on every continent and island to plant at least one tree. You are asked to do this on the week-end of June 2/3, at the time of the environmental sabbath and to report the planting to Sister Mary Theresa. Where environmental conditions would prevent your planting your tree on that day, plant it when you can, and inform us.

3. If you are having any kind of Franciscan gathering, invite a speaker from the U.N., and/or someone from the Preparatory Committee. Learn more about the U.N.'s success and tell others about them. They have prevented conflicts, assisted the poor and worked for environmental protection through their agencies. The United Nations is concerned with a wide variety of topics and issues, and your involvement is truly appreciated. In addition, tours of the United Nations can be arranged for groups. For details of these and any other activities, just contact Mary Theresa at the above address.

4. Subscribe to MUSTARD SEED, 1615 Vine St., Cincinnati, OH 45210 (12.00 US per year). They carry regular up-dates on the project. The December issue has an excellent interview with Bernadette Sullivan of the Prep Commission, as well as an interview with Donal O'Mahony.

5. Get involved with UN organizations in your area and let Mary Theresa know.

How Brother Francis Preached in the Ruins of the Former Franciscan Church in East Berlin

HERMANN SCHALÜCK, O.F.M.

At the beginning of the year of our Lord 1990, as mankind had just begun a new decade and at the same time was beginning to prepare for the third millenium, and the peoples and the Christian Churches of Europe were asking themselves with special urgency how they could contribute in their old continent to the "new thinking," behold, it came about that all of a sudden a great concourse of people came streaming together to gather in the miserable ruins of the former friary of the lesser brothers in East Berlin. Word had in fact spread in wonderful fashion that in that place in which the friars from Brandenburg and Saxony had for many centuries lived in poverty to sing the praises of God, Brother Francis was to preach a sermon which would throw light upon the many dark and diffcult questions posed by the turn of events. And there were also together about 60 of his brothers who had in those very same days hurried from East and West, North and South, and even from the eternal and holy city of Rome, that they might together with God's help read and interpret the signs of the times, and in particular to investigate the saving consequences of the so-called "perestroika" in their own fraternity, and to ask themselves in all this, what the Lord of History wanted of them in this momentous hour.

When a vast throng of people had gathered, tourists and natives, Germanics and Slavs, Prussians and Bavarians, Europeans and inhabitants of

We are happy to include in this special issue of THE CORD *this offering from our regular contributor, Fr. Hermann Schalück of Rome.*

the two Americas, Christians and those of other faiths, Brother Francis lifted up his voice and spoke:

Blessed are those who have the lasting breath of hopefulness. They will experience what is written: the net is broken and we are free (Ps 124:2)."

"Blessed are all those who are able to think globally and act locally. In them the great Utopia of the Kingdom of God is brought about in small steps."

"Blessed are those who find words and gestures of encouragement, of comfort and of active non-violence for those in need and under persecution. In them Jesus will rise again in Bucharest, in Prague, Dresden, El Salvador, Vietnam, Peking, and elsewhere."

"Blessed are the fearless and the patient. They are like roses which bloom in the desert. They are like a harmonious shepherd's flute which summons thick walls everywhere to get up and dance."

"Blessed are you when you are able to hear the voice of the people and are at the same time able to understand its silence. You will be the advocates of the poor and sisters and brothers in the new family of mankind."

"Blessed are the vulnerable. You will play our part in establishing the civilization of an enduring peace.

"Blessed are those who stand for peace, justice and the care of creation through the witness of their own lives and that more in deeds than in words. They will be a likeness of the God who is a friend to mankind in the world of today."

"Blessed are you when you know to set up creative and liberating Utopias in place of the ideology and the legislation which is inimical to humanity and life. You will often be needed again and you will have much to do in times to come."

And then Brother Francis added in that shortness of speech which was his own some words to explain what all this has to do with the Kingdom of God:

"The Kingdom of God is like the tenderness and the strength of those men and women, wherever they are, who believe that God is stronger than Evil and that Evil will in history and in the individual be overcome by Good. The Kingdom of God is like the endurance of yon 'hammerers at the wall' who never give up their hope for openness and liberation, and who strive to look beyond where we are today."

"The Kingdom of God is like the warm shelter and sweet-smelling soup-kitchen in a remote corner of that Roman palace in which watch is kept over the purity of Catholic teaching. The Kingdom of God is like

the mild glance of Mother Teresa of Calcutta who begged to have this place, and like the vision and large-heartedness of the Lord Pope who granted it to her."

"The Kingdom of God is like the joy in faith and the political courage of the basic communities an all continents and also in this city. For in them the Word of God is spoken among the poor. In them liberation is achieved and celebrated in the Holy Eucharist."

"The Kingdom of God shows itself in the fasting and prayer of those countless sisters and brothers who bear witness in the Nevada Desert against the senseless overproduction of atomic weapons, against the man-made poverty throughout the world and for the life of the cosmos. They point out that the deserts of unrighteousness and destructiveness can become a garden full of good things. "The Kingdom of God is like the bravery and like the courage of all those brothers and sisters who have, like those in Romania, remained steadfast through decades of affliction and now see a great light."

As a young brother then interjected a question, asking which 'perspectives' he could indicate for 'Evangelization in the Year 2000,' Brother Francis answered with a penetrating look upon all those who appeal to his name, in these words:

"If you want to build a ship, do not begin by calling men together to gather wood, to prepare the tools, to distribute this and that task, to divide up the work. Rather set about arousing in them a longing for that wide, endless sea, with which may be compared God's Word of liberation for all men."

Thereafter Brother Francis disappeared again as quickly as he had come, and all returned to those places from which they had hurried here, some to the South and the North, others to East and West, and others again to Rome. □

Sister Earth, our mother...

Variations

I am going toward the atavistic springs to listen to the boulder rise
marvel
the night of my origins
I am going toward the barbarian marriage of blood and light
my body trembled from the ultimate reality
body rooted in earth, torn from sky

I suppress a word

the sea sprays foam, the hills leap at dawn,
they raise the ample amphora, springtime overlaps —
high is the sky, the sea lulling it is nearby

here comes the time that centers you toward the sources of night —
I encountered the source of living faith
here your silence is broken in the silence of the source
without end
here are green flames which will be the sign of your absence
here is the time when I am no longer in the world

imaginary being ephemeral signs appearing in veinstone
the city flickers its uproar the dream escapes the
sidewalk tramples

I shall invent your name scalding stream
"oh my garden of cool water and shadow"

dense sky over vermilion Avila — my Castilian grains —
Toledo, Isabelan stones — Greco — summertime
fragrances, Remember: the dark water on the russet earth —
Alcazar — the Borgese Palace — Daphne's charm

my bosom is stone

*
* *

clouds float over the hills light quivers
its green wings an explosion of swallows in front of
the moon — the bird's chirp on the red tile

in the texture of a rose petal you give me Avila with its
vermilion rock
four columns of azure and other daylight, the grains and sky or
Castile

the fountain exults the unknown spring; on the ancient paving stones
I resounded an appeal
silence of the long Avila streets — convent of San José,
of the Incarnation, immobile in ancient prayer since
the love song

Avila is waiting. Thus I recognized my own in the flow
of blue sunshine, in the breeze from the fountain, in the laughter
behind the closed door

lane of cherry trees blue glaze of olive trees stone
on the path blackberry brambles, wild roses mauve sunlight
you are watching me the stone is gushing water
you are watching me ancient waters a
fluid sun rises up
slowly I rise toward the Orient
the oak shudders light — the sea obscures faraway places —
I live on your silence

*
* *

a star infused its sorrow in me its light enshrined
in darkness and desire, engages me
the olive tree escapes to the lake beds

to rid itself of the cry. To lose the memory of dawn, and keep vigil
in the desert of its heart

*Lisa Biscaine**

**aka Sister Marie-Elizabeth, O.S.C., Director of Novices, Monastery of Saint Claire, Nice-Cimiez, France. Published in French in* Chemins *(Paris; Editions Saint-Germain Des-Pres, 1986). Translated by Sister Mary Therese McCarthy, R.S.M., Georgian Court College, Lakewood, N.J.*

Blanche and Willie

God surely loved
Blanche Dubois and Willie Loman,
American fictional misfits,
character sketches in his journal,
possibilities for a play
he might write
one day.

But the Muse failed him,
the task too painful,
and the great God who
creates creators
willed
Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller
into being
and gave them his journal.

And Blanche and Willie were born.

Better they had not,
for Tennessee and Arthur,
themselves gifted with the Muse,
lacked Jesus in their ink
and Willie and Blanche
were doomed from age one.

Anthony Chiarelli

THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE ST. BONAVENTURE, NY 14778

COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER 1990

June 25 — July 27, 1990

Please Note: This is a five (5) week session.

8:25- 9:25	FS 500	**Method and Bibliography** 2 cr. hrs., Paul Spaeth, M.L.S.: Friedsam, Upper Seminar Room.
	FS 520	**Writings of St. Francis and St. Clare** 2 cr. hrs., Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., S.T.D.: Room A-120
9:35-11:05	FS 502	**Sources for the Life of St. Francis** 3 cr. hrs., Michael Blastic, O.F.M. Conv., Ph.D. Cand.: Room A-118.
	FS 506	**Survey of Franciscan History** 3 cr. hrs., Jason Miskuly, O.F.M., Th. D.,: Room A-120
11:15-12:15	FS 550	**History of Franciscan Spirituality** 2 cr. hrs., Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M., M.A.: Room A-118
	FS 536	**History of Spirituality of the Franciscan Penitential Movement** 2 cr. hrs., Raphael Pazzell, T.O.R., S.T.D.: Room A-120
1:10- 2:10	FS 522	**Theological Foundations of Franciscanism** 2 cr. hrs., Joseph Doino, O.F.M., Th.D.: Room A-118.
	FS 598	**Franciscan Mystics: Angela and Jacopone** 2 cr. hrs., Paul Lachance, O.F.M., Ph.D.: Room A-120
2:20- 3:20	FS 563	**Principles of Spiritual Direction** 2 cr. hrs., Edward Coughlin, O.F.M., Ph.D.: Room A-118
10:00-11:30	FS 503	**Francis: His Life and Charism** 3 cr. hrs., Dominic Monti, O.F.M., Ph.D., and others: Room A-106.
1:00- 2:10	FS 505	**The Franciscan Movement** 2 cr. hrs., Dominic Monti, O.F.M., Ph.D., and others: Room A-108.
	FS 600	**Franciscan Italy: Study-Travel Seminar** 2 cr. hrs., See description in the brochure.

By Arrangement

FS 511	**Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts** 2 cr. hrs., Malcolm V. T. Wallace, Ph.D.
FS 599	**Independent Research** 1-2 cr. hrs., Staff.
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A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

ARTICLES

A THEOLOGY OF CREATION BASED ON THE LIFE OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI 101
Timothy Vining, T.O.R.

THE DIVERSITY OF THE THIRD ORDER REGULAR — IN ISOLATION ITS WEAKNESS, IN UNITY ITS STRENGTH 121
Seraphin Conley, T.O.R.

FEATURES

EDITORIAL:
MAKING A MISSION STATEMENT 97
ST. BONAVENTURE ON THE LAST SUPPER 112
Harry Aveling, T.S.S.F.

POETRY:
PIETA: A DIPTYCH 99
Sr. M. Clarice Sheehan, O.S.F.
ISAIAH 60 100
William Hart McNichols, S.J., S.F.O.
MATINS 111
Br. Joseph Molleur, S.S.J.E.

BOOK REVIEWS 125

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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).

Making a Mission Statement

It would be rare today to find a religious group or institution without a mission statement. Mission statements abound; and those I have seen capture in prophetic tones the finest Christian values imaginable. They are a tribute to those who have dedicated time, energies and talents demanded by such an important project.

We might be led to think that mission statements are confined to the religious world. Nothing could be farther from the truth. For example, not too long ago, while working as a member of an *ad hoc* committee reviewing our St. Bonaventure University mission statement, we were presented with one from perhaps the best known worldwide financial services organization. One could not help but be surprised by the similarity of their language with ours — "realizing our mission," "our vision of the future," "commitment," "dynamic change," "shared values." I must admit, however, that my imagination was somewhat challenged by the second sentence of the statement which asserted that the company's "objective is to be the acknowledged leader in the value we offer our clients,...." I found it difficult to imagine what values a company engaged in worldwide finances might offer its clients!

Statements of mission have a purpose: they are intended to heighten the consciousness, the minds and hearts, of people so that their bonded lives and activities may move with commitment and enthusiasm toward achieving a common goal. The language employed is high-powered and stimulating; for obvious reasons it is value-oriented. People are reminded of and reinstated in what is considered to be a tradition of unusual import, whether that tradition is that of a religious order or an international finance corporation.

Francis had a profound sense of mission and he communicated it in burning words to his brothers. We find one stirring expression of it in his "Letter to the Entire Order:" ".... for He has sent you into the entire world for this reason that in word and deed you may give witness to His

voice and bring everyone to know that there is no one who is all-powerful except Him" (EpOrd 8). Francis is keenly aware of being sent and there is obviously no limit to the vertical and horizontal dimensions of his mission consciousness. He boldly situates the brothers in immediacy before God and the entire world and there is no doubt as to the nature and content of their mission. The horizons are boundless and the imagination is awakened to incredible gospel opportunities. Francis' perception of his mission, and that of his brothers, is, as Joseph Ratzinger has written, truly universal and eschatological.

The unusual intensity with which Francis perceives and expresses the brothers' mission has a very special explanation. Francis' original inspiration was rooted, as we know, in the missionary address of the Lord which, in typical fashion, he understood to be directed to his own heart and hidden desires. This sense of being sent directly and immediately by the Lord was a burning flame in his consciousness. He lived and moved and had his being in its mystery. It drove him constantly to that solitude that would permit him to deepen his love for the God who called as it also launched him toward global evangelization. In this regard, Jacque de Vitry saw him as a man "carried away by an overwhelming enthusiasm and ardor of spirit" as he made his way to the camp of the sultan of Egypt.

Following Jesus taught Francis that more than language is required for a mission statement. One must "do the truth" as well; otherwise one betrays the very gospel one is sent to preach. That is why for a person like Francis a mission statement is incomplete without "witness," and "word and example." The compelling conviction of being sent drives one beyond words to deeds; in fact, without deeds the words lose their force, no matter how expressive they themselves may be.

Whenever Franciscans gather to review or rewrite their mission statement there is, I believe, a sense of incompleteness or failure. As we attempt to express our most cherished values in our finest words and may even succeed in this, we come up feeling the need for something more or maybe even something less. And so various answers suggest themselves to us. Perhaps we have been too idealistic, too impossible in our dreams; we have let Francis put medieval demands upon us who are now almost second millenium people. Or we might feel that we still haven't learned the always valid gospel lesson that he learned: "plus exemple quam verbo," more by example than by word. Or does the answer lie in a different direction? It may be that we haven't really spent enough time with the "You are sent" of Francis. Do we awaken each day to this awareness? Do we allow it to give unusual depth to the quality of our lives, our ministry, our prayer? Have we truly allowed the grace of our calling to awaken within us what was awakened in Francis when the sending words of Jesus to the disciples were explained to him? Maybe we must first of all overcome our fears and realize that somewhere in our hearts there are waiting to be respoken, over and over again, the words of Francis: "This is what I wish, this is what I seek, this is what I long to do with all my heart." Wouldn't it be a great blessing were we to let ourselves be engaged prayerfully by the simple notion that with Francis we share the same immediacy before Jesus as those who were the first to be sent by Him? Maybe then we would discover untapped spiritual energies not merely to write, but to make a mission statement!

Joseph Dorno OFM

Pieta: A Diptych

Yesteryears' . . .
Michaelangelo's masterpiece
Sculptured in cold marble.
Her dead Son's Head to Knees
Arm-cradled by
His Mater Dolorosa.
Her eyes; dulled with loss
Looking, looking for her Boy
Unblemished . . . Lamb of God
Born in a stable.
First to come . . . Shepherds,
Heard glad tidings,
Younger, shouldering a lamb
Umblemished.

Today...
A young mother
Eyes aglow
With love
And tenderness for
Her first-born son
Cerebral-palsied:
Blemish . . . blest.
His silken curly head
Tight against her breast
Knees upon her knees.
With maternal volition
Her heart
His captive.

Sister M. Clarice Sheehan, OSF

Sister M. Clarice Sheehan's last assignment was as Librarian-Teacher, Archbishop Walsh High School, Olean, NY. This Franciscan Sister of Allegany is presently retired to her Congregation's St. Elizabeth Motherhouse, Allegany, NY. Sister wrote these lines of paralleled thoughts after a visit that afternoon of the young mother and her son.

Isaiah 60

Something is happening.
It's like the flash and
glare of light
in Jacob Boehme's
pewter dish.
It's like the sudden
petal shower from
Normandy's precious Rose.
It's like the awesome
awakening of the Child
in the arms of the
Skeleton at Greccio.
It's like Damien
transfigured and returned
to the Emerald Forest.
It's the reproach of
seven years lifted.
It's the end of the
blood soaked sheets.
It's the rider espoused
and the pale horse fed.
It's the Light in the
darkness.
It's the nations streaming
to the outcasts.
It's the empty tomb.

William Hart McNichols, S.J., S.F.O.

A Theology of Creation Based on the Life of Francis of Assisi

TIMOTHY VINING, T.O.R.

In response to the ecological crisis facing their country, the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines recently issued a pastoral letter on ecology. In the letter, they wrote:

> We will not be successful in our efforts to develop a new attitude towards the natural world unless we are sustained and nourished by a new vision. This vision must blossom forth from our understanding of the world as God intends it to be.[1]

Such a vision called for by the Philippine Bishops can be found in the life and thought of Francis of Assisi, a poet and nature mystic of the medieval period. The Franciscan vision of harmony among God, Humanity, and Nature takes on an added significance in light of today's growing ecological awareness. One need only think of the recent oil spill off the coast of Alaska and the nuclear sword which presently hangs over our world as a threat to the destruction of our planet in order to appreciate the groaning of all of creation for the peace and harmony of God's Kingdom (Romans 8:19-22). This essay is an attempt to develop a theology of Creation based on the life and thought of Francis of Assisi, drawing out some of the ethical implications of such a view.

Creation as Sacrament

The Dutch theologian Edward Schillebeeckx described a sacrament as a mutual encounter between God and humanity. For Schillebeeckx, any

---

Brother Timothy is a member of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis. He is presently a graduate student in theology at Regis College in Toronto.

understanding of sacraments must include this dynamic interplay between the offer of God's gift of self-communication and humanity's response to that gift through praise and worship.[2] This encounter is possible when the sacrament "makes present in earthly garb" the saving mysteries of God. Can one extend this notion of a sacramental encounter with God to include not only humanity but all of creation? This is what I believe is at the heart of the experience and life of the medieval nature mystic Francis of Assisi: a vision of all of creation as the locus of contact with the Divine. In the Franciscan sources, Francis is presented as one who discovered God in creation and then joined all of creation in praise and worship of the Creator.

Creation as God's Self-Communication

Fundamental to understanding Francis' creation theology is the notion that the Incarnation somehow involved the sanctification of nature. For Francis, all of nature spoke of God by pointing beyond itself to the Creator:

> Finally, he called all creatures brother, and in a most extraordinary manner, a manner never experienced by others, he discerned the hidden things of nature with his sensitive heart, as one who had already escaped into the freedom of the glory of the sons of God. (1 Cel 81)

As a nature mystic,[3] Francis' experiences began with phenomena of the natural world which came to their fruition in a vision of God:

> In every work of the artist he praised the Artist; whatever he found in the things made he referred to the maker. He rejoiced in all the works of the hands of the Lord and saw behind things pleasant to behold their life-gving reason and cause. In beautiful things he saw Beauty itself; all things were to him good. "He who made us is the best," they cried out to him. Through his footprints impressed upon things he followed the Beloved everywhere; he made for himself from all things a ladder by which to come even to his throne. (2 Cel 165)
>
> Francis sought occasion to love God in everything. He delighted in all the works of God's hands and from the vision of joy on earth his mind soared aloft to the life-giving source and cause of all. (LM 9:1).

This experience of God in creation can be considered a sacramental encounter if one compares the traditional definition as "an outward sign of an inner grace" with Sorrell's definition of a nature mystic: "an intense identification with something spiritual seen in concrete reality."[4] Thus, Francis' vision of sublime creation catalyzed a mystical experience with the divine. This closely parallels Teilhard de Chardin's intellectual vision of creation as sacramental.[5]

Francis has been accused by some of being a pantheist, due to his concept of the brother/sisterhood of all creation. Yet, these critics fail to make the important distinction between pantheism and sacramentalism: "But suspicion that he was inclined to pantheism such as have been voiced from time to time rest on the error of not distinguishing it from sacramentalism. The saint was a devoted sacramentalist."[6]

> He therefore had a special and profound love for God's creatures and especially for those which he thought of as representing some truth about God or religion. (SP 113)

For him, nature spoke of God by serving as a means of God's self-communication. All created things pointed beyond themselves to their Creator. Even two twigs crossed together reminded him of the Cross. (1 Cel 45)

Creation's Praise to God

Not only did Francis come in touch with God's self-communication in creation, but he also joined creation in singing praise and worship to God as a response to God's gift of self-communication. Perhaps one of the most beautiful expressions of Francis joining with all of creation to give praise to God is found in his popular Sermon to the Birds:

> My brothers, birds, you should praise your Creator very much and always love him; he gave you feathers to clothe you, wings so that you can fly, and whatever else was necessary for you. God made you noble among his creatures and he gave you a home in the purity of the air; though you neither sow nor reap, he nevertheless protects and governs you without any solicitude on your part. (1 Cel 58)

Francis' manner of addressing the birds as brothers (as sisters in the *Fioretti, no. 16*) is an expression of the saint's profound compassion for all Creation. The birds are not looked upon as merely providing for human use. The earth with its resources and beauties are for their use and pleasure as well as ours; they are regarded as kin to us, members of God's family. As this cosmic brother/sisterhood acknowledges a mutual dependency, they are together to join in singing the praises of their Creator God.

This motif of humankind and the birds praising God together reached its highest refinement in a story that belongs to a time subsequent to Celano's biographies. As recounted by Armstrong:

> While Saint Francis and Brother Leo were enjoying a meal together in the open air, they were delighted by the singing of a nightingale close by. Francis suggested: "Let us sing the praise of God antiphonally with this bird." Leo excused himself as he was no singer, but the saint lifted up his voice and phrase by phrase sang alternately with the nightingale.[7]

In this story we have the essence of Franciscan creation spirituality, a glimpse of the earthly paradise, humanity and nature together singing the glory of the Creator. For Francis this is not merely a background philosophy but a whole way of approaching the world. Gone now is the old notion of domination, of conquest, of stepping on creation in order to ascend to God. The hierarchical and paternalistic vision is replaced with a cosmic vision of creation as a brother/sisterhood, and all is seen as a way to God and a revelation of God. The ultimate praise of the Creator goes up when humanity cooperates with rather than exploits creation. The divine vocation for Francis is primarily to "care for creation" (Gen. 2:15) rather than to "subdue creation" (Gen. 1;26).

Harmony Among God, Humanity, and Creation

It is important to note in examining the above quotes from the lives of Francis that the early hagiographers were impressed with Francis' experiences because they believed that he had lived out in a most concrete and literal way the same ideals they had discovered in their own intellectual training. For example, one can clearly see the hand of Bonaventure in the following excerpt taken from his Major Life of Francis:

> He followed his Beloved everywhere by his likeness imprinted on creation; of all creation he made a ladder by which he might mount up and embrace Him who is all-desirable. (LM 9:1)

Here, Bonaventure appears to be attempting to integrate Francis' experience of creation into the prevailing mindset of the day. Such a mindset was influenced by the Augustinian fear that the observer of nature be absorbed in the natural world and fall prey to the temptation to forsake the Creator for creation.[8] Thus, Bonaventure presents one with an anthropocentric view of creation in which all creatures form a ladder ascending to God. Humans are considered to be at the top of the ladder and the meaning of nature becomes swallowed up by human meanings. In Bonaventure's spirituality, as humans ascend to perfect spiritual communion with God above, the animals, plants, and minerals are left behind at the lower rungs of the ladder. As he writes toward the end of his *Soul's Journey*:

> For transcending yourself and all things, by the immeasurable and absolute ecstasy of a pure mind, leaving behind all things, and freed from all things, you will ascend to the superessential ray of the divine darkness.[9]

Thus, in Bonaventure's great work on spirituality, the movement up the ladder is so emphasized that virtually no direct attention is given to nature at all. Although the whole world is portrayed as being charged with the

glory of God, it is interesting that Bonaventure never once mentions one particular creature by name much less refer to a fellow creature as "brother" or "sister." His understanding of the spiritual life is most fundamentally understood by the metaphor of ascent. For Bonaventure, each creature is like a stepping stone by which the human mind ascends to the eternal God. For Francis, each creature is a brother or sister who joins with us in praising the Creator.

One can also find such ambivalent views toward nature in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. A similar hierarchical vision is presented. Although the cosmos is believed to be charged with divine glory, the final home for the individual is arrived at by an ultimate escape from creation. "The goal of Dante's cosmic pilgrimage is thus perfect, transparent spirituality, total release from the biophysical order. This is the aluring vision he leaves with us."[10]

Francis of Asssi, however, offers us an alternate view of creation. Rather than being the top rung of the ladder of creation, Francis sees humanity as a part of creation. Francis replaces a sprituality of hierarchical ascent with one of a descending solidarity between humanity and creation. Instead of using creatures to ascend to God, Francis loved all creatures as brothers and sisters. As Francis left us with no *Summa* or *Divine Comedy*, we must look to his life in order to piece together his innovative theology of creation. Theology and spirituality are not to be separated. For Francis, both must be a way of life!

Francis expressed his solidarity with even the lowliest of creatures since the Incarnation sanctified *all* of life. Francis' compassion for lowly despised creatures is realized in the incident with the lowly worm, which caused his biographer to ask, "Who could ever express the height of affection by which he was carried away as concerning all the things that are God's":

> Toward little worms even he glowed with a very great love, for he had read this saying about the Savior: *I am a worm, not a man*. Therefore he picked them up from the road and placed them in safe place, lest they be crushed by the feet of the passerby. (1 Cel 80)

This is not at all unrelated to his embrace of the leper which he attributed as the beginning experience of his conversion process:

> This is how God inspired me, Brother Francis, to embark upon a life of penance. When I was in sin, the sight of lepers nauseated me beyond measure; but then God himself led me into their company, and I had pity on them. When I had once become acquainted with them, what had previously nauseated me became a source of spiritual and physical consolation for me. After that I did not wait long before leaving the world. (Test. 1-3)

Thus, through an embrace of the lowliest and often most despised creatures

(both human and non-human creatures), Francis had a deeply moving experience of God.[11] Francis treated all of creation, the human and non-human with the same reverence and courtesy. Thus, in the birds, worms, and trees we not only discover something of the nature of God but we also discover something about our humanity. Nature is a book revealing much about both God and humanity!

Nature provided Francis with a fundamental experience which left an indelible mark on his life and thought. Francis discovered that the universe forms a unified and marvelous arrangement reflective of the beauty of God which is not hierarchically erected but is determined by fraternity. His vision of universal brother/sisterhood was an expression of a reconciliation among God, Humanity, and Nature. The common factor of creaturehood was more important to Francis than any categorical distinctions among human, animal, and inanimate things. Repeatedly, the sources report how Francis called all things his "brothers" and "sisters," urging them to praise and obey God, speaking to them as though they were human beings with a consciousness of their own. Near the end of his life, as a doctor was preparing to treat his eyes with a red-hot iron, Francis pleaded with brother fire:

> "Brother Fire, the Lord created you as something noble and useful among all creatures. Be courteous to me in this hour, for I have always loved you and will continue to do so for the love of the Lord who created you. I pray our common Creator to temper your heat that I may be able to endure it." After saying this prayer, he made the sign of the cross over the fire. (LP 48)

"The same is true in reverse: the Sun brightened Francis' eyes, fire behaved courteously to him, birds listened to him, crickets kept him company, the lark announced the Hours of the Office, the lamb reminded him of the time of Mass, flowers consoled him, and all creatures called to him, 'God our Creator is the Absolute Good.' "[12]

The *Canticle of Brother Sun* is without doubt the most clear expression of Francis' vision of the reconciliation of all created realities. In a lyrical spirit, Francis presents the sun, moon and stars, fire and earth, death and life, all as reconciled kin, forming one single family before the face of God. All of creation is to share in the *koinonia* of God's Reign. The *Canticle* represents the final expression, the final synthesis of Francis' thought in the area of relationships among Humanity, Nature, and the Creator. In the *Canticle*, Francis assumed there was a complex, multifaceted relationship implying much interdependence among Nature, Humanity, and God. While creation and humankind each had a certain autonomous character, creation at times served people. Likewise, humankind depended on the aid of creation. Both depended on and served God. In other places, Francis envisioned people subordinating themselves to

creation in obedience, and creatures depending on human consideration and respect for their well-being. Commenting on the *Canticle*, Fox writes: "Francis takes seriously the idea of the family of all creation, the interconnectivity of all creatures. All are bound together and connected by the divine light."[13]

Ethical Implications of Creation Theology

Many could be accused of sentimentality in their attempts to popularize Francis in order to respond to ecological crises. Although Francis certainly considered himself a brother to all of creation, he did not always remain passive to everything he experienced in creation. Once, when swallows were disrupting his sermon, Francis cried out:

> My sisters, swallows, it is now time for me to speak, for you have already spoken enough. Listen to the word of the Lord and be silent and quiet until the word of the Lord is finished. (1 Cel 59)

Francis realized that men and women are made in the image of God possessing a dignity that is uniquely theirs. In the life of Francis one discovers a return to an ecologically balanced system as found in the mythological garden of Eden. Although humans have a certain responsibility as stewards of God's creation, they are called to cooperate with rather than "lord it over" creation:

> As long as man acts as a creature, as a steward of God, harmony exists in creation, but once he claims the prerogatives reserved for God (as the story of the Fall shows), he is out of harmony with the rhythm of the created

order. The consequences of this are already shown in Genesis; man's relation to creation changes and becomes one of conflict rather than cooperation.[14]

It is interesting to note that Celano concludes the above reference of Francis' silencing the sparrows with "it is indeed wonderful how even irrational creatures recognized his affection for them and felt his tender love for them." (1 Cel 59)

Karl Barth recognized the special place given to humanity by God in the following manner:

> God did not become a stone or star or even an angel. He became a man. Man, therefore, enjoys a unique status within creation. He is the "apple of God's eye."[15]

According to Barth, God's decision to become incarnate in a human person shows forth the unique role which humanity is to play in the salvation/redemption of the entire world.

Returning to Francis, we find a man who balances his belief in the special dignity of the human person as the steward of God's creation with a high regard for the reverence due to all creatures. Consequently, humanity has a religious duty to care for and cooperate with nature. God did not only become a human; God also assumed matter, common to all of creation. The respect given to all things is not given primarily for their utility but because they have all been created and redeemed/recreated by God. Humanity as God's steward on earth is to pay due reverence and respect for all creatures in a most caring and courteous way. The Franciscan vision of the relations among God, Humanity, and Nature is always one of cooperation rather than exploitation or domination.

As the Patron Saint of Ecology (declared so in 1979 by John Paul II) Francis of Assisi offers us a challenging vision, one so desperately needed in our world today. As the Church continues in its struggle to proclaim and build the kind of God on this earth, the exhortation of the Philippine Bishops as an impetus to the fuller actualization of the Franciscan vision:

> More and more we must recognize that the commitment to work for justice and to preserve the integrity of creation are two inseparable dimensions of our Christian vocation to work for the coming of the kingdom of God in our times ... The destruction of any part of creation, the extinction of species defaces the image of Christ which is etched in creation.[16]

Creation and Eschatology

An aspect of the saint's life and thought often missing from most biographies is Francis' eschatological consciousness, a consciousness which was commonly shared among people living at the time of Francis. The

prophet Isaiah had foretold an era of harmony among all of creation in a future kingdom under the rule of Immanuel:

> *Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; The calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them. The cow and the bear shall be neighbors, together their young shall rest; the lion shall eat hay like the ox. (Is. 11:6-7)*

The construction of the Christmas tableau at Greccio by Francis (1 Cel 84-87) has many parallels with Isaiah's eschatological vision of peace. Could the creation of the manger scene which included the ox and the ass be considered an act of eschatological piety? Rather than viewed as a return to the mythological garden of Eden before the Fall, is it proper for this act of Francis to be considered as an enactment of the "peaceable kingdom" to come at the end of time? Was Celano suggesting that the new heavens and the new earth promised by God were already being tangibly and partially realized in the life of Francis? I do not think it accidental that Celano thought of Francis in terms of the eschatological vision of Paul in Romans 8:19-22 in which the whole of creation was groaning in anticipation of the revelation of the children of God:

> ... he discerned the hidden things of nature with his sensitive heart, as one who had already escaped *into the freedom of the glory of the sons of God.* (1 Cel 81)

In light of a realized eschatology, Francis' preaching to the birds and flowers is more than simply pious, sentimental rhetoric. Rather, it can be theologically seen as an expression of his position of living in this world, in terms of the next, when all things are to be renewed/recreated:

> *Lo, I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; The things of the past shall not be remembered or come to mind. Instead, there shall always be rejoicing and happiness in what I create. (Is. 65:17-18a)*

Thus, the harmony which Francis experienced among God, Nature, and Humanity need not be theologically explained as a return to the mythological garden of Eden before the Fall. The theological explanation which is perhaps more accurate is one of a partial actualization of the eschatological vision in which God will be "all in all." Such a theology of creation is primarily concerned with the final consummation rather than the origins of the world.

In light of this eschatological horizon, one can understand how Francis was able to relate to his own death and suffering with such an inner peace. The circumstances in which Francis related to "sister death" are recounted beautifully in the *Mirror of Perfection:*

> The doctor said to him, "Brother, God willing, all will be well with you."

> Again blessed Francis said to him, "Tell me the truth. What is your real opinion? Don't be afraid to tell me, for by God's grace I am not such a coward as to fear death. By the grace and help of the Holy Spirit I am so united to my Lord that I am equally content to die or to live." Then the doctor told him frankly, "Father, according to our medical knowledge your disease is incurable"... then blessed Francis, lying on his bed, most reverently and devoutly stretched out his hands to God, and with great joy of mind and body, said, "Welcome, Sister Death." (SP 122)

Francis seems very familiar with the world into which he was about to enter upon his death for he had lived it by anticipation; he had shared in its anticipatory meal.[17]

Francis' ultimate destiny, like his life on earth, cannot be conceived of as being apart from that of the whole of creation. Celano recounts how on his death bed, Francis invited all creatures to join him in singing praise to the Creator:

> He also invited all creatures to praise God, and by means of the words he had composed earlier, he exhorted them to love God. He exhorted death itself, terrible and hateful to all, to give praise, and going joyfully to meet it, he invited it to make its lodging with him. "Welcome," he said, "my sister death.." (2 Cel 217)

Francis died as he had lived — in solidarity with all God's creatures, partaking of the ecstasies of the promised land.

> **O good Jesus, he is now praising you as admirable in heaven with all the angels, he who on earth preached you as lovable to every creature. (1 Cel 81)**

Endnotes

[1]Philippine Catholic Bishops, "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land (A Pastoral Letter on Ecology)," *East Asian Pastoral Review* 26 (1989), p. 98.

[2]Edward Schilebeeckx, "The Sacraments: An Encounter With God," in *Christianity Divided: Protestant and Catholic Theological Issues*, ed. by D. Callahan et. al. (New York, 1961) p. 245.

[3]Francis as a "nature mystic" is considered by Sorrell to be the most innovative aspect of the Saint's life. See Roger D. Sorrell, *Saint Francis of Assisi and Nature* (New York: Oxford Press, 1988), pp. 89-92.

[4]Sorrell, p. 90.

[5]cf. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960).

[6]Edward A. Armstrong, *St. Francis: Nature Mystic* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 11.

[7]Armstrong, p. 68.

[8]Augustine, *The Confessions* (New York: Image, 1960), Book 10:34, pp. 262-264.

[9]Ewert Cousins, *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey Into God, the Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis*, trans. idem (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 115.

[10]H. Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), p. 105.

[11]This led Santmire to describe the spirituality of Francis primarily as one of descent rather than ascent. *The Travail of Nature*, pp. 109-113.

[12]*Build With Living Stones: A Program of Study on the Franciscan Missionary Charism* (Pittsburgh: Franciscan Federation, 1987) p. 12/7.

[13]Matthew Fox, *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), p. 113.

[14]*Brian J. Lowden, "Francis: Model for Christian Ecology,"* **The Cord** 32 (Sept. 1982), p. 245.

[15]cited in Lowden, p. 246.

[16]Philippine Catholic Bishops, p. 99.

[17]It is interesting to note that in *The Second Life of St. Francis*, Celano mentions that Francis broke bread with the friars on his death bed. (2 Cel 217)

Matins

The silent misty steam
rising gently off Kanuga Lake,
a redbreast chirping cheerily
from its home high in a pine,
the fiery orange ring
steadily scaling the Blue Ridge,
all cry in a loud voice to me:
Lazarus, come forth!
And I shedding my grave clothes arise.

Br. Joseph Molleur, S.S.J.E.

St. Bonaventure on the Last Supper

HARRY AVELING, T.S.S.F.

This sermon on the Last Supper was preached by St. Bonaventure on Maundy Thursday, April 14, 1267. The original text is to be found in the Opera Omnia, vol. IX, pp. 255-9. A few extra numbers have been added to the translation to indicate the divisions and subdivisions more clearly; otherwise, the English is intended to follow the original fairly closely.

As is appropriate for a sermon given prior to Easter, particular stress is placed on preparing oneself for worthily receiving communion. The sermon affirms both the real presence of Christ in the sacrament, and the delight of sharing in a banquet with the King of Kings. Bonaventure is less interested in the transformation of the eucharistic elements than he is in the transformation of the person who comes to take communion: the purpose of the Supper is "the assimilation and transformation of the eater into the thing eaten" (III).

Sermon V

Come to me all of you who labour and are weary and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, because I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls, etc. Matthew, eleven (29-30).

(Protheme) *He who hears, may he say: 'Come!'*. The final word, which is in the Book of Revelation (22:7), is addressed to all who hear the truth, that they should also invite others to come and listen; because no one is worthy to come to the *gathering* of eternal worthiness unless he desires

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The author is a member of the Third Order of the Episcopalian Society of Saint Francis. While serving as a college chaplain in his native Australia, he has continued to share his Franciscan research with readers of **The CORD.**

to bring his fellows; and the more one desires to have a greater number of companions, and the more one weeps for that gathering, the worthier he is to come. Significantly, he therefore says: *He who hears, may he say: 'Come!'* We are summoned, therefore, and we who hear must invite others to come, and we who are invited must diligently attend. Both those who hear and those who are invited are liable to blame if they do not diligently fulfil that invitation; because there is no one who can be excused from accepting this invitation. So, at the beginning, let us pray to the Lord that we may not be foolish boors or considered unworthy of being invited to the feast, which is for the salvation of our souls, and he speaks to all, etc.

Come to me, etc.

This word is in Matthew and it is spoken by the Lord of Salvation. In it the Saviour invites those who are wearied by the work of penance to the feast of eternal joy. He invites us in a threefold way: first, he invites us *to the feast;* second, *to the cross;* third, *to rest*. He invites us to the feast, with these words: *Come to me all of you who labour and are weary and I will refresh you*. He invites us to the cross, thus: *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart*. He invites us to rest, thus: *and you shall find rest for your souls*. The first invitation applies to today, the second to tomorrow, the third to the Sabbath.

I

1. First, I say, it remains to see how God invites us to the *feast;* thus *Come* etc. He invites all who labour to rest. Just as those who can work, know how to work, and are required to work hard, but do not do so, do not deserve to eat; so, those who run away from spiritual labour do not deserve spiritual refreshment. Because, in this regard, until spiritual refreshment happens, it is necessary that labour, i.e. *spiritual labour, be done first*.

The labour which is spiritual labour consists of four things. Firstly, *deploring of sins;* and we have an example of this labour in David, who says: *I laboured in my sighing, every night I will wash my bed, I will soak my pillow with my tears* (Pr 6:6). — We must labour in the love of God and in the extermination of evil; and therefore David wept often and abundantly; he said: *every night;* as for the frequency of this work and its abundance; *my tears,* etc., as for the vigour of his weeping. David, a noble king and a hearty man desired to mourn for his sins, and this despite the fact that he only committed one sin. What must we older men therefore do? There are certain old men who are feeble in lamenting their sins, those of whom Jeremiah nine (v. 5) says: *They have taught their tongues to lie, that they might act and labour wickedly*.

2. Secondly, spiritual labour consists of *overthrowing* enemies; the Apostle's second letter to Timothy, chapter two: *So strive to be a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one who is God's soldier involves himself with secular affairs;* further: note: *that no one will be crowned who shall not persevere. — Work therefore to be a good sodier,* keep firm watch over yourself, because *the life of man on earth is a life of military* discipline (Job 7:1). We have very strong enemies: it is proper therefore, that we be good soldiers. The way of this military service is, that a man should withdraw himself from all those things which distract him from good works; and this touches on that particular topic: *No one who is God's soldier involves himself with secular affairs.* It is proper, likewise, that one persevere in his labour. He who starts to work but does not persevere in working, unlike them Pslams: *They do not do the work of men and they shall not be whipped with them* (73:5), because they are with the demons in hell.

3. Third, spiritual labour consists in the *perfecting of virtue;* the Apostle's first epistle to the Corinthians, fifteen: *By the grace of God, I am what I am (v. 10). Further: I have worked abundantly at all things* (F 84:7). It does not say that he goes *from strength to strength, but because he has worked abundantly,* it is certain that each person will receive a reward for each task. He who does a lot will receive a large reward. In like manner, God weighed work and reward in his scales, and whoever shuns work shall have no consolation; whence Proverbs: *When a man is reluctant to till the ground in winter becuse it is cold, he will beg in summer, and nothing will be given to him* (20:4).

4. Fourth, spiritual work requires *bearing tribulations* patiently; Psalms: *I went into deep water and the storm overwhelmed me. I am weary of calling out, from crying out my throat is hoarse* (69: 2-3). — Christ cried out for the cup to be taken away; and there are those who in trouble likewise call out to God. God gladly hears them. Whence Jonah called out to God, and *the Lord God prepared a bush of ivy, to be a shelter over his head* (4:4); Psalms: *Lord, Lord, you are my strong protector, shelter my head in the day of battle* (140:7).

II

God says of these four ways of working: *Come to me,* etc. So it is said in the Gospel: *It is you who have stayed with me in my temptation. And I give you, just as my father gave me a kingdom, that you shall eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.* (Lk 22: 28-30). But how does God feed those who are weary? Christ himself has eternal food in the church militant,

to which he invites us, and that is his most sacred body. And whoever labours in these predicted four means will be fed, firstly with *magnificently prepared* food; secondly, will be *shown love;* thirdly, will be *pleasantly fed;* fourthly will be *spiritually supported.*

1. Firstly, I say, the Lord will feed those who spiritually labour with food which has been magnificently prepared, in accordance with the magnificence of *royal splendour* and *pontifical authority.*

1a. First, I say, he eats magnificently prepared food *according to the magnificence of royal splendour,* whence in Ecclesiastes: *Blessed is the land whose king is noble, and whose princes feast at the time proper for eating* (10:17). — **The land,** of the holy mother the church, is *the land whose king is noble,* because he is *the king of kings and the lord of lords* (Rev 19:16), who prepared for the princes of his people, that is — the Apostles, food, not in a wantonly luxurious way, but in a spiritual way. The magnificent preparation was characteristic of a banquet; which is what is signified in Esther, where it is said that King Ahasuerus *commanded that a most magnificent feast should be prepared for all the princes of the people* (1:3). — King Ahasuerus that is — Christ, *ordered* that *a most magnificent feast should be prepared,* because his body is presented to the *princes* of the people to feast on, namely — the Apostles. This was not a physical but a spiritual feast; and was *most magnificent, because nothing is more magnificent than the body of Christ and the soul of Christ.*

1b. Secondly, this magnificent feast was prepared according to the dignity of pontifical authority; which is what is signified in Judith, where it says *Uzziah took* Achior *into the house and* made a great feast for him. and he called all the elders *together,* that is — the Apostles, *they* ate, satisfying their *hunger.* — *Uzziah,* the supreme pontiff which is to be understood as 'the strength of the Lord', signifies Christ; whence the Apostle: *We have a great high priest, who has entered into heaven* (Heb 4:14). *He took* Achior *into his house,* the light of my brothers; and *you call all the elders together,* that is — the Apostles, and *they* ate, satisfying their *hunger,* namely — in the Lord's Supper. This is the feast Christ prepared when he confected his body; *the elders being together,* when he ordered them, saying: *Do this, wherever you do it, in memory of me.* (Lk 22, 19).

This feast is royal and priestly, and is signified by the feast of Melchizedek, of whom it is said: *the king of Salem, offering bread and wine, blessed Abraham* (Gen 14:18-19). — *The king of Salem* means 'the king of peace,' or 'the king of justice,' and signifies Christ, who makes peace and will judge the world; *having neither a beginning to his days nor an*

end to his life, who, taking bread, blessed it, (Heb 7:3), when he confected his body. The *king of kings* invites us to the feast. We are careless if we refuse to come, because angels willingly participate in it. But those who have souls most vile are disgusted by this feast just as *the children of Israel were disgusted by very simple food,* because it came from heaven, and they desired *cu*cumbers and all the other things which they are in Egypt (Nb 11:5), for they were carnal.

2. Second, this feast was a *display of love* in two ways, because of its *humility* and because of its *generous sharing*. The Lord himself came and received his own in this feast and distributed generously.

2a, First, I say, this feast is a display of love because of its nature as loving humility; whence Isaiah: *this is my rest, refresh the weary* (28:12). And not only did Christ receive his own at the feast, but he even offered comfort and support, which is signified through Abraham, *who invited the Angels* and *ran out to meet them* (Gen 128:2), saying: *Let me bring some water* and *wash your feet and rest under a tree, and may I offer you a morsel of bread* (18:4). In the same way he promised *a morsel of bread* and *killed the fatted calf* (18:5, 7). This is better fulfilled by the Lord: when he wants to make a feast for his friends he brought a basin of water and washed the feet of his disciples. Behold, how the divine Majesty is bent down, how he prostrated himself before the disciples' feet, and how, in this feast, one of his disciples *reclined against Jesus breast* (Jn 21:20). And at that time Jesus was able to say: *I will bring a little bread and comfort your heart* (Gen 18:5). This is *bread,* non-physical, which is food for the physical body, but spiritual as well, which is food for the soul, of which Augustine wrote: "Believe and eat" (*In Ioan. Evang.* tr. 25, n. 12). This is his marvellous humility.

2b. Second. The feast was a display of love in so far as it is a *generous sharing*. Psalms: *The* Lord rules me and I lack nothing; he has placed me in a well-pastured place. Beside fresh water he has led me. (23:1) — The Church of God is a *well—pastured place,* that is — it is well endowed with joy and food. This well-pastured place is Mount Sion; whence Isaiah: *the Lord Almighty will make a feast on this mountain* (25:6), that is — in the grandeur of the hierarchy of the church; *a feast of fattened beef and clear wine*. The fire by which the feast is prepared is the Holy Spirit, or the power of the divine Word; the priest is the Minister. This is *a feast of fattened calf and clear wine;* Psalms: *And my cup is filled with clear wine!*

Thus was that generous sharing. Never had such a thing been imagined before. — Thus was that meal made manifest with grace, as a consequence of simple humility and generous sharing; and this is signified in the Gospel, in the story of the prodigal son, who, when he came back to the father,

the father gave him *a scarf of honour and a ring for his hand* (Lk 15:22). The prodigal son is the sinner, who comes back to the father, when he repents, and the father prepares *the fattened calf* for *him,* that is — the body of Christ, *and a choir and an orchestra,* (Lk 15:25), that is — spiritual sweetness and consolation. *the elder brother,* the Jewish people, were moved by envy, he does not want to eat, that is — does not want to believe in the sacrament of the altar, but the gentile peoples were admitted to it, when they are enlightened by faith.

3. But one could say: I do not know what this feast tastes like. For that reason Christ says: *let me refresh you,* that is *feed with pleasant food,* through *the bond of social harmony,* and through *an influx of spiritual joy*.

3a. *Therefore the Apostle says: Go, brother, let me enjoy you in the Lord, refresh my heart in the Lord* (Phil 1:20). This he says to demonstrate the love which Christ had; his heart was shown love by another's kindness. The love of Christ is shown in this, that whatever one eats, we eat that morsel with Christ; and in this is the bond of unity. The Apostle in the first letter to the Corinthians: *I would not want you to be ignorant, brethren, that when all our fathers ate, they ate the same spiritual food, and that they all drank the same spiritual food* (1 Cor 10:1-4), that was only by faith, but we do it by faith and by the Sacrament. Whence it is said: *You have nourished your people with the food of angels* (Wisd 16:20). Lord, that is — eternal life. Of which it is said in John: *This is eternal life, that they might know you, the only true God, and he whom you have sent is Jesus Christ* (17:3), and in the Book of Wisdom: *You furnished them with bread from heaven, bread prepared without any labour, and having within itself all delight and sweetness of every taste* (16:20).

3b. But this bread seemed bitter to sick souls, although it changed itself to whatever taste they wanted, as it is said in the book of Wisdom. It brings all into one, but no matter how great the love and unity, great still is satisfaction; Christ loves the soul above all else. Therefore all the delights of this world are nothing with respect to this delight, when the soul enters into Christ.

3 c. Likewise, this banquet is a sweet food in as far as it is *an influx of spiritual joy;* whence in Deuteronomy: *Your hearts are to be gladdened and refreshed in the Lord your God* (12:18), namely, in the viewing of divine beauty and in the tasting of divine sweetness. This is the sweetly intoxicating cup. Be *gladdened* now by faith, and in the future by the sight, when *we shall be drunk with the richness of his house,* etc. (Ps 36:8). With the Psalmist we must greatly desire this repast, he who says: *Just as the deer longs for springs of water* (42:1). — But they who prefer

foul flesh to the flesh of the *spotless lamb* are carnal, and being such dogs, they are excluded from this feast.

3 d. Fourth. This feast must be *undertaken spiritually*. This is to be understood in this way: whatever a man undertakes spiritually first requires that he should prepare himself by *previous devotion;* secondly, it is necessary that he should receive it with *concommitant* devotion.

(i) First, I say, it is right that a man should prepare himself by *previous devotion;* which is signified in Mark, where his disciples asked: *Where do you wish that we should prepare for you to eat the passover?* (14:12) Then: *He sent them into the city, saying, 'A man carrying a jug of water will meet you, who has a large dining room; say to him: 'The Master says: "Where is my repast?"* ' (vv. 13-14). — It says: *He sent them into the city,* that is — the Church, through feelings of love for the afflicted one and in gratitude to God. He says: *a large dining room,* which means — *with extended charity*. The soul of Christ transcends al the heavens, and he who has charity loves everyone and transcends the world. It is necessary, therefore, that a man prepares himself to come to this feast, and that in so far as God enters in.

(ii) Second, it is necessary that it should be undertaken spiritually, through *concommitant devotion;* which is what is meant in Exodus, where the Holy Spirit teaches the children of Israel how they must eat the paschal lamb, saying: *You must eat the flesh of the lamb with unleavened bread and wild lettuce. You must not eat it raw or boiled in water; you will eat head and the feet and the innards; armed with a staff, and having sandals on your feet. And eat it quickly; it is the pasch (that is, the passing over) of the Lord* (12:8-11).

III

The Holy Spirit shows here in what way a man is worthy to receive the body of Christ. It is necessary that he should have a burning and transforming devotion, so that there might occur the assimilation and transformation of the eater into the thing eaten; wherefore it is necessary that a man should have the fire of *pure love* and the strength of *perfected virtue*.

1. First, I say, on this topic, that for a man to be worthy to receive the body of Christ it is necessary that he have the fire of *pure love,* which is *the love arising from a pure heart;* but because the fire of pure love must be joined to mercy, which makes his conscience pure and clean, it is therefore said: *So let us feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth* (1 Cor 5:8). — Likewise, it is necessary that there be present

the love which arises from a good conscience, and no carnality or crudity; and so it says: *You shall not eat of this raw or boiled in water,* that is, let it not have an uncooked or fleshy heart. — Likewise, it is necessary that there be present the love which is not fashioned from faith, as it is said: this is love, which universally and most completely claims what a man must believe; *the head,* that is — in the Divinity; *and the feet,* that is — in the humanity, and *the innards,* that is — in the Sacrament; *you must eat,* which is what a man does when he freely asserts faith without any possible doubt; *you must burn the rest,* that is — if there is anything else remaining which you cannot resolve, you must burn it with fire, that is — set it aside for the counsel of the Holy Spirit. Christ was conceived in the womb of the Virgin without corrupting her virginity and born without physical damage to her; this is what the Holy Spirit teaches and it is what one can truly learn from this Sacrament.

2. Secondly, in this regard, how a man is worthy to receive the body of Christ: it is right that he should have the strength of *perfect virtue* to conform himself to this Sacrament. I have heard about a certain layman, who had great faith in the sacrament of the altar. He was feeble and could not keep his food down. And when the priest did not dare give him the body of Christ, he prayed that he might at least look at it. And when he saw it, he said: 'Lord, how gladly I would receive you!'. And when the priest moved away from him, he had him summoned and said: "Because I cannot receive my Saviour, grant, sir, that my chest may be bathed, and a towel placed on my chest, and may you put my saviour on my chest.' When this was done and everyone was watching, the body of Christ penetrated his chest, and then he died greatly consoled. Of Master Hugh of St. Victor, who was a man of great faith, it is said that when he was sick and at the point of death, a priest, who had celebrated Mass that same day, came to him. And Master Hugh asked the priest to breathe into his mouth. And after that, he died greatly consoled.

We must conform ourselves to this sacrament: firstly by *holiness of modesty,* and so it says: *having staves in your hands*. Secondly, by *promptness of obedience;* and so it says: *sandals on your feet,* so that we may be able to walk without any obstacle. Whence the Apostle: *Ha*ving shoes on your feet (Eph 6:15). Thirdly, indeed, we must be conformed by *strength of patience,* thus it is said: *staves in your hands*. Fourth, we ought to conform through the *solitude of attentive wakefulness,* by which is to be noted the virtue of temperance; therefore it says: *Eat slowly,* do not hesitate.

From what has been preached it may be gathered that seven virtues are required to eat this sacrament: three are theological: faith, hope and love, which is *the love of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and a*

genuine faith. Four cardinal virtues are required as well, these have been touched upon: and when we will have had these virtues, the Lord will say: *Eat, friend, and drink, and be inebriated* (Song of Solomon 5:1). And if you should be without these virtues, he will say to you: *Friend, to what have you come? Do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?* (Mt 25:50, Lk 22:48). In like manner, we find in the Apostle's writings: *He who eats unworthily, eats the judgment on himself* (I Cor 11:29). Let us pray to the Lord, etc.

The Diversity of the Third Order Regular — in Isolation Its Weakness, in Unity Its Strength

SERAPHIN CONLEY, T.O.R.,

One of the great strengths of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis down through the centuries has been its amazing diversity. In every age and in varied lands and cultures, new congregations embracing the Third Rule of St. Francis have been founded to meet the needs of people of the Church of that time and place. This vitality flowing from the "fruitful ideal" of St. Francis is still evident. Today there are more than 430 Institutes of contemplative or apostolic life following The Rule of the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order Regular. The witness of some 200,000 Franciscan men and women is surely a tremendous sign of Christ's love for His Church. It reflects something of what Pope Paul VI wrote in his Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of Religious Life:

> "And so it happened by divine plan that a wonderful variety of religious communities grew up. This variety contributed mightily toward making the Church experienced in every good deed (cf. 2 Tim. 3:17) and ready for the ministry of service in building up Christ's body. (cf. Eph. 3:17)"

The vocation of the priest, of the cloistered nun, of those brothers and

Fr. Seraphin Conley, T.O.R., a member of the Immaculate Conception Province (Washington, DC) is presently serving as a General Definitor of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis of Penance and Superior of the Convento dei Ss.Cosma e Damiano in Rome. In the past, Fr. Seraphin has been Director of the Pre-Novitiate Program and Commissary Provincial in Paraguay. Before being elected to the General Curia this past July, he was Director of the Inter-Provincial Novitiate Program, St. Bernardine's Monastery, Newry, Pennsylvania.

sisters engaged in the works of mercy... each is represented in the Family of the Third Order Regular. It is very clear that one of the strengths of this religious family lies in its diversity. Paradoxically, this very diversity has also been a weakness at times. How many once numerous tertiary congregations, after centuries of dedicated service, have vanished... unknown, or at least unremembered by their brothers and sisters of the TOR Family! This was brought home to me recently as I read an article by a Sister from India on the history of her Franciscan congregation. She mentioned the presence of OFM and Capuchin missionaries but evidently had no knowledge of the presence of TOR friars of the Portuguese Congregation during the colonial period. Indeed, one of whom, a Frei Paolo de Estrella, was ordained Bishop of Meliapor on December 5, 1630. The convent of this congregation of friars in Lisbon was noted for its studies of oriental languages, one of which was Malabar (the language of the rite of this Indian Congregation of Sisters!) Since the missionary area assigned to the TOR friars by the Crown was Angola and Cape Verde, their contribution to the church in India was a modest one. However, it seems forgotten even by Franciscans from India! Likewise, in Germany, the Low Countries, Ireland, France, Spain and Portugal, various national congregations or confederations of TOR friars and sisters have disappeared and their contributions forgotten. Perhaps, a principal factor in their disappearance lay in being "national" or "local" groups without the support and refuge provided by an international Order while they waited out the time of trouble. The upheaval of the Reformation, the attempt by the English to purge the Catholic faith and national culture in Ireland, the fury of the French Revolution (which gave the Church a TOR martyr Bl. Severin Girault)... all this may seem to belong to the distant past. However, the TOR Congregations of Spanish and Portuguese friars only disappeared in the civil suppressions of the 19th century. More recently and a sad loss to the whole TOR Family has been the transfer of some monasteries of TOR nuns from the profession of the TOR Rule to that of the Clares. We are not lamenting a loss of numbers or prestige but the loss this represents to the whole TOR Family of more than 400 years of tradition and witness to the aspect of contemplative prayer so beautifully expressed in the third chapter of the Rule. Surely, a sense of isolation, some lack of knowledge of penitential spirituality, being outside the currents of renewal among the brothers and sisters of the Third Order regular which culminated in the approval of our new Rule... all probably had some part in such decisions, understandable if still regrettable. These are some reasons leading to the conclusion that diversity in isolation has been a weakness of the Franciscan Third Order Regular.

Fortunately, the picture of our history is not all shadows! To replace what had been lost, God raised up modern *"penitents of St. Francis"*,

those men and women who began anew. So, in France, Ireland and Spain congregations of friars were founded. These gave rise eventually to Provinces which would renew the ancient Third Order Regular of St. Francis "of Penance." This part of the title shows that this order finds its roots and origins in St. Francis and his followers in the penitential movement of his time (Brothers of the Order of Penance). Also, some monasteries of Tertiary or "Grey" Sisters which had accepted the reforms and Rule of Leo X with the corresponding obligation of cloister, in new circumstances were transformed into modern Franciscan congregations again dedicated to teaching or nursing. The Tertiary Franciscan Sisters of Blessed Angeline is one example. In the years following Vatican Council II, many ancient monasteries of TOR nuns in Spain, Italy and Mexico formed federations to strengthen and increase their charism of contemplative prayer. They have been blessed with an increase in vocations and the founding of new monasteries.

Along with these signs of vitality there has also been an increasing impetus towards unity while respecting our diversity. One of the earliest efforts in this regard was the promotion of Inter-Obediential Congresses composed of the Major Superiors of Tertiary Congregations of Franciscan men. The inspiration for these meetings came from a letter of Pope Pius XII to the Minister General, Fr. John Boccella, T.O.R., on the occasion of the 5th Centenary of the Third Order Regular. Following that first Congress, the delegates were received in a special audience by the Holy Father who was pleased that his suggestion had been followed up. In all there were 4 Inter-Obediential Congresses along with less formal meetings which served to foster a deeper fraternal knowledge and apostolic collaboration among the congregations of friars. A friar very dedicated to this vision was Bro. Joseph Shieffer, CFP, of the Franciscan Brothers of the Poor (Aachen, Germany) who served as the Secretary of the Inter Obediential Congress/Office for several years. The most lasting and widespread influence of these Congresses was in preparing the way for that historic meeting in Madrid, Spain in 1974. From that 4th Inter-Obediential congress of the friars and representatives of several Conferences of Franciscan Sisters came the document officially titled: *A Statement of Understanding of Franciscan Penitential Life*, which came to be known eventually as *The Madrid Document*. As Bro. Paul McMullen, T.O.R., explains in his study on the development of the new Rule:

> "This document gave a distinct and unique direction to the understanding of Tertiary life today. It offered a clearer notion of penance in the biblical concept of metanoia, or ongoing conversion. Although we now have a new rule, this statement remains a valid spiritual document and expression of our Franciscan Penitential life."

Gradually, the studies and work projects towards a new rule which were being done independently in different countries or among various language groups in response to that renewal of religious life called for by Vatican II came to be known and shared. Over the subsequent 10 years there were a series of national and international meetings to coordinate these efforts. Commissions and coordinating structures were set up to guide the process of arriving at a clearer understanding of all the aspects of the charism of the entire Third Order Regular Family to be expressed in a new Rule. From a diversity of languages, nationalities, cultures and expressions of the Charism of the Franciscan Order of Penance came mutual respect and understanding leading to a real sense of unity among the many Congregations of the Franciscan Third Order Regular.

This article began by noting that one of the strengths of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis has been its amazing diversity which, in isolation often proved a weakness. Something new and wonderful has taken place in our time. The beauty and richness of our diversity remains but to it has been added a unity of spirit and heart, a unity of hopes and efforts crowned by the Church's approval of our new rule which has given new strength and vigor to the whole Order. May these efforts towards unity begun with such promise be continued and multiplied by all the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis throughout the world.

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Book Reviews

A Poor Man's Legacy: An Anthology of Franciscan Poverty. Edited by Cyprian J. Lynch, O.F.M. Franciscan Pathways. The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, NY. 1988. 759 pp. $37.50 plus Postage.

Reviewed by Dr. Gordon De La Vars, S.F.O., Assistant Professor of English, St. Bonaventure University.

Simply stated, what this remarkable collection presents is over eight hundred years of a Franciscan ideal. The ideal of poverty, which became the governing purpose and character of St. Francis' life and the movement he founded, is richly illuminated here through ample representative selections from biographies, histories, personal writings, and other documents (149 in all, many translated from the original into readable, idiomatic English). Written by or about those for whom Franciscan poverty was and is an intimate permeating force, this volume crystallizes what Fr. Cyprian in his introduction calls the "wisdom born of [an] accumulated spiritual experience' (xxi).

While this is true enough, perhaps the most remarkable (surely the most encouraging) evidence that this collection provides is of the extent of that "poor man's legacy," of the fact that Franciscan poverty has inspired people living in the last quarter of our century as powerfully as it did those living a generation or less after St. Francis himself. Ironically, it may be that those of us living and working in today's world, in what Fr. Cyprian describes as "a milieu of affluence dominated by consumerism and the cult of instant satisfaction," must, as a result, more urgently discover "ways to give authentic witness to the legacy of voluntary poverty which is [our] inheritance" (xx). So this inheritance is affirmed in the twentieth century by such writers as Pope John XXIII who, in his last will and testament, thanks God "for this grace of poverty" and proclaims proudly that "[b]orn poor, but of honorable and humble people, I am particularly happy to die poor" (590 - 91). And another modern writer, Mother Mary Francis, abbess of a Poor Clare monastery in New Mexico, speaks poetically of the poor in spirit as being "free and full of song, because they have already the Kingdom for their earthly dwelling place" (703).

These are but two stirring contemporary testimonies: this anthology is filled with such gems as wisdom and insight, works both by the famous and the little known, by clergy, canonically religious, and laity, works that reverberate powerfully through the centuries. The collection naturally begins with St. Francis who, in *The Admonitions*, dramatically paraphrases the beatitudes, exhorting his listeners to "despise the things of earth, [and] seek the things of heaven" (8); and who also sternly warns his followers, in the *Legend of the Three Companions*, to treat money "as the dust under your feet" (9). There is St. Bonaventure who wonders gravely "[w]hat Christian is so wretched" that he or she, after considering the "privations" of the Son of God, will continue to "love riches and hate poverty" (122); St. Margaret of Cortona who imagines

that, if Christ compelled her to "assume ownership of any temporary possessions," she "would not cease petitioning him with tears and sighs until he dispensed [her] from that precept" (152); and Mary of Agreda, a Spanish Poor Clare of the seventeenth century, who reasons graciously that, while God "cannot hate the beings he has created," he knows "the boundless damage caused by avarice and covetousness," an "insane love" that "pervert[s] the greater part of the human nature" (421). In addition to these personal reflections, there are chronicles narrated about exemplars of Franciscan poverty, such as the charming story of St. John Vianney and the poor cripple who cannot find a seat during the sermon. "Where was this pauper of Jesus Christ to rest his weary limbs?" the author has the saint ask himself. At length the writer says the "Cure d'Ars took the man into the pulpit and made him sit down on the seat, whence he commanded a view of all the people. Then in a joyful tone of voice, he uttered the one syllable, Na [There now). And he proceeded with his discourse, standing the while" (498-99).

What the end of this story reveals is a feature evoked by most of the selections in this anthology, a feature that happens to be, appropriately, another Franciscan ideal: the perfect joy that invariably accompanies our intentions and practices of spiritual poverty. So St. Bernadine of Siena can remind his audience that when they offer alms their giving should "always ring with cheerfulness and never with churlishness" (239); and Maximilian Kolbe, writing over five hundred years later, can state with confidence that "here we live poorly, at times even very poorly, but without misery" (559). The simple eloquence of these remarks, I think, serves to further underscore the power and grace of all those statements of faith that make up this inspiring and handsome volume.

Franciscans Under Fire. Twenty Nuns, A Girl and A Dog. Edited by Duane Hutchinson. Lincoln, Nebraska: Foundation Books, 1990. $7.95 plus postage.

Reviewed by Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg, O.S.F., Religious of the Sisters of St. Francis of Clinton, Iowa.

One, who picks up **Franciscans Under Fire** to read it, is in for many an incredible conflict. A member of the Iowa and of the Nebraska Fine Arts Councils, Duane Hutchinson came to Clinton, Iowa, in 1983 as a story-teller-in-residence. He was captivated by the title, **Twenty Nuns, A Girl and A Dog,** the first telling of which was written by Msgr. M. M. Hoffman. Probably in his room in Durham Hall of Mount St. Clare College, Mr. Hutchinson read the unpublished manuscript and then and there decided to begin his eighth book, the story of the sisters of St. Francis of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mount St. Clare, Clinton, Iowa.

The story is set in two locales: Kentucky and Iowa. It is centered on Sister Frances Walker and on the anomaly that Cistercians, because they are contemplatives, do not "run" schools. How was the stage for that drama set?

In 1848 the Trappists came from France to settle in Kentucky. Having obtained a "quiet permission" from their French headquarters to build the Gethsemane Abbey (later celebrated by Thomas Merton), Abbot Eutropius solicited funds from the entire surroundings, promising in return to conduct a school for poor boys and girls. Several teachers were hired to handle the school up to 1860, when Abbot Benedict was elected. He set about to fulfill the promises of his predecessor and in 1861 built a new girls' school, Brothers from the abbey doing most of the work.

When Caroline (Cambron) Warren came from Tennessee to find the grave of her husband, killed in October of 1862 in the battle of Perryville, she went to the Monastery to request Masses for the repose of his soul. Abbot Benedict saw in her the ideal lady to take over his school for girls. It was she, who eventually as Sister Elizabeth, became the initial player in the story of the Clinton Franciscans.

She donned a religious habit under Father Anselm, the new Franciscan pastor of Saint Boniface Church of Louisville. When she made her profession, her niece Sally Walker and the other teacher, Lizzie Lillis, put on the habit of St. Francis, taking the names Sister Margaret and Sister Angela, respectively. Bishop Peter Joseph Lavialle gave his approbation for these three Sisters in their work in the free school under the guidance of the Rt. Rev. Abbot of Gethsemane, "it being understood that the Bishop of the Diocese of Louisville is to be the Ecclesiastical Superior of the Society with full power to direct its general government either by himself or through the Rt. Rev. Father Abbot." Therein lay some of the contentions to come.

Abbot Benedict erected the Mount Olivet convent "on a wind-swept hill," and the young women wanting entrance were sent to the Oldenburgh, Indiana, Franciscan convent for novitiate training (which the original three never had). Rumblings of trouble began. When time came for the election of a major superior, Sister Elizabeth did not get the votes; Mother Paula did. Deeply hurt, Sister Elizabeth "refused to be placated and turned on" her niece, suspecting her of being involved. Aunt Caroline left and Sally was ordered to leave the Order. But she returned. Probation and postulance over, she received the habit and a new name — that of Sister Frances, which she carried for half a century.

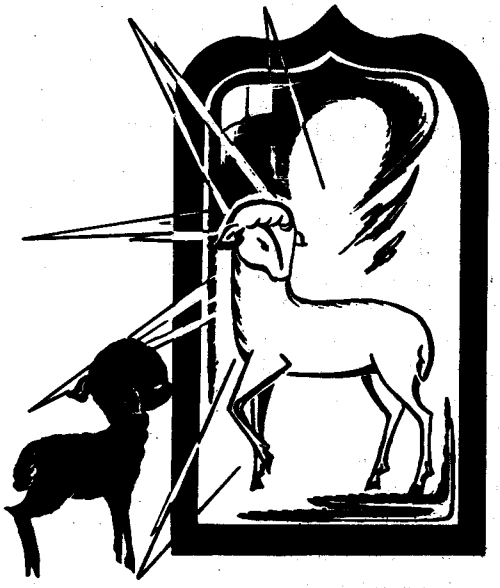
Troubles continued to hover over the "Mount Olivet Folly." By 1869 Bishop Lavialle was replaced by Bishop William McClosky. Sister Angela, second of the three original so-called founders, "began to show friendliness to dissatisfied, restive detractors." Eventually she too left for good.

There followed intrigues, a fire, working under a mentally sick pastor, teaching at mission schools unable to support the Sisters so severely that they had not enough to eat nor sufficient clothing to wear or with which to cover themselves in winter. A new pastor invited two Jesuits from St. Louis University to give a week's mission for his congregation. Father J. T. Coghland told the sisters, "Except for the powerful grace of God, you couldn't have survived such trials.... You need another field for your zealous activities. Work in another diocese."

Briefly, the Iowa period succeeded — to this day — on a higher level. With Bishop John Hennessy's permission, twenty nuns, a girl and a dog entered Dubuque, Iowa. From the first motherhouse at Anamose for a short time, the Sisters moved to Clinton. Not really understanding ecclesiastical rules

for election of a major superior, the sisters had voted Mother Agnes in consistently. Both Archbishop Hennessy and Archbishop John J. Keane demurred. On January 27, 1900, Mother Magdalen Mattingly was elected. Before two months had passed, Archbishop John Hennessy died. She magnanimously appointed Sister Agnes assistant Mother, and later, novice mistress — which well meant gesture proved eventually to be a mistake. Three years later, though Sister Agnes ran for re-election, Mother Magdalen was elected. When Mother Magdalen's second term ended, Archbishop Keane directed the January 27 election to be canceled. He came to Clinton to talk to each Sister personally because he had received notice that some complaints against the sisters had been delivered to the Papal Delegate in Washington, D.C. After his interviews, he reported: "Seldom have I ever found a spirit of charity and unity such as yours." In the end, Sister Agnes took two of the Sisters, one younger and one older Sister, for the founding of a new community.

Sadly, Sister Frances pondered nostalgically: Sister Agnes "had been with me for two months in lovely Mount Olivet in 1873. She came to Shelbyville in 1875. Thirty-two years she had spent in our community, and for twenty-two years she had been our superior.... Mother Agnes was a saintly, powerful woman. It seemed as if she were the savior of our Order. Under her leadership we had emerged from the valley of suffering. She had brought us through the Red Sea of misfortune into the promised of Iowa."



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The CORD

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ARTICLES

J. W. FOWLER (FAITH DEVELOPMENT) AND ST. FRANCIS 131
Fr. Roderick Payne O.F.M.

FRANCISCAN POVERTY AND CULTURE 142
Fr. Jude M. Rochford, O.F.M. Conv.

FEATURES

EDITORIAL:
REQUIEM FOR A BROTHER AND FRIEND I NEVER HAD MET 129
Joseph Doino, O.F.M.

POETRY:
VIEW FROM THE FRIARY 140
Sr. Virginia Balk, O.S.F.
YOUR SILENCE SEIZED ME 141
Lisa Boscane
I SAW A YOUNG FATHER 158
William Hart McNichols, S.J., S.F.O

SHORTER NOTICES 159

Volume 40, No. 5

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

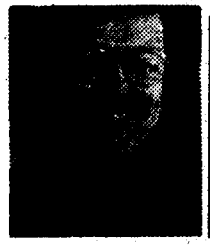
Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: 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).



Requiem for a Brother and Friend I never had met: Fr. Thaddeus Horgan, S.A.

We never had met, never spoken to one another. Though we corresponded, it was infrequent and usually concerned **The CORD.** We certainly were not what one would call "pen pals." As far as I know, he never had set eyes on me and my only impression of him came from the photo above. (The smile speaks volumes!). I always looked forward to meeting him; much to my regret, we missed one another by less than an hour during a brief visit of his to our campus a few summers ago. I could hardly claim to have developed what one would normally call a personal relationship. In fact, one could ask whether I am over-exercising my imagination in using the word "friend" in this regard. For all of this, I strongly believe that had an encounter taken place, it would indeed have evoked from both of us strong expressions of brotherhood and friendship.

Fr. Thaddeus Horgan of the Society of the Atonement will have to be remembered for incredible service to the Franciscan Family, especially the Third Order Regular; to the poor, especially of Jamaica; and to the Church, especially in its ecumenical efforts. Those are terribly bland words for a friar whose enthusiastic love for things franciscan was a constant, inextinguishable flame. He loved Francis, he loved franciscan men and women; he used his many gifts to minister in a remarkable variety of ways to awaken people to the depths and riches of the franciscan charism. This came through to me so strongly in the infrequent correspondence which began when I assumed the editorial duties of this periodical in January of 1987. As brief as some of his notes may have been, there was always a word or phrase that revealed the beauty and sincerity of his franciscan heart. The idea of dedicating the September issue of **The CORD** to themes pertaining to the Third Order Regular was his and he was

incredibly generous in assuming editorial responsibilities for it: he sollicited articles, suggested themes, wrote editorials and did all that was possible to relieve me of my duties for that particular month's issue. When his appointment to the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs limited his availability, he generously found others to continue the September project. He did, however, continue to serve on our editorial board with typical fidelity.

In June of 1989 we published the address Thaddeus had delivered at the Assembly of TOR Franciscan General Ministers/Superiors in Assisi at Pentecost of that year. Like all of his writings, something deeply personal came through. There is a particular line in the address that takes us directly to the flame that burned deep within: "A passion is a movement of the heart, arising from the center of our faith-filled being, taking us beyond desire to a gospel lifestyle which should witness to the inner unity of the Church." I am sure that he never realized how autobiographical these words were. Yet I have strong reason to believe that those who lived and worked with him and who benefited from his vibrant and generous ministry, would agree that they are indeed self-revealing.

In our files is a copy of the Christmas letter he sent to his family and friends from Jamaica in 1984. It is deeply moving in its expression of wonder and admiration for the gift of being with people of the Third World. He writes, for example: "Prayer here is a constantly new experience. It's spontaneous and penetrating." What spiritual intuitions he possessed! How sensitive he was to the unusual ways God reveals Himself, especially to the poor! He concludes this letter with his own spontaneous and penetrating words: "Until next time, stay well and show a smile."

The sincerity and transparency of his spirit are so evident in the smiling photo above. It so beautifully discloses the fraternal and friendly spirit that pervaded his letters to me, as brief as some of them might have been. It strengthens my conviction that this great franciscan, taken from our midst in such an untimely way, is now more present to us than we could possibly imagine. Our brothers and sisters of the Society of the Atonement have reason to rejoice! I do — especially for having had and continuing to have such an unusual brother and friend.

Joseph Bono OFM

J. W. Fowler (Faith Development) and St. Francis

FR. RODERICK PAYNE, O.F.M.

"Why after you? Why after you? Why after you?" Masseo questions Francis in chapter 10 of the Fioretti.

Saints inspire us because of their doggedness, their world-view, the attractiveness of their approach to their work and to their God. Sometimes we admire them because they go a step farther than we would ourselves, or we see them as trailblazers, or as catalysts who inspire us with courage to continue.

Many of us implicitly regard the saint as someone specially gifted by God right from the beginning; and so assuming that God has not so gifted us, we neatly excuse ourselves from anything but average effort in responding to God's quest for us (cf Admonition VI). Yet most people who become a success in their fields have begun with more than the usual rank-and-file drive and determination. They are not easily sidetracked. Nor were the saints. Nor was St. Francis.

J. W. Fowler has mapped out for us stages or patterns of selfhood and faith development,[1] which are quite observable as we humans become increasingly aware, conscious, responsive and responsible selves as partners of God.[2] By identifying patterns of this type of growth Fowler makes it easier for us to see the dynamic of how we grow as human beings.

All of us seek meaning. In fact the seeking and defending of meaning is the stuff of human history, both personal and social. Meaning-making

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Fr. Roderick Payne, OFM, is a member of the Formation Team of the Holy Spirit Province of Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore. Having returned from studies at Loyola University of Chicago and St. Bonaventure University in 1986, he now lectures at the Yarra Theological Union and the United Faculty of Theology in Melbourne, Australia. His specialty is religious education, and spiritual development of youth and young adults.

is the activity of seeking pattern, order, form, and significance. Being human implies seeking coherence and correspondence in the disparate elements of our existence. Faith is the activity of composing meaning in the most comprehensive dimensions of our awareness.[3] All of us have faith in this sense of the word. It is akin to a world-view or even a spirituality. Fowler finds order in the evolution of this sort of faith.

To apply Fowler's model conceived in mid-twentieth century U.S.A. to a thirteenth century alien culture is of course a risky operation, but it does shed a new light on how we see the faith development of Francis of Assisi and hopefully of ourselves. It is not so much trying to "fit" Francis into a psychological category as to see what Fowler's theory can make clearer for us from its developmental point of view.

Fowler's theory encompasses six stages of faith development ranging from that of early childhood to the achievement of wisdom. Not everybody passes through all stages. Some find their resting place at intermediate levels. We were not concerned here with the first two stages as there is little given in the early writings about how Francis negotiated his journey through them up to early adolescence.

Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional Faith

Evidence for the third stage of "synthetic-conventional faith" is more available. At this third stage of faith development a person follows the faith of others. There is an insistence on doing the "right" thing. The "right" thing is assessed on what others expect and say and do. This stage starts at about age 11 and covers most of adolescence, though some people never grow beyond it. It is the natural time for children to learn by observation to form their first self-concept, value system, and world-view, by interiorizing the implied or demonstrated expectations of the significant others around them. For instance, Francis was socialized into the "success" ethic early in life. His father, Pietro, naturally wanted the best for the boy, and Francis seems to have cooperated (LM 1).

The "success" ethic stays with him, though it will be progressively redefined. It seemed too that Pietro was proud of his son's popularity in the town, and made sure that Francis had a liberal expense account with which to entertain. Francis of course thrived on this. He was valued by others, his friendship was cultivated, he was the natural leader of his band of friends (2 Cel 7), "king of the revels" (L3S 7). He was doing the "right" thing.

Celano (1 Cel 2 and 2 Cel 7) takes a dim view of all this, probably to highlight Francis' "conversion," but Francis did what adolescents were expected to do and he did it well. Yes, there was dependence on his peer group, there was pressure to excel, there were "banquets which... served

their wantonness and buffoonery." But if Francis had learned from society's expectations and his friends that this was "success" then Francis was being basically honest. He was learning the ropes from the main models in his life.

For Fowler's stage 3, values come externally. There has not been developmental time in a young person's life, nor the cognitive skills available, to test values received for their validity or internal consistency, still less to integrate them into a unified world-view or spirituality. In fact, adolescents at stage 3 can even hold contradictory values depending on which group they currently belong to without realizing any anomaly. Emotional attachments take precedence over cognitive reflection.

So Francis at this time of his life was a well-adjusted "success." He lived up to the expectations of his father, his social class, his peers, and shared their values. He went to Church, he loved his neighbor even giving alms to the poor, and took for granted the lifestyle of those around him.

The terrible inconsistency between the gospel and the society in which Francis lived had not reflectively hit him. He could compartmentalize the gospel injunctions just as we do today, or else could not see how they could be applied amidst the mayhem in Assisi from the razing of the Rocca when he was 16, through the civil war, to the war between Perugia and Assisi in 1202. Individual morality is easier to comprehend and to cope with than sinful social structures which tend to be invisible and inaccessible behind the scenes.

The passage to stage 4 for Francis, now socialized into the "success" ethic, concurred when he was about 20, and spent a year in Perugia as a prisoner of war.

Stage 4: Individuative - Reflective Faith

While Fowler's stage 3 is characterized by a looking to others for direction and meaning, stage 4 is the time when we follow our own more or less elaborated philosophy of life. It is the stage of individuation wherein we work out a first approximation of a consistent world-view and are prepared to live by it, open to others of course, but not being dictated to by them.

Stage 4 takes a while to grow into, and two conditions must be met before one happily individuates.

The first of these conditions is a critical distancing from one's previous assumptions, values and faith. This involves standing apart from the group or groups one belongs to and seeing what doesn't hang together. This assessment requires reflection time — of which Francis had ample in his Perugia prison and on his bed of illness — and a great deal of courage.

To risk not heart, nor soul, nor mind,
Is never these three to find.[4]

Critical distancing means rethinking one's life, trying to find meaning, purpose and unity amidst the confusion and rough and tumble of living. Properly done it involves a looking to a future direction of life, a development of a Dream or the reinterpretation of a present Dream.[5] It requires "conversation" experiences: being vulnerable to a change of direction, and a letting go of the (stage 3) groups with their expectations, their tyrannies, and their sanctions. It is the frightening time of standing out on your own, being yourself, when you have never been there before. This leads us to the second condition for real individuation.

The second condition is the emergence of an executive ego, that is, an ability to carry out the dictates of the critical distancing. Sometimes the practical implications of critical distancing may be so overwhelming that a person may slip into regression rather than face the tasks ahead. Conversely, others have the executive ego, tons of initiative, but lack critical distancing, with one eye on the expected reactions of the wider group, and thus are still entrenched in stage 3. Although they may appear to be individuated it is only a thin veneer. Deeper down they are still heavily dependent on the expectations of others, whether of their friends or of the wider society. Their denial of the deeper self may result in degrees of neuroses, inability to make deliberate life decisions, feelings of guilt, or a sinking into a complacent mediocrity. In religious terms, conversion, selfemptying, is one-sided and uneven. Growth is stunted.

Francis combines both conditions: the ability to stand back, look at himself, his society, his friends and relatives, his "success" ethic, his Dream of Knighthood; with an amazing honesty that energetically pushed him to do something about it. From first principles seen in the light of grace he proceeded to rebuild his life basing himself on the Gospel. Success was not to be caught anymore in basking in the reflected glory of a Walter of Brienne, nor in starring in the popularity polls of the Assisi younger set, nor in vying for membership among the up and coming merchant yuppies. Success was now redefined as living faithful and true to his liege lord, Jesus, with initiative, absolute trust, and a sense of humor. "This is what I wish. This is what I seek. This is what I long to do with all my heart" (1 Cel 22).

And so Francis ventures into stage 4 of Fowler's faith development. It is not that he has his act together, or that he necessarily does what is wise. What he does is shake off the paralysis of needing to conform. He goes off by himself doing what he sees is the will of God for him, being with the poor, and being prepared if necessary to face his father's wrath,

which was not long in coming. There is recognizable here a basic redirection and owning of his life as he surrenders more completely to God.

Faced with the certainty of a dramatic change of lifestyle and fortified by his confidence in the cross, Francis over and over again confirms his stance of trust in God no matter what, and in his solitude deepens his prayer life. He continues to work with the poor and to repair the dilapidated churches of San Damiano, San Pietro, and the Portiuncula. In 1208 Francis now 26 broadens his Dream: he moves into preaching. After all what is a repaired church without people to worship there? It is then that others, Bernard, Peter Catanii and Giles join him. Fraternity rather than solitude becomes his new lifestyle. One can easily imagine the release of energy that this shift unleashed. The brotherhood expands. Difficulties are surmounted. Fear is eclipsed. Thus begins a period of high adventure.

Stage 5: Conjunctive Faith

But what of stage 5? Could we date the transition at 1214/1215, the time of the Lateran Council? The stage 5 transition is stirred by a restlessness with our past images, a sort of "been there, done that" type of lethargy combined with an amorphous feeling that there is to be something better than this. The stage 5 type of faith development seldom occurs before age 30, and after one has worked so hard in constructing an explicit, ideological system and clear boundaries of identity. It is a time when we let up on forcing reality to conform to our system and allow our system to adapt to the initiative of reality. It is a more advanced practice of detachment, and of listening. There is a need to face creatively the polar tensions of being young or old, constructive or destructive, for me or for others. It is a period when we take a long, hard look at suffering and what is really good. We keep the paradoxes in tension. Self-fulfillment, even in a way this term can be interpreted in a Christian sense, goes off the boil. Self-fulfillment gives way to a certain sort of group fulfillment — a genuine self-forgetfulness that does not have to be concerned with self-image. And so a wider and more exciting truth comes onto the horizon. Francis is faced now with the good of the universal Church. Francis does not cease to be involved with the lepers and the poor, but in 1217 he moves his order into the missionary scene, a new way of being for others. When, after the Chapter of 1217, Francis proceeds to go to France on a missionary expedition, Hugolino stops him. Francis answers in LP 82 (though not in 1 Cel 75, LP perhaps reflecting Francis' whole-world approach):

> God has chosen and sent the brothers for the good and salvation of all in the entire world; they will be received not only in believing

countries but also among the infidels. A far cry from the earlier (but developmentally necessary) efforts of building church in 1206 - 1208!

A case could be drawn up to show the gradation of Francis' concept of church from the early times of unquestioning loyalty and obedience (stage 3, ingroup) to a more universal outlook of the need for Church, its role in God's Plan (stage 5) in bringing about the renewed possibility of living the gospel life.

> Always submissive and prostrate at the feet of the same holy Church, and steadfast in the Catholic faith, we may observe the poverty and humility and the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ which we have firmly promised (RegB 12:4).

When he deals with priests who are doing less than their duty he does not see the fault of the priest in the limited and more immediate style of the stage 4 person. The strategy he adopts looks to a wider good, the well-being of the community — a typically stage 5 reaction. He suggests on open occasion that the friars hide the priests' lapses, supply for their many defects, "and when you have done this, be even more humble" (2 Cel 146).

His attitude towards money is also illustrative. Money is to be treated as dung (2 Cel 65). That it does not matter implies that there is a greater good available without it. A stage 4 person is more likely to pick up the money, use it or donate it to a worthy cause. Money has value. For a stage 4 mentality to bypass money would generally be wasteful, irresponsible or even contrary to poverty. A stage 5 person is more attracted to the symbolism of money than to its purchasing power: what does money ultimately do to us. A stage 5 person attaches a great deal of meaning to symbol, sign, myth, and liturgy than does the stage 4 who is somewhat reductionist, searching mainly for the cognitive meaning. Francis looked wider.

Stage 5 people are also seeking and working for a unity, a deeper meaning. 1 Cel 81 and 82, 2 Cel 165 speak of Francis' ability to see the significance of created things:

> In every work of the artist he praised the Artist... He rejoiced in all the works of the hands of the Lord and saw behind things pleasant to behold their life-giving reason and cause (2 Cel 165).

An instance of this is the way Francis called animals his brothers. Notice the stage 5 attitude of inclusion. Modern day conservationists might well reflect on what Francis was about and on his implicit theology. Conservationists can be any of stage 2, 3, 4 or 5. A stage 2 can be a conservationist out of a sense of justice, a stage 3 because the ingroup has conservation high on its set of values, a stage 4 through individual conviction, a stage

5 because it fits into a wider plan for the good of society in the long run. Francis, however, while still stage 5 seems to have intuited a higher sense of unity not based on the good of the society as such but on the unity and relationship within the Trinity, and on the loving, integrated designs God has for humankind and creation.

Stage 6; Universalizing Faith

We come now to stage 6, Fowler's final stage. "With those persons who are drawn beyond the Conjunctive [stage 5] into the Universalizing stage of faith [stage 6] we seem to see a movement in which the self is drawn beyond itself into a new quality of participation and grounding in God." So says Fowler. He continues, "persons are drawn towards an identification with God in which the basis of identity, knowing and valuing are transformed. There is a relinquishing of self into the ground of being, a kind of reversal of figure and ground in which the person of faith now participates, albeit as a finite creature, in a kind of identification with God's way of knowing and valuing other creatures."[6] How reminiscent of the later Francis! Yet as far as I am aware Fowler never mentions him.

When can we place Francis' transition from stage 5 to stage 6? So few people reach stage 6 that statistical inference is not as valid as with the other stages. The stage 3 "Lord, what do you want me to do?" (2 Cel 6) of the very early days, and possibly the Prayer before the Crucifix identify Francis as the chief actor, taking the initiative. Then it was doing things for the Lord rather than doing things with the Lord. Now it is the almost absolute giving of self to the Lord. When the Lord totally accepts our

giving the initiative in the transformation is now almost totally with the Lord. We can say with surety that Francis was in stage 6 (or beyond?) certainly at the Stigmata, 1224, and probably much earlier.

Perhaps we can date the earlier turning point at that significant time when Francis relinquished control of the Order in 1220 (2 Cel 143). This event can be interpreted in many ways. Perhaps Francis was tired and weak, and felt he couldn't continue (2 Cel 143). Maybe he was disappointed with the friars' lack of true observance (LP 76). Or perhaps just as hearing the Gospel on the feast of St. Matthias triggered a move from the physical building of churches to the spiritual renaissance of the church through the Order, now his illness was the occasion for another change of direction towards a "newness of life" where "only the wall of the flesh would stand between him and God" (1 Cel 103). When a person is ready, a trigger is often sufficient to spark a radical change in faith outlook and spiritual awareness.

In many respects this period shows all the symptoms of a depression-like transition period: a letting go of the familiar (2 Cel 158) for an unknown future.

Fowler speaks of stage 6 persons as "incarnators and actualizers of the spirit of an inclusive and fulfilled human community." [Francis could go further than the "human community" to a "creation community."] "Living with felt participation in a power that unifies and transforms the world, universalizers [stage 6] are often experienced as subversive of structures (including religious structures) by which we sustain our individual and corporate survival, security and intelligence."[7]

Such people are misunderstood. They are seen by lesser lights as eccentric, impracticable, impenetrable, unpredictable, and so very hard to live with. They tend to be more honored after death than during their lives. Francis' popularity within the Order certainly declined as the conflict of ideals became more apparent. What, so some friars reasoned, was wrong with being like other Orders, and having learned and great men in the Order, acknowledged as such? Why be so poor that poverty hinders the apostolate? But Francis had his eyes set on another vision requiring a faith from his followers that was not generally forthcoming. The stage 3's of the Order could be loyal to Francis as well as to the new guiding lights unable to fathom the real difference. The stage 4's would be logically adhering to their own individual philosophies (cf. 1 Cel 104) unable to tame a vision they couldn't encompass. The stage 5's seeing the paradox would be seeking means of reconciliation.

As for eccentrics, stage 6 persons see reality from a perspective so different from the rest of us that we think they are eccentric, whereas if the truth be known, we are the ones off-center. Jacopone da Todi (1228 - 1306), a great Franciscan mystic, sums it up well:

He who is mad for Jesus seems afflicted and disturbed,
but he is a master with a doctorate in science and theology.
He who is mad for Christ seems so crazy to people;
whoever has never had the experience thinks him disoriented.[8]

* * *

Francis moved through discernible developmental stages of faith. He began the Order as a stage 4. Very quickly he moved to stage 5, May 1214/1215, and to stage 6, in record time, about 1220 when he was only about 38, an extraordinary achievement.

He passed through a series of stages about authority: experiencing it externally to himself, then taking responsibility for his own decisions and actions, and later broadening out to the revelation of the multiple perspectives of God's authority. His notions of freedom developed from the freedom able to be expressed within the family and his peers, to the freedom associated with following his own evolving comprehensive and self-conscious ideological system released from the shackles of significant others, to a freedom that comes with a wonder, awe and delight at the simplicity and paradoxical complexity of God and his Will, to a freedom that participates in the freedom of God himself. Francis progressed from experiencing suffering as penalty, to suffering as discipline, to suffering as witness, through suffering as vicarious, and finally to suffering as glory in the Johannine sense.

We noticed too that the transition from one stage to the next was triggered by some significant event: a time to reflect, a reading, the adventure of the Fourth Lateran Council, or his sickness and the murmuring of his brothers. Every transition was painful, requiring a letting go and an outreach into the unknown. Francis had an incredible ability to see in all things a spark of the divine, which led him quickly through the transitions to the next faith stage. Every experience revealed something to him of God. He trusted Jesus, his leader and model, explicitly and implicitly. He was attuned to the song of the Spirit. His openness was extraordinary.

We will forever be plumbing the depths of Francis' spirituality to help us on our own journey. Fowler's developmental approach gives us a new way of understanding our saint and ourselves. For example it allows us happily to accept that if we are at stage 3 then Francis' stage 5 or 6 understanding of Poverty is unattainable and perhaps incomprehensible, but that if we develop, it will make more sense, and we may even grow into it.

"Why after you?" is something we can say with Masseo, at several stages of our journey. □

Endnotes

[1]Notably in Fowler, J.W. & Keen, S. *Life Maps, Conversation on the Journey of Faith*. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1978; Fowler, J. W. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. New York: Harper & Row, 1981; *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian*. New York: Harper & Row, 1984; and *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987, p. 53.

[2]Fowler, (1987) p. 53.

[3]Parks, S. *The Critical Years*. New York: Harper & Row, 1986, p. 14, 16.

[4]Sean Whiting, Unpublished Poems, 1990.

[5]Levinson, D. et al. *Seasons of a Man's Life*. New York: Ballantine, 1978, examine the life Dreams of young men, especially p. 91 and p. 245.

[6]Fowler, (1987) p. 75.

[7]Fowler, (1981) p. 200f.

[8]Peck, G. T. *The Fool of God, Jacopone da Todi*. Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1989, p. 169.

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View From the Friary

Numerous, half-golden-green
  Swaying under the grey/blue sky

Some full, others not —
  Waiting for maturity.

Will it come now? or
Under the brilliant sun of
    tomorrow?

Questioning existence, or giving
    nourishment
      Either — Death

Sr. Virginia Balk, O.S.F.

Your Silence Seized Me

your silence seized me from the midst of my life
obliterating other words

I had wandered from hill country
you remained at the crossroads of agony

at the crystal spring, behind closed door,
on an olive-tree day, Umbrian wheat resolved the enigma
of very chaste water sprayed from a maternal earth.

my abysmal wanderings strayed far from ancestral
springs.

you came, gentle breeze, toward the end of night when hills
abound with harvest.

the child had looked at ruins of hatred and expired
loves, absorbing the violence of the sea when blood-red
cliffs shatter.

well loved is she who is given to me

among the olive trees, hills stretch out toward the orient,
here she is attentive to the silence of mint when chant
is unveiled.
folds of the soul are discarded in the flood of indulgence,
like someone feeling the child of agony and death
incarnated.
With things silent, the Spirit quivering, space is no longer
abyss in this place where you have given me the earth of a
misty day
and the mast from the sea forever above the roof of God's
house.

your tenderness caressed my face, lands of
wandering slowly divert toward the springs.

Lisa Boscane
(a.k.a. Sister Marie Elizabeth, O.S.C.)

Translated with permission from editions Saint-Germain-des-Pres, by Mary McCarthy, R.S.M., Lakewood, New Jersey.

Franciscan Poverty and Culture

FR. JUDE M. ROCHFORD, O.F.M. CONV.

A Chinese sage, Lao-Tse, once said: "Muddy water, let stand, becomes clear."

The more we meditate, pray and reflect on it, the same may be said of Franciscan poverty.

When a conventual friar makes his simple profession in the Franciscan Order he says: "Since for the glory of God the Lord has given me this grace of living more perfectly and with firm will the gospel of Jesus Christ, I, Friar . . . vow to live. . . *without anything of my own*. . . according to the Rule of St. Francis. . ." [Const. I, II, 41 §2.]

The solemnly professed friars in turn reciprocally promise the newly professed brothers that with them they, the new brothers, would find the environment, the support, and the example that would enable them to be faithful to their commitment which would be solemnized hopefully in the future. The solemnly professed friars also witness daily to these new brothers within the Order the promise that they will live with men who are chaste, who are more concerned about the good of the brotherhood than their own personal good, and who *compete with each other to live with less and less in ever simpler lives*. This latter I call living out in their lives the vow of Conventual Franciscan poverty.

The subject of Poverty within the Order has always been a keen edged sword to the friars finding agreement or disagreement. Yet the Order has always been kind and solicitous to its members. It is one way of looking at our fraternity as in a mirror reflecting the Trinity's image.

Fr. Jude delivered this lecture at the Franciscan House of studies in Livingstone, Zambia. It is indicative of the dialogical approach local Africans use in discovering meaning and value.

1. Some Reflections on Powerty

In a paper entitled "Reflections on Poverty" a group of Zambian Capuchin Brothers begin by saying: "In order fruitfully to discuss and evaluate our practice of Poverty, it is first necessary to reflect on what it involves, what is it 'about' ..."

Then they quote from *Evangelica Testificatio* 12: "Let us not forget that every human institution is prone to become set in its ways and is threatened by formalism. It is continually necessary to revitalize external forms with the interior driving force."

"And so in discussing Poverty," they continue, "we must reconsider this interior driving force and not just get bogged down in externals. It is easy for such a discussion to concentrate on things like houses, clothes, transport, televisions, and money; but unless the interior driving force, or "purpose" of religious Poverty, is considered, we do not have a proper frame of reference nor the proper criteria for evaluating the "externals." When we consider how to respond today to the challenge of Franciscan Poverty, our reflections and discussions must focus on our lives in the light of what Poverty is for, in the light of our following of Christ and the demands of the Gospel, and we must not simply get hung up on what *Evangelica Testificatio* calls "an excessively superficial preoccupation with appearing to be poor." (Evangelica Testificatio 22 par 2).

In much the same spirit, at the last Conventual General Chapter held in Assisi, May, 1989, the Father General, Lanfranco Serrini, made some observations on poverty. He said: "We have meditated frequently on poverty during this sessenium... But it seems a duty to underscore that we must still do more to discover and put into practice the concept of a poverty that is not bound solely to administrative or economic factors, but that broadens itself out to every form of attachment to persons, independence, place, office, etc., everything that can bind beyond every excusable limit." [Minister General's Report to the Ordinary General Chapter, p. 60, 7.2.]

Father Lanfranco underscores three significant points for the friars:

A) *It's not enough to talk about poverty*. There is a strong stress in the Order on poverty, on justice, and on peace. There's also a growing awareness that this topic has meaning only insofar as we question ourselves about it in the first person, that is, as individual friars and then as members of a local friary, province or custody. Equivocation in theory and in actual practice should be avoided.

Admonition XIV reads: "A wordly spirit loves to talk a lot but do nothing; striving for the exterior signs of holiness that people can see, with no desire for true piety and interior holiness of spirit."

Francis was a doer. He embraced God, our Father, when he left his clothes at his father's feet. It was with complete abandonment in his heavenly Father's arms that Francis entrusted his life after emptying himself with the goods of the world. He depended upon God, his Father for all things. This deep interior change brought about an exterior change in his life.

The Capuchin document referred to in the beginning goes on to say: "Material poverty in the Franciscan context is an outer sign of this inner attitude; and also a means of deepening our awareness of God's Fatherhood, and liberating us from the illusion of self-sufficiency: it involves a radical break from all attachments which hide the fact that God alone is our "Amen," the ground of our being and the source of salvation. It is a celebration of God's Fatherhood." (par 11).

B) *We need the courage for an open dialogue on this topic*. The local friaries, provinces and custodies need to give a lot of space to an open and positive dialogue on poverty and its demands.

C) *Never cheapen poverty*. We never settle the issue if we attempt to justify every local need from construction of new additions to the latest model of technology. It leads us to cheapen unknowningly the real demands of poverty.

The Minister General goes on to say that poverty demands in every social milieu a suitable parameter for determining this religious counsel that goes back to the cross of Christ. What does this mean? For me it means there is an imbalance of material means within the Order. Why? I reply that this is due to the different conditions of life, culture and traditions, that exist globally where the Order is functional.

Nonetheless the witness aspect of poverty remains. Otherwise, what would be the sense of a Franciscan life which, precisely in poverty, plus I feel with the other two vows, finds the determining role of its vocation? A higher standard of living demands in its place our contribution of a more modest and austere witness. As I mentioned above, the friars *"compete with each other to live with less and less in ever simpler lives."* For some friars, however, social-cultural conditions, if misunderstood, may not be the best parameters for discovering the witness of poverty to the modern world.

The Capuchin document emphasizes "for the follower of Francis, Poverty is not an end in itself; it is not primarily an ascetic discipline (though as a radical following of Christ it certainly includes asceticism); .... it is not even primarily about giving up of things; it is about our relationship with people and with God. It is a joyful celebration of the Trinity in whose life we are called to share, a public witness to the relationships we are

destined to share in God's Kingdom, — with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit:

the Father on whom we depend for everything,
the Son who emptied Himself in obedience to His Father for love of us,
and the Holy Spirit who unites us together in love." (par 18)

Fr. Lanfranco states, "For everyone, however, there's always the need for that spirit which St. Francis passed on to us in Chapter VI of the Rule: 'This is that summit of highest poverty which has made you, my most beloved friars, heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven — poor in earthly things but exalted in virtues. Let this be your portion which leads into the land of the living.' "

2. Poverty in an African Context

After such a descriptive definition of poverty let us pursue this subject, poverty, from a particular milieu, an African view.

Fr. Chukwuma Okoye, C. S. SP., in his article "Evangelical Poverty and Culture," (*AFER*, February, 1989) writes in his introduction, "There are few people who agree and accept to remain small." (Therese of Lisieux) Our former Conventual missionary, Fr. Regis, as novicemaster, would have the novices every month pack their cases, bags, which they had brought with them to attest to this truth.

"The paschal mystery," Father Okoye continues, "is a challenge to all cultures, the challenge of losing self radically through love. Religious life is the pursuit of perfect love through the exercise of the evangelical counsels. There are many counsels in the New Testament, and the three vows: poverty, obedience and celibacy, take their full meaning within the way of counsels, which evoke many more virtues, of which love is the primary, namely the pursuit of perfect love.

"Poverty, celibacy and obedience are basically expressions of love. From such expressions of love the very practice of the evangelical counsels animates and engenders life and direction (*animatur et regitur: Perfectae Caritatis:* 6). Each vow is, as it were, a dimension of the whole spirit of religious life. Thus, it would be wrong to treat any one counsel in isolation. If we do so here for the purposes of study, we shall, nevertheless, do well, always, to bear in mind their unity in love."

Next Father Okoye treats of the Gospel experience of poverty which we may or may not take for granted. He continues, "The evangelical counsels are based upon the words and life example of Jesus Christ. (*Perfectae Caritatis:* 43) *The major characteristics of evangelical poverty* are outlined below, firstly by Jesus Christ's life:

a) *Generosity:* "although he was rich, he became poor for your sake, so that you should become rich through his poverty (2 Cor. 8:9).

b) *Humility:* [Jesus Christ] did not count equality with God something to be grasped. But he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave... he was humbler yet even to accepting death, death on a cross (Phil. 2:6-8).

c) *Detachment:* foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head (Lk. 9:/59).

d) *Will of Father:* by himself the Son can do nothing; he can do only what he sees the Father doing (Jn. 5:19).

e) *Dependence:* where did the man get all this... This is the carpenter surely? (Mk. 6;3).

Secondly, *similar attitudes are expected of those who wish to "follow" Jesus Christ*.

a) Leave the dead to bury their dead; your duty is to go and spread the news of the Kingdom of God (Lk 9:60).

b) None of you can be my disciple, without giving up all he owns (Lk. 14:33).

c) You need to do one thing more. Go and sell what you own, and give the money to the poor... then come, follow me (Mk. 10:21).

In particular, *Christ's disciples are expected to prefer him to all they hold most dear*, including family:

a) When his relations heard of this, they set out to take charge of him; they said, "He is out of his mind" (Mk 3:20).

b) Anyone who comes to me without hating father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes, and his own life too, cannot be my disciple (Lk. 14:26).

c) No one who prefers father or mother to me is worthy of me; no one who prefers son or daughter to me is worthy of me (Mt. 10:37).

Total trust in God's Providence is also expected of Christ's disciples:

a) Do not worry about your life and what you are to eat, or about your body and what you are to wear... set your hearts on his Kingdom first (Mt. 6:25ff).

b) Provide ourselves with no gold or silver not even with coppers for our purses, with no haversack for the journey or spare tunic or footwear or a staff (Mt. 10:9-10).

The community of the early Church, as reflected in Acts 2 and 4, has beguiled Christians all through the centuries. The *"vita apostolica"* of the early monastic movement took inspiration from the early Church

Sharing these evangelistic insights of the poor and crucified Jesus, poverty, then, becomes the preferential choice of him. Being rich, he chose to be poor. He became an artisan, worked with his hands, shunned the corridors of power and wealth. God's strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor. 12:9).

Fr. Okoye continues, "Jesus was an itinerant preacher. All who would

join his group must strike no roots anywhere. The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. God's work should be an overriding concern.

"Personal detachment to wealth is a strength to one devoted to unpopular causes. People who wield power fear anyone who cares nothing for sensual pleasure, for riches, comfort, praise or promotion, but is simply determined to do what he or she believes to be right."

He adds: "The ascetical and mystical emphasis on evangelical poverty is intended to foster in the disciples a sense of detachment from possessions, in order to make them more free to grow in spirituality and to undertake mission."

"Down through the centuries, various institutes of consecrated religious life have focused upon different motives for living out evangelical poverty. The Benedictines for example, have focused on community of goods, engendering spiritual solidarity. The followers of Francis of Assisi have focused on imitating Jesus, the poor and crucified (2 Cor. 123:9). The Carmelites focus on the ascetical and mystical dimensions of poverty. The missionary groups lay stress upon freedom from concern about possessions, in order to carry out the mission of God's will."

With this background we may be abe to look more objectively at the question of poverty in an African context. Fr. Okoye thus treats the vow of poverty in relation to culture.

He writes, *"Many people fail to see what culture has got to do with consecrated religious life and with evangelical poverty*. Let us say a parent, who has an only son or daughter, that is a religious, becomes incapacitated through old age. If the religious is a European, the religious is more likely to ask for compassion leave. There is money, social insurance, available to the parent, but perhaps there is nobody around. But, if the religious is an African, he or she may need to ask for financial help. There is no social security aid available to the African parent, but physical presence is not needed; because kin and affines are available. In one case money, in the other time — both consecrated through poverty.

He continues, "In 1984 the Pontifical Council for culture did a study about (Consecrated Men and Women) Reliigous in the face of changing Cultures. Answers from all over the world showed the following in respect of the vow of poverty. It is clear that poverty presents different sets of questions in the context of different cultures..."

Let us look at some of these responses. For example in *Latin America* the value of poverty is solidarity and its difficulties are tension between consecration and commitment while it needs a commitment to promote human values. In *Europe and North America* poverty's values are a growing desire to share, commitment to justice, a simpler and more frugal life; its difficulties are why deprive myself, material possessions, consumerism, work contracts raise problems for religious; and its needs are

questioning a confortable life style and renunciation of privileges. In *Asia* its values are simplicity of life, sharing, mendicant life of monks; difficulties: pervading materialism, religious live in security, 'gifts' hinder poverty; its needs are: commitment to human promotion. In *Africa* its values are: mutual aid, sharing, hospitality, solidarity with the poor; its difficulties are: poverty is a curse, dependence on family, new materialism as religious seem richer than ordinary people; its needs are: what is the meaning of poverty in African countries trying to come out of poverty, the Gospel meaning of poverty is not clear.

3. Some important Definitions and Distinctions

At this juncture it may be well to address ourselves to some definitions, namely, poverty and culture, since the two go together in our understanding of African poverty.

What is poverty?

Again, we will go to Father Okoye's article. He says, *"Poverty is an ambiguous term*. I isolate four senses. *The literal meaning is lack of necessities of life*. It implies that one has to depend, somehow, on others for survival. Those others may become benefactors or oppressors. A definition is necessary, because in places in Europe and North America; "being poor", sometimes means, not having superfluities, for example, not possessing a laundry washing machine, a car or being unable to afford holidays overseas.

"Poverty is not inherent in life, but, is often induced by greed, injustice, oppression or exploitation of some people by others. In this sense, poverty is a scandal against the intentions of God, who made creation for the benefit of the whole human race.

"Poverty implies a condition of dependence of some people who have to rely upon others for a living. Among such dependants are victims of war, refugees, some minorities, marginalized people; developing countries of the Third World in relation to the richer industrialized nations.

"There is also the spiritual aspect of poverty, such as that manifested by the "Poor of Yahweh." Finally, there *is voluntary poverty, based on the words and example of Christ*. It may be a spirit, integrated within a state of life, or undertaken, as a way of life in itself.

Besides Father Okoye's senses of poverty, what might be some others? Edward Desmond's interview entitled: *"A Pencil in the Hand of God," appearing in TIME quotes Mother Teresa of Calcutta saying: "The more you have, the more you are occupied, the less you give. But the less you have, the more free you are. Poverty for us is a freedom. It is not a mortification, a penance. it is joyful freedom." [TIME, December, 1989, p. 72].*

At a Seminar for Rectors and Spiritual Directors of Major Seminaries in Eastern and Southern Africa at Nairobi, Kenya, from July 19 to August 2, 1989, including four representatives from Zambia, they were convinced that a diocesan priest is called to live evangelical poverty as a way of resembling Christ in his full dedication to his ministry. Further, they said that "evangelical poverty consists of an inner attitude of trust in providence and of detachment from worldly goods. They emphasized that "poverty is first the freedom of heart and the availability for service to others." [AMACEA Documentation Service, ADS 89/No. 350, October, 1989, Nos. 13.1, 13.2, and 13..3.]

Father Lanfranco writes too that "An enthusiastic follower of Christ and St. Francis, Fr. Chevrier, has left us this description of true poverty that seems to me to shed light on many empty places in our poverty." He quotes him by saying, "The poor person 'is content with little (1 Tm 6:7), wastes nothing (Jn 6:12), accepts everything with gratitude, has a great respect for what he is given as an alms, doesn't complain about anything (Ph 4:11), works to make a living, has no housekeeper, can manage by himself, does all his own work in the house, does not employ help, except when necessary. He's not afraid of doing the most humble and demeaning things, those most despised, but is afraid of having anything to do with grandeur, luxury, or vanity, renders service to everyone, takes care of what he has, avoids waste and prodigality, makes no useless purchases, is a treasurer without avarice." [A,. Ancel, *Discepoli secondo il Vangelo* (Disciples of the Gospel); EDB, Bologna, 1985. Father General's Letter to the Ordinary General Chapter, May, 1989, p. 62].

In the Conventual constitutions it reads: "By the solem (sic) vow of evangelical poverty the friars completely renounce the ownership of earthly goods so that they may solely possess spiritual goods in God, who is all good, and, freed thus from all worldly cares, they may love the Father more easily.

Secondly, "In order to observe religious poverty the friars are bound to avoid acts of ownership, to be subject to their superiors in the use of temporal goods, and to be and show themselves to be truly poor in fact and in spirit.

Thirdly, "Each friar should love and practice most exalted poverty as befits followers of the poor and humble St. Francis. Superiors should excel in this observance because they must guide others by their example. They should beware of weakening the observance of poverty by indiscriminate permissions." [Const. I, II, no. 9 §1, 2 and 3.]

Father Okoye would like to point out two further clarifications. He says: "In Latin America, the words: the 'poor' and 'people' are almost synonymous, as against 'oppressors.' Preferential option for the poor is, thus, an option for the 'people.' "

He also mentions that "an African, who holds his homestead, and can feed and clothe his family, will feel insulted to be called "poor," no matter how simple and humble his environment may happen to be. "Modern" life is creating new categories of the poor, namely, the landless masses, the unemployed, who are hanging about in the towns; large, poor families which can no longer feed themselves, or provide their children with basic education and such like."

What is "culture"?

E. Taylor, in 1871 gave a socio-anthropological definition, as: "culture... is that complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."

Vatican II in *Gaudium et Spes,* 53, says: "The word 'culture' in its general sense, indicates all those factors, by which man refines and unfolds his manifold spiritual and bodily qualities. It means his effort to bring the world itself under his control: by his knowledge and his labour. It includes the fact that, by improving customs and institutions, he renders social life more human, both within the family and in the civic community..."

Thus Vatican II, by dealing with faith and culture, treats of inculturation. It considered culture, as circumscribing all human activity, and as a focus of evangelization.

How do these two definitions apply to religious poverty and African culture?

Father Okoye says, "The fundamental question is not: how do we adapt to the family (all peoples love their families), but how do we reconcile the following: "Son, behold your mother," and "leave the dead to bury their dead"? What "mode" resolves the tensions best? How do we best make evangelical poverty a willed and joyful way of life for those who have undertaken it? What values in the culture would favour it, and how do we open these up?"

He continues, "Traditional African culture was based on being: human and moral "weight" and wealth went together. Today it is no longer so. Money and possessions are fast becoming absolutes. Many Africans are, unfortunately, beginning to value themselves and others from that point of view. Evengelical poverty may serve a new ministry — the re-affirmation of "being" as against "having." There is a new dimension to the evangelical counsel of poverty, namely, a prophetic critique of a crave for, and attachment to, riches."

This may happen to religous too. Father Okoye states that on the occasions of priestly ordination or of religious profession presents are given. The religious may be tempted to take for himself or herself all. Yet the same people will be the first to disapprove of the rapacious and the proud. The religious, however, should set good examples about the

demands of common life, sharing the gifts and using them for promoting the ministry or the common good.

4. Religious Life and Poverty for Africans

What are some of the problems that may arise in embracing the religious life in Africa and how do these affect poverty?

Father Okoye lists some. They are:

A) Human promotion
B) Relationship with families
C) Personal promotion
D) Sufficient life
E) Solidarity with the poor
F) Religious and "anthropological poverty"
G) Attitude of lord and master
H) Poverty and Apostolate
I) Poverty in the context of weak economies
J) Liturgy and poverty

Let us take a look at these briefly.

Human promotion is understood in the sense that some religious embrace the consecrated life for their own personal promotion. Father Okoye says that the African continent labours under deprivations of all kinds. No African is happy, when his or her kith and kin are suffering. Everyone tries to use her or his position to draw them up. Hence the urge "to help my people."

It is true that the religious neither serves his or her people exclusively nor focuses on them alone. The need to determine how much help for the immediate family and the extended family needs to be spelled out preferably I would say in a good postulancy program.

Relationships with one's African family needs to be given attention. The African marriage model might be helpful here for a religious even. The families of a religious expect help, maybe a better word is advice, on spiritual affairs, visits and hospitality. In sickness, death, misfortune or debt the families of the religious expect some help in the matter of an in-law. This needs discernment on the part of the superiors and I would say again is best explained in the postulancy programme of a future Franciscan religious.

What about personal promotion? In most of Africa, there is no medical or social insurance, no free education, no old age pension. People are struggling out of poverty. They look beyond and see vast opportunities open to their more fortunate brothers and sisters.

Ordination and professions still places one among the successful class. This is not bad in itself. But the danger remains for some, namely, the

temptation of status and symbol. For some it is also the modern status of personal study projects. Self-actualization sometimes becomes a goal, divorced from service. The question arises whether one is in the religious life for personal promotion which he would not have if he did not enter. This is a question the local House Chapter could decide or an active Formation team.

What level of life are we to aim for? In *Perfectae Caritatis*, 13, it says, "Religious should be poor in spirit and in fact." Some African religious worry that they seem to live above the level of their families, and yet are not helping them, as true Africans should. Father Okoye says "unless you have the mystique of poverty, it will not do to settle for the standard of living of the poorest — these you want to uplift. Unlike the 'poor' in Europe, the poor in Africa are indigent, undernourished." The African poor do not have private rooms, books, chapel, refectory and what about smokes or alcoholic drinks which are available to religious! Usually religious try to provide hospitality in a simple but liberal way. Again discernment is necessary among Franciscans to reach a level of life that is sufficient and real for their apostolate and charism in the cultural context where they live and work. Certainly better off Provinces or Custodies should help the less indigent friaries.

"Poverty," Father Serrini told the capitular friars, "also means the proper use of things." He said: "But even in the poorest areas, we can sometimes run the risk of not using properly what the Lord gives through our own industry or the charity of our brothers and sisters."

"The poor surroundings," he continues, "— and, too, a history of a life of poverty — can thrust us, without willing it, towards appropriating — more than what is due or permissible — whatever may fall into our hands, and even to seek to recoup all we can on occasion, thus suffocating the proper tension that should be present with respect to the ideal.

While the recommendations made by Rectors and Spiritual Directors in Nairobi said "that seminarians learn to get rid of what is superfluous and keep only what is needed," they also said "that the life style of the seminary reflect evangelical poverty, e.g. building, food, clothes, etc."

What about solidarity with the poor? In Africa it seems to me that the early Franciscan missionaries showed their solidarity with the poor which still continues today by trying to uplift the conditions of the people, through direct service: in hospitals, clinics, schools, domestic science courses, development projects as farming, wood work, cement making, welding, fish ponds, cattle breeding and the like.

One of the difficulties, as Father Lanfranco Serrini points out to the friars, is: "There's a good reason for saying that 'he who has' has learned to be frugal and to know how to measure out his own needs; while 'he who doesn't have' can have no scruples in this regard."

While the participants in Nairobi strongly recommended "that the seminarians be helped to open up to the cry of the poor and to give an answer," the Rectors also stressed social doctrine be taught stressing its role in solving problems of poverty and international debt in African countries.

The Capuchin document says: "We live out our Franciscan Poverty first of all in our communites; but the brotherhood to which we are called extends far beyond our community. We are called to be brothers of all, and in a special way brothers to the poor." (Par 52 Summary)

How is this done? The document says: "This is expressed in our life in a variety of ways: In the first place concern for the poor involves us in trying to help them. But it means not just helping them but taking our place with them, in solidarity with them. It may also lead us to a more radical form of Poverty as an identification with them, — living as they live, as a prophetic witness to their dignity as "other Christs." But in any event, it involves us in striving to put into practice in our daily lives the guiding principle of brotherhood." (par 52 Summary)

What is meant by anthropological poverty?" Father Okoye confirms that "Africa has put off to a large extent, the yoke of colonialism, but only to succumb to cultural imperialism and alienation." By this he means the religious knows the best and the bad of his culture. Is it necessary to throw in the rubbish heap everything? It would seem to him that the religious should be in the forefront of the Gospel critique of certain idols that do dominate cultural symbols, namely, money, power, sex, security, happiness as possession and we could mention greed, exploitation, laziness, black marketeering among others. Why not take the good African symbols of the poor and identify with them such as time, patience, congeniality, care of the sick and indigent?

A Franciscan religious can develop the attitude of lord and master when he is helping his brothers or sisters. Religious poverty on the other hand should foster a fellowship between the helper and the poor. What is to be avoided is the un-African accent of "having," namely, ecclesial pride and prejudice.

What about poverty and a Franciscan's apostolate? Today Franciscans are serving in various missions and foreign countries. Some find their pastoral effectiveness hindered by lack of resources, that is, they do not have the means at their disposal. For some Africans mission becomes a dimension of religious poverty.

Evangelical poverty in the context of weak economies also affects the religious. Questions that arise are, for example, should the community have a vehicle since some people can never afford one? Nonetheless the apostolate demands such a need of transport. Another puzzle is how far are the religious to suffer the ordinary deprivations of an average citizen

or villager? Yet the ordinary person somehow survives, should the religious do the same?

Lastly, the Liturgical expression of evangelical poverty should show some of its values on the day of religious profession. Is there a possibility to incorporate in the liturgy of the religious profession some symbol manifesting a rejection of inordinate attachment to wealth and all that goes with it: pomp and privilege, pride in possessions? Francis, our founder, returned his clothes to his father; Eastern monks and nuns go into worship with a sheet over their head, their head and feet bare. The professed should be encouraged by his or her superior to offer some of his/her gifts to the poor in the name of the community.

To many Africans the Franciscan habit worn by religious signifies the rejection of "worldly fashions." He or she who wears it means there is a man or woman of God. In Africa today too some of the simply professed are calling for more solidarity in the use of goods and more personal involvement in the alleviation of poverty with a more radical poor standard of life. This is in line with the recommendation of Rectors and Spiritual Directors to their seminarians.

Conclusion

In an article I read recently by Bènèzet Bujo entitled: "Can morality be Christian in Africa?" he writes: "The black African is called by God as black, and it is as a black he must accept the Word of God and enter into the Kingdom. In doing so he has the right to make use of his culture to help assimilate the Kingdom." (*Theology Digest*, Vol. 36, Number 3, Fall 1989, p. 215).

I wonder if there are many who would doubt this notable principle? I would like to suggest that it also applies to the religious vows and in particular to poverty. Vowed poverty can transform African values and be a sign of contradiction in the massive poverty that surrounds African Franciscans in their daily endeavours.

Francis' poverty is relevant to Africa. Young men and women are embracing the Franciscan way of life. In a talk I gave to our friars in Livingstone I said: "The Franciscan life is not only a challenge to the African man, but it is also a deep and wonderful encounter with the many values rooted in traditional African culture. For example, a strong sense of respect for life, and among the Franciscans, that life is transformed into fraternal life, community sharing, simplicity, closeness to nature and joy... Franciscan life is a challenge... not only in prayer, poverty and community life but as messengers of joy and bearers of peace to all people... How grateful Franciscans are to God, the Creator of all things, for giving us such a founder, who, like a gardener, helps us, through his

extraordinary charism, to unfold the treasures of an African culture for the glory of the Lord and the good of his church." [Jude M. Rochford, "Franciscan Life: A Challenge for an African Man," Unpublished Manuscript, 1989, pps. 3-4)]

I would like to summarize these thoughts on poverty, primarily from my readings of two great problem solvers of poverty, namely, Fathers Lanfranco Serrini and Chukwuma Okoye by quoting from a Poor Clare nun who wrote:

> It is not the shoe which falls out of fashion but the added ribbon or the buckle. It is not the table which will become strange but the gilt or the carving, not the Gospel but its commentaries. There is no interpretation or commentary in our Founders' rule: it offers us water from the very spring and it answers the thirst of blacks and browns and whites of the thirteenth or the twentieth centuries alike, wherever there is a thirst for God and a determination to follow Christ.
>
> "We go to our modest tasks like the village women; we suffer from the same insecurity; we experience the lack of medical supplies at the nearby hospital where our illnesses are imperfectly cared for; we struggle to find some proteins for our meals and we experience a strange mixture of exhaustion and joy after a day in the fields. All this we bring to the God of Nazareth. And at the same time, in a continent where all attention is focused on material development, we feel the responsibility of offering "the supplement of soul" that was wished to a world which reaches to the stars but knows no peace." [*Is Clare Relevant for Africa?" Serafika*, No. 43, July '87, pps. 29-30).

In the document: "Reflections on Poverty" the writers note some difficulties that may arise in discussion. They quote Leonardo Boff's *Saint Francis: A Model for Human Liberation* (SCM Press, 1982, pp. 66-67). It may help in understanding better the use of certain words. The Brothers say: "Leonardo Boff's use of 'for,' 'with' and 'as' may help clarify some of the issues involved. Boff traces the stages of St. Francis conversion in terms of a gradual development in his relationship with the poor. While still living with his parents, helping in his fathers' business, he begins to assist the poor from his father's resources. He thus begins to live a life for the poor. After the break with his father, he leaves his home and goes to live with lepers, cares for them, bathes their sores, etc. Then, after hearing the Gospel reading Matthew 10:7-10, he goes further: he no longer lives just for the poor, or with the poor, but as the poor, identifying himself with them..."

The professed are models, true or false, not only to the new brothers they welcome into the order but to all peoples, rich or poor, in their daily commitment to the evangelical vow of poverty that Francis of Assisi so eagerly sought in the imitation of his Brother, Jesus, and that our mother

Clare achieved in her own rule hours before her death. With God on our side we should not fear or be intimidated as living witnesses or signs of contradiction to the present impoverished people among whom we move, pray, work and find our salvation. We must be men and women of great faith, hope and bearers of the living and risen glorified body of Christ, a divine fire of love, inflaming people's precious lives.

The wise old Chinese philosopher sage offers us much fuel for thought: "Muddy water, let stand, becomes clear." Or does it? □

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I Saw a Young Father

I saw a young father
with his child.
He was wheeling a stroller
through the airport
and made a great circle
on the red carpet at gate seventeen.
His face was stern and guarded,
the very mask of masculinity,
then the child reached for him,
tiny arms and hands up-like prayer,
and the young man bent low,
mask fell,
the father became a child
and the circle closed.

William Hart McNichols, S.J., S.F.O.

Shorter Notices

A Short History of the Franciscan Family. By Damian Vorreux, O.F.M., and Aaron Pembleton, O.F.M. Translated and adapted from the original French text **Histoire de la Famille Francisaine** by Aaron Pembleton, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989. Pp. 108. Paper, $4.95.

Reviewed by Sr. Gretchen Kunz, O.S.F., St. Joseph Hospital and Health Center, Bryan, Texas.

This short history is a bright jewel among Franciscan literature. There are many, like myself, who have found the growth and development of the Franciscan family difficult to follow, even somewhat of a mystery. Written as a good story, this book sheds light and understanding on the pilgrimage of a great family through the centuries.

The story flows through each of the eight chapters. Fathers Damian and Aaron begin with the story of St. Francis and his plan for the Franciscan family; they describe the first brothers and the foundations of the Order. Then they follow the story through the centuries, from the thirteenth century to the recent eighth centenary of the birth of St. Francis.

The slender volume relates more than a dry history, however. The authors have filled the story with interesting and meaningful examples, as well as vividly communicating the nature of the world that surrounded the Franciscan family. Statistics, geography and major social events are woven into the unfolding story. If anything is missing in the book, it may be the development of the Third Order; yet the book would no longer be a short history if it were included.

The authors answer many of the most frequently asked questions. They discuss what differentiates the Franciscan Order from other Orders and why the friars are called friars minor. They also address the fundamental intuition of the spirituality of St. Francis. In answering each of these questions, the authors return to the words of the founder himself.

To the authors I say, thank you, Father Damian and Father Aaron for this small but wonderful history of the Franciscan family. May your book heighten our awareness and help us bring Jesus and Francis closer to the Church and the world of today. Peace and every blessing!

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JUNE, 1990

The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

ARTICLES

CHRIST: THE HAECCEITAS OF GOD. THE SPIRITUALITY OF JOHN DUNS SCOTUS' DOCTRINE OF HAECCEITAS AND PRIMACY OF CHRIST 165
Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.

BETWEEN THE "LETTER" AND THE "SPIRIT": A REFLECTION UPON ADMONITION VII OF ST. FRANCIS 173
Brian Jordan, O.F.M.

COMPUTERS FOR CHURCH USE 190
Francis De Ruijte, O.F.M.

FEATURES

GUEST EDITORIAL: DO WE REALLY NEED A COMMENTARY? 161
Fr. Seraphin Conley, T.O.R.

A KITCHEN TABLE PRAYER 179
Jack D'Emic, S.F.O.

ON HOW THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT WERE DISTRIBUTED TO THE MASTERS OF NOVICES OF OUR FRATERNITY ASSEMBED IN ASSISI 181
Herman Schalück, O.F.M.

POETRY:

TO EASE YOUR PAIN 164
Rita Kristina Weinheimer, O.S.F.

REST HOME MASS 172
Fr. Theophane Robertson, O.F.M.

BOOK REVIEWS 187

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The CORD

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

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

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

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
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).

GUEST EDITORIAL

"Do We Really Need a Commentary?"

FR. SERAPHIN CONLEY, T.O.R.

I have just finished reading a very interesting book which provided me practice in Spanish, stimulation for the mind and inspiration for the spirit. Not bad for only the equivalent of $9.00! The title is *La Forma de Vida Franciscana, Ayer Y Hoy* by Fr. Javier Garrido, O.F.M. It is a study of the Rule of 1223 and its place in the life of the Friar Minor of today. Many of his observations can apply to the Friars and Sisters of the TOR Family. We seem to have passed from a great enthusiasm for the new TOR Rule to a period of casual admiration. In the "olden days" during the Novitiate many had to memorize the Rule, while the Friday readings of it in the Refectory helped the rest of us to know it more or less by heart. Now it seems scarcely to be read, even formally in our refectories! Why after so much effort to renew it does it seem to have lost its value or force?

Perhaps it is because the Rule in itself never had for us the great force and power that the words of the Rule had in other Institutes. Many of the modern communities of sisters had been given it as an "umbrella" Rule to cover all their charitable apostolates. Many of the scholars knew also that the various Rules of the TOR through the centuries traced their origin to the more legal or canonical expressions of the penitential "propositum" rather than to the spirit-filled words of the Letters of Francis to his Penitents.

For the brothers and sisters who made up the numerous communities of the Order of Penance of St. Francis from the beginnings down to our days, the source of their vocation did not lie in the Rule but in the knowledge/experience of God in the works of mercy. Almost instinctively they drew their inspiration from that powerful moment when Francis encountered the leper and embraced in his person all the marginated people of his time. It is in this moment of penance/conversion or change of values which begins franciscan life. In the eyes of Assisi, Francis and his first companions were "penitents"... men who had voluntarily accepted

a life style founded upon the Words and Actions of Jesus shown in their charitable works in favor of the lepers.

Our "founders" or ancestors were certainly more inspired by the Fioretti and the words and examples of franciscan charity than in the dry texts which tried to codify and regulate and recognize the life of penance. It is true generally that "Actions speak louder than words" then it was especially so in this case.

Now we are in the period of trying to work up commentaries on the most recently approved version of the TOR Rule. To be useful such Commentaries should be the real expression of the specific values, initiatives, and the talents, which from the beginning have been and are the expression of each TOR Congregation's unique style of living the Rule drawn from its social, ecclesial, theological and franciscan context. It will not be an easy task. There is resistance from many of the brothers and sisters in leadership positions drained by the efforts to redefine the purpose of their group, or to finalize the writing of their Constitutions. They point to these as the Commentary to escape another round of meetings, discussions, rewritings! And in the background for those who have been around for a while are the pre-conciliar type of commentaries which emphasized the juridical and moral aspects... heavy on obligation and light on inspiration!

Perhaps the immediate consequences of getting out from under the weight of a more juridically cast Rule and commentaries is that the new Rule has become only a Spiritual and Inspirational document from the past, although now fortunately cast in the words of Francis himself. Friars and sisters don't really know what to do with a phrase like: "They are obliged to observe it faithfully in virtue of their profession accepted by the Church". Yet the Rule does represent our identity and it continues to be a prophetic call to relive the adventure of Francis and to show forth the fruits of penance in works of peace, reconciliation and mercy, in a poverty embraced to enrich the poor.

The current after the Council certainly went against the legal and juridical type of commentary on the obligation of the vows, prayer, etc. It was the historical interpretation of the Writings, of the epoch, of the Church and the popular religious movements which swept all before it. The great value of this current has been to return the Rule to its context, its vitality, to the very language of Francis. An unfortunate byproduct of this has been to reduce the Rule to a document from the past. It is very hard for novices and junior professed to appreciate what the recent process of leaving behind the juridical accent of the "Memoriale Propositi" to recovering the spiritual accents of the Letter to the Faithful has meant to so many older friars and sisters... "graduates" of Roots & Winds courses, of study days and questionaires! That, as they will tell you, is history, but

what does it mean for today, for these modern conditions so different from Assisi and its lepers?

Another current is that of the theological/spiritual interpretation which focuses on the writings of Francis examining each phrase and its context so as to trace the very roots of his Rules. The "poor, unlettered" Francis would be amazed at his wisdom embracing almost all aspects of Christian life! The problem resulting from so much painstaking and careful efforts is that we can become so wrapped up in complex interpretations and "questions" that the vital message of Francis is weakened for us.

As graceful as we franciscans, especially those of the TOR family, must be to these dedicated scholars of whatever current and their insights... do we really need all this to comment on a document written by a simple man to be read as he wrote it with the wisdom of simple people? Is the Rule only a spiritual and inspiring document of the past or professing it today am I linked with Francis in following Jesus Christ?

I think that all the Commentaries... juridical, historical, theological and spiritual are valuable and are needed... but that each Congregation in its institutional life and each brother and sister in his/her personal life must supply the "commentary" applying the Rule to the reality of "Today." We must use all these hardwon reflections to recover the original spark of conversion, the creative force reflected in the Rule for our own Times/History. This creative force, this gift is what is needed in all our works of renewal. And this we cannot supply for it comes from the Holy Spirit, the Source of all renewal. When we have done our study and reflection... or better before ... we ask the Source of light and courage to stir up in us the grace of conversion, part of God's Call and Gift to us. Then we Penitents of St. Francis will see and do the works of mercy in our day as Francis did in his.

"I have done what was mine to do. May God show you what is yours."

To ease your pain
Is a thousand
Bright
Triumphal
Victories!
To bring you joy
Is
Discovery
Of
Secret treasure,
Jewels in a
Misplaced shoebox!
To be a blessing
In your life
Is sunrise caressing
Daisy fields,
Kissing honeybuds
In June,
Smiling on the
Morning World
With
Peaceful Consolation!

Rita Kristina Weinheimer, O.S.F.

Christ: The Haecceitas of God

The Spirituality of John Duns Scotus' Doctrine of Haecceitas and Primacy of Christ

SÉAMUS MULHOLLAND, O.F.M.

It may at first glance seem odd that I have chosen to reflect upon the spirituality of Scotus when he is known as a theologian and philosopher, but on closer inspection it is not odd at all. Scotus' theological and philosophical investigations and conclusions burn with a love for God, Christ, creation, and humanity. He is a thinker, not just of profound intellectual insight, but of profound spiritual insight also. It is love which is the central motivating force, and principle tenet of his life and work. It is love which is the essence of Franciscan spirituality whether it be found in the writings and life of Francis, Clare, Bonaventure and a host of other Franciscan writers, thinkers, mystics and saints and it is love of God which predominates.

Yet, Scotus' spirituality has not been given the attention it deserves for too often, even among Franciscans, his insights are seen as theological or philosophical "hair-splitting." He is presented as some kind of Scholastic Iago: subtle, scheming, devious, a thinker who can take apart a word, phrase or sentence and manipulate it to serve his own purposes. He is more feared in the avoiding than understood in the confronting. Scotus: the Harbinger of Nominalism; the initiator of everything that is decadent in philosophy and theology: Scotus, the linguistic gymnast who somersaults, cartwheels and vaults with finely tuned nuances and veiled half-implied eccentricities and subtleties of language and thought. But there is more to him than that for I believe he is not only one of the great theological and philosophical teachers in the Franciscan tradition, but also one of the great spiritual teachers.

Fr. Séamus Mulholland is a member of the English Province of Franciscans whose poetry appears frequently in **The CORD**. *He is currently at the Franciscan Study Centre in Canterbury researching and writing on the thought of Duns Scotus.*

The most frequently used epithet of Scotus is "Subtle Doctor" which does not have the same celestial attractiveness about it as Thomas', "Angelic Doctor," or Bonaventure's, "Seraphic Doctor," and too often this epithet is used in a perjorative and derisive sense. But as Hamlet said, "... to my mind it is a custom more honoured in the breach than in the keeping." (Hamlet, 1, 111). So, I use the epithet, "Subtle" in the breach and not the keeping; for though he was intellectually subtle, he was subtle in love also. It is a subtlety which is rooted in love, a gifted vision of God, the unique individuality of Creation, and the place and role of Christ in God's redemptive plan, and the absolute freedom of God, particularly in Christ's predestination and the Immaculate Conception.

In all the reading, study and thinking about Scotus that I have done and continue to do, a question persistently raises itself in my mind: how could Scotus have arrived at the spiritual depths of his doctrines (let alone the theological/philosophical depths), if he had not already experienced them as realities in his own life? I find it impossible to believe that Scotus did nothing but abstractly think and reason like some Scholastic Mr. Spock. Indeed those who use his epithet perjoratively may think of him as Caeser did of the even subtler Cassius: "... Mark him... he thinks too much... such men are dangerous..." (Julius Caeser, 1, II). Where ignorance is bliss, when approaching Scotus it is folly to pretend to be wise by avoiding him; the result is fear and lack of understanding and yet Scotus is a fertile bed of spiritual richness.

As a Franciscan myself and a Scotist, I am struck by the fact that Scotus' own Franciscanism is very often almost overlooked, or at best, an afterthought or irrelevancy in his life. It is an uninteresting biographical fact yet it is crucial to any spiritual understanding of him. His work burns with a Franciscan vision which has much to teach us today. The doctrine of the Primacy and Predestination of Christ; haecceitas; primacy of the Will; and his defence of the Immaculate Conception, as well as his ethics, are intimately part of the Franciscan tradition, its vision of the world and its humanism.

He entered the Order at a very young age and one may assume that this was because his desire to join the Friars was very strong. Perhaps he had heard the Friars preach in his native Scotland, or had seen them; whatever the case, one may also assume that he had some love for Francis when he joined. One may further agree that Bonaventure may be closer in 'spirit' and in time to Francis, but I have always viewed this as setting limits on interpreting Francis' life and vision. New interpretations of his life and work and vision are essential if the needs of any age are to be met so that the vibrant, charismatic ever-newness of the Spirit of Francis and Franciscanism can be a prophetic witness in every climate and not

be lost to complacency, cynicism and compromise. I believe Scotus does this in his own age, for what we receive from Bonaventure in poetry in his own writings, we receive in realism and conceptualisation in Scotus. One might call him the 'metaphysical wing' of Francis.

Yet it is the "Subtle" doctor who breaks with a whole tradition and asserts the Will over intellect; who limits what philosophy can conclude or reach; who teaches the Predestination of Christ. It is the "Subtle" doctor, who when Augustine, Thomas and even Bonaventure, cannot hold to the Immaculate Conception, solves their problem (and that of the Church) by moving it away from human necessity to divine freedom of will (for which alone he should be canonized). One might ask and wonder why Bonaventure could not hold to the Immaculate Conception — a question which has not been asked or even investigated. However, what holds these theological and philosophical teachings together in unity is not intellectual or linguistic subtlety itself, but I believe his experience of them in his own life. Even in Scotus' ethics it is Love which dominates.[1] They are conclusions of a man of prayer and deep spiritual serenity, for in Scotus the ultimate aim of all theology is union with God and this is also the ultimate aim of Spirituality.[2]

His teachings attest to the spirituality of his own life which is within the understanding of mysticism in the Scholastic tradition.[3] He was not an emotionless thinker, nor was he removed and transcendentally mystical or spiritual; he was, rather, a man bewildered in love at the intensity of God's love revealed in creation, Scripture, theology and most perfectly, in Christ — and is this not what Francis is doing in the Canticle of the Creatures which is poem, prayer, mystical union, theology, and praise all in one? Scotus is undeniably a son of Francis and it is the doctrine of the Primacy and Predestination of Christ which is the most eloquent witness to the depth of his Franciscanism, his prayer and mysticism.

The Spirituality of Scotus' Doctrine of Christ

In turning to consider the spirituality of Scotus' doctrine I am constantly struck by the beauty of the phrase "Summum opus Dei"[4] which the late Eric Doyle, OFM, translated as "God's Masterpiece." Here Scotus manifests the poet in himself as well as mystic: and not only here, for one need only read the opening and closing prayer of *De Primo principio* to see not just his poetry but also his prayerfulness.[5] And I venture to suggest that the doctrine of "haecceitas" is of significance here, for what Scotus says about the unique distinction of everything as being 'this' and not 'that' can equally be applied to God's Masterpiece for I believe in this context that Christ is the "haecceitas" of God.[6]

The question of Christ's Predestination was not new when Scotus came

to consider it, but as Scotus thought differently from others before him so too he approaches this question differently.[7] It had been considered from the hypothetical standpoint in the question, "if man had not sinned would Christ still have come?." The question is not only hypothetical but is also negative in its implications for spirituality where it is man's actions which occasion God to act. Though the question is hypothetical it implicitly limits the absolute freedom of God to be God as God.

Scotus does not ask this question and indeed would never have asked such a question because he moves away from considering the question in hypothesis and so in a negative manner, to a consideration of divine freedom, will and love and so arrives at a positive soteriology, anthropology and spirituality. Scotus says that we do not know what God may or may not have done if man had not sinned;[8] when he treats of the question he does so based purely upon what he concludes of Christ's absolute predestination to be Son of God before all time.

Scotus has the same vision of the created order as Francis; he is closer to Francis than many would consider, for he knows that without this love there is nothing and if there is nothing there is chaos.

He therefore takes what is essentially a theological question and moves it into a spiritual dimension by starting not with man's sinfulness and need for redemption, but the absolute freedom of God's love. Scotus' question is "whether Christ was predestined to be the Son of God." Scotus' answer based on the love that God is, is yes. Christ's predestination is absolute and unconditional and sin has nothing to do with it. He cannot and will not believe that God's Masterpiece would never have taken place because there was no sin to bring it about.

Here, spirituality is at the service of theology first and foremost and again the basis of Scotus' doctrine is love. He cannot accept that if Adam had not sinned the greatest love would never have been given to God because the love of men which is less than perfection had not been refused — and the love of men cannot have nor ever possess the same intensity as Christ's love. It is impossible, Scotus holds, to accept that God would have accepted the lesser over the greater: thus, Christ was always absolutely and unconditionally predestined to be the Son of God: it is the

perfection of Christ's love which constitutes the Primacy he has and His Predestination and no other reason.

Spirituality takes precedence over theology here for although the doctrine has profound theological significance, it has a profounder spiritual significance particularly for understanding the Universal Kingship of Christ over creation. Scotus' doctrine hinges on God's love for himself and his will to be loved by others in himself.

Scotus says that God is first and foremost and formally love. He loves himself and wills himself to be loved in others and that those who love him come to perfect union with him (the end to which theology and spirituality look forward). Love is reaosn itself for its own loving and in God there is one act of loving. He loves himself most perfectly, in loving himself in others the love is ordered and holy and it diffuses itself. God's will is that he be loved outside himself by someone who can love perfectly. He forsees the intensity of union between Christ and himself who loves him as he loves himself. Christ therefore, one concludes from this, is the centre of all creation all of which has its beginning, source, and end in the love God has for himself in Christ most perfectly.[9]

The 'motive' for the incarnation then is God's freely willed, freely given, freely creating love. Scotus' teaching from a spiritual point of view is about the goodness of God, how God sees man in love in Christ; it is about love and redemption, intimacy and union, acceptance and gratitude, the goodness of creation — and not sin and death, estrangement and loss, rejection and self-pity, and creational dualism.

This is Francis of Assisi's Canticle and spirit from a different, though undoubtedly Franciscan, viewpoint. Scotus has the same vision of the created order as Francis; he is closer to Francis than many would consider, for he knows that without this love there is nothing and if there is nothing there is chaos. The core spiritual message of the Doctrine of the Primacy of Christ in Scotus is that of experiential love: God's love is its own reason (the Immaculate Conception is a point in case), its own cause and so is the cause of everything else. As Francis saw with the poet's eye, Scotus sees with the reflective eye: creation, Christ, and the human family are constituted in love and it is through this love that we are brought deeper and deeper into the mystery of God in union, the end to which we all look forward.

The Spirituality of Haecceitas

I do not wish to discuss the metaphysics of "haecceitas" in great detail in what is essentially an article on spirituality; however, some treatment is necessary if the spiritual dimension is to be explored.

In Scotus the mind apprehends both being and objective truth but he

goes on to say that objectivity of human knowledge involves certain positions for which philosophy does not allow.

Agreeing with Thomas, Scotus says that human knowledge depends upon experience but he rejects the necessity of a 'divine illumination' of the intellect. Scotus, however, did not agree with Thomas' idea that the human mind does not know individual things directly or immediately.[10] He believed that the mind does have an intellectual, albeit somewhat confused, intuition of the individual thing itself. His reasoning is sound: how could the mind abstract the universal from the particular or individual without any previous intelectual intuition of the individual. If the mind abstracts at all it abstracts from what it knows.

Scotus demonstrates this in his Socrates example: Socrates is a man and Plato is a man but there is in both a human nature which is itself "indifferent" to being the nature of Socrates and Plato. In other words we can distinguish in Socrates his "Socratesness" from his human nature which is not identical with it. What then is the distinction? It is not a distinction between separable things (not even the divine power could separate them). Nor is it merely a mental-intellectual distinction. It is a 'formal objective distinction.' Again, reason and sensation are distinct objectively but they are not separable in the way body and soul are separable — the power of both could not be separated without the destruction of the soul. So it is a distinction in formalities rather than in separable things.

This is the core of "haecceitas" and there is a deep spirituality in it because this realism of Scotus attests to the fact that there exists in each individual thing a nature distinct from its "haecceitas" (though he does not attribute the same nature to all members of the same species).

Haecceitas concerns itself from a spiritual point of view with the absolute unique individual distinction of originality that is the result of God's free loving creative activity and effects every animate and inanimate thing. As each person is individual and distinct in their 'thisness,' even from their own human nature, so too is every bird, flower, tree etc. The doctrine of Christ's Primacy attests to his own uniqueness for he is the only Son of God. He is utterly and absolutely unique in himself; his haecceitas is his Christness — original and individual: he is a sense the 'haecceitas' of God present to the world.

Haecceitas then is not simply about metaphysical deliniations of form, genus, species, substance, essences and so on but it is also about humility in accepting the glory of God in the most insignificant of created things. Gerard Manley Hopkins spiritualized it as 'inscape' in his poetry, particularly in "Pied Beauty." Francis does the same in the Canticle by naming each thing as individual Brother or Sister and in the great prayer of thanksgiving before the Eucharist.

There is as much Christological depth in this doctrine as in that of the Primacy and it has a very positive anthropological and psychological dimension to it. Underpinning all these teachings is the unity in love which exists between God and his creatures each one of which is unique, not just among the species but of and within itself and to itself in God's creative activity. Thus even the metaphysical dimension of Scotus' thought is rooted in love.

Francis always began with the love of God and his own experience of it. Scotus too belongs in this category: he begins with the love of God in his Predestination and Primacy doctrines; Primacy of the Will; haecceitas; his ethics, psychology and anthropology. He has the same depth of feeling and desire that Francis has, though he expresses and contextualizes it differently. It led Francis to call Christ, 'Brother;' to thank God for him who knew our human experience. It led him ultimately to La Verna to experience the pain and suffering of this love.

Love of God, love of Christ, love of creation, love of man in all his vast array of gifts and talents, Scotus experiences it as much as Francis, Clare, Alexander of Hales or Bonaventure. He not only loves God but is in love with God's love. He is beyond doubt a great spiritual master in the Franciscan tradition, a mystic and, I believe, a saint.

His teachings are deeply significant for our own times: filled with faith and hope; love and longing; a respect for life; a respect for the uniqueness of God's creation and the ever-present love of God. What a pity he died so young. I regret what might have been, but as Gilson says, "such regrets are useless." His works radiate not only intellectual power, but spiritual power also filled with love, intimacy, prayer, mysticism and the unity which he saw his whole life and work bringing him towards.

As a Scotist, as a Franciscan, as a Celt, as a disciple I pray daily that the church may recognize not just his intellectual genius, theological orthodoxy, or philosophical subtleties, but also the sanctity of his life; for Scotus was a man who knew by experience the love of the God he wrote, thought, speculated and reflected about. Like Francis he was a simple man of prayer and love. □

Endnotes

[1]See the excellent translation and study by A. B. Wolter, *Duns Scotus On The Will and Morality*, CUP, 1986, esp. last 3 chapters.

[2]*Opus Oxoniense*, Prol., q. 3, a. 4, n. 12.

[3]See P. Tillich's remarks about Scotus' mysticism in *A History of Christian Thought*, SCM, London 1968, p. 126.

[4]Scotus' full teaching on the Predestination of Christ is to be found in *Ordinatio* III, d. 7 (Vives ed., XIV, 348-9, 354-5) and *Reportata Parisiensis*, III, d. 7, q. 4 (Vives ed., XXIII,. 301-4).

[5]An excellent translation can be found in A. B. Wolter's *John Duns Scotus: A Treatise On God As First Principle*, Franciscan Herald Press: Chicago 1966, 1.1, 1.2., p. 3, 4.94, p. 150.

[6]I am aware that Scotus teaches that God's essence alone has no need of any individuating principle since it is individual in itself (*de se haec*). I use the term in a spiritual sense and not credal.

[7]See ref. note 4. In these two cases Scotus always begins with asking about Christ's Predestination: Ord. III *Utrum Christus praedestinatus fuerit esse Filius Dei?* Rep. Par.: *Utrum Christus sit praedestinatus esse Filius Dei?*

[8]As note 7 has suggested, there is nothing in his works treating of the question in the way it had been framed before him. He does mention the hypothesis of Adam not sinning but in Scotus this too must be understood in terms of what he says concerning Christ's predestination.

[9]*Rep. Par.*, III, d. 7 q. 4 no. 5 op. cit., 303.

[10]See the variety of its use in *Op. Ox.* I, d. 2, q. 4 a. 5, n. 41-45 *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 8, q. 4, a. 3, n. 17 and cf I, d. 2, q. 7, nn. 43-44.

* * *

Rest Home Mass

Old people, ancient inmates of the Home,
Your struggles o'er, your hard-fought battles done,
Here endlessly becalmed you spend your days
Content with laurels you've already won.

Laurels or sorrows, all is muted now.
The daily rounds, the flying years advance.
Bath, meals and sleep and TV make your life.
One hour only wakes you from your trance.

One hour the Saviour speaks unto your souls,
One hour at Holy Mass when angel wings
Bring heaven's blessing to your weary hearts,
One hour when the spirit wakes and sings.

So drowse throughout the day, if drowse you must
Till Mass or heaven raise you from the dust.

Fr. Theophane Robertson, O.F.M.

Between the "letter" and the "spirit": A Reflection Upon Admonition VII of St. Francis

FR. BRIAN JORDAN, O.F.M.

We religious need to remind ourselves every so often, of what our profession is all about. As servants of God we are called to seek the glory of God, not our own self-glorification. Such was the motivation Francis possessed when he reminded the friars of what their profession entailed, whether it was in chapters or other fraternal gatherings. The *Admonitions* of St. Francis are a collection of 28 short addresses given at various times during his life. Taken as a whole, the *Admonitions* form a mirror of that perfection which the friars should strive to attain as a fraternal order. Some commentators believe they were reflections upon Matthew 5:3, which serves as the basis for the Sermon on the Mount.

It is my contention that the *Admonitions* are still relevant and meaningful for us religious today because they add something to the understanding of our rule and living tradition. I wish to focus upon Admonition VII because its message that good works must follow knowledge is vitally important today. Twentieth-century thought includes all types and areas of knowledge. Those in religious life have access to that knowledge and are responsible for correctly disseminating that knowledge. By our own example in community life and within our apostolic endeavors we have the potential to advocate the message of good works as a follow-up to our newly-discovered knowledge.

In order to clarify my point, I wish to divide the seventh admonition

Fr. Brian Jordan recently completed a Doctor of Ministry Degree at Andover - Newton School of Theology. His area of concentration was ministry to Hispanics in which he has gained much experience. He is a member of the Holy Name Province of Friars Minor. Fr. Brian is an avid marathon runner, most recently having participated in the Boston Marathon.

into five parts as the format for my reflection. This format is similar to the one in Lothar Hardick's, O.F.M., book *The Admonitions of St. Francis*.[1] In this book, Fr. Hardick reinforces the significance of Cajetan Esser's, O.F.M., reflection upon these same *Admonitions*. My purpose is clearly to state that good works, whether in community life or in the apostolate, must follow the knowledge that we learn using it wisely for the service of others. The following is a five-part reflection on the seventh admonition.

I. St. Paul tells us: *"The letter kills but the spirit gives life".*

Francis constantly alluded to Scripture as the basis of his rule and the way of life for the friars. This verse from Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 3:6 was included in the comparison of the Old and New Covenants. The "letter" is the Old Testament *law* which brings spiritual death because in proclaiming comands and prohibitions that must be heeded without at the same time giving the inner grace for their observance, it places men and women in the condition of being bound by what they cannot always observe fully. The Spirit, given the graces in the new economy of salvation, empowers one to do what God wants.[2] The "spirit" refers to the spiritual nature of the New Covenant which is the person of Christ.[3] Francis, like Paul, was impatient with self-righteous friars who profess value in externals and details of the law. Rather, Francis inspired the friars to abide by the New Covenant exhorting them to give service to the People of God by the example of their own interior life in giving witness to Gospel values.

II. *"A man has been killed by the letter when he wants to know quotations only so that people will think he is very learned and he can make money to give to his relatives and friends."*

In the film, *Amadeus*, the character Salieri is a learned man who is in charge of the royal court in eighteenth century Austria. Salieri had accesss to power and money while holding a lofty position in the local church. He possessed an uncanny knowledge for recognizing and appreciating the gifts and talents of others while quoting famous writers and musicians of past ages. He discovered the brilliance and creativity in Wolfgang Mozart. However a falling out between the two took place because of the jealousy and envy of Salieri. Towards the end of the film, Salieri was responsible for the physical and emotional destruction of this talented composer, Mozart. Salieri tragically lamented his own loss of self and because of his own mediocrity, was unable to realize and to share his own gifts. Salieri possessed the type of knowledge that was separated from life with God and therefore became dead knowledge. He died a broken, frustrated man.

Such was the type of knowledge that Francis detested because it was used as a form of manipulation to deceive other people due to vain and vested self-interests. In our contemporary American culture, a conflict of values is apparent in the family, business and even in church matters. Strong encouragement is given to those aspiring to be number one, and who demonstrate the need to be recognized or considered famous. As Franciscan religious, we can practice values of respect, dignity and fairness to all as a means of promoting a value system for the service of humankind.

When Francis was alive, science generally meant theology, a knowledge of what God revealed to us through Scripture. Therefore, theological knowledge was based on the Word of God. Today, however, the emphasis of scientific knowledge is not on theology but on the natural, physical, and behaviorals sciences. Most religious have friends or know persons who are struggling to find meaning in their lives at home and in the workplace. It is a most satisfying experience when we can help them make connections that God is also revealed in what they do in their particular professions. First of all, we Franciscans are called by the Gospel to discover that truth in our own religious lives. We are well-educated and have the opportunity to attend workshops, retreats and various forms of continuing education. In fact, some of us can make a career of attending workshops. But do we consistently integrate that new-found knowledge into our ministerial encounters? Francis warned that we can be smug in our knowledge if good works do not follow. We have a choice as Franciscans: like Mozart, we can take a risk at sharing our knowledge and talent for the sake of posterity, or, we can be like the safe, cunning Salieri and use others' knowledge and talents for our own selfish gain.

III. *"A religious has been killed by the letter when he has no desire to follow the spirit of Sacred Scripture, but wants to know what it says only so that he can explain it to others."*

Francis really has no problem with formal studies, provided they were based on prayer and devotion to God. I am not promoting a literalist Franciscan antiintellectul attitude. On the countrary, I am trying to convey that studies were encouraged as a means to build up Franciscan life through good works. To support this argument, let us examine Francis' response to Anthony's request for formal studies for the Order's students. In the *letter to Anthony*, Francis wrote:

> To Brother Anthony, my bishop, Brother Francis sends greetings. It is agreeable to me that you should teach the friars sacred theology, so long as they do not extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotedness over this study, as it is contained in the Rule. Farewell. (*Omnibus*, p. 164).

The concept of formal studies was acceptable for Francis, provided it

was rooted in prayer. Francis trusted the wise and loyal Anthony. This relationship was opposite to that of the religious superior in Bologna who allegedly defied Francis' authority and opened a house of studies for knowledge rather than for the sake of God. Francis is said to have applied a curse on this superior, who eventually died after a long illness.[4] Properly understood, formal studies should be a blessing rather than a curse for the Franciscan student.

A religious can also learn humility within the same process. I remember one evening, some years ago when I was teaching an adult education course on the Synoptic Gospels and was purposely trying to impress the class with my knowledge of form criticism, literary criticism, redaction criticism and other methods. The first question after my somewhat verbose explanation was, "O.K. Father, what does all that mean to you regarding your faith life?" Needless to say, I really learned a lesson in humility that evening. What I learned was that the teaching of scripture should be educative and faith-developing, not merely boosting of one's ego. It reminds me of the evangelist John's words: "Let us not love in word and speech, but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18). Br. Giles, one of Francis' wisest followers observed: "the Word of God is not with the one who hears or speaks it, but with the one who does it." (*Golden Words*, 91).

The Gospel is of crucial importance in the Franciscan religious life. Father Robert Karris, O.F.M., highlights this importance in an article for religious published in an earlier *Cord*. The article, entitled "The Place of Scripture in Religious Life" (July/August, 1976), reminds us that the Gospel is the fundamental norm of religious life. The author cites important passages from key Vatican II documents, such as *Dei Verbum* and *Perfectae Caritatis*, to support his thesis that frequent reading of Scirpture is indispensable in assisting religious to attain the "excelling knowledge of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:/8).[5] To quote St. Jerome, ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.

Furthermore, Fr. Karris excoriates the contemporary tendency in religious life of making substitutes for the Gospel, such as trendy workshops or the use of psychological jargon. Fr. Karris teaches:

> It strikes me at times, however, that there has not been enough emphasis put on a return to the Gospel. At times, we religious have the tendency to substitute for the Gospel. These substitutes are well and good, but then they have the tendency to replace the gospel as the norm for religious life, then we have problems.[6]

Later, Fr. Karris comments on knowledge and cultural values that can endanger and possibly supplant Gospel values. He warns of these popular tendencies and calls for a realistic but faithful application of Gospel principles for today's religious.

IV. ***"On the other hand, those have received life from the spirit of Sacred Scripture who, by their words and example, refer to the Most High God, to whom belongs all good."***

The late Cassian Corcoran, O.F.M., was a devout scripture scholar and is certainly missed by many people. I remember Cassian as a friar who constantly updated himself and his students with all the recent developments in New Testament studies. This occurred while he was teaching at the Washington Theological Union in Silver Spring, Maryland; at St. Bonaventure's for summer courses; and even in his numerous adult education classes. He was constantly helping each of his students in his own unique way. Cassian consistently maintained a symmetry between what he espoused as a religious and what he practiced as a scholarly friar. He always thanked God for his vocation as a friar and his ministry as a teacher. He was an excellent role-model for his many students and friends. Cassian's love for God was especially seen in his encouragement of those considering priestly and religious vocation. Fr. Hardick acutely observes the connection between this presence of knowledge and the search for God. "The hunger of authentic love is a hunger for a deeper knowledge of the one whom we love."[7] Cassian's forceful encouragement to read the Scriptures was helpful for the Franciscan students who would transmit this love in their apostolic works.

In reflecting upon Scripture, I envision the apostolate as not merely sharing in the care of souls but as a dynamic mission of vast proportions and innumerable opportunities. Many of my Franciscan teachers, like Cassian, encouraged me to explore all possibilities in the apostolate. The Franciscan mission to serve was to be as wide as the world itself, its purpose was the intensive betterment and the proclamation of Christ's message to all. Now, after a brief time as a friar, I am beginning to understand why Francis has been referred to as the *vir catholicus et totus apostolicus*". He was for all people. Francis had an open approach to all people without distinction of class or race. And he reaized this vision with the courage of a disciple of Christ and the boundless energy of a herald of the Great King.

Fr. Hardick describes the feeling I get when I think about some of my past Franciscan teachers like Cassian:

> We should, however, never forget that our increasing knowledge should be used to increase our good works and that those good works, which can be done by even the most ordinary brethren, show the extent of our knowledge and understanding of God.[8]

May the knowledge we receive be incorporated into good works for the service of humankind.

V. *"... all that they know or wish to know and do not allow their knowledge to become a source of self-complacency."*

Fr. Frank McNulty, the vicar for priests for the Archdiocese of Newark, was entrusted with delivering a public message to His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, back in September, 1987 when the Pontiff returned to the United States for his second visit. In one of his spiritual conferences, Fr. MaNulty tells a story about a debonair stage actor who was asked to deliver a dramatic reading of Psalm 23, the Psalm of the Good Shepherd, in front of a packed audience in a well-known theatre. He did so with such tremendous elocution and consummate skill that he was greatly applauded. Afterwards, he invited an impoverished man to come up and recite the same psalm. The man did so with such conviction and genuine passion as to create a cathartic effect upon the audience which left them in tears. The stage actor immediatelty responded "ladies and gentlemen, I know the words of the Psalm of the Good Shepherd, but this man knows the Shepherd." How many times do we utter fanciful words in our preaching as though we were acting while neglecting the passion for holiness which the gospel is meant to convey? Do we know only the words of self-complacency or do we know Christ in scripture, as Francis demands of us? As faithful followers of the Word, we all need to be reminded that we are servants of God seeking His glory and not our own self-glorification.

Endnotes

[1]Lothar Hardick, O.F.M., *The Admonitions of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1982).

[2]Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm., and Raymond E. Brown, S.S., eds. *The Jerome Biblical Commmentary* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968), Vol. II, p. 279.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 279.

[4]"The Little Flowers of St. Francis," Part Three, No. 12. *Franciscan Omnibus*, (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973) pp. 1492 - 1493.

[5]Robert Karris, O.F.M., "The Place of Scripture in Religious Life," *The Cord* July/August, 1976, p. 205

[6]*Ibid.* p. 206.

[7]Hardick, p. 65.

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 66.

A Kitchen Table Prayer

JACK D'EMIC, S.F.O.

The revised Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order urges all of us to participate in the Liturgy of the Hours. I am fortunate to be a part of a small, dynamic pre-fraternity which stresses the Hours as an integral part of the Franciscan way of life.

An initial encounter with the actual text of the Liturgy of the Hours can be confusing. I found it a daunting task to unravel the day-to-day and week-to-week Cycles. With some generous help from my confreres, I have mastered the essential mechanics.

For the past year and a half, I have prayed the "Morning Prayer" nearly every day. There are, of course, also the "Day," "Evening" and "Night" Prayer; my own schedule does not usually allow for these. But, in the early morning, as I sip my coffee at the kitchen table, and the day's first light streams through the window, I and this simple little book are one.

My wife peruses the morning paper. She has become accustomed to this lapse during which I sit there quietly, my head cranned over my brown book. My sons wander past me, their eyes still dim. In the distance, I hear them announce the burning issue of a new day. "Do we have any Cheerios?" "Where are my sneakers?" "I can't find my schoolbag." My wife fields all of this demands with the elan of a traffic cop in rush hours. I feel the boys' eyes upon me. They, too, recognize this musing phase of my morning. Christopher captures their mixture of wonderment and derision thus: "Daddy's being weird again."

Such is the grist of my Morning Prayer. As I sit there poring over the psalmist's ancient groping for his God, I am surrounded by my family and the reality of this day with all of its necessities. This is as much a part of the Morning Prayer as the Psalms themselves. Indeed, even a cursory reading of the Psalms makes it evident that the writers were expressing their own very compelling pains and fears, anxieties and tribu-

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Mr. D'Emic, an attorney and counselor at law, is a member of Laverna Fraternity of Secular Franciscans at St. Francis Church in Manhattan.

lations. So, too, I enter into the spirit of each Psalm, joining with the psalmist as he pleads for mercy, gives thanks for assistance, expresses sorrow for his sins.

For that brief hiatus in the day, time stands still. The perennial essence of life asserts itself. I picture my Hebrew confrere as he sits in front of his tent in the early morning light. As much as he, I need strength for the day, courage for all of its challenges, forgiveness. For all of the quantum leaps in our science and our understanding, life on earth is much the same as it was for this ancient pray-er with his camel and his tent:

> To my words give ear, O Lord,
> give heed to my groaning.
> Attend to the sound of my cries,
> my King and my God.
>
> (Psalm 5, Monday Morning, Week I)

I have yet to hear a more beautiful and expressive way of describing the sombre pall of a Monday morning. Slowly, I reread the words. Something stirs within me; yes, this is how I feel! Through the murky swirl of appointments, deadlines, unreturned phone calls, bills and taxes which cloud my heart and soul, this primitive echo from a distant desert has hit its mark. The psalmist has become my confidante, giving form, in measured cadence, to my early morning bewilderment.

We stand as one: This citizen of the wandering, fractured Hebrew tribe, and I, a denizen of the beleagured city of huddled masses:

> I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
> a voice that speaks of peace,
> peace for his people and his friends
> and those who turn to him in their hearts.
>
> (Psalm 85, Tues. Morning, Week III)

My hand gropes for the coffee. Andrew needs his shoes tied. "Yes, yes," I mutter, "just a minute." My head drops down closer to the book. "'We're gonna be late!" The desert sand evaporates before me, and I am surprised to encounter my little brown-eyed boy, full of vim, his foot in my lap with shoelaces dangling.

From the living room, John, the oldest, announces the time. "We're gonna get demerits, Dad!" Yes, I think, demerits would be hard to explain to your mother. I close the book and murmur a farewell to my Hebrew brother. It is time for the day to begin.

On how the Fruits of the Spirit Were Distributed to the Masters of Novices of Our Fraternity Assembled in Assisi (Cf. Gal. 5,22)

HERMANN SCHALÜCK, O.F.M.

In the year of Our Lord 1988, three years after the Chapter of Pentecost and two years after the approbation of the new General Constitutions by the Lord Pope, it happened that the Minister General of this Fraternity, together with the body called the Definitorium, decided to call the attention of the Fraternity in a special way to Chapter VI of the General Constitutions. This chapter dealt with the formation of the brothers and faithful to the intention and the words of our Father and Brother, Francis, bore the title: "To have the Spirit of the Lord." (rb 10,8) It appeared more important than ever to help the brothers from many parts of the world to rediscover the spirit of the Lord and his holy operation in their lives, and to do so more by the testimony of their lives than by means of documents and clever writings, by induction rather than by deduction, by practice rather than by human laws, there in Assisi rather than in Rome.

The Minister of all the Masters of novices of the universal Fraternity convoked all to a meeting in the DOMUS PACIS in Assisi. The work of preparing this meeting and of bringing it to a succesful conclusion fell to Brothers Sebastian and Saul, with the aid of some others. So shortly after the feast of the Transitus of Francis, our Father and Brother, 108 Masters from fifty countries gathered in the Portiuncula not so much to talk in abstract terms of formation as to be filled, themselves, with the Spirit of the Lord and of our Brother, Francis; and to bring forth fruits of penance and conversion under the influence of that same Spirit. During four weeks they tried to discern the signs of God in their lives, allowing themselves

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Fr. Hermann in the style of the Fioretti continues to share with us the rich experiences of the franciscan life. The message coming from the international meeting of novice masters at Assisi in 1988 should be of value to all of us.

to be evangelized by prayer and work — in Assisi, at Alverna, in the valley of Rieti and on the holy island of lake Trasimene, that is to say, "in loco et ex visu audituque."

Here then are the sacred signs and symbols by means of which the Spirit of the Lord spoke to the fraternity in a novel manner according to the spirit of Francis and of the new General Constitutions. It is a report which one of the participants caused to be written in few and simple words.

The TAU or the fruit of ongoing conversion

At the beginning of their labours Brother John handed to each one a wooden TAU, sign of election and salvation and so dear to the heart of Francis that he used it to sign his letters (cf. LM, prol. 2; 3 Cel. 159) Then those who heretofore had found the task of imparting formation to others bitter, because their work was difficult and unsuccessful — to be compared to that of the sower who had scattered the seed on dry or rocky soil (cf. Mt. 13,5) — joyfully wore this Tau night and day. In a remarkable way this sign restored their courage and confidence. They came to realize that they could not apply themselves to the formation of others unless they had first allowed themselves to be "grasped by Christ" (Phil. 3, 12). The became more aware of the significance of the Tau and of the importance it had for Francis: they were now enabled to read his life under a new perspective. Above all, they understood that there exists no other more important pedagogical principle than that of a life which reveals the "form of Christ" (Gal. 4, 19), a life which derives its dynamism from the radiating force of personal witness.

Some of those who up to now had wondered how little fruit they had derived from their studies of characterology, psychology and group therapy, suddenly discovered, as if by a new insight, the principles which Francis himself — the only genuine model of Mirrors — had embodied. Had he not stated that it was not a question of books and theories, no matter how useful they might be — including theology? What mattered was the capacity to be an instrument of the spirit of the Lord and a witness to his holy operation (cf. RB 10, 8; Cta Ant 2). Had not Brother Francis preferred to every other book, that of the Cross of Christ, the one which he read day and night without fail (cf. LM 4, 3)?

The more the friar masters extended their stay in Assisi and the more they reflected on the mission which the Lord had really confided to them, the more they entered into peace with themselves. The words of Thomas Merton, who was himself a novice master, came to their minds and hearts: "We do not experience conversion only once in a lifetime, but several

times. And this continuous repetition of little and great conversions, of interior turmoil, leads us on to one only METANOIA, our becoming transformed into the image of Christ." So, renewed in mind, they all decided to imitate their father and brother, Francis, whose comforting words they read; "Day by day the blessed Francis was being filled with consolation and the grace of the Holy Spirit, as with ever greater care and vigilance, he continued the formation of his new sons by means of new instructions, teaching them to walk with sure step along the road of holy poverty and of blessed simplicity." (1 Cel 26).

That was the FIRST FRUIT of the Assisi meeting.

THE GUITAR or happiness in God

Nobody has any doubt about the difficulty of the work of personal conversion according to the "form of Christ," and the need for asceticism on the part of one whose work is formation of others. Nevertheless, just as Francis, precisely at a time of the most severe asceticism and piercing sufferings, had been consoled by heavenly music (cf. LP 24; LM 5, 11), so now, centuries later, his brothers did not wish to be deprived of that consolation which is imparted by the melody of their own voices and the harmony of instruments, old and new. They too wanted to have an experience of the creative spirit of the Lord of music. Many had brought their instruments with them: guitars and flutes, horns and fifes, violins and ten-stringed harps, cymbals and drums, trumpets and bandores, oboes and clarinets, cornets and lyres.

A certain Brother Ivo from Dalmatia sounded forth on the great organ and accompanied the gregorian chant, while Brother Marino of Fontecolombo, a place where Francis "composed" the Rule, conducted the choir in church. Not only did the brothers sing solemnly during the divine liturgies; they also sang during the "multinational and multicultural" recreations which took place in a venerated aula adorned with ancient frescoes in the convent of the Portiuncula. This same hall was the one which had frequently been used throughout history for the Chapters of Pentecost. With the sound of music the Spirit of the Lord wished to reveal their mission to them. St. Ignatius of Antioch had a way of expressing it very harmoniously: should they not consider their vocation more clearly than ever — could they not make of their lives a fitting example in the work of formation of their friars, when "they sat weeping by the banks of the rivers of Babylon, and hung up their harps on the poplars that grew there" (cf. Ps. 137, 1-2)? Was it not a matter of interpreting their own history and their personal vocation as a voice in the midst of a polyphonic chorus which sang the praises of creation before the Lord of life? In the area of

formation, was it not a matter of intoning a "new song" (Ps. 40,4) — as Brother Armando from distant Colombia so aptly observed in his conference on minority and work... a matter of a more radical life-style in the midst of the poor? And that choir or an orchestra in which various talents are so many different instruments, but in which mutual listening and attention to the one and only Lord (cf. Mt. 23, 8) combine to avoid cacophony? — as Brother John Baptist from Gaul never tired of repeating. Does not that diversity of talents-instruments, placed at the service of over-all harmony, help towards the building-up of the Kingdom of God? And the varied timbre of voices the use of diverse instruments, old and new, in the execution of one single simphony... are not these an obvious symbol of the pluriformity of charism which brother Francis has bequeathed to us? Should not formators and masters be gifted with a finely-tuned ear to help them discern the melody which the Lord both of music and of history has engraved in the person of every novice?

As often happens in palaces steeped in sanctity, the brothers united in Assisi were wonderfully enlightened and came to understand clearly that their charism was "missionary" and that they were sent forth to give concerts not only in cells, churches and chapels, but, as Brother Leo from Indonesia recalled, also in the six continents. So by way of affirming their vocation of "non sibi soli vivere, sed aliis proficere," on one cold evening they set out, with their bizarre instruments and their repertory of songs, for the "Piazza del Comune" of the town of Assisi. There they sang and danced and played their instruments until late into the night for the glory of God and the edification of the people. And all who saw and heard them were extremely amazed at the enduring vigor and the formative creativity of the franciscan life.

All the brothers were overjoyed at this SECOND FRUIT of the Asissi meeting.

THE ROCK or the foundation of our fraternity

During a liturgy that was as festive as it was fraternal in the peaceful hermitage of San Damiano — that same place in which the formation of Francis took a decisive turn — the Minister of the fraternity in Umbria gave each one a small stone, symbol of another fruit of the Spirit. It is not difficult to describe to what kind of knowledge or experience this concrete symbol was meant to relate. In the precious writings which they were studying night and day, the Masters had read how Francis at the beginning of his conversion, had borne heavy stones (cf. LM 2,7); how he had walked respectfully on stones, out of consideration of him who is the living Stone (cf. 2 Cel 165); how he venerated holy poverty as the

foundation stone of the fraternity (cf. Flor 13; SC. prol. 1); how he came to look upon his sickness and tribulations as if they were precious stones (LP 83d); how "he raised up the noble edifice of charity, in which living stones, gathered from all corners of the world, formed the temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cel 38); how the Order always and everywhere is built up solely upon the observation of the Gospel (cf. LM 3,8); how Francis from the beginning of his conversion had, like a wise architect, based his life and that of his Order only on the highest humility and poverty of the Son of God (cf. LP 9).

The important stone from San Damiano thus became for the formators, the corner stone on which to base their work in formation. In their act of thanksgiving the novice masters promised, with a clearer and more consistent commitment than ever, to contribute by their work to the building up of a renewed fraternity. Several acknowledged that it should lead to inculturation and insertion among the poor who are our teachers (cf. Bahia 41). Also, that it should lead those brothers whom the Lord sends us to contemplation of the mystery of God, starting out from the point of view of the poor.

When they had spent some time discussing the issue of an "open" novitiate or a "closed" one, they looked upon the stone of San Damiano as an invitation to remain always open to the experience of the fruits of the Spirit, open above all to that God who reveals himself in the poor. Every fraternity which is built upon the foundation of the poor Christ — so the friars coming from the younger Churches and Provinces did not fail to recall — ought to avail of the experience of which the Prophet Isaiah speaks: "Enlarge the space for your tent, spread out your tent cloths unsparingly; lengthen your ropes and make firm your stakes. For you shall spread abroad to the right and to the left; your descendants shall dispossess the nations and shall people the desolate cities." (Is. 54, 2-3).

Here now was the THIRD FRUIT of the Assisi meeting.

THE GRAIN OF WHEAT or evangelization of one's own heart

At the closing of this memorable meeting, when all were about to hurry back to their countries, a departure liturgy was celebrated in which Brother John gave to each one a grain of wheat, symbol of the word of God which always desires to fall on good soil (cf. Mt 13; Lc 8; Mc 4), symbol, likewise, of a new life (cf. Jn 12, 24) and, finally, a reminder that all evangelization must first take root in one's own heart. On that day there was no homily.

Rather, each one received in his hand a grain of wheat and then began to speak to his heart.

Can one come to know life according to the Gospel if not by means of a journey which becomes a faithful following of Christ (cf. Adm 7)? Can a master be other than a disciple of Christ (cf. Phil 2,7)? Can a formation fraternity exist which is not deeply rooted in the contemplation of God in the world, while being open to the poor and to the signs of the times (cf. RnB 9,3)? Can there be found a more stimulating pedagogical motivation for a formator than the following intuition of a famous contemporary mystic: "He who is aware of his own wounds is the only one capable of healing those of others"? A further thought that came to mind: In the formation of the brothers, can there be a greater joy than that experienced by three brothers who, during a desert experience, had their cells ransacked by brother thieves who despoiled them of all their private store, while they themselves were given over to the highest contemplation on Mount Alverna, where they were spending a few days? Can one imagine a more consoling experience than that of the rest of the brethren, who showed more than motherly care for the brothers who were robbed, joyfully dispossessing themselves of their superfluous goods in order to come to to aid of those who finally had had the experience of "perfect joy?" The experience of absolute non-violence and the unsuspecting friendship of Brother Francis for the robbers of Monte Casale (cf. Fior 26)... does that not invite the present-day friars to walk by the same paths? The search for peace with oneself and with others... could that not become a basic principle of the pastoral vocation? Peace, tolerance and perseverance in working for peace... are not these simply so many fruits of the Spirit which could again launch the brothers on new apostolates?

All received their grain of wheat in a spirit of willing cooperation and carried it to their Provinces as an invitation to be themselves converted to the gospel, and as a stimulus towards proposing to others a process of conversion in a convincing manner. They all proclaimed their willingness to obey, after the example of Francis, even a novice of one day (cf. LM 4,4; LP 11b) so that, by an ever more evangelical and critical discernment, they might come to a deeper knowledge of art. 40 of the new General Constitutions, which say: "Every friar is a gift of God to the fraternity. Therefore, even though they possess different characters, cultures, customs, talents, abilities and qualities, the friars are to accept one another just as they are and as equals, so that the whole fraternity may become a privileged place of meeting with God." And all prayed in their mother tongue — suffice it to mention tagalog, urdu, moba, breton, latin and malgache — to Our Lord and to Our Lady of the Angels, so that the Spirit of the Lord might bring to fruition his promise of excellent fruit,

in the good soil of their lives in the bosom of the fraternity (cf. 2 Cel 109). In this way "their offspring will increase in numbers and in grace everywhere, and will extend its branches, wonderful for the abundance of fruit, even to the ends of the earth" (2 Cel 23).

These insights constituted the FOURTH FRUIT of the meeting at Assisi, which the brothers attributed to the action of the Holy Spirit.

Soon after, the 108 Masters from 50 countries returned to their fraternities, and the friars of the General Curia, so called, returned to the ever eternal City. All gave thanks to God for everything they had seen and heard, as well as for all the gifts of the Spirit which the Lord had granted them with such magnanimity.

For the praise of Christ. Amen. □

Book Reviews

Theology in a Digital World. By David Lochhead. Toronto: United Church Publishing House (85 St. Clair Avenue East, M4T 1M8. Phone: (416) 925-6597), 1988. ix-95 p. CDN $9.95 (+ $1.75 for shipping/handling).

Reviewed by Francis de Ruijte, O.F.M., House of Prayer, Sherbrooke, Quebec.

The way I go to school: on foot or by bus, the way I plow the field: with horses or with a tractor, the way I send a letter: by the Post Office or through a fax machine, the way I spend my evening: playing monopoly or watching TV, are all ways that have altered my life. Electricity, airplanes, the telephone, radio and television have all transformed the face of society.

But one machine in particular stands out among all because it has almost infinite capabilities and so profoundly and overwhelmingly transforms our lifestyle and thinking patterns that it causes a cultural change, imitates the human brain, and is sometimes considered godlike: it is the computer.

The computer technology raises basic questions to the professional thinker and the clergy, to the ordinary lay person and the unbeliever alike. The questions touch not only computer technology itself but our very identities as human beings, our behavior and nature, the concept of community, our destiny, our world view, the Church's mission, and even God Himself. Or at least the way we are accustomed to conceive them. That is what the computer theology is about.

David Lochhead has initiated computer theology. Along with personal reflections, I offer here a review of his book entitled **Theology in a Digital World.**

A theology professor by vocation and a computer enthusiast by avocation, the author teaches at the Vancouver School of Theology, B.C. He is the convenor of the Small Computer Committee of the United Church of Canada and a prime mover of UCHUG (United Church of Canada Users' Group). He is also the founder and president of Ecunet, a coalition of religious networks

on NWI Information Service. He runs a local BBS in Maple Ridge, BC: Agora, (604) 463-4811. He is married to Ann Marshall, and they together have two sons and four daughters, ages 27 to 16, plus two permanent foster sons, ages 15 and 11.

Besides the Preface, the book contains six (6) chapters:

1. Theology in a Digital World
2. Theology about a Machine
3. Does God love Computers?
4. The New Electronic Church
5. The Tower of Babel revisited.
6. Toward a Theology of Information

These chapters were originally prepared as conferences given at different occasions between October 1984 and September 1986. Chapter 5 was published in *Computers in the Church* magazine of Church Computer Users Network (CCUN), in January, 1987.

The tools, machines, instruments I use are neutral. But the way I, the user, deal with them is not always neutral. It can be neutral, good or bad.

Computer theology is not merely a reflection on the approval or disapproval of ethical computer use (copyright, piracy, security, hackers). That is not the essential. It concerns the meaning of computer technology for our understanding of ourselves, God, and the world, with all their ramifications: community, destiny, the future. We cannot always easily identify the questions computer technology raises. They are not the task of one or a few individuals, but the activity of the community of faith.

We transform the world through computers. In turn, we are changed by the use of this technology. We do something and something is done to us. We are both the subjects and objects of mutation. Thus, computer technology interrogates us: a number of theological themes suggest themselves to our minds.

This forms the theme of Chapter 2, which can be seen, to some extent, as the preface or colophon, introduction or conclusion, of the book.

Besides the methodology, the approaches, the ways and places to look for the answers to the queries put to us by computer technology (Chapter 2), Chapter 1 introduces us to two basic and opposing views of computers and computer communications. This largely comes from our views of God as the "One Who Is" and the computer as the "one who can be" (possibility machine). If we view God, not as the Static Being, but as a total Goodness, the source of all goodness, a loving Father, with whom I can enter into a personal relationship as son or daughter (St. Francis of Assisi, St. Bonaventure), our perspectives and conclusions may be quite different even about computer technology and its relationships to us, and we might make some surprising rediscoveries.

In Chapters 3 and 5, the A. proves himself a fascinating story teller — again very much a Franciscan trend, perhaps unknown to the A. himself. Thus he lets deep theological and human values pass the revue. Throughout the book, in fact, the A. holds the reader captive: he is a master of analysis, and conducts us from one new insight to another. The reading is charming and thought-provoking; and you will gladly reread a chapter to grasp the fulness of its depth.

On the other hand, the style is not always clear and organized, and contains repetitions. The chapters would benefit of subheadings. For instance, I would insert the following into Chapter 3:

1. Introducton: a koan
2. Computer: foe or friend
3. Machines versus people
4. Man created in the image of God
5. Mind versus heart
6. Our 4 attitudes toward computers
7. A more critical view of them
8. Head — heart
9. Solution: friendship with ourselves and with computers
10. Transformations to be expected
11. Conclusion.

The A. attempts to dissolve anti-computer prejudices and fears and offers friendship and comprehension to this cultural revolution.

In Chapter 4, the A. returns to a topic of Chapter 5 and expands it (They were not encessarily written originally in the order they appear in the book): computer communications. Computer communications form an online community and make ecumenism grow. "When churches go online, we begin to experience a different kind of community." (page 62). "In computer communications we have the ideal vehicle for the growth of ecumenical community." (Ibidem).

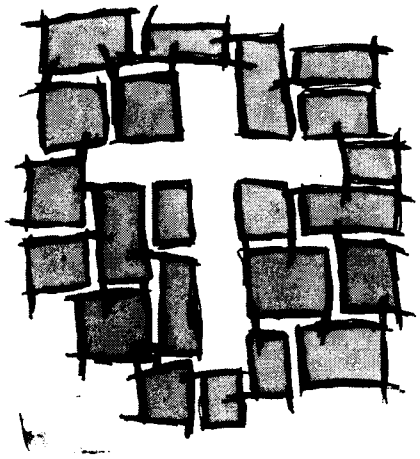
Out of this, a new series of questions is pressed upon us, e.g.:

— the reevaluation of the concept of community
— the sense of ecumenism
— the understanding of church
— "proclamation" versus online dialogue
— "mission" in an electronic community
— Is online worship possible?

The last chapter (6) deals with the Church as an information provider. It concludes by stating our Christian responsibility for using information technology. To this I would like to add our Christian responsibility for joining — or refusing to join — computer communications. Theology is a reflection AND an action.

Information as such has no power. But it becomes demonic if it leads to the destruction of human life. Or it becomes a sign of the Kingdom if it brings healing, unity and grace. The choice is ours.

The A. has given us 100 golden pages. Meditate them! Absorb them! Experience them!



Computers for Church Use

FR. FRANCIS DE RUIJTE, O.F.M.

Who should use computers? Are computers useful solely for government and business, education and entertainment? Or are they not first of all God-given tools destined for the building of His Kingdom? Many clergy suffer of computer phobia. Moreover, of those who do use this new technology for the love of God, only few get online for teleconferencing and electronic messaging. Even they need a second "technological conversion" — just as difficult as a religious "metanoia".

The spiritual leaders we need today must not be passively watching television and reading print; they need to be two-way communicators, interactive with the media, getting involved and speaking out. The computer allows us to do this as it was never before possible.

This machine, sitting on our desk top or lying in our briefcase, the size of a ring book, allows us to write letters, keep the accounting records, prepare the church bulletin, make complex scientific calculations, draw engineering plans, invent programs, play games, etc., in a much faster and easier way than ever before, less error prone and more efficiently.

Online, it allows us to receive and send messages, graphics, and programs, to share with fellow ministers and lay people of our church, to break through our geographical and denominational isolation, building up ecumenical ties and making us discover the church and the community in a whole new perspective. We can follow a university course online, even for credit.

In addition, we can check the membership database for an address or telephone number, update the family record, and all that on

A member of the Province of St. Joseph (Canada), Fr. Francis is presently at the House of Prayer in Sherbrooke. He holds a Master's degree from the Franciscan Institute. Readers should find both this article and his book review quite enlightening.

the road, while paying a pastoral visit. We can consult the King James or New International Version, find any passage in a matter of seconds, copy it in our sermon or church bulletin. We can write an entire book, alone or with others. In all these tasks, we can make changes, insert new material,, relocate it, and make a copy for a friend, either on paper or on diskette (or tape). And I am sure I have not exhausted church applications.

When Jesus met Nathanael, he publicly stated: "Here is a real Israelite; there is nothing false in him!" (John 1:47). Are we, ministers, "real Israelites," i.e., authentic Christians, are we genuine preachers of God's Good News, are we reading the signs of the times? Using computers today for God's sake is no longer being innovative. It is simply being up-to-date just like using a car, the telephone and television. Not using this technology is neglecting a God-granted grace; it is spiritual laziness, among other things. Today we use electricity, no more gaslit lamps. In the same way, our trusty typewriter and pencils, to some extent, have become obsolete antiques.

So it is clear that we need a serious theological reflection on the use of computers in church work, just as there are liberation and other theologies. Here David Lockhead in his book *Theology in a Digital World*[1] leads us on the way.

As the creator of all things, God certainly made us invent the computer, just like other instruments, for the sake of his glory and our salvation, and not only for business expansion or government departments and university research.

I believe there is even a third level challenge, a third technological and psychological barrier to conquer, that we may call a third "conversion": it is setting up one's own network or BBS. I am now going through the birth labours but have not yet "fathered the baby". So here ends my experience. But I firmly believe in the value of reaching out to the world through a Christian BBS, or one with Christian values and programs present on its system. I see it as a new form of ministry in today's digital world.

I would like to invite any priest or minister who is a SysOp here to take over and continue this article and share with us his/her experience. I know some local BBS's are linked together via Fidonet and/or CIN (Catholic Information Network, 6 nodes), and there may be others. Computers do change our way of working, communicating, thinking, believing, and ministering.

There exist even PBBS's, combining computer and short wave radio, and amateur satellite links being used for God's Kingdom. Yet there could be more of them.

Lately I read about CD ROM technology (Compact Disk Read Only Memory), replacing the plastic HD by a metal 550 MB disc. Grolier Encyclopedia takes up 12 MB. There is a multi-version, multi-lingual bible on CD ROM. At least two companies are preparing, or have prepared, a series of theological abstracts, saving us an enormous amount of time in searching.

In these fields, we can go beyond passivity and show an active, positive leadership role. They are also occasions of collaboration between clergy and laity, displaying the church's true nature.

The world shows us the way. It should rather be the church leading the world. But let us learn from it, cooperate with it, and bring it to Christ, as is our God-given mission. This will not go without suffering: we shall encounter resistance from the outside as well as from within ourselves: our own fears and hesitations (as recalled above). But we have one special asset we should never forget: we can call upon the Name of the Lord. He is the maker of heaven and earth. (Ps 124:8). He will not abandon us to ourselves alone. After all, we do it under the inspiration of his Holy Spirit and for the expansion of His Kingdom.

What will be next? The challenge is up to us.

Endnotes

[1]David Lochhead, Theology in a Digital World. Toronto: United Church Publishing House (85 St. Clair Avenue East, M4T 1MB — phone: (416) 925-6597), 1988. ix-95 p. CDN $9.95. (+ $1.75 for shipping/handling).

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The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

ARTICLES

CLARE OF ASSISI: A LIGHT TO THE WORLD 198
Violet Grennan, O.S.F.

"GO FORTH SWIFTLY" 211
Sr. Marie Beha, O.S.C.

FEATURES

POVERTY ... AS A POSITIVE ATTITUDE 193
Sr. Frances Ann Thom, O.S.F.

POETRY:

THE SECRET OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER 197
William Hart McNichols, S.J., S.F.O.

TWO AUGUST FAILURES 222
Anthony Chiarilli

Volume 40, No. 7

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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).

Poverty... as a Positive Attitude

SR. FRANCES ANN THOM, O.S.F.

Cold feet and stone floors
bare stone walls... stone steps
sleeping on hard vines... no central heating
few blankets... hard wooden kneelers and benches
long hours of prayer... sparse food... silence
long working hours... regulated schedule...

These are a few of the aspects of monastic living in the time of St. Clare and her sisters at San Damiano and, indeed, chosen by them as fundamental to a life of holiness in the 13th century. There does not seem to be any possibility that anyone could live such a life without a very POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD POVERTY.

We know, of course, that Clare learned about poverty from a great teacher, Francis himself. We also know that poverty was not an abstract notion to Francis since he often referred to poverty as Lady Poverty. His first recorded love tryst was with the lady whom he called poverty and he further extolled her as:

Holy Poverty (who) destroys
the desire of riches
and avarice
and the cares of this world. (Sal Vir 11)

Clare needed to have more of an attitude of poverty than Francis because of her limited exposure to the world. Francis lived among the people and saw the problems wrought by over attachment to things while Clare had little need for things. That does not mean, however, that she could not have become overly attached to the little she did have.

The author, member of the editorial Board of **THE CORD** *and a frequent contributor, is engaged in parish ministry in Baldwinsville (Syracuse Diocese). She is a graduate of the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University.*

For Clare and her sisters the ideal of poverty was more personal. People did not see their poverty as they did the friars; people saw only the large building in which they knew nuns were enclosed who professed to live a life of poverty. Some few came to visit the sisters and experienced the coldness and the starkness of the building, but, for the most part there was no ostensible sign of the depth of their poverty. Eventually the reputation of the Poor Ladies would spread, but in the beginning each sister had to be convinced of her own attitude of poverty.

One of the ways in which the sisters schooled themselves in poverty was by studying the Master on the cross and tracing his life from his poor birth to his destitute death and burial. He showed them that God cares for his own if his own depend upon him. He taught them that God would always send benefactors when they were in need and if a benefactor was not to be found, he would even perform a miracle for them. But, one thing they knew, he would never let them down.

Each day was a following of the crucified...
each day the lesson of the cross became more clear...
they understood the value of detachment from things...
they tried to imitate Christ in his self-emptying...
They emulated the task of self-giving...

they shook off all the encumbrances which they could even to the extent of professing not just poverty, but highest poverty; not just being poor, but refusing to accept things which were not needed for their way of life.

Poverty enveloped every aspect of their daily lives...
saying a kind word when one wished to be critical...
complimenting another instead of keeping silence...

It was by going out of one's way to show concern for others that selfgiving and self-emptying could be accomplished in one's soul and the Poor Ladies learned that together as they daily rubbed shoulders with each other. This was more important than material poverty because it was soul building!

Poverty in material fact and poverty in spirit grew together at San Damiano; one complemented the other to create the whole and holy atmosphere of highest poverty.

Obviously, most of the people of that century felt it was enough that a woman enclose herself away from her family and vow herself to live a life based on prayer and alms. Even the hierarchy of the Church could not fully relate to the poverty which Francis and Clare professed; after all, it was not practical.

Francis and his friars walked among the people...
No money in hand... no shoes on their feet... no place to stay...

the world was their cloister... Heaven their goal...
poverty and charity was the aim of the soul...

Francis had admonished his brothers not to accept money except in the case of a sick brother who needed medicine. His stand on money was so strong that he felt contaminated even to touch it. Francis saw how money had replaced God in the lives of so many and he and his brothers were to be seen, were to live as a countersign to wealth and the evil it had generated among the upper classes.

Clare and her sisters wished to emulate what Francis and the brothers were doing by wearing coarse clothing, having very little, standing as a countersign of wealth; however, they could not walk among the faithful nor aid in caring for the lepers. No one saw their poverty; most people did not understand their enclosure; often it seemed to the worldly-wise a real waste of lives; some even thought the women enclosed were too lazy to work because they thought they prayed all day long and that they were waited on... and... this was true in some of the monasteries that nuns who prayed were waited on by others who were of a lower class and were the workers in the monastery. In the monastery of San Damiano, all were equal. All of the Sisters worked; all of the Sisters prayed; all of the Sisters recreated together; all were one in the Franciscan Family of San Damiano. A revolutionary idea!

No one suffered hunger... no one suffered from the cold...
no one needed to be lonely... poverty had brought them together...
poverty would care for them... as they cared for each other...

It is strange how the attitude of being poor could make a group so rich! The attitude to use this world's goods only when necessary and as much as one actually needed left time for other things to be done. Poverty heightened the feeling of gratitude when something was given or done by another; poverty released the mind of clutter and worry about aquiring, hoarding, gathering or keeping up with one's neighbor. Poverty left more time for prayer and charity.

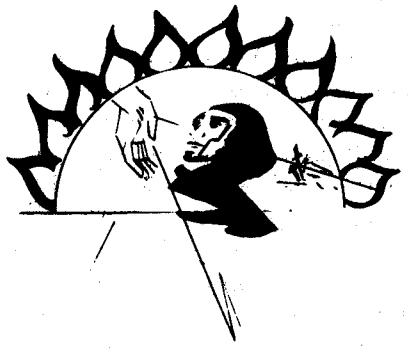
Poverty freed not only the body for good works but also the soul from harsh attitudes. By working together to remain free of useless things as a community the sisters were able to learn some very deep things about each other and from this learning came first a tolerance, then an acceptance and then a deep love. The joy which radiates from this deep love does not only affect those in the monastery but travels, as it were, through the walls into the streets of the city so that an unusual peace is found by all who visit there. Only the inhabitants of the monastery are unaware of this profound aspect in their lives. This is true of most persons who do good deeds for love — a total unawareness of its effect on others.

As silent sentinels of joy and peace...
they live enclosed yet open to the world...
unaware of their precious gifts... they love in spaces that seem closed...
while, indeed, they are more uncontained than they shall ever know.

If we could only understand the attitude which pervaded San Damiano at the time of the early Damianites we would not get so wrapped up in non-essentials which we consider to be poverty: we would not try to categorize poverty by counting items or the lack of them but by attitude. Poverty is not the type of food that we buy nor the way in which it is prepared since everything should be prepared with care and love. Let us recall the scene where a sister told Clare that there was not enough bread for the sisters to eat and yet Clare has asked her to cut the loaf in half and give half to the friars. Clare's reply is certainly very positive and the result of cutting the half loaf into slices was even more positive... all had more than enough to eat!

Money was not a problem for Clare and her sisters... to Francis it meant evil
to Clare it meant aid for someone in need... even from a cloister...
if a sister's family was having a difficult time...
money went to ease their need...

Clare did not get hung up on non-essentials... if a sister was cold, she would give her something to keep her warm. If a sister was hungry, she would get her something to eat. If a sister needed to be comforted or advised, Clare was there to help. All of this is poverty at its highest; poverty as a positive way of thinking; a positive way of looking at others and at one's self. This attitude can be cultivated, nourished and come alive through the instruction of the Holy Spirit and the Damianites were espoused to the Holy Spirit as Francis himself declared.



The Secret of the Golden Flower

Chiara,
a play of light
golden as the
rising sun
over Assisi,
played out
over fifty years
of agonizing sickness
after sickness
and vicious onslaughts
of the evil one.
She taught her
dearly loved sisters,
in O, a thousand ways,
the adoration and praises
of the Most High,
the passionate cultivation
of the enclosed garden...
Jesus,
and a swift attention
to the tremulous
stirring
of the Spirit's wings.
Once while listening
to a sermon
of Brother Philip,
she was seen
clear and bright
as day,
holding the Holy Child —
enfolded in the
secret of the golden flower.

William Hart McNichols, S.J., S.F.O.

Clare of Assisi: A Light to the World

VIOLET GRENNAN, O.S.F.

In the last decade of twelfth century Italy, a girl was born into one of Assisi's noble families. Sources tell us that a few days prior to the birth in 1193, the infant's mother Ortolana, a strong and pious woman, made her way to the local church. While praying to the Crucified, she heard a voice saying to her "Do not be afraid, woman, for you will give birth in safety to a light which will give light more clearly than light itself" (*Leg Cl* #2).[1] Because of this prophecy, a standard pre-birth feature in saints' lives, on the day the baby was baptized in the church of San Rufino, surrounded by noble guests richly clad, she was given the name *Chiara*, or as we know it in English, *Clare*.[2]

Clare's Youth: Family and Church

Clare, the oldest of three daughters born to Favorone and Ortolana, grew up in one of Assisi's noble families who belonged to the well-known and wealthy Offreducio clan (*Leg Cl* #1). Little is known of the early stages of the lives of Clare's sisters, Catherine and Beatrice. Catherine, Clare's favorite sister and long-time confidante in everything, joined Clare just a few days after her arrival at Sant' Angelo di Panzo.[3] Beatrice, the third and youngest daughter of Clare's family entered the monastery of San Damiano in 1229 and is the twelfth witness in the *Process of Canonization* (*Proc* 12:1).

And what of Clare? The accounts of several of the witnesses in the

Violet Grennan, OSF, is a member of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. She is associate director and counselor at the Center for Career Development and Ministry, Newton, Massachusetts. This article is the substance of a paper written for a course in the History of Christian Spirituality at Weston School of Theology where she recently completed her M.T.S. degree.

Process of Canonization, who knew Clare prior to her entry into religious life, enable one to get some sense of her. According to those witnesses,

> Clare was considered by all those who knew her to be a person of great honesty of very good life... intent upon and occupied with works of piety. All the citizens held her in great veneration because of her good manner of life... her kindness and humility (*Proc* 2:2. 3:2; 4:2). In the house of her father she was considered by everyone to be upright and holy (*Proc* 13:2) and kind and gracious (*Proc* 16:2). Clare fasted, prayed, willingly gave as many alms as she could (*Proc* 18:3) and wore a rough garment under her clothes (*Proc* 20:4). Her household was one of the largest in the city and great sums were spent there; she, nevertheless, saved the food they were given to eat, put it aside and then sent it to the poor whom she loved very much (*Proc* 20:3).

This portrait of the young girl Clare sheds a good deal of light on the Clare who will emerge as woman and on her life and mission in the Church.

The years of Clare's childhood and adolescence were years of great feuding in Assisi between the merchant and noble classes of the city. The merchants were determined to form a commune — an idea that was disliked intensely by the nobility of Assisi. The formation of a commune would challenge the power, wealth and prestige of the nobles in the political, economic and social arena. The merchants in pressuring the nobles to hand over some of their wealth and privileges were not motivated by concern for the poor, but to increase their own wealth. In the midst of this struggle between the nobility and merchant class Clare grew up. It was inevitable that she would witness the daily feuding and hear the conversations of the people of the commune regarding the place of money and wealth as a means of attaining status and power.[4]

The Church at this time was preoccupied with its own struggles. In the twelfth and at the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, many groups within the Religious Poverty Movement were choosing to live in a manner similar to that of the primitive Church. Women and men were eager to live like Christ-who-was-poor and like the apostles who were poor and lived by the work of their hands. Many of these groups while pursuing this manner of life experienced conflict with and opposition from the Church.

A short passage from a letter of Jacques d'Vitry, bishop and cardinal, a friend of the Friars Minor, the Beguines and many other women's groups who wrote the following to a friend:

> When I remained for a while at the [papal] curia, I observed many displeasing things. One was so occupied with temporal and worldly things, with kings and kingdoms, with court cases and plaintiffs that it was almost impossible to discuss spiritual things even superficially.

These words were written at Genoa in 1216 and give some indication how much worldliness and care for external affairs had spread into the highest circles of the Church. Eagerness to possess and anxiousness for the things of this world, hunger for money and profit, threatened to suffocate religious values in the life of the people or at least to put them out of sight on a sidetrack.[5] Undoubtedly this religious, social, and economic climate impacted Clare's choice of life and her mission in the Church.

Clare's Choice: Conversion

The one who, as God's mediator, would be the single most influential person in the evolution and crystallization of Clare's vocation, her form of life and her mission in the Church was Francis of Assisi.

In 1206, their lives begin to converge. The incident which highlights the point of convergence was recalled many years later by Clare in her Testament.

> Almost immediately after his conversion, when he had neither brothers nor companions, while he was building the church of San Damiano, where he was totally visited by divine consolation and impelled to abandon completely the world, through the great joy and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, the holy man made a prophecy about us that the Lord later fulfilled.
>
> For at the time, climbing the wall of that church, he shouted in French to some poor people who were standing nearby: "Come help me in the work of building the monastery of San Damiano, because ladies will again dwell here who will *glorify our heavenly Father (cf. Mt. 5:16) throughout this holy, universal church by their celebrated and holy manner of life." (Test C #9-14).*

Some two years later (1208) when Clare was fourteen, Francis on hearing the Gospel of Matthew preached during the mass (Mt. 10:8-9) renounced all his worldly goods before Bishop Guido of Assisi, began the life of a penitent and itinerant preacher and was joined by his first companions. One year later Francis wrote his very brief *forma vitae* (1209 and set out for Rome with his eleven companions with the intention of obtaining approval for his Rule from Innocent III.

Francis on meeting with Innocent promised him obedience (not an insignificant factor in light of Rome's heightened awareness and suspicion of wandering preachers and heretical women and men in this period) and received oral approval of his *forma vitae* from the pope.

This recognition of Francis by Innocent III had very wide implications for Clare. The pope's oral approval to Francis was no justification for the formation of a female order. However, it is acknowledged that Innocent grasped the significance of the feminine piety movement of the early

thirteenth century and was in favor of adding women's orders to the church to strengthen it in its struggle with its heresy and current political difficulties.[6]

With Innocent's approval, Francis and his companions freely and joyfully moved through cities, towns and villages preaching conversion and penance. Clare would surely have heard and possibly met him. Several references are made to Francis' preaching as an instrumental factor in Clare's conversion to a more radical way of living the gospel (*Proc* 6:1; 12:2; 17:3,4; 20:6). His new approach to Gospel living, his words and example and willingness to endure all for the sake of the Gospel set Clare's heart afire.[7]

In the course of several meetings with Francis which continued for almost a year and to which Clare "went secretly so as not to be seen by her parents" (*Proc* 17:2), Clare's vocation was being crystallized. It was becoming increasingly more clear to her that she desired and God was calling her through Francis, to a more radical life than that of the lay penitent which she was already living. Francis' preaching on the poverty and humility of Jesus Incarnate and Christ Crucified filled Clare's heart with an intense desire to follow in the footprints of the Lord Jesus.

It was on Palm Sunday, 19 March 1212, that Clare was clothed in the habit of poverty by Francis at the Portiuncula. Immediately after Francis, Clare and a faithful friend left for the Benedictine monastery of San Paolo delle Ancelle di Dio. It was during Clare's very brief sojourn at this monastery that her extended family, seething with anger, attempted in a forceful way to take her away. Clare, we are told, sought refuge in the chapel, tore the cloth off the altar and made a shield of it against her persecutors. Clare was evidently claiming the right of sanctuary, and her family, knowing the implications of touching her, withdrew.[7]

The intense reaction of Clare's family must be understood against the medieval concept of honor in which criticism or infamy brought on by the deeds of any one member of a family or clan was held to be equally shared by all. What women did was held to be an especial threat to family honor. It was for that reason that families maintained guardianship over female members so long as they remained at home and saw to their proper marriage or placement for the double considerations of providing for their material support and guaranteeing the honor of the house.[9]

After this incident, Francis found refuge for Clare at Sant' Angelo di Panzo on the slopes of Mt. Subasio which until recently was also considered to have been a Benedictine monastery. However, the findings of a recent study indicate Sant' Angelo was a place of "recluses" or "penitents" that would have been closer to the Beguine expression of women religious rather than the Benedictine or Cistercian expressions.[10] Clare after her monastic experience possibly wished to experience a different form of

religious life — that of the reclusive or eremetical type. Further reference will be made to this style of life in a later section.

Clare's Form of Life: Gospel

Clare finally arrived at San Damiano where she would by "vocation and choice" (*Test C* #16) live the next forty years of her life in the "poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ and of his most holy Mother." This was to be her life and mission and she would struggle for almost her entire life with the Roman Curia (while remaining obedient and faithful to the church) to live it out.

At the beginning of her life at San Damiano, Clare and a few other ladies received from Francis a brief *forma vitae* which consisted mainly of Gospel texts. No copy of this rule is extant; however, fragments of it were preserved by Clare in her Rule (Ch. VI, 2) and she refers to it in her Testament.

In the Testament, she states "When the blessed Francis saw, however, that although we were physically weak and frail, we did not shirk deprivation, poverty, hard works, trial or the shame or contempt of the world... he rejoiced greatly.... Afterwards he wrote a form of life for us, especially that we always persevere in holy poverty." (*Test C* #27, 28, 33.) It was intended only for San Damiano, for Francis had bound himself to care for only Clare and her companions. Clare tells us: "and moved by compassion for us, he bound himself, both through himself and through his Order, to always have the same loving care and special solicitude for us as for his own brothers." (*Test C* #29).

This form of life held for Clare the essential points of her vocation: life according to the Holy Gospel, absolute poverty after the example of Francis and the closest possible connection with the Friars Minor.[11] Clare clung to this. It profoundly influenced her entire life and was the foundation and mainstay of her mission in the Church.

In order to take a closer look at Clare's understanding of that mission — which I believe Clare never actually articulated, but it evolved as she lived her life fully and intensely — the central place poverty had in Clare's life must be highlighted. Her Testament provides us with a lens through which to understand her poverty and mission.

Clare's Testament has been referred to as the document of greatest auto-biographical importance, one of the truest reflections of the soul of Clare, richest in personal and franciscan memories and in revealing the charism of the Poor Clares. The Testament mirrors her radical choice of loving the poor and humble Christ and her manner of conceiving the fraternity of the Poor Sisters in vibrant fidelity to the Church.[12]

In verses eighteen through twenty-three of her Testament, Clare brings

into high relief her understanding of her mission, and that of the Poor Ladies, in the Church. Acknowledging that she has been called and has freely chosen to respond (*Test C* #16), Clare states

> With what eagerness and fervor of mind and body, therefore, must we keep the Commandments of our God and Father, so that with the help of the Lord, we may return to Him an increase of His talent. For the Lord Himself has placed us not only as a form for others in being an *example and mirror*, but even for our sisters whom the Lord has called to our way of life as well, that they in turn might be a mirror and example to those living in the world. (*Test C* #18-20).

Here Clare describes her life and mission and that of the Poor Ladies — a community of women, who by their very way of life, will bring glory to God in the Church. She then spells out how that mission devolves on the Order. Life as it is lived in fraternal union and mutual service is to be an example, a mirror in the Church to those in their own monastery and to those in the Church outside the community. For Clare everything comes from the way of being — a way of being that is the result of being filled with Christ and the Spirit of God — and thereby becoming a living sign, a light for the world. The very form of Clare's life and that of the Poor Ladies constitutes their mission.[13]

The particular shape and form of this mission was powerfully influenced by Clare's choice of a life lived in absolute poverty. In verses thirty-three through fifty-five of her Testament (the most decisive and clear section affirming the pivot of the Order: the poverty and humility of the Son of God, the humble Gospel life taught to the Poor Ladies by Francis), Clare highlights the fact that she sees her mission in the church profoundly connected with a life of absolute poverty. Her mission, and that of the Poor Ladies, is to live in poverty like the "Son of God who was placed poor in the crib, lived poor in the world and remained naked on the cross." (*Test C* #16.).

Clare's Privilege: Poverty

Over and over again, Clare refers in this section to the central place poverty had in the life of Francis, in her life and in the life of the Poor Ladies. Francis, in the very earliest days of the Order of San Damiano, "wrote a form of life for us, especially that we always persevere in holy poverty (*Test C* #33) and he encouraged us with many words and examples... and many writings (#34) and having imitated the footprints of the Son of God never departed from this holy poverty (#36)."

Clare goes on to state that

> time and again we willingly bound ourselves to our Lady most holy Poverty that after my death, the sisters... would never turn away from her (#39).

> And as I have always been most zealous and solicitous to observe and to have others observe the holy poverty that we have promised to the Lord and our holy father Francis (#41) so, too, the others who will succeed me in office should be always bound to observe holy poverty (#42). Moreover, for greater security, I took care to have our profession of the most holy poverty that we promised our father strengthened with privileges by the Lord Pope Innocent... and by his successors (#43) that we never nor in any way turn away from her.

In these and subsequent verses, Clare clearly and unequivocally states it is her desire that she, those with her and those to come after her live in poverty like the son of God and in the footprints of Francis. This is her mission, and in order to secure the carrying out of that mission by those who would come after her, Clare struggled her entire life with the Roman curia to live a life of absolute poverty without any possessions or fixed income.

It is in this section of her Testament that Clare records her request for and concession of the Privilege of Poverty by Innocent III and his successors. Here, too, she underscores the fact how after the death of Francis she stood alone in sustaining the value of absolute poverty (*Test C* #37-39).

In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council (in response to the extraordinary flowering of religious movements and groups and the need to exert some control) legislated that new religious groups were to adopt the rule of an already existing and approved order. Since a new rule was not permitted, Clare, wishing to safeguard the life according to the example of Francis and according to the *forma vitae* written by him, asked Innocent III for the permission for the community to live without possessions.[14] Spelled out, Clare wanted the Poor Ladies to maintain their renunciation of property and profession of strict poverty. This was a very special privilege made once and for all and never before or after requested from the Roman Curia. Since there was no precedent for such a case, the Pope had to compose his own handwritten draft for the special and exceptional right.[15]

Innocent, in responding to Clare highlighted in his document the renunciation of all possessions on the part of Clare and the Poor Ladies from the point of view of imitation of Christ. He included passages in his text from Clare's letter requesting the Privilege.

> As is evident you have renounced the desire for all temporal things, desiring to dedicate yourselves to the Lord alone.... Since you have sold all things and given them to the poor, you propose not to have any possessions whatsover, clinging in all things to the footprints of Him... who for our sake was made poor.... therefore we confirm... your proposal of most high poverty, granting you by the authority of this letter that no one compel you to receive possessions. (*Proc* #5-7).

The granting of the privilege by Innocent was clearly in opposition to the decree of the Lateran Council since it made possible a new form of religious community not based on an existing order.[16] However, it did not end Clare's struggle with the Curia.

Cardinal Hugolino, who personally knew and cared for Clare, as papal legate in 1218 gave "all the poor ladies living in enclosure" the Rule of Benedict with an added "Constitutions." It was not a Rule just for San Damiano but for several other convents of Poor Ladies. This form of life contained legislation about the enclosure, fasting and prayer, but said nothing about possessions and the relationship with the Friars. Clare and the Poor Ladies apparently accepted this form of life, but continued to live life at San Damiano based on Francis' *forma vitae* and the privilege of poverty.[17]

This same man, but now as Gregory IX, on the occasion of a visit to San Damiano spoke to Clare about accepting possessions which he himself offered her. Celano recounts that the Pope literally told Clare: "If you fear for your vow, we release you from it." Clare with a clarity, confidence and directness that characterized all her choices and decisions, responded: "Holy Father, never do I wish to be released in any way from the following of Christ." (*Leg Cl* #14). What more needed to be said? Gregory IX renewed the privilege of poverty in 1228.

Clare's Conviction: A Dwelling Place

There was yet one final struggle Clare must go through. In 1245, Innocent IV confirmed the form of life given by Hugolino (1218). He later repealed his confirmation and gave another Rule in which possessions were permitted. The Rule of Innocent was unacceptable to Clare, especially because it disregarded the *forma vitae* and privilege of poverty granted in 1228.

Some scholars propose that it was in response to this Bull of Innocent (issued on August 6, 1247) which permitted endowment of possessions and fixed income, that Clare composed her Testament. It is generally acknowledged that the Testament was written between 1247 - 1253. The document was meant to confirm strongly the essentials of Clare's Rule, and its pillars of poverty, fraternity, of seclusion to small places like San Damiano, of dependence on the Roman Catholic Church and the Order of Friars Minor. As such it explains very well the doubt that the Rule would ever be approved by the Church.[18]

Clare is a strong, persistent, determined yet gentle and gracious woman, and the absolute centrality of "holy and highest poverty" in her life and mission, shines ever more brightly in light of that lifelong struggle to preserve her commitment to follow in the footprints of the Lord Jesus,

after the manner and example of Francis. Despite this struggle she, as did Francis, remained obedient and faithful to the Church.

For Clare, poverty was her way of living the gospel — an essential part of the following of Christ. For her, economic poverty, evangelical poverty and contemplation were intimately linked. Poverty was not just another virtue to be perfected or ascetical practice to be adhered to; it was, rather a form of life, an attitude of life comprising the whole person, realized in Clare by God.[19] Her desire was to embrace the poor Christ, to contemplate this Christ

> who was poor in the crib, who lived a poor life and who hung naked on the cross (*Test C* #45), to imitate him, to follow the footprints of the Son of God who was made for us the Way... which Francis has shown us by word and example (*Test C* #2) by following the poverty and humility of His beloved son and His glorious Virgin Mother (*Test C* #46).

For both Clare and Francis, poverty and humility are inseparably linked. Humility — an acknowledgement that all good things without exception are gifts of God, a recurring theme in her Testament — is for Clare the inner attitude which should correspond with external poverty. Celano in his Legend states "Her poverty in all things was in harmony with poverty of spirit which is true humility." (*Leg Cl* #13.)

Clare's heightened awareness of God's graciousness and mercy in her life, her total dependence on God, and her contemplation of Christ in the crib and on the cross filled her sensitive and compassionate being with the desire to relive the self-emptying and crucifixion, a desire which found even greater satisfaction through her choice of the added self-denial possible in the enclosed life.

For Clare, and for the Poor Ladies who were with her and who would follow her, enclosure was the means and the way to enter ever more deeply into this self-emptying, this ***kenosis*** which is characteristic of the Lord and set as example by him to those who wish to be disciples. It has been suggested that it is to the recluses and penitents that Clare owes the completely new and revolutionary idea of a bond of deeper union in that ***kenosis*** of Christ which is his solitude of death on the cross.[20]

Enclosure through the ages has had a variety of functions and interpretations. For our purposes, it will be addressed as it impacted the life and mission of Clare. In the eleventh and twelfth century reforms, enclosure was seen as a way to remedy abuses in female monasteries of the time. Its aim was twofold: to limit severely the "wanderings" of the women and to eliminate any type of close assocation with the sexes. A widespread distrust of women and a fear of female sexuality on the part of clerical reformers has been proposed as a large part of the basic rationale for

enclosure. Only secondarily was it considered a physical protection from the dangers of the outside world.[21]

Whatever the rationale behind it, by its very definition strict cloistering insured that many women's communities could no longer be autonomous, independent bodies. With the loss of autonomy came a similar loss in public influence and general visibility for the abbess and monastery. The reformers of the eleventh and twelth centuries wanted it applied to all female religious. It is worth noting that this legislation was always made by men who did not share the lifestyle of enclosed women and did not consult them![22]

With the restrictive legislation limiting and controlling the lives of women who were religiously motivated but did not want monastic life, the lifestyles of the Beguines or Anchoresses (recluses or penitents) became increasingly more attractive and a viable option for many women in the late Middle Ages. For the purposes of this paper we will focus briefly on the anchoresses (recluses) since their way of life influenced to some degree Clare's early years in San Damiano.

Many of the women who were attracted to the anchoretic/reclusive way of life were strong, highly motivated women who refused to succumb to parents' pressure to marry, and who desired to live a life simpler and stricter than monastic life. These women were characterized by a strong commitment to their way of life (fasting prayer, solitude, aiding lepers, giving spiritual direction and prophetic advice.) Although they were in contact with bishops, abbots and monks who seem to have supoorted them, they were free of their authority and jurisdiction. Consequently, the recluses had a great deal of control over their own lives.[23]

These women, whose cells were usually by the city gates or next to one of the many town churches, by their very way of living witnessed to their faith. The vocation of the recluse or anchoress was held in very high esteem — no significant fact in light of the general lack of appreciation of women's vocations in that period.[24]

In one of the more recent studies on the place of enclosure in the life of the Poor Clares, it is proposed that Clare probably owes her style of life in perpetual enclosure to these recluses or penitents who were "incarcerate" — confined to one place. In fact, the name by which the Order of the Poor Sisters of St. Clare was known to the townspeople of Assisi "*Order of Enclosed Women*" is related to the manner of living of those recluses.[25]

Contrary to the widely held opinion that enclosure was imposed on Clare, it seems plausible, in light of more recent research, to propose that neither Francis, Cardinal Hugolino or anyone else, imposed enclosure on Clare, but that she herself consciously and freely chose it. Since in all other instances she pursued with such vigor and determination what she

saw as necessary to safeguard her form of life, it would be inconsistent for Clare to accept enclosure if it was not to advance her life and mission in the church.

Chiara Lainati in her most recent writings on enclosure points out that there has been a fundamental misunderstanding in the Order about enclosure in terms of seeing it mainly as favoring a life of contemplation and as a protection for chastity. Her understanding of enclosure in the life of the Poor Clare is that it is one ulterior deepening of the "emptying out" of a woman who, in addition to embracing the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, ties herself to a place where she is limited in possibilities.

In addition to the vows, enclosure is embraced as a particular way of entering more intensely and deeply into the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ. A vowed life in enclosure is the Poor Clare's particular way in the Church of living out the paschal mystery of taking upon herself the emptying out of Christ on the cross.[26] This was Clare's life. From this perspective, enclosure has value in itself and provides a much clearer understanding and appreciation of the fact that Clare not only freely embraced enclosure, but valued it as an integral dimension of her life and mission in the Church.

Clare: A Light in the Church

How did the Church view this woman who gave birth to a new form of life within the Church and whose very life was her mission? The following excerpts from the *Bull of Canonization* afford us to glimpse of how the Church perceived and experienced Clare:

> In this Clare,
> a clear mirror of example has been given to this world.
>
> While this light remained certainly in a hidden enclosure,
> it emitted sparkling rays outside.
>
> Placed in the confined area of the monastery,
> yet it was spread throughout the whole world.
>
> Hidden within,
> she extended herself abroad (*BC* #3-4).

> This woman was undoubtedly an eminent and most celebrated tree with far reaching branches that brought forth the sweet fruit of a religious way of life in the field of the Church.... This woman furnished a new fountain of living water... planted and cultivated a vineyard of poverty and set up a garden of humility in the domain of the Church bound by immense needs (*BC* #9).

> Her very life was an instruction and lesson of others (*BC* #10). Therefore, it is fitting that the universal Church venerate this woman through her teaching (*BC* #20).

In the foregoing excerpts from the ***Bull of Canonization***, the Church acknowledges over and over again that Clare is truly a light to the world. In the mid-thirteenth century, that light shone brightly; the passage of time has dimmed that brilliance somewhat.

A dearth of good critical material on Clare has been a significant factor in that dimming. Until very recently much of the material on Clare was presented as part of Francis' biographies, written from a male perspective and varying from biography to biography. For too long Clare has stood in Francis' shadow.

With Clare's own writings now accessible to the English speaking world, Clare as a person in her own right and as a woman becomes more accessible to us. We can begin to look at Clare from a woman's perspective and ask who is this woman Clare and what does her life and mission say to us today. Clare's Rule, Testament and Letters indicate, among other things, that she was a strong, persistent, determined, holy, loving and skillful woman who had a vision. She articulated that vision in her life and writings; she spent herself tirelessly in pursuit of it; she never saw it validated in her own lifetime, but left that vision to countless women who would desire and attempt to follow in her footprints. The passion that characterized her living and loving spans centuries and cultures and challenges us to live as passionately our "vocation and choice" in our world and time. □

Endnotes

[1]References to the Legends, Process, and Writings of Clare are taken from R. J. Armstrong, *Clare of Assisi: Early Documents*. New York: Paulist Press, 1988.

[2]L. Iriarte, *Franciscan History: The Three Orders of St. Francis of Assisi*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983, p. 332.

[3]A. Fortini, *Francis of Assisi*, tr. Helen Moak. New York: Crossroads Publishing Cop., 1981, pp. 347-348.

[4]M. Karecki, "Clare: Poverty and Contemplation in her Life and Writings," in *Peace Weavers: Medieval Religious Women II*. Cistercian Studies Series 72, Cistercian Publication, Inc., 1987, p. 168.

[5]See E. Grau, " 'As a Virgin Embrace the Poor Christ': St. Clare's Life in Poverty and Humility," pp. 20-21.

[6]See Brenda Bolton, "Mulieres Sanctae," in *Women in Medieval Society*. London: Basil Blackwell, 1973, p. 148.

[7]Karecki, p. 169.

[8]Fortini, p. 344.

[9]Fortini, p. 345.

[10]See Armstrong, footnote 82, p. 164.

[11]E. Grau, "The Rule of St. Clare (1253) in Its Dependence on the Rule of the Friars Minor (1223)," tr. by D. Temple, OFM, in *Franziskanische Studien*, 1953, pp. 211 ff.

[12]Chiara A. Lainati, "Testament of St. Clare," tr. from the Italian by J. Frances, P.C.C. (Roswell, NM), in *Dizionario Francescano*. Padua, 1983, p. 7.

[13]H. Roggen, *The Spirit of St. Clare*, tr. P. J. Oligny. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1971, pp. 39-43.

[14]P. Van Leeuvwen, "Clare's Rule," *Greyfriars Review I*, September 1987, p. 66.

[15]Grau, " 'As a Virgin,' " p. 24.

[16]Bolton, p. 149.

[17]Van Leeuvwen,, pp. 67-68.

[18]Lainati, p. 4.

[19]Roggen, pp. 16-18.

[20]Chiara A. Lainati, "Enclosure: Characteristic Way for Clare to Express the Paschal Mystery" from the Italian "La Clausura: non mezzo di contemplazione, ma modo tipico delle Clarisse di esprimere il mistero pasquale," in *Forma Sororum*, # 4 & 5 (1983). P. 2 in redacted form of translation.

[21]J. T. Schulenberg, "Strict Active Enclosure and its Effects on the Female Monastic Experience (540-1100)," *Distant Echoes: Medieval Religious Women I*, Cistercian Studies Series 71. Cistercian Publications, Inc., 1984, p. 79.

[22]Schulenberg, p. 59.

[23]P. J. Rosof, "The Anchoress in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," *Peace Weavers*. Pp. 125, 140.

[24]Rosof, p. 140.

[25]Lainati, "Enclosure," p. 2.

[26]"Enclosure," p. 1 of redacted typescript.

"Go forth swiftly"

SR. MARIE BEHA, O.S.C.

As religious life stands on the threshold of the 1990's, the progress of renewal continues, charting a direction for the last decade of this century and influencing the next. Will it be a springtime flush with the hope of new growth or an autumn going into winter of accelerated aging and decline? The answers are being determined "today" in the intersecting of past history, present events, and personal/communal decisions. Beyond that, the future lies uncertain, yet filled with possibility. One hope for that future is being spelled out in a renewed spirituality of religious life. During the '80's this renewal focused primarily on apostolate and community as integral and essential elements of all religious life. What may lie ahead is increased emphasis on the vows, as summary expressions of religious consecration.

But are they that? Do the "vows I have made" (Ps. 116) really summarize the thrust of my life's orientation toward God motivating me to fuller, deeper consecration? This basic question must be faced, not in theory, but in practical experience; it must be asked of each vow and of all the vows in their interrelatedness.

As a small but, hopefully, meaningful contribution, the present reflection focuses on the spirituality of a vow of enclosure and how it relates to that living in Christ which is basic to all Christian baptismal consecration and to the other vows which shape and form religious life.[1]

In a society where increasing mobility is fact of everyday experience, as well as cultural ideal, living an enclosed life has to be problematic. For some, enclosure recedes into the realm of mystery, where it can be respected in the safety of the abstract and left in the practical limbo of ignorance. For others, it becomes a problem, often dismissed as symptomatic of some religious aberration. In either case, most Americans

Sister Marie Beha, OSC, presently serves her community as novice directress and vicaress. She continues to write for REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS, LIVING PRAYER, PASTORAL LIFE and is currently completing work on a book length treatment of spiritual development in the corporate person of community. Sister lives at 1916 N. Pleasantburg Drive, Greenville, S.C. 29609.

continue to live out the cultural values of upward mobility and freedom of choice that keep us a nation on the move.

Enclosure, by contrast, not only accepts limits, but freely chooses, makes a commitment, to some very definite boundaries. These limits are geographic, requiring that persons live within a certain, restricted space, committed to a community of others who have accepted similar restrictions. That is the negative and more easily stated side of enclosure. The positive aspects are an environment of prayer-filled solitude and silence, a concentration of purpose, that living within clearly defined limits makes possible. Then holy enclosure becomes a powerful beam of light focused out; it is for others.

Even this brief statement of meaning already indicates some of the ways in which enclosure is related to the other vows. All are counter-cultural. All are evangelical, based on the good news of the life of Jesus. None are absolutes; they are only means, moving toward ends. They are relative values needing to be weighed in the balance against the prior rights of human persons and the absolute value of love. Each vow incarnates a spirituality, expressing externally an orientation of the spirit. The materiality of the vow is as variegated as the persons who practice it; its expression changes and should change as often as necessary to better express the language of the heart. It is the latter that provides direction and a steadfast core-commitment against which the variables of lived expression can be critiqued.

The Enclosed Life of Jesus

Like the other evangelical counsels, enclosure is rooted in the way Jesus lived; in this case, in His apartness and His being a part. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God" and "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1;1, 14) hint at both themes: the Son's eternal oneness with the Father and His being sent into our world. Jesus' descent into this world continued His nearness "to the Father's heart"; it was for the sake of "making Him known." (Jn. 1:18).

At the very beginning of the Good News, we are already in touch with the mystery that underlies enclosure. When the appointed time had come for the enfleshment of the Word in our world, Jesus entered into our way of living. He was enclosed in the womb of the Virgin Mary, sheltered in the confines of a simple family; he accepted the cultural limitations of village life in one corner of the narrow world of Jewish culture and Old Testament religious tradition. Jesus descended. And the life of God-with-us continues that movement. Being enclosed as one of us offered Him

no security; nor was it easy escape. The intimacy of family life in Nazareth was preparatory to being sent forth.

Through the brief years of public ministry, Jesus lived out an alternating rhythm of going apart for periods of prolonged prayer and being involved with equal intensity in caring for the needs of others. Love of God and love of neighbor were not two loves, pulling in opposite directions but one fire of charity that simply had to be expressed in every way possible. In the continuing ministry of Jesus, both expressions expanded. His sense of mission grew. He came to appreciate that He was being sent not only to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mt. 10:6) but also to rival religious neighbors like the Samaritans and even to those pagans who were "great of faith" (Lk. 7:9). At the same time that Jesus' preaching became, in one sense, more inclusive, in another way, it grew more concentrated, as it deepened. So in the last months of His life, most of His preaching was directed toward His close friends and disciples. Finally, on the night before He suffered He revealed the secrets of His Heart to the twelve, sharing a last supper with them.

At the same time that the being-sent of Jesus' mission was developing in this pattern of growing inclusivity and being limited to depth-sharing with a few, His prayer before the Father (if we may dare to speak of such an awesome mystery) seems to show a comparable development. From the solitude of the forty desert days at the beginning, to the long nights spent in solitary prayer, from the request of the disciples, "Lord teach us how to pray," (Lk. 11:1) to the shared intimacy of the final moments of the last supper where Jesus prayed that "they may be one, as you Father in me and I in you, that they may be one in us" (Jn. 17:21), the prayer of Jesus both reached out in growing inclusiveness and also invited others into the singular mystery of who He was before the Father.

This same rhythm is evidenced in the final crisis events of Jesus' death/resurrection. His last word, His ultimate activity, would be one of singular surrender, "Father into your hands..." (Lk 22:46), as He returned His spirit to the God who had sent Him into the world. Resurrection would be the Father's answer as Jesus was caught up into the life of glory. No longer confined by space or time, he would live in eternal presence to the Father. This Ascension would make possible a sending forth of the Spirit now at work transforming our world, making it possible for all of us to live the good news.

Enclosure as Gospel Imperative

Living according to the holy gospel is the challenge and the opportunity of all the baptized. What Jesus began is to continue in us. Each Christian is called to a going into the world as well as a degree of separateness from

it. Each is invited to grow into a greater inclusivity that is paralleled by comparable development of personal indepth relationships with God and with others. Overflowing love for others needs to be rooted in silence and solitude, if the word spoken is to be a living word. Closeness requires distance, a distance that charity transforms into presence.

Jesus' way of living becomes the rhythm of Christian life. Some measure of apartness balanced by some form of presence is gospel imperative, a necessary element in each Christian life. Enclosure is not just esoteric preference; it is essential ingredient. Like the other vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, it is an evangelical counsel which, on closer examination, proves to be commandment.

Why call any of the vows counsels? Perhaps to indicate that the way in which canonical religious life spells out their meaning is just one option, a choice offered to individual discernment. In this sense, marriage and life in family are equally gospel counsels; no one is commanded to marry or to have children; this is just one response to the universal call to holiness.

No one is commanded to live out enclosure according to the specifics of religious life, much less those of monastic community. All Christians need to find ways to grow in a spirituality of going apart and of being part. For example, marriage is for children but it is also for the sharing of intimacy between man and wife. Religious life is for the Kingdom but this being sent forth is response to a call that is first heard in the silence and solitude of the heart.

Vowing Enclosure

Since the spirituality that lies behind enclosure is integral to the vocation of all Christians, why do some observe it by special vow? For the same reason that some in the Body of Christ profess other vows, whether these be marriage vows or those of poverty, chastity and obedience, or other specific promises, for example, to care for the needy. All of these commitments express response to a special charismatic call; they are gifts given to individuals for the sake of others. They are bold-face statements, written in the lives of certain persons, words that shout values which every Christian must enflesh in some form.

It is the value behind the vow that is truly Catholic, an absolute for all. The specifics of vowed expression are only means and so relative. A vow of poverty is not an attempt to live without any property at all, nor does it impose the restrictions of a vowed religious on other Christians. It does not even say that these particular expressions of poverty are always better even for the religious who has accepted them by vow. All of this is relative: to one's call in the body of Christ, to the particular situation in which individuals find themselves. Similarly, that "unmarriageable for

the sake of the Kingdom" (P. van Breemen, CALLED BY NAME, Dimension Book, Denville, N.J., 1976) which describes the vow of religious chastity, does not make it an ideal imposed absolutely on all or even on someone who might experience a call to it. It invites a free response, a personal response-ability relative to the amount of freedom a person already possesses. What is of absolute value, requiring an unqualified "yes", is the priority of relationship with God over every other form of intimacy. Vowed celibacy simply expresses one way of putting God first. Obedience is likewise a means, one among others, to the absolute value of surrender to the will of God mediated through others. The way that this is expressed is relative to persons and situations.

Vowing enclosure is just one way of expressing a value that is absolute. It is this central value that needs clear articulation so it can be embraced more fully, lived more freely, and can be distinguished from particular expressions which are relative and changing. Being enclosed is not "always better" even for those vowed to observe it and certain expressions of it are quite contrary to a more directly apostolic vocation. But for those invited, it can be a particular expression of that going apart for the sake of being a part which was Christ's own leaving this world and going to the Father.

Like all vows, enclosure is, first of all, a spiritual value; this is its absolute meaning. But since we are speaking of a human value, we are also describing an incarnational reality, requiring a material, physical expression. Overemphasis on one aspect or the other results in malformation. Too spiritualized, enclosure drifts into vagueness, the world of ineffective "good intentions." Emphasis on the material expression results in rigidity and a self-satisfying preoccupation with small detail. The vow comes alive when there is a healthy balance: a spirit that breathes life into the exterior forms coupled with sufficient embodiment to support the spirit and keep it humbly honest.

Because of its material aspect, enclosure needs to be incarnate in practical sorts of ways. This "spelling out" may be as informal as the customs of family life or as formal as the code of canon law. "The way we do things" is the streambed of tradition that defines expression, keeping it moving in a definite direction, giving it a certain shape and force. But the life-giving element is the meaning behind the observance; without this the streambed runs dry!

Readiness for Vowing Enclosure

Like all other vows enclosure presupposes a certain readiness, which forms the human subsoil making growth possible; just as marriage requires some level of personal/social maturity, so too, the vows made in religious life. Poverty, for instance, presupposes that a person has sufficient security

to be able to give up possessiveness. It also requires enough life-experience to have developed appreciation of and a caring for the good things this world offers. The vow of chastity has comparable prerequisites including a capacity for intimacy and respect for marriage and family life. Obedience presupposes that someone has already worked through adolescent rebellion and come to a sense of personal autonomy, the "yes" and the "no" of individual responsibility.

Enclosure makes comparable demands on human maturity. These might be summed up as negotiating the crisis of limits and developing an "interior" life. A small child has no understanding of limits; his power is infinite; his tiny body is THE world. Disillusionment follows and then, hopefully, a growing realism. The world is not subject to self; mother says "no." The world is also larger than self; the child reaches out and others respond. With some oversimplification, the rest of life's growth can be imaged as further development of these two themes.

Facing life's limits and entering into realistic relationships delineates the development of the baby and the task of the adult. Learning to relate to siblings or other small children rounds off some of the rough edges of omnipotence, a process that is continued in school and on the playground. The need to make choices adds further realism; no one can have it all. But choosing is also freeing. The world beyond the self, the enrichment of friendship, the direction of commitment, enlarge the self. Limits, once accepted, frame the doorway to transcendence.

Vowing enclosure is simply one way of enfleshing this acceptance, this belief in the greater power that lies beyond the narrow world of self. The vow presupposes that an individual has already made some peace with the world of limits, peace, not just an uneasy truce. And has experienced that such acceptance holds the key to transcendence. It is a lesson not learned once but repeated in changing circumstances and only completed in the final "yes" of life limited by death.

Negotiating the crisis of limits makes possible the development of an interior life. When the external world is in focus, then it is no longer so preoccupying; looking inward becomes possible. Self-conscious intersection gives way to the quiet of interiority; solitude becomes an option.

Just as limits threaten independence and can bear either the sour fruit of rebellion or be transcended into the freedom of acceptance, so too, solitude can deteriorate into withdrawal and aloneness or be transformed into deepening relationship and solidarity. Before the latter can occur, individuals desiring to live an enclosed life need to have grown into a maturing sense of who they are and where they are going. Then they can experience both limits and aloneness as filled with creative possibilities. Sounds nice. But does it happen? All we are claiming here is that it can, if one is ready and willing.

Like all the other vows, enclosure is a risk. On the one hand, it probes personal choice, demanding a decision that must be made over and over again in all the changing circumstances of one's life. What is promised at the beginning of an enclosed life must be renewed in the face of later questions. The crisis of continuing fidelity must be faced with regard to enclosure as with all the other vows. To say "I will be forever faithful" can destroy freedom, leaving one chained to living out practices that are no longer life-giving. Or it can liberate by deepening personal direction and providing a context for other free choices. To make a vow is to take a risk, either that of deadening repetition of routine or of careless neglect of what has been promised. Yet refusing all commitment is even more risky.

Like all the other vows, enclosure may threaten certain human values. Poverty, for example, exposes one to the possibility of irresponsibility, of living like a child expecting to be cared for by others, or having all one's needs guaranteed, of settling for security in preference to creative response. Poverty can shrink one's world and harden one's heart into miserliness. Similarly, chastity can avoid the maturation of intimate, longterm relationships, leaving someone with the personality of an "old maid" of whatever sex! Obedience has another set of risks, allowing an individual the satisfaction of perpetual adolescence, always rebelling against the authority of others without ever having to answer for self or assume responsibility for authorizing others.

Enclosure has its own dangers and the "wise virgin" prepares to meet them throughout her vowed life. The separateness that is one side of living an enclosed life reduces one's exposure to the world outside. This makes it easier to ignore such reality as poverty's degradation, the explosiveness of violence, the many faces of evil in our world. Yet this is a risk for any "sheltered life" including that of the academic, the research scientist, or any other individual cloistered in a specialization.

The smallness of enclosure also deletes some of the finer things that the wider world offers: the richness of much natural beauty, the splendor of an art exhibit or concert, the rich resources of the best of libraries. Obviously, these are not completely lost but they are no longer as accessible. For someone who is not ready, or who finds that enclosed life, in whatever way that is spelled out, shrinks the world, the loss may be greater than the gain.

Symptomatic of unreadiness is a certain element of escapism. When the world becomes too small pressure builds. Little things are magnified. Just as with the Israelites in the desert, muttering and murmuring become chronic diseases. "This wretched food..." (Nm. 21:5) The desert, instead

of sharpening vision, produces mirages. Solitude is viewed as solitary confinement. Escape from such a punishment becomes a necessity and is accomplished with all the ingenuity of the desperate. Uselesss curiosity, small talk, mindless busyness and addictive behavior of many kinds substitute for reality. Anything is better than nothing.

The World Enlarged

Such are the risks for which one must be ready. Presuming that the person vowing enclosure has come to terms with the crisis of limits and has some experience of the interior life, the question for on-going formation becomes: how to minimize the risks and maximize the richness of an enclosed life? The answer seems to lie in continuing to face limits and growing in interiority, while avoiding the dangers of escape into unreality and diminished worldview. The world of the enclosure will be as real as one's self-knowledge and as fruitful as one's sense of the kingdom.

Just as enclosure presupposes a certain amount of self-knowledge, it also demands continual growth in self-understanding, self-acceptance, self-love. This is life-long process more than accomplishment and professing the vow is only proclamation of intent, not guarantee of fulfillment.

The limits of an enclosed life bring one face-to-face with the reality of personal weakness. Anyone entering the enclosure with illusions about achieved virtue is in for rapid disillusionment. Without the distractions of absorbing work and the stimulation of the "outside" world, there is a corresponding increase in focus on self. That is alarming enough itself; who wants to live in a house of mirrors!

But the focus we are speaking of here is more than a matter of self-consciousness. Though it may have some aspects of introspection, especially at the beginning, it soon moves from attending to self, to self-awareness. The latter is intuitive, rather than judgmental; contemplative, more than rational. While attending to self is focused concentration that restricts one's range of vision, self-awareness is part of a bigger picture, heightening sensitivity to all reality. It is alert but not strained, open rather than restricted. As a consequence, it maintains perspective; self is seen in relationship. In this way, self-knowledge, even growing awareness of one's sinfulness, bears the authentic fruit of self-acceptance. Without this transformation, enclosure is condemnation to constant companionship with someone who is vaguely disagreeable.

Self-acceptance is slow-growth virtue; perhaps this is why discerning capacity for living an enclosed life requires time. Persons may have to move through some initial increase in introspection but they should not remain in this stance. To do so would be a vocational countersign. Gradually, self-acceptance will be manifest in growing relaxation and increased

peace and joy. Self will be seen as sinner, yes, but loved sinner.

Love of self will be the mature fruit of being called to live an enclosed life. Contrary to what one may at first think, authentic self-love is not the first of the virtues to be acquired; rather, almost the last. It presupposes a being rooted in God, a finding of one's personal identity in relation to God. When God is enough, enclosure simply provides a set of creative limits which heighten this awareness.

This God who becomes known on the Mount Sinai of enclosed life is a God who acts strongly, who calls, promises, cajoles, "threatens." This is a God who relates in very real ways, forming a people "peculiarly His own." (Dt. 7;6) Enclosure permits no easy escape from this God who is always with us, who wants us for Himself.

God fills the small world of enclosed life; this is the attractiveness of His call, the promise of presence that he offers. And the threat implied in divine-human relationship. If God is everything... there is nothing much left for self. In the desert of enclosure most of the customary disguises of the ego become useless. The brick-building of Egypt no longer justifies one's existence; gathering manna is no longer self-satisfying. While the temptation to idol-making remains a real possibility, the opportunity to be formed by God's commandments becomes a gift offered in community.

Again, we are given a choice: either to escape into a shrinking world of mounting dissatisfaction or to move up the mountain of Sinai. To accept the latter invitation is to be caught up in the cloud of God's presence, to perceive the promise of revealed glory.

It is to enter into a day-by-day experience of the paschal mystery that is intense and concentrated. Without the distractions that form the backdrop of most human lives, everything stands revealed as part of this fundamental option. We are always choosing either life or death. We decide to pass through death now for the sake of life everlasting or we opt for immediate satisfaction and put off our dying until the end, when it may be too late. Like the Israelites enclosed in the desert, we are asked to choose which God we will serve. It is a life/death choice.

As part of our choice we are also offered a clearer vision of that promised land which is the Kingdom of God. Enclosure maps the boundaries of this kingdom in certain clear and specific ways, making clear that in it all are united to all. Time and distance are not obstacles. Place, space, race, make no difference. The only persons who are excluded are those who exclude themselves by refusing to accept the all-inclusiveness that is the wideness of God's mercy. In the striking phrase of John Shea, the invitation to the heavenly banquet is open to "all who want to feast with all." (STORIES OF FAITH, Thomas More Press, 1980, p. 171). Paradoxically enough, it is this universal openness which reinforces the separateness of enclosure. As we have already said, the going apart is for the sake of

being more a part. The solitude and silence highlight union with a God whose "taste" is catholic, and also the intrinsic unity of all human persons in the one body of Christ.

If enclosure does not bear this fruit of experienced union, the dangers inherent in it become too great. But when one is called and when one responds authentically, the gift of growing oneness becomes apparent. Horizons of caring are expanded and love reaches out from neighbor to neighbor in an ever expanding chain of concern. Situations described in the news make a difference in the way one lives; persons never met become personal responsibility. Asians and Africans caught up in the crossfire of political violence are as real as any more immediate neighbor. Faces of slum children are no longer just pictures; their cries are heard, perhaps even more really than if they were shouting in the streets where one lives.

At the same time that enclosed life expands vision, it also particularizes, another of its paradoxes. The neighbor whose voice is heard is quite specific. Some hear one voice, some another. The call is vocational. In some instances this may be as natural a response as someone who has been ill hearing the voices of others who are sick. At other times there is no human logic to explain that the call to concern spotlights these individuals rather than others. No matter the "why" of this vocational concern; what is important is the difference it makes in experienced connectedness.

At the same time that God's love is perceived in its universal openness and concrete application to specific neighbors, enclosure also reveals the priority of "God alone." In the past this phrase was often bannered over the monastery door and it is no accident that "monk" and "monastery" both have their verbal roots in the single-mindedness of the "one." Living within enclosure focuses life on the "one thing necessary." It is a deliberate reduction of other choices for the sake of making one choice more strongly. The kingdom which is coming is God's alone. And in the end we will either choose to be chosen by God or we will be left outside the kingdom. This final choice is a solitary one. We make it alone and we alone can make it.

Just as enclosure brings together all-inclusiveness and solitariness, so also does it place in creative tension the truth of God's being universally present and the inability of any place or space to contain this divine presence. God is everywhere and nowhere! Fidelity to an enclosed life involves a "yes" to both of these. Divine presence can be discovered in any place, in any set of circumstances. There is no need to search out special places, spots of great natural beauty or historic significance. Sacred shrines are less necessary for no place is really profane. Every place is sacred.

So stay where you are. Here is your place of meeting. Looking for God abroad is unnecessary; it may even be defeative. In the limits of your personal past, the confines of your possible future, the divine is being offered to you. Your body is a meeting tent; your psyche, the place where redemption is being effected. So too the opportunities or lack of them that our culture affords us; the gifts and poverties of the particular place where we live: all of this is holy ground. We have only to stand where we are and be grateful. Then our openness to receive will bring us into divine presence. Spatial limits open out in transcendent possibility.

In speaking of the going beyond that begins by embracing where we are, we caught up again the incarnational elements of our humanness. Enclosure is material and spiritual; it is external and physical but it is also interior and transcendent. Over-emphasis on either dimension dehumanizes the whole. When external, physical space is stressed too much, the spirit is lost. Either it becomes complacent, satisfied, having achieved one more spiritual goal or it goes to the opposite extreme and rebels against what it perceives as truncating spiritual meaning and so attempts to live without limits. Enclosure is primarily a matter of spiritual space, a place where persons meet God. Being where we are is basic to this meeting and the challenge which enclosure enunciates.

Listening for the divine, waiting for it, looking for it in the everyday of this time/place is at the heart of living out an enclosed life. When this attitude moves an individual to make a vow of enclosure, and when this profession is lived out in authentic acceptance of limits for the sake of deeper interior life, then what is enclosed is rich and expansive. This space, any place, makes possible a divine break through. God is here. So are we. And so is everyone else. □

Endnotes

[1]Long tradition in the Order of St. Clare provides for a fourth vow of enclosure and the newly approved CONSTITUTIONS of the Order maintain this tradition. Though other contemplative communities observe enclosure they do not make it a special vow. The present article does not take a position on the somewhat controversial question of whether it should be subject matter of a vow; rather it intends to explore the meaning of present practice. What is said could also be applied to any gospel counsel, including those fourth vows which other communities have made to emphasize their particular charism.

Two August Failures

I

Lord,
if in creation's realm
there does exist
that state of being
tired, too tired
to free the gift of poetry,
then I am there.
August heaps me,
and I am maimed, drained,
unable now to even sing
my weariness.

II

To further demonstrate
my state of belly-up,
the guards just brought
some pizza in,
two pieces nice and warm,
and I myself devoured one slice
realizing far too late
that I had three
young kids on break
and probably the pizza was
for all of us.
In shame I cut
the other piece
into three tiny token
slivers,
and gave them my potato chips
to salve my selfish beast.

Anthony Chiarilli

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SEPTEMBER, 1990

The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

ARTICLES

GRIEVING FOR EARTH 228
Margaret Pirkl, O.S.F.

CORPORATE LOSS IN THE FRANCISCAN FAMILY 237
Ingrid Peterson, O.S.F.

IN THE HOME THAT WISDOM BUILDS,
WE WILL GRIEVE NO MORE 244
Rosemary Small, O.S.F.

FEATURES

ABOUT THE SEPTEMBER *CORD* 225
Margaret Eletta Guider, O.S.F.

THEA... "GOING HOME SONG" 226
Francesca Thompson, O.S.F.

POETRY:
AT LA VERNA 236
Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.

BOOK REVIEWS 245

Volume 40, No. 8

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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).

About the September CORD...

This month's issue of **The CORD** focuses on the theme of grief. It is a theme that runs through the fabric of our lives in ways that often make it difficult for us to comprehend its effect and meaning. C.S. Lewis, in his book entitled *A Grief Observed*, notes that grief is not a state of being, but a process. He goes on to say:

> Grief is like a long valley, a winding valley where any bend may reveal a totally new landscape. As I've already noted, not every bend does. Sometimes the surprise is the opposite one; you are presented with exactly the same sort of country you thought you had left behind miles ago. That is when you wonder whether the valley isn't a circular trench. But it isn't. There are partial recurrences, but the sequence doesn't repeat.[1]

The selections presented in this issue describe at length some of the occasions for grief that cause us to ponder our identity as Franciscans in the heart of the world. Each contribution is representative of individual reflections on specific experiences of grief that are common to many of our lives. Each, in its own way, provides the reader with a point of departure for ongoing discussion on the significance of grief and the process of recomposing our faith as the mystery of our lives continues to unfold.

Margaret Elatta Guider, OSF

[1]*C. S. Lewis, A Grief Observed* (New York: Crossroad, 1961) p. 47.

"I have done what was mine to do. May the Lord reveal to you what it is that you are to do."

St. Francis of Assisi

Sister Thea Bowman, a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration for 37 years, died of bone cancer on March 30, 1990, at the age of 52, in Canton, Mississippi. As an African-American, she was gifted and sustained by a heritage that inspired her to respond to the God who called her by name. Sister Thea is remembered throughout the United States and many parts of the world, as a teacher, an evangelist, an artist, a singer and a catalyst for faith, hope and love.

The following piece was written by Sister Francesca Thompson, O.S.F., a member of the Oldenburg, Indiana, Franciscans. Long time friend of Sr. Thea's, Sister Francesca presently serves as Assistant Dean of Fordham University where she is associate professor of Afro-American Literature and Acting. She was recipient of the 1990 PIERRE TOUSSAINT MEDALLION for Outstanding Service to the Black Catholic Community.

Thea... "Goin' Home Song"

Loosened, lifted from our limited, loving embrace,
She slips from our reluctant-to release-her grasp
Into the waiting, welcoming bosom of her Father-Friend... God,
"Blessed Assurance"... ASSURED ... at last.
Eternally to rest "leaning on His Ever-Lasting Arm."
God-given, granted to us. God graced, God generously-gifted.
Glittering of soul, soul-sister mine.
Thea... meaning "of God"... was truly that.
Of... from... portion of The Almighty.
God-gilded voice. Lifting it liltingly in song
"Praisin' Her Jesus"... busy from dawn to dusk...
Vigorously in the vineyard dancing, swaying, *sash-shaying...*
Shouting... "Amen"ing her way deep into our model-hungry hearts,
Reminding us... (if too briefly) of Gospel promises... Church,
Songs of the elders... sighs of the hopeless... and always illustrating

LOVE. Loving like her Lover, Jesus loved ... generously, extravagantly,
Whole-heartedly warming the worn... the cold-from-neglect...
And the weary with her own special, winsome warmth.
Excluding none... for she was not into exclusion
Rather, *includer...* inherent.
Bent! Bowed! But never spirit-broken.
Bravely bearing the heat of the day AND her cross. Tried! Tested! True!
Treading the wine-press, she paid her dues as she lived her vows
Self-lessly... with joy jubilant. Worthy daughter of a Troubadour
Whom she gaily followed as "Sister Ever-Glad"
"Princess of Peace"... as Francis was its heralder.
And tho' she has left us now for a brighter shore... wading across that
Deep, "Deep River" wide —
We are not bereft... tho' sore bereaved.
For He, to Whom "She Done Made Her Vow"
Had kissed her to Eternal LIFE and Light.
No more darkness NEVER! Cuz "That Ole Time Religion"
Which fed her soul has lead her HOME...
Healed! Healthy! Well and whole! ... HALLELUIA!
Why mourn for her "Great Gettin' Up Morning?"
She was never really ours... alone... but ever completely His.
Her solid Rock... Her Strength... Her Salvation!
To us, she was merely lent, for *always* she was first and foremost
His chosen, precious Own...
And so my friends, the "Silver tears we shed —
They are simply interest on God's loan."

So Thea can hear it... Let the church say "AMEN"!

. . . . . .

Humbly offered with love ... for my sister...

Sister Francesca Thompson. OSF
April 2, 1990, D.M.E.O.

Grieving for Earth

MARGARET PIRKL, O.S.F.

The troubled trees of our planet are bent with the winds of grief; the silence of the rocks seems to say something is terribly wrong. Somehow, through them we recognize in ourselves a cosmic sadness at the grievous suffering of our earth: wounded and dead innocents in war-torn countries, eroded hillsides, dying trees, poisoned groundwater, oil-covered waterfowl, extinguished species, starving children, abused children, children deprived of their childhood.[1]. Historically, the 20th century, considered by some to be the century of progress, has been regarded by others as an "age of holocaust."[2] Since 1900, perhaps 160 million persons have been butchered in wars, death camps, and purges. Untold millions have died as a result of malnutrition and injustice. Humankind has damaged the delicate chemical and physical balance of global and regional systems, in some cases irreversibly. Pristine forests, homes to exquisitely rich and diverse ecosystems, have been torched and bulldozed. Centralization of power and wealth in many sectors has caused deep problems for all inhabitants of the earth. Extreme military spending has made possible the annihilation of the planet by nuclear weapons, to say nothing of its gobbling up resources and talents that could have provided a more human life for billions of people. Precious creatures, including humans, find themselves threatened now by retaliation from natural systems harmed many years ago. The magnitude of this violence and death is too much to take in. T. S. Eliot helps us to put words around our feelings; although the images were originally taken from World War II, they serve well in the context here:

Margaret Pirkl, OSF, is a member of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Rochester, Minnesota. In writing of concern for the Earth, she attempts to integrate ecological knowledge with Franciscan spirituality.

Ash on an old man's sleeve
Is all the ash the burnt roses leave.
Dust in the air suspended
Marks the place where a story ended.
Dust inbreathed was a house —
The wall, the wainscot and the mouse.
The death of hope and despair,
This is the death of air.

There are flood and drouth
Over the eyes and in the mouth.
Dead water and dead sand
Contending for the upper hand.
The parched eviscerate soil
Gapes at the vanity of toil.
Laughs without mirth.
This is the death of earth.

Water and fire succeed
The town, the pasture and the weed.
Water and fire deride
The sacrifice that we denied.
Water and fire shall rot
The marred foundations we forgot,
Of sanctuary and choir.
This is the death of water and fire. [3]

We often experience this loss of earth's members, including humans, at levels that we cannot identify, and usually we do not take time to reflect on why we are grieving. Yet, the pain is real, even though we do not know the dying directly. I believe that we Franciscans can look to our heritage in order to understand why our sense of loss is so acute. We know, though perhaps not consciously, that members of our family are dying; our sympathy goes out especially to those without a voice, suffering because they are dominated by others; we are heartbroken at the violation of sacred, irreplaceable particular beings who somehow hold God for us.

Francis of Assisi turned attitudes upside down by preaching and living the brotherhood and sisterhood of all created beings. For him, humans and all other creatures together made up the earth-family — created, held in existence, and cared for by a loving Creator God and claiming as a member Christ, the incomprehensible Mystery who is truly human and truly Divine. Francis' affection for this family is well-known through the early writings: his interaction with Brother Fire (LP 49), Sister Cricket (LP 84), Brother Leo (BenLeo, EpLeo), Sister Lark (LP 110), and many others. Francis related to all earthlings as his brothers and sisters, as

family, as creatures coming from one Creator (1 Cel 81). And earth's members responded as family.

Francis' special concern for the lowly and the suffering is widely-known. Thomas of Celano states:

> The father of the poor, the poor Francis, conforming himself to the poor in all things, was grieved when he saw some one poorer than himself, not because he longed for vainglory, but only from a feeling of compassion. (1 Cel 76)[4]

> [Francis] was filled with compassion not only toward [people] in need, but even toward dumb animals, reptiles, birds, and other creatures sensible and insensible. (1 Cel 66)

This compassion is described in passages about his encounter with lepers (1 Cel 17), his gentle care for a rabbit that the brothers had rescued from a trap (1 Cel 60), the lamb he saved from slaughter (1 Cel 77, 78, 79), his admonition to leave part of a tree standing so that it might grow anew (LP 51), his provision of honey for the bees in wintertime (1 Cel 80), the gift of his tunic to a person who had none (1 Cel 76); many others could be cited. It seems clear that such compassion for the poorest on earth flowed from Francis' sense of being the least of God's creatures, the least of all *minores*, as well as from his personal immersion in Christ Crucified. He owned his creaturehood and he deeply loved Jesus, the Suffering Servant (Is 52:1353:12); the stance resulting from these two attitudes increased his perception of his own poverty and his sinfulness as a human being.

That Francis found God in ordinary and extraordinary ways in and through creation both enriched and flowed from his contemplation of God's goodness and humility in creating the world and in becoming human, becoming a Child of Earth. Over and over again, we find Francis was moved to joy and gratitude and rapture as he recognized the presence of God in nature (CantSol; LP 49, 51; 1 Cel 80, 81; 2 C 165).

In his book, *The Franciscans*, William Short writes a particularly beautiful summary of Franciscan spirit and theology based on Francis' life and words; the following section is relevant here:

> The universe and all creatures reflect God, speak of God, reveal God because they are made according to a pattern, the model of God's own heart, the core of the Trinity, the Word. The human person coming at the completion of creation, gives voice to the praise of all creatures for the Creator.

> The Creation is fully understandable at the birth of Jesus.... With the coming of the Word as one of them, creatures find their model enfleshed. Christ is no alien in a strange universe: [Christ] was from the beginning the reason and the Creator's blueprint for every particle of matter, for all things visible and invisible, for everything and everyone.[5]

I believe that we can better understand our grief in experiencing a suffering earth if we reflect for a bit on the gifts described above in Francis, the gifts of *fraternitas, minoritas, and contemplatio*, operative to varying degrees in a Franciscan life. We will find that they increase our pain precisely because they intensify our membership in the earth-family. In our immediate blood-relationship, loss of a member cuts deep, all the more so if we have taken the person for granted. Common origins, common genetic coding, common heritage, common home all form the basis of family bonding. When we lose a family member, we know diminishment in our own person. Though we seldom analyze our grief, we may look back at the death after a time and understand a least some of our mourning. Most of us feel the loss of *what the person gave us and did for us* and the loss of *who the person was for us*. Whether we allude to these reasons or not, I believe they are the basis for our sadness at all deaths in our earth-family.

The loss of earth-family members *who have done good for us, who have given to us* because we are family, causes us pain. The sight of a dying lake hurts us, even if only because the lake once provided a place of healthy recreation. An article on stratospheric ozone depletion evokes more than fear of skin cancer because we get in touch with the fact that we are losing protection by a family member. When we are told we shall never know at least half of the multifold species extinguished by rain forest destruction, we grieve because we have been deprived forever of the particular beauty and variety these brothers and sisters might have shared with us, in addition to the oxygen we and the rest of the earth lose because so many trees are destroyed. If a people is being snuffed out, as are the Nambiquara of the Amazon, we and the entire earth are losing the gift of a unique, rich culture. We mourn these deprivations and many others because we are losing what earth-family members do for us and give to us.

At a deeper level we mourn the loss of creatures, including human persons, because of *who they are for us*. Living within the Franciscan values emphasized here enables us to know with our hearts that we have lost *companions, minores*, and *sacred presences and revelations of God*. How can we articulate who these beings are for us? Over 65 years ago, Martin Buber, in his important book, *I and Thou*, provided a language for describing relationships with others.[6] His two primary words, I-It and I-Thou, may be applied to our connections with humans and all other creatures.

Persons may relate to a being, human or other than human, either as an "It" or as a "Thou." The I-Thou relationship gives us the "Thou" as a

"who," totally other, yet in close communion. And, according to Buber, in any I-Thou relationship we touch the Eternal Thou.[7] In an I-Thou relationship, the "I" is truly in touch with what is. The "I" of I-Thou dialogue *with persons* is in constant relation with them, believes in their reality, goes out to meet them and to stand with them.[8] In Buber's words, the "I" of I-Thou intercourse *with nature* finds that

> nature gives herself to it and speaks unceasingly with it, revealing her mysteries to it but not betraying her mystery. It believes in her and... takes its stand with her in a single reality. So the spirit of the real remains with it when it turns back to itself, the gaze of the sun abides with the blessed eye that considers its own radiance, and the friendship of the elements accompanies the ["I"] into the stillness of dying and becoming.[9]

It is in the I-Thou relationship that we discover who a member of our earth-family is for us.

When human members of the earth die, whether they are near or far, we lose *companions*. Most of us can readily say with the poet that any other person's death diminishes us — whether or not we have ever met that person face-to-face, whether the person died alone or as one of millions. Human spirit is bonded to human spirit. Perhaps we are not so ready to concede that earthlings other than humans are companions for us, that mineral or plant or animal can be a "Thou" for us. But we humans travel on a cosmic evolutionary journey in company with all other creatures. Our bodies are constituted of the same atoms — very probably atoms formed billions of years ago from simple hydrogen in distant stars and galaxies. Our planet is an interdependent system whose members are receiving and giving in mutual natural processes, developed and refined into marvelous balance over probably several billion years. In Thomas Berry's words, earth is a "self-emergent, self-propagating, self-nourishing, self-educating, self-governing, self-healing, self-fulfilling community."[10] Its members need each other, are companions to each other, are integral to each other. The glaring exception, of course, is we humans, whose activities have damaged the very processes that make the planet habitable for us. This forces the conclusion that, although other earth creatures are critically necessary companions for humankind, humans can hardly be necessary companions for them.[11]

The finch who keeps me company as I prepare a meal, the air that not only provides oxygen day and night but also sings to me, the soil that receives the acorn, the oak tree that grows from the acorn — each of these can speak to me as a "Thou." (The five large old oaks near my family home have been vibrant, beautiful companions, especially to my mother and father. They have given shade and oxygen, but, more, they have faithfully stood with us, seeming almost unchanged over the last 63 years,

and have taken us through life into deeper reality.) When another creature becomes a "Thou," we begin to recognize it as companion, as brother or sister. Losing it causes great pain.

. . . we Franciscans can look to our heritage in order to understand why our sense of loss is so acute.

We grieve in a special way for the *little ones* with whom we are in total community: innocent suffering women and children, the destitute poor, the unprotected tiny fraction of water that is potable, the very fragile and sparse ozone layer, the delicate immune systems of creatures facing new toxic threats, dolphins cruelly decimated in tuna-processing machinery. We hear the cry of environmental refugees — over 10 million of them — who are fleeing areas no longer habitable;[12] and we grieve because our lives are diminished by the suffering of persons and lands with whom we are bonded as family. Our awareness of their helplessness and powerlessness increases our compassion for, our "suffering-with," them as *minores*. It was so with Francis; it is so with us.

Finally, we mourn the destruction of creatures because *they somehow hold God for us*. Each particular being is itself. It is good in itself, it has its own individuality, its own integrity, its own identity. Precisely because it is what it is, it speaks to us of its Maker. Beautiful fruits and flowers and sunsets reflect their Creator's beauty; intricately designed crystals and dragon-fly wings reflect Divine carefulness; immense mountains and oceans and the planetary processes that produce them tell us something of Eternal Power and Strength. God's faithfulness is mirrored in the consistent behavior of gravity and of astronomical bodies; and it is mirrored most powerfully in those who love with a constant and unconditional love. The prodigality and diversity of seeds, of shapes and colors, of species and personalities, speak of God's endless generosity.

Even more overwhelming is the truth stressed by Franciscan theology that the Incarnate Word of God, *from the beginning*, is a model — not only for humans but for the cosmos. "[Christ] was from the beginning the reason and the Creator's blueprint for every particle of matter... for everything and everyone."[13] When we are given a unitive moment with nature, when we meet another creature as a "Thou," we experience reality purely and directly as best we can in our poorness. In this meeting we touch the Eternal Thou. We are fascinated by the creature because it is

good in itself and in it we somehow encounter the Incarnate God; we believe more surely that "[Christ] fills the universe in all its parts (Eph 1:23). Christ fills the morning song of the grosbeak and the lovely muted sounds of evening, the fresh water spring and the saguaro, the salmon and the polar bear, the mimosa and the daisy, the fair weather sky and the thunderstorm, the fragrance of clover and the gentle wind that carries it. Christ fills the land, water, and air systems and all their processes. Christ fills the stupendous energy of growth and the natural evolutionary thrust in all of us creatures toward greater complexity.

Knowing Christ as a particular person and knowing Christ in creatures come together for us and give meaning to life in ways full of wonder, even though our poor hearts cannot begin to grasp the mystery. Recognizing this Christ calls us to special reverence for each individual earth-brother and sister. And it is the cause of boundless sadness when this family member is violated or destroyed.

Something is amiss if we do not grieve for our Sister Mother Earth who is struggling with the difficult predicament into which human activity has placed her. However, we must not allow our grief to immobilize us. Rather, we can channel it to help release the healing power available in our Franciscan charism and propel us into attitude-change, conversion to healthy lifestyle, and practical work for justice and harmony and peace in the entire earth-family. The combination of our grief and our will to change here and now can open us to the faith and hope necessary for humankind to enter one day

> Through the unknown, remembered gate
> When the last of earth left to discover
> Is that which was the beginning....[14]

Endnotes

[1]This article names the violence to earth resulting from human activity. The earth itself is not always benign. Consider predator-prey relationships, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, typhoons, and major extinctions resulting from climatic change. Discussion of natural earth-damage would require another article.

[2]Marc H. Ellis, *Reflections on Solidarity and Fidelity in an Age of Holocaust* (Abingdon, VA: Connective Ministries, n.d.).

[3]T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding," in *Four Quartets* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1943), p. 33.

[4]All references to early Franciscan writings are from *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and early Biographies; English Omnibus of sources for the Life of St. Francis*, ed. Marion Habig (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1972).

[5]William Short, O.F.M., *The Franciscans* (Wilmington, DE; Michael Glazier, 1989), p. 106. The entire chapter is helpful reading for those who seek the basis of their deep connection with the earth.

[6]Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1958).

[7]Buber, p. 6.

[8]Buber, p. 9.

[9]Buber, p. 66.

[10]Thomas Berry, "Twelve Principles for Understanding the Universe and the Role of the Human in the Universe Process," in *Thomas Berry and the New Cosmology*, ed. Anne Lonergan and Caroline Richards (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1987), p. 7.

[11]It is in the human that the universe becomes aware of itself. The praise of all creatures for God is expressed in words by the human. Some may argue from this that other creatures cannot come to fullness without humans.

[12]Jodi L. Jacobson, *Environmental Refugees: A Yardstick of Habitability*, Worldwatch Paper 86 (Washington, DC: Worldwatch Institute, November 1988), p. 6.

[13]See note 5.

[14]T.S.Elliot, p. 39.

At La Verna

When I went to La Verna,
a searcher and a pilgrim,
I saw no seraph with six wings,
or black nails piercing him,
but in the evening I heard
the silence that quietly sings

when the heart is at peace.
In the solitude of night
when trees are still, and the land
expectant, the small slight
breath of a momentary sigh
caught my ear — I felt a hand
touch that place which the eye

cannot see. At La Verna,
a searcher and a pilgrim,
I saw no seraph with six wings,
but in the gentle brooding
of night's dark
I understood.

Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.

Corporate Loss in the Franciscan Family

INGRID PETERSON, O.S.F.

The recent study of religious life in the United States is a story of corporate loss. The picture of the Franciscan family in this nation is nested in a larger picture of diminishing numbers which began in the early 60's.

The 1987 study by the National Conference of Religious Vocation Directors reports that there are 141,000 active priests, sisters, and brothers in the United States, which is somewhat less that 1% of the entire Catholic population.[1] Of these, four-fifths are women and one-fifth men. Because of the Sisters' Survey, conducted in 1966 and in 1982, there is a foundation of factual information about religious congregations of women. Neal reports a 31% drop in membership in women's religious congregations between 1965 and 1988.[2] My own congregation of 500 Rochester Franciscans, which is typical of the pattern of women's religious congregations in the Midwest, had approximately 1000 members at its peak.

Invaluable as statistics are, they do not make their appearance only in sociological studies or in graphs. Each statistic is incarnate as a person, a number of lives, or a corporate life. Beyond each number is a personal story or a communal story of loss. My own story is part of a bigger story of institutional loss. What we have lost is our numbers, our works, and ownership of buildings. What has diminished is our corporate identity and presence. What I know is grief, loss, and the leap of faith that compels me into the next century.

I entered the Rochester, Minnesota, Franciscans in the boom years of religious life, soon after the 1953 Marian year when nearly 50 young women came annually to join our congregation. My story of ministry is a representative one from this period: elementary school, secondary school, and the college teaching. As my own educational level changed, so did my ministry.

Ingrid Peterson, O.S.F., is a Franciscan from Rochester, Minnesota, and currently an Adjunct Professor of English at Quincy College. She is doing research for a study of Clare of Assisi.

I became an associate Professor of English at a women's college, founded by our congregation, where most of our members received an undergraduate education. After eigthty-two years, the Board of Trustees announced that the College of Saint Teresa in Winona, Minnesota, would close in May 1989. The president, a member of our congregation, directed the college community to call the final year a year of transition. Each event was, nonetheless, poignant and charged with emotion because it was our last walk through each academic ritual. Although we did not talk of death, an editorial in the local newspaper named it euthanasia. The closure and the year's advance notice stemmed from a sense of corporate integrity and the desire not to compromise our high educational standards. Time was necessary for students, faculty, and staff to make wise life decisions.

A professional psychologist who was experienced in assisting groups through transition instructed the entire college community in a process of transformation which included the steps of remembering, reconciliation and ritual.[2] Appropriate channels were established where it was acceptable to vent our anger and to shed our tears in public. Personnel were added to help students, staff, and faculty make the necessary preparations to relocate. Events were scheduled throughout the year to mourn what we were losing and to acknowledge the value of all that had been accomplished for individuals and for the mission of the church.

None of this took away the confusion or the pain. To this day, the feelings continue to overpower the facts. As a college community we felt betrayed, cheated, denied a continued commitment to what we held sacred. Trust was broken. Fingers of blame were pointed in an attempt to find reasons for the closure. Why? Why us? If only.... Perhaps the decision was a mistake. We felt that if we tried hard enough to mend the flaws, the closing could be stopped and we could avoid living through the hurt and difficulty.

Everything happened that was forecast in our bible for closing, *Colleges and Corporate Change*.[4] We begged for time. Nothing changed. The angers alternately subsided and then revived. We could not fix the financial predicament by holding a bake sale. Death, always an incomprehensible mystery, was taking place in our Franciscan college community and in our lives.

My identity as a woman of the church was more than jarred. It seemed to be ripped away. I became a part of this religious congregation because I shared its values: the church, Franciscanism, feminism, education as a liberating force in a global society. Wasn't this the stuff of each day of my ministry? What had gone wrong? The forces pushing against me were larger than I was. I was angry because other members of my congregation

were making ministry decisions for themselves while decisions were being made for me. I felt powerless and displaced.

All is not lost; the prophetic dimension of our lives is intact.

The most obvious question kept popping up. What are they going to do with the buildings? I wanted to scream. What are we going to do with our lives? The students that I loved and my professional colleagues. I thought my ministry was directed toward eternal values, and yet they could not give eternal life to our institution. There seemed to be diverse opinions on what was valuable. Who really cared about us and our grief as individuals and as a college community?

How widespread is such a tale of loss in the Franciscan family and in the North American church? Declining school populations have forced many of our elementary schools to close. Shifting economic realities in health care have left areas where we have served decayed or empty. Those who have been able to afford the services we have offered can no longer do so, and our institutions have been unable to remain solvent. We are forced to sell, merge, give away, close, transfer our loyalties from thousands of our prestigious institutions across the United States.

Losses abound in what we do and in who we are as Franciscans and persons serving the church. According to the data collected for the longitudinal study of Catholic religious congregations of women in the United States, 32,433 women became new members in the peak period from 1958-62, 2,767 became members from 1976-80. In addition to decreasing numbers of new members, 31,763 left their religious congregations between 1966 and 1981 (Neal, 20). Our largest age brackets are our elderly, so that within the next several decades, once again, we will lose approximately half of our current membership.

Neal points out the curious contradiction that while the new sense of mission for the church is perceived as the need to help the poor claim their rightful share of our nation's resources, these are the same problems that plague our own institutions: unemployment of members, high costs of housing, transportation, health care and professional education (Neal, 76). In moving with the church as religious congregations, we have lost our security, contemplative serenity, the dependability of community life, care in retirement, and a significant and relevant work to do in the service of others. Yet these are the gifts we hope to bring to others.

Not only do religious congregations experience shifting numbers, but also shifting priorities reflecting the national population change. In this same period of declining numbers, the variety of places sisters worked increased 768% (Neal, 29). Ownership by religious congregations of educational buildings has dropped, while ownership of retirement centers and retreat houses has grown. The social and economic forces that bring change into the corporate life of our religious congregations are the same forces that press into the lives of those we serve. We want to save others from the peril and pain of modern society, but, in truth, we cannot save ourselves.

This is the bad news, but there is good news. According to the findings of the Quinn report, a three-year study on the decline of vocations to the religious life in the United States, this nation is representative when viewed in the context of the universal church.[5] Less than 6% of the world's Catholics are in the United States, yet approximately 27% of the world's religious men and women are from this country. The great vocation boom between 1945 and 1960 was an abnormal period in our history. Those of us who have experienced the larger numbers of these years tend to take them as the norm and accordingly, to view the decline as failure. The Quinn study notes that while it was asked to report on decreasing numbers, it found strength in the religious life in the United States. What was remarkable was that so many men and women passed through such a period of profound change with fidelity and perseverance. The report also noted that persons who enter the religious life today are older and better educated than the candidates who entered in the past.

We have been compelled to share the authority and responsibility of our corporate structures with the laity. This contemporary trend is showing us new ways to build caring communities. William Short observes that, in the spirit of Francis, contemporary men and women continue to choose to pray, work, and live among the poor.[6] He uses the term "communion" to characterize the way we seek to share life with our sisters and brothers. Such a life demands shared authority and participative decision making — more than we experienced as sole corporate owners. It means including all others in the purpose of our lives.

Francis caught on in thirteenth-century because he spoke to the people of his times. He used their language and he saw and responded to their needs: the rights of each individual, a just distribution of goods, and mutuality. Can we as the Franciscan family of the twenty-first century do more than continue on the same path? The essential needs of our time are similar: respect for persons, an equitable distribution of food, shelter and health care for the elderly and under-privileged, coupled with reverence for all the creatures of earth. Ironically, many of these are things

that are also scarce for us. Yet our commitment as Franciscans and Christians calls us to share what we have.

The story of Clare is not a story of outward success. She relinquished her societal status as a Medieval noble woman. She suffered the loss of prestige and family land. She grieved the loss of her blood sister Agnes, sent as abbess to the monastery of the Poor Ladies of Montecello in Florence. The population changes caused by the Crusades and the rise of the merchant class demanded that she let go of old ways. Her vision of evangelical poverty was not seen as a valid one for women. Yet Clare was faithful to her inner call, to the inner truth that gave her confidence to create a new path. The personal pain and cost must have been enormous. What Clare had to sustain her during those forty-one years of religious life were the Poor Ladies of San Damiano who made the journey with her.

Like ourselves, Francis too suffered because of numbers, though for Francis it was a problem of increasing numbers. (Will we ever get it right?) He resigned as Minister General in 1219 when things got away from him. The corporate problems and the crises compounded. The issues Francis and his early followers faced are the ones we face today: poverty, privilege, priesthood, and professional education. The Great Temptation for Francis was his human discouragement and fear that he had not been obedient to the will of God. Resolution came through the mystery of Francis' contemplative prayer and the strength of his faith.

The reality of our moment in history is that we are fewer in numbers as we applaud the increased participation of the laity in the American church. Mary Ann Donovan's *Sisterhood as Power* reports how the combination of changed circumstances along with declining numbers has caused us to drop works.[7] However, she observes that "dropped works are not in themselves a sign of the decline of the religious life.... that which religious intend chiefly and for its own sake is to give themselves to God" (Neal, 83).

Donovan adds, "the challenge is for religious to enable the laity to assume their rightful role in the church and to be content with smaller numbers. A reduction in numbers does not in itself constitute a crisis of vocations, but can simply be God's unique gift to the American church now. The journey of religious today is a pilgrimage, one made with their sisters and brothers, lay and cleric."

The foolishness of Francis was that he carried out his mission although he did not have all the answers. Today is it not the same for ourselves? We count our diminishing numbers while we have an heightened awareness of the need to transform, first ourselves, and then our society through the values of the gospel. Our human efforts will not resolve the so-called crisis of religious life today. If we keep our eyes fixed on the needs of the church and the world, rather than on our congregational needs, we gain

a different slant on religious life today. The value of our witness is based on our commitment as persons, not on the measure of our products.

Ambiguities persist. I wanted to minister in a religious congregation to help others lead meaningful, graced lives, when suddenly the bottom seem to drop from my own life. What I thought was the setting for my most productive years was suddenly snatched away. I came to identify with the unemployed of our culture, and worked hard to rid myself of old tapes telling me that work is worth. I sought a professional counselor to help me direct my anger into creative energy, and I used tools such as Joyce Rupp's *Praying Our Goodbyes*.[8] Through all of this, I had the support of a compassionate congregation. Some were grieving with me, yet, admittedly, others were quietly rejoicing that another corporate "millstone," draining the congregational energies and finances, had finally toppled. For some of us, these are the worst of times; for others, they are the best of times. Some feel that at last we are liberated from the apron strings of our corporate commitments. For most of us, it is a mix of convictions and emotions. Difficult as the leave-takings are from our institutions, often there are no viable options.

We cannot deny the past — its glory and burden. We are in the presence of enormous institutional loss: our schools, our health care institutions, our religious communities themselves. The nostalgia for the past and the burden of loss are facts of our times. In our congregation, we celebrate the anniversaries of our deceased members, and we are beginning to be reconciled with many of those women who withdrew membership. Somehow, we must also find ways to remember and to ritualize our corporate losses. We do not want to forget what we said and did, even as our profile in the American church changes. In *The Soul's Journey Into God*, Bonaventure describes how we discover the image of God through memory. We must continue to tell our stories of the past, for they have a sacred place in our lives as contemplatives.

All is not lost; the prophetic dimension of our lives is intact. Some of our members continue to minister in the corporate world in order to permeate organizations that we no longer own with gospel values. We struggle to find ways to preserve the mission of Jesus through corporate sponsorship and education in Franciscan values. As we acknowledge major institutional losses, we look to the twenty-first century where we will continue to strive to make a difference. Our most important personal and corporate difference is always that we are witnesses to the gospel. While the recent story of religious life in the United States today is a story of corporate loss, it is also a story of greater collegial witness.

As modern day followers of Francis gazing at the Cross of San Damiano, we ask again, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" We see a Christ on that crucifix who does not flaunt a crown of thorns. We see a Christ who

brings us beyond suffering and death. We see a Christ who has surrendered life in obedience to God. We find on the cross of San Damiano a serene and peaceful figure who will be transformed through the mystery of resurrection.

Our posture is that of Mary in the San Damiano icon who stands and waits at the foot of the cross. The hand of one arm supports her head in a gesture of sorrow. The other hand is extended toward the figure of the Christ in wonder at the glory that is yet to be.

Endnotes

[1]*Who's Entering Religious Life?* An NCRVD National Study. National Conference of Religious Vocation Directors. Chicago.

[2]Marie Augusta Neal, SND de Namur, *Catholic Sisters in Transition; From the 1960s to 1980s* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1984:18).

[3]Dr. Charles Lofe used the metaphor of jumping a canyon to illustrate how important memory or story telling is in moving to a new place. He argued that by going backward to gain a running start, we make a successful leap. In the thick of our anger, we mocked this process calling it regurgitation and resuscitation.

[4]P. O'Neill and Samuel Barnett, *Colleges and Corporate Change* (Princeton, N.J.: Conference University Press, 1980).

[5]John R. Quinn, "A Repport to the Bishops of the United States on the Work of the Pontifical Commission on Religious Life," *Crux* (Albany: Clarity Publishing, Jan. 12, 1987).

[6]*The Franciscans* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1984) 145.

[7]*Sisterhood as Power*. The Past and Passion of Ecclesial Women (New York: Crossroad, 1989).

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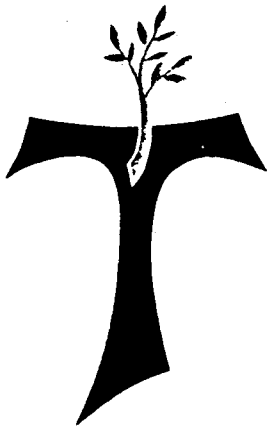

In the Home that Wisdom Builds, We Will Grieve No More

SR. ROSEMARY SMALL, O.S.F.

"Are we capable of beginning all over again?"
Elie Wiesel

They left us. They had to. And those of us who remained, grieved. We had to. A life process was interrupted. A common past gave way to an unexpected future that offered no guarantees. Few, if any of us, were prepared for such an ordeal. Our sisters and brothers were leaving, not in ones and twos, but by tens and twenties. Some were in their youth. Others were in their prime. Yet regardless of their age or rank, each and everyone faced the same challenge of beginning again.

Those of us who remained as vowed members of our Franciscan communities, whether by desire or default, were forced to come to terms with the inevitable realization that we too, were faced with the challenge of beginning again. Though few of us were able to give voice to the truth, the fact was, our future was being determined as much by the life choices of those who left us as those who remained. We could not help but ask oruselves who would take the place of our departing sisters and brothers, particularly those who early on in their formation were identified as potential leaders and spiritual guides? Who would take the place of our friends and companions? What would it mean for us to fashion a life without them? We, who so often admonished others to trust in providence, were being put to the test ourselves.

Rosemary Small, O.S.,F., is a member of the Congregation of the Third Order of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet, Illinois. During the 1980's, she was Assistant Professor/Visiting Lecturer in the department of Religion/Philosophy at the College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois. Currently, she is the Councilor/Administrator of the Governing Board for her Congregation.

Remembering the Past

The growth of religious communities during the 1950' and early 1960s, heralded a future filled with hope, — or so it seemed. In the wake of Vatican II, a number of great expectations inspired a confidence in *aggiornamento*. Joseph Cardinal Suenens, recognized by many as a visionary ambassador of renewal, issued a poignant call to apostolic religious, a call which urged us, to become pilgrims *in* our world and *throughout* our world. We were chosen by Christ to embark on this pilgrimage, said he, to share our energy, our devotion and our spirituality with the world and all its peoples. Little did we know or recognize that point in time that "the way of pilgrimage is the way of death leading to life."[1] Day by day, our awareness increased.

Within a decade, many of our brothers and sisters, whose names and faces were barely known by past provincials, general superiors or congregation ministers, found themselves wearing cloaks, which they themselves neither asked for, nor imagined. In some cases, the demands of sheer necessity triumphed over reason and wisdom. Predictions of a "second exodus" called our attention to the pretense, denial or naivete with which we defended ourselves from the grief of the first exodus. No longer could we evade the unnamed sorrow that manifested itself in the forms of anger, resentment, frustration, disillusionment and depression. We began to wonder whether or not longstanding silences could be broken? Could bridges be built to bring together relationships of the past with the realities of the present?

Questioning in the Present

In recent years, our questions have led us to acknowledge the fact that death and dying are no longer an appendix to the book of our lives. Rather, they are a significant part of its substance. They are woven into every chapter. They are incarnate not only in our lives, but in our ministries. We are learning that we grieve not only at the time of death, whatever its form, but really, forever afterwards — unless, and until we understand that death does lead to new life. But to arrive at such an insight requires of us "nothing less than everything" or so it seems.

Nearly a quarter of a century has passed since we all began again, consciously or as a matter of course. Looking back on an era that represented both the best of times and the worst of times, we have an emerging sense that regardless of the choices that were made, to leave or to remain, the roads that once diverged have not taken the pilgrims who followed them on completely different journeys. Were we ever completely convinced that a change in one's lifestyle would inevitably mean

a change in one's attitudes and actions? Did not the same memories and ideals linger in the hearts and minds of every pilgrim, who for a moment in time was indelibly marked by a charism? A charism which we are now discovering could be expressed in "as many ways as there were desires."

.... our future was being determined as much by the life choices of those who left us as those who remained.

Imagining a Future

Our discovery of the "leaky boundaries" of our charism involves risk. It requires imagination. For those of us who continue to be vowed members of the communities shaped by this charism, our imaginative risk leads us to discover what renewed contact with our brother and sister pilgrims, who journeyed these past years on other roads, perhaps less travelled than our own, might entail? Could we take the risk of inviting them to abide with us if ever their roads should converge with our own? Would those who received such invitations, take the risk to allow for such convergence to occur?

Such a convergence could never be a "coming home" — as if returning to a place unchanged by time and history. Such a home is no more. The convergence, however, could be a "home coming" — as if to suggest a space that could hold our pasts, our presents and our futures, was coming to greet us and gather us in. "Two roads converged," and we... would we have the courage to take the way where pilgrims could meet face to face and heart to heart? The way where stories could be told, decisions explained, emotions expressed? The way where broken hearts could be broken open to one another? The way where insecurities and uncertainties about ourselves, those whom we loved and the world in which we lived could be shared? The way where struggles with cancer, depression, alcoholism, and life transitions were a common ground of experience? The way where commitments to excellence in education, health care and human service were fashioned by a common concern for justice and peace? And in that space, would it be possible for us to hear the Voice saying: "This is the way, walk in it." [Isaiah 30:24] Could this invitation and response make all the difference?

Laboring Through What Is Still Undone

The "home coming" envisions a gathering of pilgrim brothers and sisters, each of whose lives is reminiscent of the walking and floating of Rilke's Swan."[2]

> ... laboring thorugh what is still undone,
> as though, legs bound, we hobbled along the way,
> is like the awkward walking of the swan.
>
> And dying — to let go, no longer feel
> the solid ground we stand on every day —
> is like his anxious letting himself fall
>
> into the water which receives him gently
> and which, as though with reverence and joy,
> draws back past him in streams on either side...

Over the years, our awkward walking has led us to the edge of many waters that promised us a new way of living, of moving and experiencing our being, but only if we could allow ourselves to leave the solid and secure and trustingly allow ourselves to fall into the unknown depths of the fluid. Like a home, the water receives us, reminding us that transformation is as much a function of place as time.

Our convergence, our home coming, is not an "undoing" of our common and separate pasts, but it makes it possible for us to be stranded no longer in a place that is no more. We began as sisters and brothers. We journeyed for a quarter of a century as pilgrims and strangers. We now take risk of home coming, of convergence, of discovery — and rediscovery of sister and brother pilgrims. Perhaps, as Elie Wiesel notes, it's wise for us to know from the beginning that:

> "We cannot create; we are too weak to create.
> But we can re-create; we can complete;
> we can achieve what God began."

Perhaps, it is the time for us to realize that Wisdom has built us a home, where she calls to her children: Come and grieve no more.

In the convergence of home coming, we are all challenged to come. We will come. We have to.

Endnotes

[1]Murray Bodo, O.F.M., *Through the Year with Francis of Assisi* (New York: Image Books, 1987) p. 7.

[2]Rainer Maria Rilke, "The Swan," *The Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke*, edited and translated by Stephen Mitchell (New York: Vintage Books, 1984) 29.

Book Reviews

Religious Life: Rebirth Through Conversion. Edited by Gerald A. Arbuckle, S.M., and David L. Fleming, S.J. New York: Alba House, 1990. Pp. xv-142 pages. $9.95.

Reviewed by Very Rev. Anthony M. Carrozzo, O.F.M. Provincial Minister, Holy Name Province.

Religious Life: Rebirth through Conversion is an unusual title for a work that developed during a Conference on refounding religious life and whose papers primarily deal with the theme of refounding rather than rebirth. It would more aptly and descriptively be called **Religious Life: Refounding through Conversion** for each article deals in one way or another with that theme.

For Franciscans, the most valuable articles may well be those by Gerald Arbuckle and David Couturier.

Arbuckle's **Understanding Refounding and the Role of Conversion** is a precursor to his book **Out of Chaos: Refounding Religious Congregations,** both of which are extraordinarily valuable for contemporary religious not only to read and study personally but most especially to absorb prayerfully and fraternally. In this article Arbuckle defines *refounding as a process necessary for religious congregations which involve the application of Gospel values to the most urgent, non-ephemeral needs of today, under the inspiration of persons who 'see and can make it happen'* (p. 52). Further he states that *there can be no refounding except through the leadership of refounding persons. These are the people who see the gap between the Gospel and cultures* (p. 52). While readily accepting his insights into refounding and its urgency today, I believe that for Franciscans it would be more helpful and even more accurate to speak not of refounding persons but of *refounding fraternities,* for it is the fraternity that is the graced experience for Franciscans and the place of renewal. One might also quibble with the passive role that Arbuckle provides for leadership in this process when he encourages leaders to *get behind creative pastoral initiatives* (p. 61). It seems to me that leadership must do far more than that. It must provide the impetus, the initiative, and the atmosphere for refounding. Nevertheless both Arbuckle's article and book should be treasured for the insight and challenge they provide for contemporary religious to move out of chaos into new and creative ways for living and ministering. Couturier's article is intellectually stimulating and thought-provoking, especially in its reference and appeal to Francis of Assisi. However, at times his insights are presented in far too sketchy a manner, allowing for terrific one-liners that need to be further explored. For example, he states that *to enter into all our relationships in a spirituality of refounding based upon minority is essentially to place a primacy on solidarity* (p. 98). Previously he states that *there can be no spirituality of Franciscan refounding apart from a spirituality of minority* (p. 97). Both statements, while appreciated, need further explication. I found myself hoping that Couturier would eventually do what Arbuckle has done, namely develop a book in which he explores refounding for Franciscans in the light of minority and solidarity.

While John Padberg assists the reader in understanding the tradition of religious life, David Fleming helps by reflecting upon a theology of it. Padberg begins with the premise that *if we are interested in a 'refounding,' we ought to know what it is that might be refounded,* then offers a valuable distinction between tradition and the simple past (p. 3). Fleming, on the other hand, begins by decrying the lack of a theological understanding of that life, reflecting that *all too easily in renewal attempts in religious life we find ourselves swept up in psychological studies of community life and governmental structures, with little or no reference to the theological nature of religious life* (p. 21). While Fleming's work is not entirely satisfactory, it offers a good beginning for a contemporary theology of religious life and is advice that could well have been heeded by Patricia Spillane whose article *Refounding and the Formative Journey* covers an important topic but does so more from a psychological than a theological or spiritual perspective. One ends up wondering if the pascal mystery has anything to do with the formative journey or the process of refounding!

A valuable aspect of this work are the personal reflection starters and group reflection starters at the end of each presentation. However, I found the most useful exercise to be contained in John Padberg's piece when he offers *the ten most powerful symbols of the current sensibility of the Church* — ten words that *do more than almost anything else to evoke the extraordinary history of this post-conciliar era.* (p. 17). Reflection on those words would show the reader how truly difficult the process of refounding will be!

The Skilled Participant. By Keith Clark, Capuchin. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1988. Pp. 111. Paper, $4.95.

When Society Becomes an Addict. By Anne Wilson Schaef. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987. Pp. 176. Paper, $8.95.

The Addictive Organization. By Anne Wilson Schaef and Diane Fassel. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988. Pp. 232. Paper, $7.95.

Reviewed by Bro. F. Edward Coughlin, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Catholic University), vicar of St. Francis Friary, New York, summer professor at the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University.

The Skilled Participant — A Way to Effective Collaboration by Keith Clark, Capuchin, is a welcome guide to a contemporary understanding of relationships. Relationships that can only be built on healthy self-awareness and authentic self-understanding. Clark explicitly directs his book to those who are "interacting with others in an institutional setting within the Church" (15). In effect, it is a guide to the practical skills required for achieving mature human relationships. A way to enable more active and fruitful participation in life's interactions.

Clark assumes that self-understanding is an essential prerequisite to understanding others. He offers his "Some-

times Useful Tool" as a means through which an individual can learn to "sort out what I am aware of and what I might want to disclose of my awareness" (27). The tool is essentially a model through which individuals can break open the different dimensions of human experience. While respecting the varying degrees of intimacy that might be sought, the "Tool" can give individuals the knowledge that is needed and the freedom that is necessary for authentic self-awareness. The underlying thesis then is that "self-awareness, self-disclosure and hearing allow people who are strangers on the horizon's of each others' lives to connect in a way that permits intimacy to arise between them" (28).

"The Tool" fundamentally demands that individuals learn to distinguish between (1) perceptions, (2) interpretations, (3) feelings, (4) decisions, and (5) behavior. Perceptions are defined as what I have seen, heard, tasted, felt or said. Perceptions form the basis for our interpretations, the opinions, judgments and evaluations that we make. While interpretations are personally relevant, they shape and define human feelings. Telling us what something means to us, feelings inevitably influence our behavior (51). The chapter on feelings is especially well done and packed with valuable information.

Through the use of rather simple and concrete examples, the author gives a clear explanation as to how a comfortable familiarity with perceptions, interpretations and feelings within the "Tool" model can be very useful in "clarifying what's going on (58) in the different moments of our experience. This type of self-knowledge enables individuals to "more adequately convey [their] inner experience" in relationship exhanges. This type of skilled awareness can also be "helpful for hearing what others disclose of themselves (61)." Learning to sort through these different dimensions of experience, individuals can become skillfully aware of their true, even if complex, inner reality.

"The Third Party Ploy" is defined as "reporting one person's feelings to the other (64)." In this important chapter, Clark discusses the various ways individuals often misuse the feeling information that others disclose to them in an attempt to build relationships. "The Third Party Ploy" can take three forms. The "mistake" is the unintentional but inappropriate reporting to an individual how another individual feels about them. The "Claim of Shared Feelings" can be recognized in a "We feel..." statement. The Tobit Treatment "happens when someone purports to report the feelings of unspecified persons" (69). After careful explanation on each of the "Ploys," Clark concludes: "No matter what the intention, the use of the Third Party Ploy in any of its forms will lead to the failure of relationships, not to their success.

Being in relationship can be one of the most difficult things that human beings do but the one for which humans most hunger. Clark offers a straight forward way to develop the skills needed for quality relationships. Moving beyond the theory of collaboration, Clark offers a model for learning that makes participation in quality relationships a real possibility. It is hard to imagine how Clark's is only a "Sometimes Useful Tool."

* * *

Are you constantly being asked to believe that your situation is really a very good one? Is your group the only one that is doing things the right way? Are you continually being told by leadership that they have a clear idea as to what is needed and are on top of the best solutions? Is your organization moving ahead in a clear rational and logical way? If you are inclined to answer yes to these questions, you may be caught in an unhealthy, possibly addicted set of relationships.

Addiction is the name for a disease that involves not only ingested substances but patterns of relationship that leave people feeling powerless. Whatever the specifics of the relationship situation, "the most caring thing you can do is confront the disease" according to Anne Wilson Schaef in *When Society Becomes an Addict* (p. 4).

Schaef defines addiction as "any process over which we are powerless" (18). She applies her understanding of basic nature of addiction to the dynamics of human interaction which can be diseased and destructive as addiction to any ingested substances. Through a clear set of descriptive definitions, *When Society Becomes an Addict* invites the reader to take a second look at those relationship situations which are typically dishonest, self-centered, controlling, and demanding both "stinkin thinkin" and dependency. Convinced that "understanding is the first step toward change" (6), Schaef helps the reader to see the truth of diseased relationships and know the demands of recovery.

The Addictive Organization by Anne Wilson Schaef and Diane Fassel is a more complete and comprehensive treatment of the central theme of Schaef's earlier work. Focusing on organizations, this volume is divided into give helpful sections: (1) an understanding of the roles, power and pervasiveness of the addictive process; (2) understanding the concepts, dynamics and characteristics of addictive systems; (3) the multiple ways in which addictions impact organizations; (4) recovery in the addictive organization, and (5) implications.

The tendencies "to deny the presence of the effect of addictions and to see addictive behavior and processes as normal" has been true in both in the field of organizational development and in the process of organizational consultation (5). As a result, "one of the reasons that many management and organizational techniques have not made lasting change is that they have not addressed the underlying problem" (5). By naming the sometimes subtle and frequently operative dynamics of many groups and organizations, the authors are educating the reader to see the real problem. Recognizing the "missing-piece" is the only lasting way, the authors argue, to establishing organizational systems where people feel alive, where individuals are given the opportunity to use their power in creative, productive and meaningful ways.

Those familiar with the nature of addiction will find Section 3 especially valuable reading. The section explains how addicted organizations tend to perpetuate themselves while trying to "patch-up" problems rather than face deeper issues. The authors summarize their important thesis: "Ultimately, organizations that are addicts have a serious obligation to become healthy, for they have wide networks that spread the disease. Through it all, we should remember that they are not bad organizations getting good, they are sick trying to get well,... they are in need of recovery (176)."

What may appear to be a technical subject is in fact a practical lens through which individuals can reflect on their relationship experience. Given the per-

vasive nature of addictive processes, both volumes hold great potential for enabling men and women to become more aware of the worlds within which they live. Recognizing the disease that is at the root of many relationship dynamics, the reader can see how addictive processes disable growth and block the development of human potentials. "It brings the possibility of seeing reality more clearly and participating in it more fully. Indeed, the knowledge that the addictive system is an illusion may well be the first step in making a paradigm shift. (225)" A shift that will renew individual belief in the self, relationships and organizations. A shift to creating a world that is continually becoming a better place to live.

They Bore the Wounds of Christ: the Mystery of the Sacred Stigmata, by Michael Freze, S.F.O. Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. 1989, 350 pages. Paper, $14.95.

Reviewed by Fr. Daniel Hurley, O.F.M., National Chaplain of the St. Bonaventure University Alumni Association, Instructor in English and Campus minister at the University.

The mystery of suffering has been a matter of anxiety and curiosity for centuries. Theologians and spiritual writers have offered many words of encouragement, explanation and enlightenment that have been of benefit to sincere believers in their desire to be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Michael Freze, a member of the Secular Franciscan Order, has written *They Bore the Wounds of Christ: the Mystery of the Sacred Stigmata*. The author aims at explaining the mystery of suffering by examining the meaning of the sacred stigmata.

"The stigmatist represents the Crucified Christ to a world continually in need of a loving sacrifice that atones for sin" (p. 8). The author strives to "focus on the meaning behind these sacred wounds and the role they play in the lives of the faithful" (p. 9). Of importance is the role of the stigmatist as victim soul voluntarily united to our Lord's sufferings for the sake of saving souls, "to fill up what is lacking in Christ's affliction for the sake of his body, that is the church" — Col. I, 24 (p. 12).

"Clearly, caution must be balanced with pure faith and the willingness to believe that God at times does manifest His presence in extraordinary ways" (p. 14). "In a very real sense, these privileged souls represent Christ to a broken world of unbelief and oppression" (p. 14).

The real value of suffering is not for its own sake but rather for its redemptive value when offered up to God in a spirit of voluntary sacrifice (p. 57). The history of the People of God bears witness to the fact of suffering as concomitant with the life of God's people. From the example of Job through that of the prophets of the Old Testament to the life of Jesus and Mary, suffering was an accepted part of the human condition — a benefit for the spiritual growth of the sufferers.

In light of the redemptive value of suffering, the author traces the history of those who bore the physical marks of the Crucified Lord in their bodies — those who are called stigmatics. Beginning with St. Paul and continuing through St. Francis of Assisi and others up to the modern stigmatist, Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, the author explains the stigmatists as "victim souls" who exemplify St. Paul's words, "in my own flesh I fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of his body, the church" (Col. 1, 24).

Michael Freze carefully refers to the writings, especially the letters, of various stigmatists to show their own understanding of their suffering as "voluntary offerings" to be united with those of their Saviour in reparation for the sins of the world. The writings of the Fathers of the Church and statements from the Church Councils, particularly those of the Second Vatican Council, support the thesis that those who bear the marks of Christ's wounds are "victim souls" especially chosen by God as a sign of His favor.

This reviewer found *They Bore the Wounds of Christ* an interesting survey of the many individuals who have been recognized by the Church as authentic stigmatics. Of special interest are the chapters on "The Mystery of Suffering" (Chapter One) and "Understanding the Sacred Stigmata" (Chapter Three). Many devout believers will find help in their probing of the mystery of suffering from reading this book. Many readers will find satisfaction to their curiosity about people who have borne the marks of Christ's wounds in their bodies.

Whether the reader is a pious curiosity seeker or a devout pilgrim striving for holiness of life, this reviewer thinks he or she will find some answers. The author is to be commended for his sincere intent and for his zealous research. The reader will find especially helpful the author's supplements to his book: a Glossary of Mystical Terms, a Bibliography, and the author's Index to his book.

Mentoring. The Ministry of Spiritual Kinship. By Edward C. Sellner. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1990. Pp. 166. Paper, $5.95.

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

Helping people to grow in their relationship with God is not something reserved to priests and religious, or to trained professionals. Rather, the sharing of one's spiritual journey with another in a loving relationship, a sharing which is part of letting another find God in his or her life is a ministry that corresponds to a need for generativity that occurs in mid-life.

Sellner begins his account by describing mentoring as a form of love, then examines C. S. Lewis as a model of mentoring, noting that the mentor is a friend first and foremost. The soul - friend - anamchara — is another illustration of mentoring that helps flesh out its concept — a mature, compassionate, spiritual listener, one who reflects on his own relationship to God.

Sellner discusses the discerning of vocation in its widest sense, and how mentors contribute in those decisions. He then examines dreams as mentors of our spiritual life, and discusses mentoring as a link between generations. His concluding summary is an excellent description of the role of mentor, and could be read before the rest of the book. Also important in his conclusion is the call for the mentor to first care for himself/herself.

Sellner is generous in his citation of psychologists and works to integrate their findings with the rich tradition of spiritual direction in the church. The author is a layman, and writes clearly.

Since mentoring is something most people in mid-life do every day, those of us who have arrived there can profit from this book, as can those who are beginning the ministry of spiritual direction.

Harper's Encyclopedia of Religious Education. Edited by Iris V. Cully and Kendig Brubaker Cully. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990. Pp. 717. Cloth, $34.95.

Reviewed by Dr. Winfred Whelan, O.S.F., Theology Department, St. Bonaventure University.

There is an old riddle: When is a school not a school? When it's a Sunday school! When the term "religious education" is mentioned, most people think of the Sunday School or of one aspect of the Catholic School horarium.

Overall, this is not the impression given by the *Encyclopedia of Religious Education*, 1990, edited by Iris V. Cully and her late husband Kendig Brubaker Cully, Harper & Row. The 717 page, one volume work attempts to inform the reader of the history, philosophy, psychology, methodology, and theology of its subject. The reader learns or reviews, for example, that "Origen (A. D. 182 - 254), born... in Alexandria, Egypt, ... was appointed head of the earliest Christian institution... the catechetical school at Alexandria." The developmental stages of James Fowler, Erik Erikson, and Jean Piaget are briefly outlined along with objections and critiques. Among many other things, it defines spirituality, ministry, Middle East, and in some cases gives bibliography for further reference. Even "Field Trip" and "Bulletin Board" have their own columns.

One nice feature is that the end of one article will refer the reader to another for more information. The article on the Feminist Movement, for example, mentions that "sexism in the life of the church is one of the most powerful theological issues the church has yet to deal with," and mentions some effects of the movement on curriculum and teaching. It does not say how feminism is affecting the structures of religious education, but refers the reader to Conscientization: Conscious Raising; Language, Inclusive; Liberation Theology, Social Action; and Social Justice, Education for. Many articles contain bibliography "For Further Reference," but some do not. Why, for instance, do the articles on James Smart and Paul Vieth refer to their works, and the one on William Clayton Bower does not? The "For Further Reference" section is an attractive feature, where it is included.

One of the inherent problems with such a volume is that it must consider a vast area of religions and theological orientations. I wondered as I picked up the volume, whether it would be biased. Would it cater to Protestants more than Catholics? Would there be a male dominance? Would it put all of religious education under "ministry"? Would it presume that education was synonymous with schooling?

An impressive list of contributors reads like a Who's Who in religious education, and includes Catholics, Protestants, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists. 66 of the 270 contributors are women, which is a good percentage. Overall it seems that Catholics and Catholic attitudes are well represented. However, the "National Catholic Educational Association" refers the reader to "Professional Societies," but the National Christian Education Association, a protestant organization, has its own article. St. Therese of Avila is represented with both an article and a picture. The Jesuits, Dominicans and Franciscans were more difficult to find, but they are included in the article "Religious Orders." An index of proper names would have been most helpful.

There are several charts in the book, most of which deal with grade levels and the appropriateness of curriculum material for each level. These give the impression that, yes, religious education is equivalent to classroom lessons. To strengthen that impression, they always begin with infants or preschoolers and proceed to adults. Although charts such as these may be useful at times, they are overly simplistic and reinforce the idea that religious education is church- and classroom-bound. Other articles, too, such as the one on "Mass Media," do not emphasize the fact that the family, television and other societal realities as well as liturgies and church structures have a powerful educational impact, and that only a small percentage of religious education actually takes place in the classroom.

But the *Encyclopedia* is well worth its cost. It is a first effort at such an endeavor, and as such it is a brave attempt to include as much as possible of all aspects of religious education within the covers of one volume. Every religious educator will find it both valuable and enjoyable, and it will be handy reference for immediate informational needs. Most especially, religious educators everywhere will rejoice to see that at last *our* discipline has its own *Encyclopedia!*

Memoirs of the Oratory of Saint Francis de Sales from 1815 to 1855. New Rochelle, New York: Don Bosco Publications, 1989. Pp. xi-489 including indices. Cloth, $24.95

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., National Chaplain of the St. Bonaventure University Alumni Association, Instructor in English and Campus Minister at the University.

When Saint John Bosco met Pope Pius IX in 1858, His Holiness had heard of the saint's work with the poor youth of Turin and he urged Don Bosco to record his experiences. Because of his modesty and his busy schedule, Don Bosco did not comply with the Pope's request. At a second meeting with the saint in 1867, Pope Pius commanded him to do it. With some reluctance but in the spirit of obedience, Don Bosco began to write down what he remembered of his experiences from the time of his birth on August 15, 1815 in Murialdo near Castelnuovo d'Asti. In sixty-three short chapters, the saint recorded the events of his life and of his work with boys and young men who were poor and in need of support and direction. Don Bosco emphasized that he was writing these "confidential details.... that they may somehow serve as a light.... and will help people overcome problems that may come in the future by learning from the past" (page 3). Don Bosco does not seem to have written these recollections beyond the year 1855.

This English edition of the *Memoirs* has been translated from the Italian by Daniel Lyons, SDB. Notes and commentary have been included as prepared by Eugene Cerio, SDB, Lawrence Castelvecchio, SDB, and Michael

Mendl, SDB. A Foreward has been provided by the Very Reverend Egidio Vigaro, SDB, Rector Major of the Salesian Society. Each of the sixty-three chapters is followed by explanatory notes that enable today's reader to understand the Nineteenth Century background and circumstances that constituted the milieu of the experiences that Don Bosco writes about. These notes are invaluable to the reader.

The Introduction to this English edition of the *Memoirs* has been provided by Michael Mendl, SDB. Father Mendl explains the methodology of supplying explanatory notes for each of the chapters and he adds a most important historical background to the *Memoirs*. An awareness of the Nineteenth Century Italy is essential for the reader's appreciation of the experiences that Don Bosco relates in his writing.

Don Bosco's honest and simple description of the progress of his work with poor boys in the city of Turin reveals a man of deep faith and trust in God. He was convinced from the time of his ordination to the priesthood that God was calling him to serve the poor, especially poor youth. The holiness and courage of a saint comes through in his determination to pursue his goal regardless of the trials and failures he met along the way.

While Don Bosco expected only his sons in the Salesian Society to be interested in and to read what he wrote, any reader of the *Memoirs* will gain an understanding of the spirituality of the Saint and of the heritage of the Salesian Society of Don Bosco. This reviewer learned from his reading of the *Memoirs of the Oratory of Saint Francis de Sales* to recognize the faith and the enthusiasm and the courage of Saint John Bosco. He also gained an appreciation of the problem of conscience that troubled so many subjects of the Papal States loyal to the Pope during the struggles of the various kingdoms striving for the unification of Italy during the Nineteenth Century. This reviewer was mildly disappointed that the paper edition failed to include the various maps that were listed on pages lvi through lxii.

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The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

ARTICLES

THE SPIRITUALITY OF KAZANTZAKIS' "GOD'S PAUPER" 263
Harry Aveling, T.S.S.F.

A TRIPLE WAY FOR REFOUNDING CONTEMPORARY FRANCISCAN LIFE 273
Anthony Carrozzo, O.F.M.

FEATURES

THE IMPACT OF "IL POVERELLO" ON TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERATURE 257
Thomas E. Beeman

CLARE REFLECTED IN VISUAL ART 283
Polly Duryea

POETRY:

ST. FRANCIS AND THE BIRDS 262
Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.

AUTUMN BEAUTY 272
Sr. M. Colette Logue, O.S.F.

THE LEGEND OF THREE COMPANIONS 282
William Hart McNichols, S.J., S.F.O.

BOOK REVIEWS 287

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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).

The Impact of "Il Poverello" on Twentieth Century Literature

THOMAS E. BEEMAN

Out of the grey misty darkness of the twelfth century, in Umbria, from the ancient Entruscan soil of Assisi, sprang forth a great light, who would be a reflection of the grace of God. Francesco; the great Francis who would emulate holy poverty and carry it to its greatest heights, was a compass who aided Christianity in making a midcourse correction and find the way of Christ through the darkness of the medieval night. Francis was to become a Saint who had a profound and lasting impact on many cultures and all the arts. Whether it was the painting of Rembrandt, a Protestant, the poetry of Tennyson also Protestant, or the writings of Chesterton, a Catholic, Francis left an incredible imprint on history. Why? The answer is as complex yet as simple as Francis. It was in his earnest and complete surrender to the gospels, his beautiful and undying selflessness that has endeared him to us all. Francis went as Johannes Jorgensen said "into eternity singing" and his undying song echoes to us in our age. Art, poetry, literature were impacted; even contemporary filmmaker, Franco Zeffirelli, filmed Francis bringing him alive in still another media.

It will be the attempt of this paper to review, in particular, the imprint of Francis on western literature, especially in the 20th century, to view some of the sources and to analyze his impact. One must note that the study of Francis leads the author, not into some new insight into Francis, but more importantly into a deeper insight into the author himself. This reflection would have made Francis glad. I will attempt to take us on a voyage of Francis and see how this Gothic saint has influenced all of us.

The author, a member of the Secular Franciscan Order, is chief Executive Office at St. Joseph Hospital in Reading, Pennsylvania. He wrote this paper for a course entitled "The Age of Francis" taught by Fr. Vianney Devlin, O.F.M., at Neumann College in Aston, PA.

I will start with Vachel Lindsay. Lindsay wrote in his poem "Would I Might Wake Saint Francis in You All"[1] his plea that God make us all like Francis and "brave." Lindsay realized, as so many in the contemporary western scene have imagined, the great gulf between God's will for us, "our wealth undone," and where western mankind is. Francis, for Lindsay, and other western writers, then become a contrast. Not so for the more spiritual eastern mind. Arnold Toynbee compares Francis with Buddha.[2] For the west, Francis is someone we desire to emulate and pursue. It is Francis himself who says: "I have done what was mine to do; may Christ teach you what you are to do." (2 Cel CLXII, 214).

The point is that for modern western man, who is detached from his world about him, St. Francis becomes a sometimes "plastic" or "birdbath" saint. He is alas, neither of these and as modern literature evolves, so too does our comprehension of the Poverello, the poor man of Asssi.

Perhaps no modern writer of English was more profoundly influenced by St. Francis of Assisi than G. K. Chesterton. In an essay of Saint Francis, Chesterton sees Francis as a dilemma for the modern writer in three ways.[3] He was perhaps, the world's one true and sincere democrat. In him congealed almost all that was right about the peace movement, the ecology movement and social democracy. On the other hand, he was a conservator of the Church, a protector of all life. He saw, centuries before Wordsworth, the beauty and transcendence of nature. Francis in his one poem, "Canticle of Creatures," created Italian poetry and with it a genre that would influence the world forever. His was a response to nature, a response to God in a most real and loving way. Francis was characterized by Chesterton as the "morning star of the Renaissance,"[4] but too, Francis was also the preserver of history. He was at once the revolutionary, a humanitarian without compare, but also a respector of traditions, a lover of God's evolving divine plan.

Chesterton too, believes that the enigma of Francis lies in his paradoxes. He is both joyful and sad, bold yet humble, Francis is both light and dark. I like the concept that he has shades of both and that our response to Francis can emanate from where we are and we can find him, no matter how dark. For me, Francis is Christ's standard bearer who goes out and shines the light for me to find my way in the Gospel of the Lord. finally for Chesterton, St. Francis:

> is a historical character that is admittedly attractive to many of us already, by his gaiety, romantic imagination, spiritual courtesy and camaraderie, but also (his character) contains elements... which seem quite remote and repulsive...[5]

For Chesterton and St. Francis, this is not problematic. It is the twentieth century reader who, because of the inherent contrasts in the vivid personality of the poor man of Assisi, is confused and seeks to impose twentieth century standards on a thirteenth century Saint. So, for modern man to love Francis, but to eschew the stigmata is not to comprehend him. In the stigmata, the "scandal" is not to see the pain Christ suffered as just that, suffering and martyrdom. Not to see the stigmata of Frnacis as his genuine response to the crucified Christ and as a divine gift is to miss the Francis who mirrored Jesus. The joy for me in the study of St. Francis is how the stories develop for me over time the profound nature of St. Francis' response to the will of God. He is all the more real because he is a man who first lived in the world and then rejected it. He then becomes the embodiment of loving response to God's call. For Chesterton and me, this is the importance for the twentieth century writer to comprehend; thus St. Francis can, I believe, transcend the thirteenth century and become more relevant to us, even today.

Does that mean that St. Francis was the "Hippie Saint" as Joseph Roddy wrote in *Look* Magazine, in 1971?[6] Certainly the Saint who was from the monied merchant class threw off the accouterments of that class as did so many hippies in the 1960's and 1970's. He did also, in many respects, embrace a counterculture which caused a revolution. However, this revolution sparked the imagination of whole generations to come and unlike the hippie revolt which sparked a reversal in the 1980's, the Poverello's revolution still remains. It is sadly true, one may suppose, because the insidious worldliness that marked the thirteenth century seems to be exacerbated in the twentieth century. It is a tribute to the grace of God and Francis' strength that he remains such an important spiritual figure in 1990 as he was in 1226 at the time of his death.

I dispute, then, the claim that Francis was the Hippie Saint, although I agree that he is relevant to all who are seekers of the truth.

Perhaps no twentieth century writer was in more kindred spirit with Francis than Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk. In many ways, his lifestyle was a complete contrast — Francis a mendicant Friar, Thomas a contemplative. Both, however, shared a common beginning, both were somewhat hedonistic and pursued wordly pleasures. Both Francis and Thomas had conversion experiences in their early twenties, although Francis was hardly the intellectual that Merton was. Merton, however, was fascinated by the poor man of Assisi. He saw, in particular in his Rule of the Hermitage, a lifestyle "cleansed of every taint of selfishness and individualism, Solitude is surrounded by fraternal care and is therefore solidly established in the life and order of the Church."[7]

Merton saw Francis' *Rule of the Hermitage* as a precursor to the modern concept of solitary life as he, Merton, hoped to live it. It is a life not of

permanent solitude, but one that is open to the world and thus evangelical. It is my belief, that Merton who has influenced many in modern times understood this at the end and thus undertook a pilgrimage of sorts to the world to seek dialogue with the other major religions of the world. Thus far then in this journey through twentieth century literature, one can recognize the profound impact of the "beloved troubadour" Francis on poetry modern literature and religious writings as well.

But what of other disciplines. The modern world is one marked by cynicism predicated upon a scientific model that believes in theories that must be tested by incipient skepticism. Can Francesco, the deeply spiritual man of 13th century Italy have relevance for the post technological age of the late twentieth century?

Luke R. Power in a radiantly beautiful article entitled "Il Poverello and Technology" says unequivocally, yes. Because "the attitude of Francis was radically Christian, essentially religious, and therefore, fundamentally optimistic,"[8] he has particular relevance for today. He discovered things "anew" and because of his insight into the things of creation, Francis was given vision that few others have ever enjoyed. His reverence for God and the laws of nature made Francis see things about God and nature that connected him to the universe. This connectedness, and his understanding of the fundamental goodness of God, give us, says Power, an "appreciation of technology as a gift of God."[9] We see then that nothing is possible without God's eternal influence. He is the Divine Orderer who creates technology for the world. As in Isaiah (54:16) "Behold I have created the smith that blows in the fire the coals and brings forth an instrument for his work," God then creates the technology. I call Him for Francis, the Divine Potentiator. In all this, we can discern God's will for us, namely, that man is called by God to develop these things from nature, but, I would posit, with deep reverence as we see in the "Canticle of Creatures."

Power sees this relationship then, but recognizes that salvation comes not through the realization of the connectedness of man with God's creation, but only through grace which must mediate for us. We are part of a cosmic fraternity which must interpret "material progress in terms of Christ centered cosmic development."[10]

Francis thus becomes again the beacon of light that points the way for twentieth century man toward the Center, which is Christ. Even science, with all of its vilification of religion, can in Francis find a way. For modern man, this is hope indeed.

I turn now from modern literature and how it has been influenced by Francis and turn to a deeply moving modern text about Saint Francis, *God's Fool*, by Julien Green. Francis has withstood the vicissitudes of

eight centuries and today we are given soulful insight into this exceeding unique Saint by Julien Green. Green's work is significant in that it frees biographies of saints from the plaster molds of hagiography and grants us a vision into the "alter Christus", Francis.

What Green does is to add flesh and bones to the "birdbath" saint. By constructing a biography not based on a progression of time, but instead, led by the soul, Julien Green allows us to see the eseential truths behind the life of Francis. He brings to Francis a deep and powerful humanity that is led by the grace of the Holy Spirit. This approach allows us to see him as a man, much like ourselves, responding to God's will for him in his life.

... the study of Francis leads the author, not into some new insight into Francis, but more importantly into a deeper insight into the author...

Francis, troubadour, contemplative, a man of contrasts is much like twentieth century man. Yet, he responds in ways which are alien to us as well. Therein lies a benefit for modern man and also the fascination by modern writers. Francis, the medieval knight who comes from a feudal — communal tradition whose concepts of nobility and church were fashioned by a time now remote and pungent with things somewhat repellent to us, is somehow alive and real for us.

Francis was a diminutive man, probably no more than five feet tall and frail, but with energy beyond his stature and bearing. Green shows us how this man dealt with his trials in a way still open to us. His wolf at Gubbio, the wolf within each of us, has profound import for us today. Francis, simple and genuine, is a man of symbol. His life is a beacon of light marking the crossroads for twentieth century man.

So where have we traveled on your journey? Twentieth century literature is so abundant, that it would be impossible to even begin to understand fully the impact of Saint Francis of Assisi on modern literature. His poetry sparked the Renaissance, his writings a revolt and his lifestyle remains a revolution. Francis has been featured in Off-Broadway musicals and in fiction, in biography and other serious literature. Ernest Raymond says that he, Francis, has sparked even a fourth order, a group who despite their excesses in the world still love and revere Francis. There is hardly a year that goes by that a new life of the Saint doesn't get published. It

is probably because, as John Moorman put it: "Humility, Simplicity, Poverty and Prayer... the four foundation stones on which Saint Francis built" are still the only real response total and absolute, to the call of Christ. Perhaps again with Francis, we are called to utter:

I have done what was mine to do; may Christ teach
you what you are to do. □

Endnotes

[1]Vachel Lindsay, *Collected Poems*, New York: Macmillan, 1920).
[2]Arnold Toynbee, "The Challenge of Tomorrow," *Japan Times*, (October 4, 1972).
[3]G. K. Chesterton, *St. Francis of Assisi*, (New York: Doubleday, 1957).
[4]Ibid.
[5]Ibid.
[6]Joseph Roddy, "The Hippie Saint," *Look*, (April 20, 1971).
[7]Thomas Merton, "Franciscan Eremitism," *The Cord*, (December, 1966).
[8]Luke R. Power, "Il Poverello and Technology," *The Cord*, May 1966.
[9]Ibid.
[10]Ibid.

☆ ☆ ☆

St. Francis and the Birds

They study the line of the face
wings ticked, heads back, eyes,
intent on the sound that traces
with an outstretched finger
their own melody that dies

away to silence. A single word
spoken in softness lingers
in the evening air and a sword
of choruses cuts through night's
darkness — until later, the flights
of larks would answer this speech.

Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.

The Spirituality of Kazantzakis' "God's Pauper"

HARRY AVELING, T.S.S.F.

"For me," the modern Greek author Nikos Kazantzakis wrote in the Prologue to his novel *God's Pauper: St. Francis of Assisi*, "Saint Francis is the model of the dutiful man, the man who by means of ceaseless, supremely cruel struggle, succeeds in fulfilling our highest obligation, something even higher than morality or truth or beauty: the obligation to transsubstantiate the matter which God has entrusted to us, and turn it into spirit."[1]

Of the importance of St. Francis in Kazantzakis' life there can be no doubt. Born in Irakleion, Crete, on February 18, 1883, Kazantzakis was educated on the island of Naxod under Franciscan priests. The veneration of St. Francis is widespread on Crete, among both the Orthodox and Cahtolics, as is evidenced by the more than one hundred and twenty paintings of him made by the greatest of Cretan devotion painters, El Greco.[2] Kazantzakis visited Assisi twice, and the second time met the Danish author Johannes Jorgenson, author of the widely esteemed *Life of St. Francis*.[3] His descriptions of Assisi are filled both with an immense joy at the beauty of the area, and a sense of the immense demands the little poor man placed on his followers: "To obey a harsh signal and abandon ourselves with confidence to the high forces around and within us, visible and invisible, unshakable in our faith that these know everything and we know nothing..."[4] The lives of Kazantzakis and his wife were "saved" (the word is his own) by St. Francis when some Catholic Greek monks requested him in 1941 to translate Jorgensen's biography in return

A regular contributor to The Cord, *Fr. Harry Aveling, TSSF, is on leave from his college chaplaincy to serve as a Writer in Residence for the Malaysian Government language and Literature Bureau. He is engaged in translating Malay literature into English. Fr. Aveling holds a Master of Sacred Theology Degree from the Wollaston Anglican Theological College, Perth, Western Australia. He is a member of the Third Order of the Anglican Society of St. Francis.*

for provisions.[5] He was saved a second time in 1952, when, in hospital suffering an eye disease which had almost killed him, "In the delirium of fever," as he wrote to his wife, "I saw the Poverello bending over me. During my nights of insomnia, he came and sat by my bedside and told me his life, like some old nurse."[6] When he worked, two pictures sat over his desk, one of Dante, the other Giotto's St. Francis.[7]

God's Pauper was the last of Kazantzakis' novels. *The Golden Legend of Alexis Zorba* was published in 1943, the same year as his translation of Jorgensen's biography. *The Greek Passion* appeared in 1948; *The Fratricides* in 1949; *Freedom or Death* in 1950; *The Last Temptation* of Christ in 1951; and *St. Francis* in 1953. He had been planning the life of St. Francis prior to his eye disease; the book formed itself within him while he was in hospital and thereafter only required to be copied out.[8]

Kazantzakis' own attitude to the novel was mixed. At the end of 1953 he wrote to his wife that *Saint Francis* "is one of the works you won't like, and I'm puzzled as to how I wrote it. Well, is there a *religious mystique* inside of me? Because I felt great emotion when I wrote it..."[9] This uncertainty has been echoed by his critics. The late Eric Doyle described the book as "profound, inspiring and authentic."[10] P. Levitt, on the other hand, has stated that it is "a stunted growth in an arid landscape" and the one book by Kazantzakis which can be called a failure.[11] In this paper I would like to sketch some of the assumptions underlying the spirituality of *God's Pauper*, and to suggest their limitations.

Nature

Some of *God's Pauper* suggests a positive attitude towards Nature. "As long as there are flowers and children and birds in the world, have no fears, Brother Leo," Francis tells the narrator at one point, everything will be fine (191).[12] And again, as the saint smells some juniper flowers: "Everything is a miracle... the water we drink, the earth we tread, the night which descends on us every evening with its stars... the sun, the moon. Miracles all of them!" (252). For each created thing contains the power of new life: on one side of a leaf is the crucifixion, on the other is the resurrection (252).

Yet, created objects are only "fulfilling their duty," nothing more (63). Only man can surpass his nature "and enter heaven" (63). He (Kazantzakis almost invariably uses the masculine pronoun) is therefore separate from Nature and must reject its attractions. As death approaches, Francis laments: "a blade of grass, a goldfinch, a sweet aroma are enough to make us never want to abandon this earth of clay" (111). The song of a bird is sufficient to destroy the ecstasy of his prayer (155) and, indeed,

a green leaf enough to cast any holy man from the arms of God (214). The struggle to turn flesh into spirit requires the transcendence of this world.

Soul and Body

Man consists of two elements, the soul and the body (339). The soul is divine: "every man, even the most atheistic, has God deep within him in his heart, wrapped in layers of flesh and fat" (37). It is variously described as "omnipotent" (9), "the crucified Christ" (35), "a volcano" and "a force, a flame" (71), "a divine spark," more powerful than the sea and death (176), and "a handsome prince," destined for greatness" (364). But the soul is "imprisoned" within the body and the world (258). The flesh separates us from God (72), hates Him and is itself powerful and indestructable (364, 261). Under its influence, the prince is turned into "a horrible, ferocious beast" (364-5).

The soul needs the body, for it is "the donkey" on which the soul rides until it obtains death and immortality (279, 368); it is the cross on which God is crucified and from which He must also be resurrected (325). The meaning of human existence is the struggle precisely to turn flesh into spirit; after "all the flesh has become spirit," the world is of no further use (170).

The Two Paths

If the body is ugly and mortal, and the soul divine, how is the tramutation of one into the other to be achieved?

There are two roads which lead to God. One is the "straight, level road", by which one reaches God "married, with children, freshly shaved, full of food and smelling of wine" (115). This is the path of "the simple, pious believer" (282), and its difficulties — the temptations to laxity or priggishness — must not be underestimated (161). The other path is that of the "monk": it is "the uphill road," where one arrives "a tattered rag, a handful of hair and bones, smelling of uncleanliness and incense" (282, 115). Each path is a test of our stamina (109), and it is not for the individual to choose which path to follow: the choice is given by God (30). The monk Francis cannot follow the straight path, nor will he allow the amiable Leo to do so.

God

Before we turn to the praxis of liberation, it is as well to be aware of the understanding Kazantzakis gives Francis of the nature of the God we bear within us, like "the Ark of the Old Testament" (260).

He has many names: "The Bottomless Abyss, the Insatiable, the Merciless, the Indefatigable, the Unsatisfied," and "He who has never once said to poor, unfortunate mankind: 'Enough!' " (118). His name is heavy, "it crushes bones" (24). It would be better to call him "Father" (24), except: "Thou art not a Father", as Francis rails when God sends him the leper to kiss, "Thou dost not love mankind. Thou art merciless and all-powerful and Thou playest with us..." (91).

The merciless quality of God is everywhere evident in the novel. In one place God is a fearful conflagration: "He burns and we burn with Him" (23). In another place, Leo reflects that God holds man writhing in His claws, like a hawk with a small animal:

> God is severe... exceedingly severe; He has no pity for mankind. What was it that Francis had just finished telling me: that God's will was supposed to be our own deepest, unknown will? No, no! God asks us what we don't want and then says "That's what I want!" He asks us what we hate and then says "That's what I love. Do what displeases you, because that is what pleases me!" And you see, here was poor Francis carrying the leper in his arms, having first kissed him on the mouth. (93-4)

Francis accepts this cruelty as appropriate for the measureless power of a sovereign God. His measures are not ours; His thought is such that "the mind of man cannot even approach it without being turned to ashes!" (243). He behaves so inhumanly "because He loves us" (121), and wishes to teach us (316).

A consequence of that process of toughening is that all limiting concepts of God must also be put aside. Adam must necessarily leave heaven to be a man, "a warrior, worker, rebel," to fight wild beasts and the forces of nature (154), if he is to realize his full destiny. As the earlier ascetical work, *The Saviors of God* (1923), argued, the march to God moves through this world, not admitting any of its comforts, even hope or despair. "Perhaps," says Francis, "God is simply the search for God." Perhaps, says Leo in a terrible dream, "we have been duped... there is no heaven, and no hell... not even chaos... Nothing!" (33). But no! Leo wakes, rushes to Francis, and finds him suspended in the air, bearing the first signs of the stigmata on his wide-open hands.

Ascetical Practice

Francis' ascetic practice derives from these grim insights about the human drive to go beyond matter, and the fearful power of God. The path of "ascent," from earth to heaven, passes across an abyss, and cannot

be anything but terrible (32). There are three stages on the path of purgation from pleasure, pain and fear.

The first stage involves acceptance of the spiritual realm. This acceptance involves the rejection of moderation, for the man who is "extraordinarily prudent," "sensible to a fault," will not be able to take the leap (213). The commitment is never-ending, for if God stands "outside the bounds of moderation" (83), then it will only be by "overdoing it" that he can be found (82). The God who shouts "Not Enough" demands that the pilgrim continually do the most difficult thing, the least congenial thing (89), there can be no rest. "The body of man is the bow," Francis says in analogy, "God is the archer, and the soul is the arrow." One prayer asks "Lord, bend me, or else I shall rot." A second: "Lord, do not bend me too much, for I shall break!" The third prayer, he tells Leo, belongs to the true ascetic: "Lord bend me too much, and who cares whether I break!" (181). The aim of the soul is to go as far as it can and then further (60). It is the sheer impossibility of this task which excites Francis.

The second stage is the acceptance of complete negation. Absolute poverty is to have "nothing, absolutely nothing: this is the path that leads to God. There is none other" (148). It involves giving up possessions ("Humility is to hold out your hand and beg; the rest is arrogance," 96), and of all ideas (113). Perfect Love asks nothing in return except "that we may accept all men, good and bad; that they may accept all animals, wild and tame; all trees, fruitful and unfruitful; all stones, rivers and seas. We are all brothers. We all have the same Father, and we have all taken the road which leads us back to our paternal home!" (200). The "search" unites man with himself, his race, all mankind, and the earth itself, as the *Saviors of God* insists. All struggle to be free; the man who has nothing is free (161).

The third stage is that of vision and action. In *God's Pauper* (as in *Zorba the Greek*), these take the form of prayer, dance and song. When Francis prays, he dances (175), and he asks the Holy Father, the Pope, only one thing: "permission to sing and dance in cities and villages, and to be ragged and barefoot, and to possess nothing to eat" (178). It is only after Francis receives the stigmata, when he wants to dance but cannot, that his canticles begin to form part of the texture of the novel. When Brother Elias forbids him to sing, Francis replies "God commanded me to sing," and in defiance of the interdiction an angel comes down and plays the flute beneath his window (380-2).

The Unseen World

The world we see is not real. This single assumption forms the core of the spirituality of *God's Pauper*. The book rejects the physical world

available to the senses in favour of spirit which exists beyond matter and struggles to release itself from the confines of the physical form. For this reason Francis can preach: "our life here on earth is a deceptive dream. The true life, which is eternal, awaits us above in heaven. Do not regard the soil beneath your feet, but lift your eyes high, my brothers, open the cage where the soul thrashes itself, covers its bill with blood — and fly away!" (281).

The merciless quality of God is everywhere evident in the novel.

For Kazantzakis' image of Francis, the assertion has three consequences.

Firstly, there is the destruction of his body. Thomas of Celano provides us with a full, and reasonable, picture of Francis' physique (1 Cel 83). In the novel, both Leo and Brother Masseo describe Francis in unpleasantly ugly terms (22, 275). The destruction of Francis' eyesight is seen as a significant part of his growth in sanctity, as he rejects the world in favour of inner vision, but this is only one aspect of the complete destruction of his body. After meeting the leper, he is no more than "a handful of flesh and bone with God, God in His entirety, sitting inside" (106). In front of the pope, he reveals his "ravaged cheeks, withered mouth, and large tear-filled eyes" under compulsion (115). On Alverna he is unrecognisable because his body has been eaten away by prayer and fasting (318). As his final year of illness begins, he is "nothing more than a tatter: one huge wound lying on the ground in a pool of blood" (335). Throughout his life he is haunted by the rotting flesh of a beggar with scarred temples, a red wound on his forehead, and "large, blood holes in his hands and feet" (48-49, 177, 322). It is in that same form that he haunts others (177, 322). Not only does he actively mortify his body, he also encourages others to do so: his father (68), the villagers who throw stones at him (78), the door-keeper who rejects him entry to a monastery (105-9), the Crusaders (214), and even Leo, whom he tells when they eventually tire of flogging themselves: "You did not have a good time; you suffered. It's exactly the same thing" (264-5). For Kazantzakis' Francis, "Crucifixion, Resurrection and Paradise are identical" (326 - 7).

There is, secondly, the destruction of his mind. Leo regrets his own spiritual blindness, the inability to push aside the visible world and see the invisible world hidden behind it, "the eternal one" (140, 294-5). Francis, on the other hand, can look at Leo and see his head as a skull covered with worms (23). He walks with Leo and they are three (85). He

tells the bandits that he is "the emissary" of a Great King (95). He marries a pale woman, dressed in rags, yet "noble and lofty, like a widowed queen," whom he calls lady Poverty (150-1). Hungry, he sees "an angelic loaf" in front of him, big as a millstone (181). Explicitly he calls his preaching "the new madness" (77). The bandit can see no difference between "a saint" and a lunatic (85); neither can the villagers whom Brother Giles visits (273).

There is, finally, the destruction of human relationships. "Accursed is he who acts contrary to the will of God," young Clara Scifi tells him. "Accursed is he who preaches that we should not marry, should not have children and build a home; who preaches that men should not be real men, loving war, wine, women, glory; that women should not be real women, loving love, fine clothes, all the comforts of life... forgive me for telling you this, my poor Francis, but this is what it means to be a true human being." (112). He can look upon her only when her body is prematurely aged, hunchbacked, her cheeks withered and her eyes dimmed with tears (231, 247).

God's Rich Man

God's Pauper presents a possible reading of the life and significance of Saint Francis in the light of the later legends and of Kazantzakis' own assumption about matter and spirit. Kazantzakis was not being perverse; he was well acquainted with the sources and their modern interpretation, with the geography of Assisi, had a deep commitment to spiritual growth, and acknowledged Francis as his "favourite saint."[13] As early as 1924 he insisted:

> If Francis had preached more accessible ideas, his teaching would have had no influence. The idea must be preached in absolute terms, higher than human powers can reach. In this lies its mystical power, the painful, fertile straining of spirits to attain it, the impossibility of attaining it and consequently the concern, contrition, weeping, the eternal dissatisfaction. This is the only way that the momentum can become as strong as possible: by refusing to yield, or to make any *compromise* after (first) defining the goal.[14]

Yet it is an interpretation most find increasingly difficult to accept. The first consequence of Kazantzakis' dualism of matter and spirit is a hatred of the body and the desire to inflict intense pain on it. Resurrection is no different from Crucifixion; pleasure is the same as pain. This surely is profound masochism. The second implication is the rejection of created reality. Zorba responds joyously to two dolphins swimming beside his boat.[15] Years later he cables "the Boss" to come immediately and see a green stone he has found.[16] In his dancing he is "one harmonious whole" with himself and all things, "women, bread, water, meat, sleep," in

friendly accord between "a man and the universe." [17] Zorba opens his eyes and sees what is not to be seen in the empirical world. Zorba has no illusions; Francis, it seems, has nothing but illusions. The third consequence of Kazantzakis' dualism is the apparent absence in Francis' life of any sense of a Christ rooted in the soil of every day existence, the Christ of flesh and blood who attended weddings, and ate and drank with gluttons and criminals. The human dimension of Jesus' experience is dismissed with the words that Christ is God while "I am only clay" (37).

The legends are attractive. Kazantzakis is only one of the many writers who have erected a spirituality around these fascinating and extgravagant tales. Yet it should be noted that the legends are literary works, products of the imagination and deep piety, composed with very specific ends in mind. As Edward Armstrong has shown, the authors copied from each other and often tried to improve on what they had before them.[18] In the *Testament*, Francis simply states: "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 on them" (1-2). Celano's *First Life* records that "the lover of complete humility went to the lepers and lived with them, serving them most dilligently for God's sake." It adds that Francis "met a leper one day and, made stronger than himself, he kissed him" (17). In the *Second Life*, no mention is made of regular association with lepers. The meeting with the leper follows a vow made to a hunchbacked woman; after struggling to kiss the leper, the man mysteriously vanishes, although they are in the middle of an open plain. From this time on, Francis began to frequent the places where lepers were to be found, "giving them money and kisisng them." Armstrong rightly notes that the consequences of this process was the production of an image of Francis which was, on the one hand, a figure of superhuman, even supernatural, sanctity, wielding magical power, but also, on the other hand, "an ascetic subjecting himself and his companions to discipline so harsh as to savour of mental disorder."[19] It is this extraordinary Francis Kazantzakis describes. When his Francis kisses the leper, he tells brother Leo: "All these, if you kiss them on the mouth — O God forgive me for saying this — they all ... become Christ" (95).

There is a strong current within the biographies which insisted that even if Francis' actions were considered factual, the Saint recognized the extremity of his own ascetic practice and never insisted that it should be normative for others. The *First Life* includes two long paragraphs on the harsh mortification practiced by the earliest friars (1 Cel 40-41).

> The saint also once said: "Brother body should be provided for with discretion, so that a tempest of bad temper be not raised by it. So that it will not be wearied with watching and that it may persevere with reverence in prayer, take away from it every occasion for murmuring. For it might say: 'I am weak with hunger, I cannot bear the burden of your exercise." But if after it has eaten sufficient food it should mutter such things know that a lazy beast needs the spur and a sluggish ass must expect the goad.' (2 Cel XCII, 129).

Bonaventure's *Major Legend* states: "Francis did his utmost to encourage the friars to lead austere lives, but he had no time for exaggerated self-denial which excluded tender compassion or was not tempered with discretion" (V:7). The note of caution is followed by the tale of Francis eating with a friar who has been tormented by hunger and unable to sleep. That story appears in the *Mirror* as an example of the saint's great "charity and discretion," and bears the comment:

> My brothers, everyone must consider his own constitution, for although one of you may be able to sustain his body on less food, I do not want another who needs more food to try to imitate him in this matter. Each brother must consider his own constitution and allow his body its needs, so that it has the strength to serve the spirit. For while we are bound to avoid over-indulgence in food, which injures both body and soul, we must also avoid excessive abstinence, especially as the Lord desires mercy, not sacrifice. (SP 27).

The same story occurs at the very beginning of the *Legend of Perugia* as if to encourage an intelligent distinction between the reader's capabilities and those of "the man of God."

Similarly, Francis does not claim in the *Fioretti* that it is pleasant to be excluded from a warm monastery late at night, let alone be beaten as well. Rather he states; "Above all the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit which Christ gives to his friends is that of conquering oneself and willingly enduring sufferings, insults, humiliations, and hardships for the love of Christ" (Fior 8). As another fourteenth century manuscript says: "If I kept true patience and was not upset — that is true joy and true virtue and the salvation of the soul" (Omnibus 1502). Contrary to Kazantzakis' understanding, there is no intrinsic virtue in suffering and it is certainly never pleasurable. What matters is what one does with the suffering in conforming one's inner nature to Christ.

The Saint Francis of the counter-tradition had no desire for the "supremely cruel struggle" spoken of in the Prologue to *God's Pauper*, and no sympathy for any lack of discretion or absence of compassion for other people. Kazantzakis had thoroughly misunderstood the Saint and his motivations, as his deepest instincts recognized in the letter to his wife after the completion of the book. □

Endnotes

[1]All references are to the 1962 translation by P. A. Bien, published by Faber and Faber, London 1979.

[2]N. P. Levitt, *The Cretan Glance*, Ohio State University Press, Columbus 1980, p. 159, n. 19.

[3]The visits are described in his *Report to Greco*, tr. P. A. Bien, Faber and Faber, London 1983, pp. 183ff, 374ff.

[4]*Report to Greco*, p. 377.

[5]Helen Kazantzakis, *Nikos Kazantzakis: A Biography*, tr. A. Mims, Creative Arts Books Co., Berkeley 1983, pp. 412, 537.

[6]*Nikos Kazantzakis*, p. 519.

[7]*Nikos Kazantzakis*, p. 385.

[8]*Nikos Kazantsakis*, p. 517.

[9]*Nikos Kazantsakis*, p. 549.

[10]"Select Bibliography on the Life and Message of St. Francis," *Concilium*, Nov. 1981, p. 77.

[11]*The Cretan Clance*, p. xiv.

[12]Numbers in brackets hereafter refer to page in Bien's translation.

[13]*Nikos Kazantzakis*, p. 412.

[14]*Nikos Kazantsakis*, p. 12.

[15]*Zorba the Greek*, tr. C. Wildman, Faber and Faber, London, 1981, p. 19.

[16]*Zorba the Greek*, p. 308.

[17]*Zorba the greek*, p. 137.

[18]*Saint Francis: Nature Mystic*, University of California, Berkeley 1973.

[19]*Saint Francis: Nature Mystic*, p. 218.

☆ ☆ ☆

Autumn Beauty

Thank You, Father, for the beauty
of Autumn majesty:
Its riot of color, as could no other,
lifts the human heart,
to love and gratitude:
The reds, the greens, the golds,
gladden our world-weary souls:
Cause us to exclaim in glad surprise:
Behold! See the Hand of the Father:
Heaven's artist Supreme!

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

A Triple Way for Refounding Contemporary Franciscan Life[1]

ANTHONY M. CARROZZO, O.F.M.

A journey, even when well organized, does not always turn out as planned. Unforeseen events like car troubles or faulty directions often cause delays, tensions, and ill-tempers. Such is the case in Edna O'Brien's perceptive short story "A Demon" (in *Lantern Slides*), in which a relatively poor Irish family has rented a car and driver for a day's outing to visit their son in a monastery and to bring their ailing daughter back from a convent. They started out late in the day, were slowed down by poor directions, and grew tense when faced with unforeseen expenditures. At this point the reader begins to wonder if the demon of the title is nothing more than a well-planned journey plagued with difficulties. But that is not the demon Ms. O'Brien chooses to write about; her demon is the mysterious, unnamed illness of the daughter which intensifies the atmosphere of this brief though penetrating story.

Journeying is a familiar image of the spiritual life. Think, for example, of the Bible's Exodus narrative, of St. Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, of the journeys made by Catholics of various persuasions to places like Medagorje and the tomb of Oscar Romero. The exodus journey was neither well-planned nor well-travelled; it required the hand of God himself to guide it to the Holy Land; Bonaventure's soul-journey, on the other hand, is mapped out in such detail as to be almost fool-proof; but either of these two examples still has the power to alert us to be watchful, even during our own travels, for Edna O'Brien's mysterious demonic

Fr. Anthony Carrozzo, O.F.M., is provincial minister of the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus with headquarters in New York City. Besides holding administrative posts in formation, he has served as director of St. Francis Retreat Center ir Rye Beach, New Hampshire. Father Anthony, who holds a D. Min. degree, has taught on the college level and has conducted retreats throughout the country. He has published articles on spirituality and religious life in **THE CORD** *and in several other periodicals.*

illness — the existence and presence of sin — which absorbs the self and distracts from the journey, In the *Itinerarium,* Bonaventure makes such a travel-warning quite basic when he advises us to begin the journey by acknowledging our sins and purifying our consciences. Quickly moving beyond this purification, he invites us into the illuminating experience of God's gracious forgiveness, of his continuing gifts to us along the route, and of the reward he promises at journey's end. Such an illuminating moment — *a flash of insight,* Bonaventure calls it — leads to a contemplative attitude toward life, resulting in a measure of personal peace, a vision of truth, and a joyful insight into the goodness of creation.

This is certainly Bonaventure's outline of the journey; it is the process described not only in the *Itinerarium* but even more precisely in *De Triplici Via,* documenting my two-fold thesis that, first, one cannot truly understand and appreciate the spiritual theology of the Franciscan way of life as articulated by St. Bonaventure unless one has a working knowledge of *De Triplici Via* and second, this small and seemingly simple work can form the foundation for refounding contemporary Franciscan life.

The triple way was not an original insight for Bonaventure. It is found in earlier works, particularly among the Victorines. Bonaventure gave it a unique interpretation due to his Trinitarian outlook and Franciscan way of life. For though he was certainly familiar with Victorine Spirituality, his soul was anchored in the Franciscan spirit of prayer expressed so vividly in this one composed by Francis himself:

> *Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God,*
> *Give me the ability to do for You*
> *What I know You want me to do,*
> *and always to desire what pleases You,*
> *so that inwardly c l e a n s e d,*
> *inwardly e n l i g h t e n e d*
> *and i n f l a m e d by the fire of the Holy Spirit,*
> *I may be able to follow in the footsteps*
> *of your beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ,*
> *and by your grace alone*
> *make my way to you.* (Armstrong, 61)

Francis outlines his own framework of a triple way: cleansing, enlightening, inflaming. One can readily imagine Bonaventure spending affectionate hours repeating this prayer as he poured over the Victorine texts to settle his own mind and spirit on the three-fold way of purgation, illumination, and union. And settle it he did, for though his predecessors presented the three ways quite separately as the soul moves from one stage to another, Bonaventure gives the triple way a new twist: it is not a separate way but a uniquely integrated and cyclic one, where the individual may well be at one stage in one area of his life and at another stage in another

area of his life or at one period in his life be at one stage with a particular virtue while being at another stage with that same virtue at another period in his life. This unique twist to the triple way was admirably imaged by our own Bonaventurean scholar Father Thomas Plassman who expressed the relationship in this way: the soul is traveling on a three-lane highway, constantly changing lanes and speed.

Permit me to use the contemporary concern for friendship as a pertinent example of triple-way simultaneity. "Particular friendships" were forbidden when I was in formation as a student; even solidly mature friendships often gave rise to suspicions! Yet years later when I was in formation as director, an inability to form mature friendships was judged to be a negative characteristic in one aspiring to the Franciscan way of life. What happened in that mere twenty five years span to reverse our outlook on a matter so vital to our fraternal lifestyle? Among other things, I believe we have come to a new and more penetrating understanding of the triple way where purgation, illumination and union are being experienced simultaneously in the same person in different areas of his life. This was not well understood years ago, so we made a norm of Bonaventure's purgative advice as expressed in this passage: "we must remove all inordinate love for creatures. For the love of creatures is of no spiritual use to us: and even if it is, it does not refresh us: and even if it does, it is not enough. So all such love must be held far from the heart" (The Triplici Via, 1:3). However, we neglected Boanventure's advice regarding friendship at our illuminative moments where, he asserts, "we extend our view of truth to what is around us through pure charity... by embracing human beings in friendship" (De Triplici Via, 3:6). He goes even further when he considers friendship at our unitive moments where he asserts one has reached the "state of purest charity" if one is willing "to die for all," loving the other for the sake of the other, explaining that "one does not reach this perfect love of neighbor unless he has also attained a perfect love of God" (De Triplici Via, 2:3). This thought is echoed later by Francis of Osuna, the fifteenth century Franciscan spiritual director, writer, and faithful expositor of the Seraphic doctor, who wrote that: "Religious Orders are schools where we learn affection and love" (Osuna, 319).

Bonaventure never taught that all human relationships are by their very nature inordinate (though he believed some could be). Franciscans may have interpreted Bonaventure in this way but it never was his opinion. On the contrary, he clearly believed that human relationships would develop as one moves along the illuminative and unitive ways. Through a contemplative reflection on the experience of friendship along the journey, the soul would come to the desire for martyrdom, that is, the desire to give one's life in mission for the sake of others.

Return for a moment to Edna O'Brien's short story. It tells of the

socially deprived mother's desire for friendship with the wife of the doctor. The mother attempts to win this relationship through a gift to the doctor's daughter. The daughter accepts the gift but continues to avoid the giver. Yet the desired friendship does arise between the mother and the doctor's wife when "a mutual friend had died young, and death, as the mother said sorrowfully binds all" (O'Brien, 133). The inordinate desire for friendship gave way to true love through mutual suffering and sympathy.

For Bonaventure the soul is at once sinful, graced, and united to the Trinity. In its sinfulness, it needs to be purged so that it can attain peace through meditation; in its graced state, it is illuminated so that it can attain truth through prayer; in its unity, it is not only holistically integrated but it is united to God through contemplation. This process has an aim beyond itself as indicated by the subtitle of *De Triplici Via: The Fire of Love*, Bonaventure pointing out in paragraph fifteen of the work that we seek the fire of wisdom by enkindling a spark that develops into a flame.

This triple way develops a highly sophisticated liturgical spirituality. Considering the Eucharistic Celebration in the light of this spiritual process, we discover purgation takes place conscientiously though quickly through the penitential rite, our hearts and minds are illuminated as the word is proclaimed and explained, and we are more deeply united to Christ and His people through Communion. The Lenten motif may be even more telling: on the first Sunday of Lent, as the temptation of Jesus is proclaimed, we are called into the desert to be purified; on the second Sunday, as Jesus' transfiguration is proclaimed, we are called to the mountain to be transfigured; and during the Easter Vigil we become inflamed by the new fire burning upon the earth.

De Triplici Via is not easy reading. It must be prayed over in the spirit of recollection and even contemplation if we are to garner wisdom from it. It is the key to all Bonaventure's later works and to his understanding of the Franciscan way of life. For example, his work addressed to sisters, entitled *On the Perfection of Life* certainly would not appeal to many of today's sisters unless they first realized that it was written from the purgative perspective. On the other hand, the *Itinerarium* is a work of the illuminative way, which leads to enlightenment through reflection. Finally, *The Tree of Life* invites the contemplative into the Gospel experiences so as to activate personal engagement with the Gospel.

The triple way can also be exemplified by the senses. *On the Perfection of Life*, clearly expresses a purgative understanding of the senses in these words: "As soon as you have set yourself to pray, straightening your body and lifting up your heart, with all your senses closed, examine every one of your failings" (5:2). The *Itinerarium*, however, urges us "To contemplate God in all creatures which enter our minds through our bodily senses" (2:1) when we arrive at the second stage of our journey. Further, *The*

Tree of Life, which offers instruction on experiencing the Gospel through memory, understanding and will, urges us to move beyond the senses to the imagination and "to prefer faith to reason, devotion to investigation, simplicity to curiosity, and the sacred cross of Christ to all carnal feeling or wisdom of the flesh" (Prol. 5). Thus in his *Major Life of Saint Francis*, Bonaventure can exclaim:

> *Refounding will necessarily lead us through the entwined experiences of purgation and illumination: both struggle and insight will be part of the chaotic experience leading to integration.*

> Consider carefully the marvelous purity and the degree of virtue that Francis attained. At his mere wish fire tempered its heat, water changed its taste, an angelic melody brought him comfort and a divine light gave him guidance, thus it is proven that all of creation came to the service of the sanctified senses of this holy man." (5:12)

Reading Bonaventure, one must always locate the vantage point along the journey from which he offers his insights. That determined, we can harvest much advice valuable for our contemporary struggle to refound Franciscan life.

Refounding, according to Gerald Arbuckle, author of *Out of Chaos*, is "a process necessary for religious congregation which involves the application of Gospel values to the most urgent, non-ephemeral needs of today, under the inspiration of persons who 'see and can make it happen' " (Religious Life: Rebirth through Ministry, 52).

Refounding is a more preferable concept than reform, which indicates only the purgative experience — an approach never highly successful in Franciscan history; refounding is a more satisfying term even than renewal, which may not sufficiently emphasize the illuminative value of the original charism and of the charism's various embodiments throughout history. Moreover, the refounding process itself, by whatever name it is best known, can claim an illustrious friend in Francis of Osuna, who, in his *Third Spiritual Alphabet* claims that "We establish and conserve the Order, when we continue to construct it anew in those who later will found it in others according to the specifications they receive from their masters." (225). Osuna may well be offering this advice in the light of

Francis' permission to refound: "Christ taught me what was mine to do, may he teach you what is yours."

As Franciscans we may quibble a bit with Fr. Arbuckle, preferring to speak of refounding fraternities rather than refounding persons, making the brotherhood rather than the individual friar the agent of refounding. This certainly seems more appropriate to our Franciscan heritage and sensibilities. This becomes quite evident when Francis himself describes the perfect friar minor, who turns out to be a fraternal image rather than a single person, with the faith of Bernard, the simplicity of Leo, the courtesy of Angelo, the common sense of Matteo, the contemplative nature of Giles, the prayerfulness of Rufino, the patience of Juniper, the courage of John, the charity of Roger, and the caution of Lucidus (Omnibus, 1218). Furthermore, Franciscan leadership would do well providing itself with a far more active role in the refounding process than the passive one that Fr. Arbuckle assigns it. The leaders of the fraternity must provide the model and the impetus for refounding, which surely would prove not only to be an experience of illumination but also one of purgation. Refounding demands purgation.

Recently while reading Denis McFarland's novel *The Music Room,* I was stopped short by this startling passage:

> "When Perry (the younger brother of the story-teller) was about five years old, we used to go to a popular swimming hole, fed by a huge reservoir and dammed at one end where the water cascaded over a spillway and dropped some fifteen feet to a rocky creek. One day, Perry, who hadn't yet learned to swim, somehow got into the deep part, where a gentle current moved the water from reservoir to spillway. Unnoticed by anyone, he was in over his head, able to surface and resurface for air but unable to stop his slow drift toward the falls — Perry was small enough that he would have been carried over with the force of the plummeting water. Finally, someone did notice him quite near the spillway, a teenaged boy who lifted Perry under the arms, guided him to the edge, and deposited him on the grass. Perry coughed and spit up water, assuring the teenager, between fits of coughing, that he was all right. Many years later when he recounted the incident to me, Perry said, "I knew I was going to die. The minute before I felt the guy's hands lifting me up I had accepted my death."
>
> "But how stupid," I said to him, "all you had to do was call for help. Why didn't you just call out for help?"
>
> "I don't know," Perry answered. "I guess I just felt like I would rather die than do that." (pp. 112-113).

Many of our fraternities and ministries are in the process of dying, yet we refuse to call for help. Is it possible that, like Perry, we would rather die than call for help? Even if the cry is made, the death process for some

of our fraternities and ministries may not be slowed down, though for some it certainly will because the process itself will bring the friars together in the presence of the Holy Spirit to create a new future for our brotherhood on misison.

This emphasis on the dying process may recall our minds and hearts to the paschal mystery, which leads to a new and more vigorous life in Christ. For we are involved in a purgative mystery, causing us some suffering as we confront painful questions and even more painful answers. Francis himself records this purgative process for us in his Testament as he distinguishes between when he was in sin and when he began to do penance. Much seemed bitter to him when he was in sin, but when he began to do penance "that which seemed bitter became sweet for me." In doing penance, Francis found new life and energy by ministering to lepers, who had previously been repulsive to him; what he had avoided in sin he embraced in penance as a source of God's grace. From him we franciscans learn to pass from bitterness to sweetness by confronting both our sinful fraternities and sinful selves; we learn that this same process will take place through refounding, provided we are willing to travel the purgative way.

This movement from sin to penance, from bitterness to sweetness also enligthtened Francis to the presence of grace in the most unlikely people and places. Refounding, too, leads to illumination, for as Bonaventure observed, "Omnia in Cruce Manifestatur" (De Triplici Via, 3:3) — everything is understood in the cross, or even better, everything is illuminated through the cross. Refounding will necessarily lead us through the entwined experiences of purgation and illumination: both struggle and insight will be part of the chaotic experience leading to integration. Accepting the Emmaus aspect of our journeys, our hearts will burn once again as we travel from discouragement to joyful proclamation of the living Jesus, whose spirit gives wisdom to our the traveller. By becoming refounding fraternities willing to accept purgation, our understanding of the gift of the Franciscan Charism will be so illuminated that we will understand more clearly and accept more wholeheartedly the charism itself, with its contemporary demands for mission. For it is precisely through union with the People of God in mission that we experience communion with Him; we become willing to take up our mats — even if they have become mansions — and move into missionary endcavors truly inspired by the Gospel, thus arriving at that "burning zeal for martyrdom" which "draws us close" to the "divine shelter of Christ beneath the father's enfolding wing" (De Triplici Via, 3:5). In this way we find Christ once again, fulfilling that magnificent prayer of the Bonaventurian triple way:

You do I seek,
In You do I hope,
For You do I long,
To You do I arise,
You do I receive,
In You do I rejoice,
To You do I cling,
Until it is accomplished! (De Triplici Via, 3:5)

Such seeking arises from desire. Saint Bonaventure, perhaps reflecting upon Francis' expression of the search and the desire when he says "this is what I want, this is what I seek, this is what I desire with all my heart," claims, as he begins his *Soul's Journey into God,* that one must be "a man of desires" if he is to make this arduous journey into God.

It was the desire to hear live and preach the Gospel that led others to Francis. This simple gathering of brothers and sisters to live this desire led them to experience the Gospel in new and creative ways. This desire and its accompanying experience were not fully articulated until 1223, after several earlier attempts had failed. In other words, the Rule of 1223 was based upon the desire of the friars to hear, live, and preach the Gospel as they had experienced and continued to experience that desire lived each day together as brothers. Here again we recognize a triple way: desire, experience, and commitment to the Rule.

A refounding of Franciscan life and ministry must begin, then, with a contemplative grasp of our desires and the lived experience of our commitment. If the process is not shared in faith and contemplation, it will reveal merely superficial desires that distinguish rather than unify us, differing as these desires do from person to person, time to time, and place to place. However, the desires that reside deeply within ourselves are shared by all. Given our loneliness, we all seek a sense of belonging, often expressed as hunger for community; given our constant tendency to overindulge, we share a need for discipline; given our self-centeredness, we long for transcendence. As Franciscans we sense that these deeply felt desires are embodied in the one desire we inherit from Francis: to hear, live, and preach the Gospel.

How do we get in touch with this desire, come to understand our experience and remain faithful to our commitment? Many today would facilely respond "through theological reflection." Perhaps. However, in the Franciscan Tradition, filled as it is with folklore and myth, a better approach may well be through an affair with Lady Wisdom, for it is wisdom we seek far more than knowledge alone.

In the Catholic and Franciscan tradition, wisdom can be attained through a contemplative appreciation of the arts that lead to an understanding of God in our lives. In a recent article in the New York Times, it is reported that the evangelicals are opposed to the funding of the arts. Franciscan evangelicals should be supporters of the arts, of poetry and music and painting and writing. We should suport all the arts for they return us to God, assisting us in identifying our desire for God and appreciating his presence in our experience. It is an essential part of our heritage. I learned far more about morality and desire from Francois Mauriac and Graham Greene than from the abstract concepts of Tanqueray and Joné. I discovered much more about the desire to be poor from Leon Boy and John Steinbeck than from any number of vague position papers on poverty. I have come to appreciate the priesthood far more from movies like *On the Waterfront* and *Romero* than from dry Roman documents. I have come to love Francis of Assisi far more by listening to Messiaen's opera *Francois* and viewing Bellini's painting than from any scholarly analytical texts, helpful though they may be. To become refounding fraternities, we need to learn once again the process of returning the arts to theology in order to share our desires, experiences, and commitment. This will also give us the impetus toward creativity that we need to become refounding fraternities, basing our life and ministry upon the desire to be the Good News for today's world, to be today's heralds of the Gospel.

Perhaps, then, when all is said and done, it is said best by Galway Kinnell in his poem *Saint Francis and the Sow:*

"The bud
stands for all things,
even for those things that don't flower,—
because everything flowers from within, of self
blessing.
Though sometimes it's necessary
to reteach a thing its loveliness,
to put a hand on its brow
of the flower
and retell it in words and in touch
it is lovely
until it flowers again from within, of self-
blessing.
As Saint Francis
put his hand on the creased forehead
of the sow, and told her in words and in touch
blessings of earth on the sow, and the sow
remembering all down her thick length,
from the earthen snout all the way through the fodder and slops
to the spiritual curl of the tail,
from the hard spinniness spiked out from the spine

down through the great, unbreakable heart
to the sheer blue milken dreaminess shuddering.

(Mortel Acts, Mortal Words, p. 9)

Endnotes

[1]This article is a revision of a lecture delivered at the Franciscan Institute as part of the celebration of its fiftieth anniversary. It is based upon the premise that, while "refounding" is a contemporary word coined to express the experience of today's religious who desire to return to the charism of their founder in the light of the signs of the times, the refounding experience was articulated throughout Frnciscan history as new generations of Franciscans struggled to live the charism in changing times among a people with shifting needs.

☆ ☆ ☆

The Legend of the Three Companions

We warned him
that the Ancients say
drawing too close
to the fiery shrub
would mean
death
for human jars
cannot bear
liquid fire.
But he seemed to
revel in the
secrets found within
the chambers of heat,
and with him
in our midst
we too could burn
without end.

We warned him
not to cross too far
to the other side,
(for we dreaded
losing him)
yet he seemed at home
nimbly scaling
the ladder to the sky
to the rhythm of
the silent music.
Ah, but the time
we hold most dear,—
the time which seemed
out of time indeed,
was that mid-September
we found him
hidden in the
cleft of the rock.
His body could
no longer bear
the love,
and he broke out
in wounds.

William Hart McNichols, S.J., S.F.O.

Clare Reflected in Visual Art

POLLY DURYEA

One of the earliest pictorial representations of Clare painted on board shows her standing, surrounded by miniature scenes from her life. Its style is an iconic Byzantine-link popular in the tradition of Franciscan motifs that were painted in nearby Tuscan workshops in the last half of the thirteenth-century (Carli 14). In *Italian Primitives*, a book devoted to this school of painting, in one of eight scenes from her portrait by the *Maestro di S. Chiara* (1283) Clare is shown in a detail as she meets St. Francis (Plate 39). In the full version of this primitive, Clare is attired in Franciscan garb, as she stands barefoot in a sign of poverty and holds an elaborate Crusader's Cross, (*Assisi* 102; de Robeck 22a).

In another primitive in this book, there is a detail from a diptych, painted in brilliant hues of vermillion, gold and black. It pictures Clare, in one of her miracles, as she fends off the Saracen hoard while displaying the Host-filled pyx above the tumbling bodies of the enemy (Plate 22). Indeed, it is probably from this representation that Bynum, in a modern critical sense, sees Clare's iconographic motif as the monstrance, a chalice which holds the Host, one that connects her with fasting and the cult of the Host (*HFHF* 101). This appears to be the only instance in which Clare holds the Host, and this image of her does not reflect standard iconology of the period.

Attention given to these Oriental-type panel paintings is important because they speak from the period closest to Clare's life. Primitive cursive crucifixes on board — some of which included instructive scenes from the Passion — were replacing earlier Eastern images of Christ the Re-

Polly Duryea, a mother and grandmother, is a non-traditional Ph. D. candidate at the University of Nebraska. Readers will welcome her penetrating study of St. Clare in this article.

deemer (Plate 26, 35). The scenes responded to the West's affinity for the mystery of Christ's Passion. The crucifixes were indispensable to Franciscan devotion and were contemporary to the devotional panels of this erupting transitional period in art, when frescoes were just emerging, and painting on canvas was yet unknown.

In his study of Adriatic iconology associated with St. Clare, Fabio Bisogni gives examples of both altar paintings and frescoes. *The Dossale,* by Giuliano da Rimini, dated 1307, is held by the Isabela Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (fig. 2). From this touchstone of North-East Italian panel painting, Clare's depiction is a source for a later 1330 fresco, by Pietro da Rimini, painted for the Monastery of St. Clare, at Ravenna (Fig. 4). In this panel, St. Francis as *alter Christus*" (142) and St. Clare stand haloed, side by side. It is an image not often found, as they face posterity together in a high point of genderic art.

The element of humanism in art, like the budding lily that Clare holds, was now beginning to soften the lines and expressions in faces and folds. At about this time, Clare is depicted holding a book ("*il libro della regola,*" (fig. 18-9), a symbol that was slowly being added to the already standard iconology of the lily, the scapular, the corded Franciscan garb, and later the cross. Is the book Christ's Codex as held by the Redeemer in Eastern iconology? (Plate 35); or is it the Scriptures clutched so solemnly by St. Francis (Plate 16); or is the book Clare's own rule, by now approved, as indicated by the title? No matter, in later tradition she is rarely without the codex, yet oddly her mantle becomes striped in an increasingly Adriatic pattern (Fig. 36-7).

As in thirteenth-century transitional Italian art, Clare's writings show transitional religious influences from the mystery of the East and Latin orthodoxy of the West. The West continued to struggle for primacy. One of Clare's favorite metaphors found ties to Rome and St. Peter. It was to "hold fast to the footprints of Him to Whom you have merited to be joined as a Spouse" — *eius adhaesisti vestigiis cuius meruisti connubio copulari.*" The metaphor probably had its foundation in the Petrine verse: "For unto this you are called because Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps" (1 Pet 2;21). The conceptual metaphor suggests a theological triptych as its three panels combine from the Augustine doctrine of *repraesentatio vestigii* and *repraesentatio imaginis* (Klubertanz 50) from Cistercian nuptial imagery, to be discussed later, and from the concept of *imitatio Christi* found in the Apocryphal Gospel of St. Peter, and as explained in Bynum's *Holy Feast Holy Fast* (319).

Emphasis on the Petrine verse may reflect Rome's long-standing conflict with the Byzantine East, and Clare's effort to conform to papal literary usage. (The same passage was used by two popes, Innocent III and Gregory IX, in their Prefaces to Clare's rule, *Écrits* 120, 196, 200). There was a

great thrust for affirming St. Peter as the founder of the Roman See, the new Jerusalem. As far back as 202, Irenaeus the Bishop of Lyons divided the Sees of Christendom and attributed the foundation of Rome to Sts. Peter and Paul, of Alexandria to St. Mark, and of Antioch to St. Peter. Ever after, the question of primacy between East and West was never completely settled and the controversy erupted again in the early thirteenth-century when the Latin Crusaders outraged the Greeks at Constantinople. Once again, the Roman Primacy was rejected by the East, and there was an additional issue of heresy rampant in the West, one which included Catharsism, or dualism. Western theologians, in their writings, were anxious to demonstrate their Latin orthodox theology (Dvornik 41; 167). Consequently, Clare uses this Petrine metaphor of "Christ's footsteps" fifteen times in her work, perhaps in an attempt to stay within the contested borderlines of Western doctrine, since Franciscan doctrine had strong windy echoes from the Desert Hermits of the East. In fact not too long after Clare's death, Dante would place Assisi at the gate of the East:

> ... therefore let none who speak
> Of the place, say Ascesi; for its name
> Were lamely so deliver'd; but the East,
> To call things rightly, be it henceforth styled.
>
> Dante, *Paradiso,* xi. (Duff-Gordon)

In a later visual-art period, the [pseudo-]Giotto (c. 1267-1337) fresco from the "Legend of St. Francis" in the Upper Basilica at Assisi depicts Clare and her Poor Ladies in an emotional, humanistic state as they mourn St. Francis' stigmatized body; yet the Byzantine-Islamic patterns remain on the bier-mantle and the church facade. "The Grief of the Poor Clares," attributed to Giotto, portrays the friars in procession with the body of St. Francis as they halt at the convent-church of San Damiano, so that Clare and her Sisters might more fully gaze upon the cross-like stigmata. In this fresco, Clare is dressed in a grey-brown habit with a dark blue-black veil covering an underlying white one (*Assisi* 75.23).

Simone Martini, in 1317 during the blossoming Italian renaissance, painted a loving, contemplative Clare in beautiful freso. His vibrant blue-green background is a foil for Clare's radiant gold nimbus. She again wears a white veil overlaid with a darker blue veil of penance, a pale brown Franciscan robe and cord, a grey-green cape, and scant sandals indicating poverty. She holds in her right hand the white lily of purity, with three blossoms and three promising buds. She looks at an accompanying Saint Francis as they rest under an ivory gothic arch near the St. Martin of Tours Chapel in the Lower St. Francis Basilica at Assisi (*Assisi* 23).

Perhaps this representation is the most significant of all, since Clare

holds the iconic lily, the symbol of both the Virgin Mary and Christ himself (Cant 2:1), and now the symbol for Clare, the "little plant of St. Francis" who planted and propagated his ideals. The lily plant self-generates in five asexual ways: by bulbils on the stem, by seeds from its flower, by scales from the bulb, by offshoots of the bulb, and by the bulb itself. The bulb is edible, giving sustenance in itself. The lily is closely identified with Mary in purity and Christ in poverty: "I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys" (Cant 2:1). This particular verse was elemental to God's protective promise to Franciscans who denied wordly wealth.

Bynum notes that Clare "tended to ignore the female model [Mary] to discuss instead the Imitation of Christ" (*Gender* 259). Again, as Bynum points out, St. Clare was also associated with Christ-like feeding in her miraculous multiplication of bread and oil, and in a lactation miracle recounted in testimony during the processes for her canonization in 1255 (*HFHF* 101). The lily as a symbol of humility was an identity for Clare; she was obstinate in refusing, for a long while, the title of Abbess, and she often washed the feet of her sisters (Vauchez 324).

In other representations of the period, Clare holds both the lily and the book. The lily is an enigmatic symbol for the saint as a generative virgin, known for the fruits of her miracles and conversions; it also suggests a redeeming, nurturing Christ. Once in her own writings, Clare refers to God as neuter and Jesus as feminine (*Écrits* 103, n. 4; 113, n. 5). She herself was referred to as feminine in sex, but masculine in virtue (S 2). Bynum advises that such a Cistercian attitude of cross-gendering (like Clare's inversion of it) should not be seen as isolated or stereotyped but rather as a reflection of the masculinity or femininity of the individual him/herself (*Jesus* 167-8). Androgeny held no stigma. ☐

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Book Reviews

Francis of Assisi: The Way of Poverty and Humility. By William R. Cook, Vol. 8 in "The Way of the Christian Mystics," Michael Glazier, 1935 West Fourth Street, Wilmington, Delaware 19805. 1989. Pp. 135. No price given.

Reviewed by April Oursler Armstrong, SFO, Ph.D. (Fordham), author, retired Assoc. Prof. Theology, Sacred Heart University, CT.

Many Post-Vatican II people who "love St. Francis" do prefer not to mention the Stigmata. They are more at ease with Francis' animals and birds, his work for peace, and his personal liberation into Lady Poverty. Yet, as we strive for true ministry as we daily move on to the third millenium, we know the major Franciscan crux in Francis' love of the Crucified One. William R. Cook knew as Bonaventure knew and correctly magnified the fact that "stigmatization is both the fruit of contemplation and the authentication of ministry."

Cook's last three chapters in this book show the modern need for "Action and Contemplation," "The Christmas Crib of Greccio" and "The Stigmatization of Saint Francis." Opening the little book I instantly noticed Cook's special akcnowledgment: "Professor Ewert Cousins of Fordham University, one of the leading scholars of Franciscan spirituality, has been mentor and resource." (Cousins was my mentor and friend in Fordham years ago.) With Cook professor of medieval history in SUNY, obviously I knew him to be steeped in both Francis and scholarship.

Those last three chapters are particularly good indeed. But in the early chapters the book seemed to be balking, even disorganized. I sense a little confusion, perhaps a play of cross purposes, between the writer and the editor, Noel O'Donoghue, ODC. The editor, in his own Preface, says that until "quite recently mystics were either misunderstood or simply not understood" since mystics were presented either as "models of perfection or monuments of orthodoxy," and "joyless and ascetical." When did the word *orthodoxy* become a bad word? Having for years been joyfully teaching the history of Catholic mystics, this editor made me nervous. Perhaps it made Cook nervous too?

Chapter 1, on "Overview in the life of ——" gives the birth-to-death plus some of the growth of the order. In Chapter 2, "The Conversion of ——", goes more deeply into the "spendthrift" and the rich merchant father Pietro Bernadone, and the Bishop. Then, in one line, Cook adds the fact that Pietro apparently had *two* other sons, perhaps sons of lady Pica. And then he says, in the early years, Francis, in real conversion, practiced extreme acts of asceticism. He tried to answer the problem the editor had in mind.

In such a small book it might have been easier to explain that there were *two* great founders, who knew each other well, Francis and Dominic, similar in Love of God yet quite different in spirit. But, both used corporal pain for a reason. In the 3rd century, when most Christians no longer suffered as real martyrs, they did soon see the need physically to discipline their own minds and bodies for God. The beginning

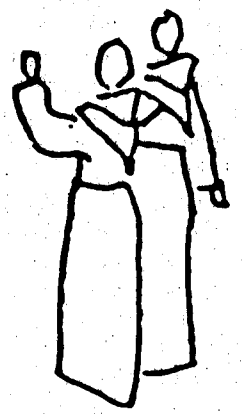
founders, like gentle Benedict, saw the reason for physical asceticism; Columban's rule was much harder. But when Francis and Dominic were to start their orders such ideas were quite normal after 1000 years. It was not bizarre in a world where peasants had their hands or arms cut off for stealing a bit of bread.

Chapter 3, with "—— and the Physical World" is excellent, giving a non-sticky truer version of what Francis really thought about God and creatures. Yet, in the chapter on "Books and Learning," I wondered. Cook did not mention theologian Anthony of Padua, knowing the Pope chose him rather than a Dominican to be the major preacher. Cook mentioned much on the Dominicans but mentioned none of the major saints except Francis. And I wondered why Cook the medieval historian did not slip in the "Books" ahead, of Dante, or Chaucer who made such famous digs on the English friars.

But, as I said, in Chapter 5 Cook was alive and vibrant on "The Active Contemplative." He sees that some Franciscans can make a common mistake by placing active ministry over the contemplative life. Cook shows us that in the 20th and 21st century it is necessary to spend two or three hours a day in contemplative life — in private and liturgical prayer, and also in silence. Naturally Cook uses a Mother Teresa or a Father Bruce Ritter.

In the 6th chapter Cook explains the uniquely unconscious gift given by the spirit not only to Francis but to many friars, sisters and SFO's — the quite natural theatrical use of Scripture. He hones in on the childlike wonder of Greccio. It is well done! And in Chapter 7 Cook makes it gloriously clear that the work of Francis the prayer, actor, singer and poet could never bring forth the stigmata. Only God was experiencing what he wanted most, to share Christ's life, which includes his suffering."

Valuable also is Cook's bibliography, with simple one-sentence sketches of everything from biographers on to periodicals.



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The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

ARTICLES

FRANCIS AS TROUBADOUR 295
Martha Rampton

PREPARING THE WAY OF THE LORD. AN ADVENT SERMON OF ST. BONAVENTURE 304
Gregory Shanahan, O.F.M.

FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS CHRIST: SAMENESS AND DIFFERENCE IN FRANCIS AND CLARE 312

FEATURES

REFLECTION: "WHEN GOD CLOSES A DOOR HE OPENS A WINDOW" 289
Hermann Schalück, O.F.M.

Volume 40, No. 10

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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

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Reflection:

On How Some Friars of the West Meditated on the Wisdom of a Proverb from the Far East Which Says: *"When God Closes a Door He Opens a Window"* (China)

HERMANN SCHALÜCK, O.F.M.

"How happy I feel to be able to salute friends coming from so far!"

Towards the end of the second last decade of the second Christian millenium, when everybody spoke of the "Evangelization of Cultures," behold, some looked out from the center — which is in Rome — to recall the discovery of the West Indies by Christopher Columbus, an event to be solemnly celebrated in the year 1992. Others, on the contrary, particularly brothers and sisters from Africa, Asia and the Americas who, in these latter countries had discovered European missionaries in their countries and had endeavored to enter into "intercultural dialogue" with them, looked rather towards the periphery — for them, towards Europe. They began to ask both themselves and the Europeans whether that continent, having now attained partial unification at the political and economic levels, might not finally discover its deeper spiritual and cultural roots. Others, finally, animated by a no less holy zeal, were conscious of the fact that the year 1994 would mark the celebration of seventh centenary of the arrival of the Friar Minor John of Monte Corvino in distant Peking, where shortly aftertwards he was appointed patriarch "in toto dominio Tartarorum." These friars withdrew their attention for a moment from the

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The Cord *is privileged again to share with its readers a reflection of Fr. Hermann Schalück. We are grateful to him for the insights he gives us coming from his remarkable experiences as a member of the General Administration of the Order of Friars Minor.*

"Curia" which is in Rome, in order to direct it instead towards the East, towards the mysterious Celestial Empire, in an effort to understand better, with the grace of God, what the inhabitants, Christian or otherwise, of that vast country might not be able to say even now to their brothers and sisters in the rest of the world. The doors and seaports of that country had for long remained closed. In recent years, however, the words of that great wise man, Confucius had begun to come alive. Two thousand years ago he had sung: "How happy I feel to be able to salute friends coming from so far!"

Three friars of the Province of Saxony in Germany had heard the words of this most friendly salutation from the very lips of other friars now living in China. And the names of those who had undertaken the journey to the East in the month of May in the year of the Dragon were: Reinhard of Werl, Theobald of the Island of Hong Kong, a man who had already proclaimed the Gospel in China before the great revolution, and a certain Transalpinus who for some time now had been residing at Rome.

It was during the novena of Pentecost, the time at which the Roman church prays incessantly for the coming and help of the spirit, that the three pilgrims crossed the Pearl River to enter Canton. From there they made hurried visits by land, sea and even on the wings of Brother Wind to the great cities of Xi-an, Peking, Tsi-nan and Shangai. Meanwhile they asked themselves what the Lord in his mercy might deign to help them discover for the benefit of their own conversion. Always and everywhere the visitors manifested towards those brothers and sisters of the broad smiles who rushed to meet them on their bicycles the desire of Francis: "The Lord give you his peace!" Day and night they endeavoured to capture the meaning of those words welling up from the inexhaustible fount of oriental wisdom, words they had read before their journey: "To understand the people you meet, you must concentrate much more on what they do not say and on what they are perhaps not able to say."

Whenever they entered a house or met with people, — events which were like genuine gifts to them, they thought of the proverbs of Lao Tse:

> "Whoever is able to see that which is little is a clairvoyant.
> Whoever is always gentle is truly strong."

Finally there occurred to them one of the rare words of the silent Buddha which they always recalled:

> "Patience is the best of all prayers."

So it happened that, having been spiritually fortified in a thousand ways and interiorly strengthened, they spent the whole Octave of Pentecost in the Celestial Empire. Nay more: By a rare working of grace they came to perceive with greater clarity than ever the wonders which the Spirit

of the Lord had accomplished during these latter years all over our sister and mother Earth.

"Be transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Rom 12,2)

In recent months, in various parts of the earth the call to a "new mode of thinking" had made itself heard: a call to hope, to singlemindedness, to the participation of all people in political systems and the various social structures. These transformations had their beginnings in the East, but they have also had their repercussions in the West. Others emphasized that the Apostle Paul had been the first to speak of such a renewal, so that this invitation was first of all directed towards the Church and to the preachers of the Gospel. Even in the City called holy and eternal there was increased awareness of the fact that people are more important than any system, more important even than the sabbath (cf. Mk 2).

In the Plaza of Celestial Peace, where they happened to be on the vigil of Pentecost, but also in other great squares and in the streets, the three friars had the experience of meeting thousands of young people, men and women, who demanded that the leaders of the country adopt a "new mode of thinking." They asked the visitors where they had come from and what expectations or, rather, what "thinking" had impelled them to come from the periphery towards them, towards the Celestial Empire. The three Saxons spoke to them of their country of origin, of their father and brother Francis, and of the meaning of the salutation of peace. They also gave witness, when they were asked (cf. Reg NB 16), of the hope which animated them (cf. 1 Pt 34,15). They told them how Brother Francis would salute others as brothers and sisters, no matter what the colour of their face, the form of their eye or nose; also how for the Apostle Paul it was not important whether one were a Jew or a Christian, a European or an Asiatic, a Chinese or a Saxon of Westphalia. For all, because of the Lord Jesus, were in the embrace of God's love and were called to enter his Kingdom of Peace and Justice. Some of the natives with whom they had had longer conversations left them these words of Tao as a departing message:

> Heaven and earth are united
> And refreshing rain falls
> On the good and the wicked.

"Surely words like these," so remarked the three travellers from the west, "allow us to discover traces of the Kingdom of God and of the incarnation of his Gospel where no one might have expected it." They also asked: "Would not a dialogue of religions and of cultures be necessary for the greater good of all and for the building of a world of peace and

justice?" Yet again the friars asked themselves to what point the "new thinking" had been absorbed by the leaders and those weilding power in that country. A young woman gave them an answer by quoting Confucius:

> Do you wish to know whether a country is well governed?
> Pay great attention to the music
> which evolves in that country.

And with a smile she continued:

> Do you think that music is nothing more than
> the beating of drums and the sound of bells?

Amazed at the profoundity and the appositeness of these observations, the three friars were dumbfounded while they recalled their own country and their cities of origin.

When they began to speak of non-violence and the building up of peace on the model of the Gospel, an old man who had alighted from his bicycle quoted Tao:

> Meekness overcomes force and violence.
> We must leave the fish in the deep waters.
> Offensive arms of the State should remain
> Where nobody can see them.

The three companions had nothing more to add.

Some days later, when they already had returned to Europe and with no little consternation heard the news that men in power had resorted to using arms against their own sons and daughters in the Plaza of Celestial Peace, they remembered those words which they had exchanged with their hosts in that same plaza. Their prayer then became twice as insistent, asking that as soon as possible peace and justice might again embrace (cf Ps. 85, 11) in that country. For:

> Nothing is more gentle than water;
> But nothing is stronger than water to wear down hardness.
> The defeat of today is a step on the way
> to the victory of tomorrow.

And the three, always more eager for the wisdom of the Orient, gave thanks to the Lord for this consolation.

When the sun goes down in the West, it rises in the East

In the great city of Tsi-nan, capital of the province of Shantung — where long ago friars from Germany, following the missionary example of their fellow friar, John of Piano del Carpine (+1252), former Custos

of Saxony and Minister Provincial of Cologne — the three stayed on for a longer period so as to meet the bishops, priests and their brothers and sisters in the faith. They heard them speak of the "great period of trial" (Apoc 7,14), of all kinds of persecutions and tribulations, of the many dangers that the Church had suffered in Asia (cf 2 Cor 1, 8-11) even to this day. However, they also heard them speak even more about their perseverence and their fidelity. Recently the obstacles had become less and several churches had been opened again. And the people who were walking in darkness began to see a great light (Is 9,1).

In the cities and towns of Shantung, where the missionaries from distant Germany had scattered the seed of the Gospel, and which these friars could now visit, the young and the old combined approached them and told them with tears in their eyes how they had withstood these trials and how they had endeavoured to construct a Church after a new model, one built "of living stones" (1 Pt 2); a church, which according to the recent Ecumenical Council and with the approbation of the Lord Pope would be at the same time Chinese and Universal, Roman and Catholic, giving and receiving, evangelizing itself and among sister Churches in other cultures.

With exceeding great joy the three companions saw that there was only one Gospel, only one Church in the name of the Lord Jesus. They exhorted all to constantly preserve this unity while they decided to pray more insistently to the Lord of history that the penetration of this "new thinking" should make itself felt everywhere, including Rome, and that the Lord Pope would soon be able to honour the Celestial Empire with one of his numerous visits. Furthermore they decided, as a preparation for that visit, to call the attention of the Roman Curia to a saying of that most catholic man, Matthew Ricci (1552-1610), a member of the Society of Jesus which for long competed with the Friars Minor in the evangelization of China: "We can hope that many of their ancestors have been saved because they obeyed the natural law and God, in his great goodness, came to their aid.

Since the friars were ignorant of the Yin and the Yang and were rather tied up in their neo-scholastic mode of thinking, a mode that was exclusive rather than inclusive, abstract rather than concrete, and since they yet had no idea of what message the Church and culture of China could bring to mankind and the Universal Church, they once more opened Tao and read:

> An image speaks more than a thousand words:
> When the sun goes down in the West, it rises in the East.

When they asked a theologian of the country the meaning of the word "inculturation," he told them this parable:

Some students held a lively discussion
on this proverb of Lao Tse:
"He who speaks does not know; he who knows does not speak."
When the master came they asked what the meaning might be.
"Which of you knows the perfume of the rose?"
When they all said they knew, then the master anew:
"Describe that perfume in words for me."
They all closed their lips silently.

The YIN and the YANG

Having come to the end of their journey the three pilgrims took part in a festive meal in the house of the bishop in the company of other guests. At this meal the artistic presentation and order of the plates resembled the temple which is to be found in the "Forbidden City" and bears the name of "Celestial Harmony". In its reconciliation of contraries this temple is an image of the harmony full of tension and the tension full of harmony which seems to be diffused in and impregnate the whole culture of the country. It was served a sumptuous meal in which alternated:

Softness and hardness, sweetness and bitterness;
fluidity and solidity, the brackish and the piquant;
the flesh of animals and the flesh of birds;
the serpent and the dove, the frog and the fish;
the raw and the cooked, the boiled and the roasted;
the animal and the vegetable, the hot and the cold.

All this wonderful individuality and this universal complementarity had remained hidden from the three travellers until that day or had appeared to them worthy of detestation, because according to their occidental way of thinking these contradictions had appeared irreconcilable.

Strengthened in body and soul, enriched in an unforseen manner with new experiences of faith, the three friars returned to their country of origin consoled in the very depths of their being by this fourfold conviction: (1) The seed of the Gospel and of the Kingdom of God produces varied fruits in a multiplicity of ways; (2) the Lord of History is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, but the world in which his Kingdom is to come is rich in diversity; (3) there is a time for sowing and a time for reaping; a time for weeping and a time for laughter; (4) where God closes a door he opens a window.

And the pilgrims said to one another that perhaps the moment had come in which the Friars Minor of different countries, all those who had once been expelled from China in sorrow and tears, could enter the country once again by a "window", now in a state of deeper purification and of more profound conversion to the Gospel of the Lord of History.

In praise of Christ. Amen. □

Francis as Troubadour

MARTHA RAMPTON

The images and associations conjured up by the name St. Francis of Assisi are amazingly varied. By Thomas of Celano alone Francis is characterized by images as diverse as John the Baptist: Herald of Christ, to God's fool. Certainly one of the characteristics of Francis which emerges clearly and colorfully form the lives and legends of the saint is the motif of the troubadour — Francis the poet, the minstral and the ardent lover of Lady Poverty. The troubadour theme, in fact, runs so strongly throughout the early biographies and assorted tales about Francis that one would expect to see the theme picked up and developed in the art which relied on these tales and legends for subject matter. However, obvious association of Francis with the troubadour or courtly tradition is missing in the visual tradition for nearly seventy-five years after the saint's death. In this paper I will examine the troubadour images as found in selected literature by and about St. Francis before the writing of the *Legenda maior*. Secondly, I will discuss the Franciscan art of the thirteenth century and demonstrate that there is, in fact, a real silence concerning this important element of the saint's persona.

A troubadour is traditionally defined as a wandering singer or minstrel who composed songs and poems in the vernacular languages, generally Provençal. These poems and songs deal chiefly with themes of courtly love. However, when I define Francis as a troubadour, I wish to imply much more than that he was a composer of love poems. Rather by use of the term I wish to link Francis to the courtly and chivalric atmosphere prevalent in much of Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In other words, in addition to the narrow definition of troubadour, I wish to imply (1) a chivalric character, displaying the qualities ideally expected

Martha Rampton is currently a doctoral student in medieval history at the University of Virginia. She acquired her MA in medieval history from the University of Utah. Ms. Rampton was the recipient of a National Endowment for the Humanities grant in 1988 whereby she studied St. Francis for six weeks in Siena and Assisi, Italy. She also received a Fulbright Fellowship in 1989 for study in Egypt. This paper was read at the Kalamazoo Medieval Conference in 1989

of a knight, including courage, *largesse* and courtesy, (2) fascination with the *chansons de geste* and the types of heroes who people them such as Charlemagne, King Arthur, and Alexander the Great, and (3) an interest in romantic or courtly love as a theme in literature and a motivating principle for heroic deeds or the heroic quest. In most of the early Franciscan literature one or more of the elements of the troubadour are evident. Francis is a knight for Christ, a troubadour of the gospel and a lover of his lady, Poverty.[1]

The authorship of the *Sacrum Commercium* is uncertain. It has been attributed to many authors, among them are John of Parma, Anthony of Padua, and Crescentius of Jesi. Placid Hermann makes a convincing argument that the work may be from the pen of Thomas of Celano.[2] At any rate, this charming allegory of the marriage of St. Francis to Lady Poverty was certainly known by the early biographers of Francis.[3]

Of all the early Franciscan works, the *Sacrum Commercium* is the most obviously courtly. It is written as a poem, although in prose style.[4] In the work are evident several of the cliches and techniques of the romance genre. For instance this work resembles the initial portion of *the Romance of the Rose* in that it is an allegory wherein many of the principle characters are personifications of virtues. Secondly, a typical element of many romances is the *domina* theme wherein the lady being pursued is married.[5] Such is the case in the *Sacrum Commercium*. Lady Poverty is already the espoused of Christ. A third important romance motif, the forced seclusion of the lady, is found in the *Sacrum Commercium*. Lady Poverty is isolated almost inaccessibly on a mountain top.[6] (SC 10-13).

The medieval theoreticians of the art of love divided the experience into steps or stages.[6] The progress of love was often perceived to unfold in four stages.[7] The initial step involves hesitating because the lover is unable to express his love, whether from a lack of courage or because of an obstacle exterior to himself. Second is the "pleading" stage wherein the lover does declare his passion. The third stage involves the lady's "hearing" and deliberations — she hesitates, considers, and finally, in the fourth stage, the *druerie* or "service," the lady accepts the courter's suit and rewards him by allowing him to serve her. This is the pattern which the *Sacrum Commercium* follows. Initially, Francis is unable to declare his love and devotion to Lady Poverty because he cannot find her. When this obstacle is overcome, when he locates her atop a precarious mountain, he declares himself. Lady Poverty is hesitant. She has been loved and abandoned before by those who professed to follow in the footsteps of the Lord. Finally, however, Francis is able to convince his lady of his ardent and unflagging devotion. Lady Poverty takes mercy on Francis and his brothers. She "ran and embraced them all, giving to each the kiss of peace saying: 'Behold, I come quickly.' "[9] (SC 58) This spouse

of Christ accompanies the friars to their domicile, the great outdoors, and takes a meal of water and barley crusts after which she retires, served by her new devotees who bring her a stone for her pillow.[10] (SC 63)

The literary works which were the most important source for artistic representations of Francis in the middle thirteenth century were the lives by Thomas of Celano. These lives collectively constituted the official biography of the saint and were the authoritative source of information regarding the life of Francis. The troubadour theme runs as a consistently discernable thread throughout the lives. The motif is at work in three ways: Francis as the noble knight in quest of deeds, Francis as the poet and wandering minstrel, Francis as the lover of lady Poverty and devotee of the Virgin Mary.

Celano was fond of analogizing the life of Francis by comparing him to well known and colorful characters, often biblical personalities. The author often saw in Francis a modern day John the Baptist or Elijah. When the saint was hiding from his father in the church of St. Damiano, he was compared to Daniel. (1 Cel 10) Both the Old Testament prophet and Francis emerged triumphant from the pit. However, Celano not only utilized biblical characters to describe the behavior of Francis, he also saw in him the traits of a troubadour, but a troubadour for Christ.

One of the first courtly images Celano gives us of Francis is as a knight in search of *gestes*. This young man from Assisi "looked forward to accomplishing great deeds of wordly glory and vanity." (1 Cel 4) Very soon Francis and the reader discover that the battles Francis will fight will be of a spiritual nature. But even after Francis dreams of the house full of arms and learns the true interpretation of that dream, Celano continues frequently throughout both lives to refer to him as a knight and soldier. (1 Cel 9, 11; 2 Cel II and passim) — "the most valiant knight of Christ." (1 Cel 36) The saint is still very much characterized in chivalric terms. He displays the important courtly qualities of loyalty, *largesse*, courtesy, and "nobility of soul."[8] Francis proved to be the better knight than the nobleman of Assisi who was preparing to go to Apulia. "He was inferior to him in nobility of birth, but superior in generosity, poorer in the matter of wealth, but more lavish in giving things away." (1 Cel 4)

An important aspect of the knight of both the *chansons de geste* and the romance is that he quests, seeks deeds in order to prove himself. In the *chansons de geste* the knight is generally proving himself to his Lord. In the romance the knight pursues *gestes* for his lady. Francis is also questing. After stripping himself before the bishop of Assisi, Francis goes through the woods in search of deeds which will prove his loyalty to his new lord. He is cast into the snow by robbers, works as a scullion and is evicted from a cloister, but valiantly passes all these tests. (1 Cel 16) In chapter ninety-three of Celano I the author appears to be specifically

using the questing motif when he says of Francis "... through many tribulations, many trials and many struggles... the very strong soldier of the Lord was not disturbed by the struggles at hand."

Celano also developed the troubadour theme in the lives by frequent references to Francis as a poet and wandering minstral. Celano early connects the saint to the troubadour culture of Provence when he mentions that Pietro de Bernardone was inspired to call his son 'Frenchman' after a journey to France. Francis himself sang and preached in the troubadour language of Provençal when he was especially inspired. (2 Cel VIII, 13) He composed a poem, *Canticle of the Creatures*, in the vernacular language of Umbria and put his composition to music. Francis not only played the part of the troubadour, but he was a *jongleur* as well. "Many times as he went along the way meditating on and singing of Jesus, he would forget his journey and invite all elements to praise Jesus." (1 Cel 115) An even stronger allusion to Francis as a *jongleur* is found in chapter 127 of the *Second Life*.

> When the sweetest melody of spirit would bubble up in him, he would give exterior expression to it in French, and the breath of the divine whisper which his ear perceived in secret would burst forth in French in a song of joy. At times... he would pick up a stick from the ground and putting it over his left arm, would draw across it, as across a violin, a little bow bent by means of a string, and going through the motions of playing, he would sing in French about his lord. (2 Cel XC, 127).

When going before Pope Honorius, words failed Francis so he expressed himself through a type of spontaneous song and dance. (1 Cel 73)

Francis as the courtly lover is a third aspect of the troubadour, in the broad sense in which I have defined the word, which is developed in Celano's biographies. Although not universally accepted, many historians interpret this period's deep devotion to the Virgin Mary as a precursor of the love motif in courtly literature.[9] The Francis of Celano's lives was clearly a devotee of the Virgin. He "burned with devotion toward the mother of all good" (1 Cel 21) and especially cherished the Portiuncula because of its connection to Mary. (2 Cel XII, 19) Time and again throughout the two lives Celano speaks of Francis praying to and praising the Virgin Mother. "Towards the mother of Jesus he was filled with an inexpressible 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." (2 Cel CL, 198).

In addition to Marian veneration, the courtly love theme is succinctly developed in reference to Francis and his Lady Poverty. Throughout the narratives Celano refers to Francis and his relationship with Lady Poverty with whom he "kept faith... to the end. (2 Cel XXV, 55) From Celano II

we learn, "He sought to espouse it (poverty) in perpetual charity... After he had become a lover of her beauty, he not only left his father and mother, but put aside all things, that he might cling to her more closely as his spouse." (2 Cel XXV, 55)

What of the writings of the saint himself? How does he paint himself vis-á-vis the troubadour? There are three reasons that these questions have qualified significance to the problem I have posed. Firstly, the writings of Francis were not generally directly known by the artists who represented him.[10] Secondly, Francis, who was not adept at Latin, usually transcribed his words to others, often Brother Leo, and it is questionable in some cases, how faithful to the author's style the scribe remained.[11]

Celano was not simply inventing a persona when he assigned to Francis elements of the troubadour.—

Also, official documents have been judged by most modern scholars to have been tampered with or at the least, to be the products of the will of others, in the case of the Rule of 1223, Cardinal Ugolino.[12] Thirdly, we do not have from Francis an autobiography in any sense of the word. Most of his writings date from the last five or six years of his life and are exhortations to the friars, written under stressful circumstances, shorn of that which was non-essential to the health of the order. Nevertheless, it is important to review the writings of Francis because they provided source material for his biographers. It is interesting to determine whether the courtly connotations evident in Celano's works are his own literary concepts or his faithful reading of the primary sources.

The reverence for the Virgin is evident in Francis' works. In the Rule of 1221 Francis lauds Mary because she "lived on alms," (Reg NB 9) and he begs blessing from her. In his *Letter to the Faithful* Francis speaks of the Madonna, but not strictly in courtly terms. In this *Letter to the Faithful* and the *Letter to the General Chapter* the Virgin is praised more because she bore the Christ child than because of any innate qualities she has as a courtly or regal figure. Mary is an important element of the *Office of the Passion* composed, or more correctly compiled, by Francis. The antiphon glorifies Mary in the following terms: "Holy Virgin Mary, among all the women of the world there is none like you... you are the spouse of the Holy Spirit... Pray for us." (OffPass) Again, it is not clear that Mary is here in any indisputable sense a courtly figure. However in *Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, a poetic piece which is often appended to

the *Praises* which was recited at every hour of the day and night before the *Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary,* the Virgin is very specifically characterized as an object of devotion in and of herself, addressed by the courtly appelations, Lady and Queen. She is seen as a dispenser of favors, a source of "grace" and "good." (Sal BVM) Inasmuch as Marian veneration is an element of the courtly and troubadour tradition, it can be concluded that the troubadour tradition is explicit in the writings of Francis himself.

A second indication from the writings of Francis that he was conversant with the troubadour culture is evidenced in his medium of expression: in other words, his use of poetry and song and the style of his poetic works. Poetry is the form used by the saint when he wrote spontaneously.[13] According to Celano, *Praises of God* was written for Brother Leo at Mount La Verna when Leo "longed with a great desire to have something encouraging from the words of the Lord noted down." Francis complying responded "I want to write down the words of the Lord and his praises which I have meditated upon in my heart." (2 Cel XX, 49) Other poems written by Francis are *The Canticle of Brother Sun, The Praises of the Virtues,* the *Salutation of the Blessed Virgin* mentioned above, and a song of praise to God called *The Praises Before the Office*. Although the use of poetry and song as a vehicle of praise is not unique to the troubadour tradition,[14] given Francis' cultural and educational backgorund, it is likely that his poetic mode of expression was learned from secular sources.[15]

The Canticle of Brother Sun is the most famous product of Francis' poetic nature. The "hymn"[16] has many characteristics in common with Provençal literature. It is written in the broad rhythms of the Umbrian dialect and is thought to be the oldest extant poem in any modern language.[17] The work was also put to music, music of Francis' own composition. The saint encouraged the friars to sing the *Canticle* while out preaching. The subject of the work is typical of one type of troubadour theme. Another element of the poem which closely links it to the troubadour tradition is the veneration of the natural order, the lingering adoration of the physical world.[18] The wind is "fair and stormy;" the water "precious and pure," the sun "radiant in all his splendour." (Cant Sol) The *Canticle* is not a love poem as such, but it is a poem of love.

In the writings of Francis perhaps the dominant message is an appeal to poverty, an exhortation to his brothers to eschew private or even communal possessions. In *the Praises of the Virtues* Francis personifies poverty, and many of the other virtues. The poem begins, "Hail, Queen Wisdom! The Lord save you,/ with your sister, pure, holy Simplicity./ Lady Holy Poverty, God keep you." (Sal Virt). It is possible that this poem was the source of the *Sacrum Commercium* written shortly after the death of the saint. This is the only reference made to poverty in the writings known to be by Francis, with clear courtly connotations.[19]

The evidence outlined above does indicate that Celano was not simply inventing a persona when he assigned to Francis elements of the troubadour. From the saint's own words we get a sense that he was not uncomfortable with the message and mode of expression of the secular culture of the thriteenth century.

Having established that the troubadour motif is pervasive in the early Franciscan literature, I come to the question posed above: why is this theme ignored in the art which relied upon these sources for material? It is not surprising that the artists of the visual representation of the Franciscan tradition who worked from the *Legenda maior* as a source should neglect images of Francis as a sort of troubadour. Bonaventure himself omitted from his work most of the frivolous or quasi-secular interpretations of the saint's character which are present in the work of Celano.[20] But even before the decrees of Narbonne and the Parisian Chapter of 1266, Francis — the troubadour is not translated into the visual tradition.

The most significant early or 'pre-Bonaventure' artistic representations of the saint are, among others, a portrait from the Sacro Speco of Subiaco, the Pescia dossal, the *paliotto* which hung over the door of the sacristy of the lower church in Assisi, the Bardi dossal, the Pistoia dossal, the Pisa dossal, and the Orte dossal.

In none of these works have the artists represented the troubadour aspect of the saint which is developed in the literature. In all cases scenes of healing, posthumous miracles, the reception of the stigmata and the saint receiving official sanction from the Church predominate. The non-narrative representations of Francis in the works listed above are austere and aescetic, portrayed in a Byzantine style. We do not get any sense of the joyous, free-booting *jongleur* who proclaimed that only hypocrites appear sad and hungry and tormented.[21]

The only scene which is in any remote sense related to the troubadour motif is St. Francis preaching to the birds, which appears in two of the works mentioned above. The argument could be made that the integrity assigned to the created order implicit in this popular legend is characteristic of the celebration of the natural world found in troubadour poetry. However, I would interpret the scenes of Francis preaching to the birds as intending less to portray Francis as a lover of the physical world than to underscore the apostolic preaching nature of the Franciscan mission. In the Bard dossal the preaching to the birds is juxtaposed and paralleled to the scene of Francis preaching to the Sultan. In the dossal from Pistoia the preaching to the birds is omitted and a scene of Francis preaching in Pistoia is substituted.

In any search for early Franciscan artistic images which incorporate the troubadour theme I did discover in the Pinacoteca in Siena a small panel

by Duccio dating from the last half of the thirteenth century. This work portrays the Virgin and three Franciscans very much in courtly terms: the composition is curvilinear, the figure of the Madona is S-curved, her gown is soft, flowing and gilded. The scene is decorated with delicate geometric designs and elegantly rippling ribbons. The tone of the piece is aristocratic and representative of the French International style. Three Franciscans, very small in scale compared to the Virgin, are posed in feudal gestures of supplication at her feet. In view of this panel, I would not make the argument that there are categorically no courtly Franciscan images before the decree of 1266, but such representations as may exist are few in number and not well known.

The reason that the troubadour motif was ignored by the early artists of the Franciscan legends is a matter of speculation. There are numerous possibilities for this omission. The scope of this paper does not allow me to do more than suggest a few of them. Briefly stated, during the period when the first Franciscan art was produced the fledgling order was in trouble. Several conflicts were threatening the stability of the Friars Minor. Dating approximately from Francis' return from the Holy Land, acute tension was present in the order over certain strictures insisted upon by the saint. This tension mushroomed during the thirteenth century resulting in a rift among the brothers. In 1256 a controversy erupted at the University of Paris over the new mendicant orders.[22] In view of the tensions surrounding the Franciscans, it would not have been to their advantage to promote the eccentric, innovative and profane aspects of their founder's character. In a period when novelty was suspect, and Rome was already grappling with the eccentricities of the Albigensian heretics, the Franciscans had made some rather novel claims, for example, that their founder carried the "seal of the living God," the stigmata.

In conclusion, I speculate that the early artistic tradition avoided portraying Francis as a religious troubadour because this sort of image was inconsistent with the goals of the early order. The Franciscans, or at least the dominant party of Franciscans, were interested in the growth of the order. The art sought to legitimize or standardize Francis, to connect him to established religious tradition. Francis' mode of life was to be seen as not new but a renewal of primitive Christian life. Many of the troubadour or courtly literary images of the saint, the carefree vagabond fiddling with sticks, for instance, did not present a posture which would have associated Francis, founder of a great religious order, with the aescetic/monastic tradition.

Endnotes

[1]The scope of this paper is from the death of Francis to 1266 when the *Legenda maior* became the official biogrpahy of the Franciscan legend.

[2]Martion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi — Writings and Early Biographies; English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis*, trans. with introduction by Placid Hermann (Chicago, 1983), 1535 - 39.

[3]*Ibid.*, 1534,

[4]*Ibid.*, 1544.

[5]*The Lais of Marie de France*, trans. with introduction and notes by Robert Hanning and Joan Ferrante (Durham, 1982),. 55-59.

[6]Andreas Capellanus, *The Art of Courtly Love*, trans. with introduction by John Jay Parry (New York, 1941), *passim*.

[7]*Medieval Culture and Society*, ed. with notes by David Herlihy (New York, 1968), 229.

[8]Maurice Keen, *Chivalry*, (New Haven, 1984), 2.

[9]Penny S. Gold, *The Lady and the Virgin: Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France* (Chicago, 1985), 77-81; Joan Mowat Erikson, *Saint Francis and His Four Ladies* (New York, 1970), 101-9; *Medieval Culture and Society*, 292.

[10]"The Writings of St. Francis," trans. Benen Fahy with introduction and notes by Placid Hermann, in *Omnibus*, 11.

[11]*Ibid.*, 18.

[12]*Ibid.*, 20; and J. R. H. Moorman, *The Sources for the Life of St. Francis of Assisi* (Manchester, 1940), 31.

[13]Johannes Jorgensen, *St. Francis of Assisi*, trans. T. O'Connor Sloane (New York, 1912), 279-89.

[14]Jean Leclercq, *Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France: Psycho-Historical Essays* (Oxford, 1979), *passim:* and Charles H. Haskings, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1927), *passim*.

[15]*Omnibus*, 17.

[16]*Mirror of Perfection*, trans. Leo Sherley-Price, in *Omnibus*, 100.

[17]*Ibid.*, 129; and Moorman, *The Sources for the Life of St. Francis of Assisi*, 17.

[18]This same emphasis on the natural world can be found in secular troubadour literature: *Medieval Culture and Society*, 229-34.

[19]There is another prayer atrributed to Francis, but the authorship is spurious: "O my dear Lord Jesus, have pity upon me and upon my Lady Poverty, for I am cnsumed with love for her, and can know no rest without her. Thou knowest all this, my Lord. Thou who didst till me with the love for her. But she sitteth in sadness, rejected of all; she the Mistress of Nations is become as a widow; the Queen of all virtues is become contemptible.": Erikson, *St. Francis and His Four Ladies*, 82.

[20]Alastair Smart, *The Assisi Problem and the Art of Giotto: A Study of the Legend of St. Francis in the Upper Church of San Francisco, Assisi* (New York, 1983), 4.

[21]*Legend of Perugia*, trans. Paul Oligny, in *Omnibus*, 97; and Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Woman* (Berkeley, 1987), 97.

[22]Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God; The Tree of Life; the Life of St. Francis*," trans. with introduction by Ewert Cousins (New York, 1978), 6.

Preparing the Way of the Lord

An Advent Sermon of St. Bonaventure

GREGORY SHANAHAN, O.F.M.

As is well known, Scripture constituted the warp and the woof of the medieval sermon and Bonaventure's sermons are fine examples of the application of all parts of the Bible to Christian life. Obviously the fruit of profound lectio divina, *his sermons can assist contemplation by means of the word of God or offer material for the formation of 'mantraic' prayer patterns; the cross-references provide a fairly wide biblical spectrum while the 'spiritual sense' often employed (sometimes 'moral' or again, broadly 'allegorical') is a form of interpretation recognized as particularly conducive to prayer. The sermon here translated and annoted is one of a selection revised by Bonaventure himself about 1267 and whose general* motif *is 'Christ the Center.' It was actually preached, however, perhaps in a slightly less developed form, at an earlier date. Several points seem to suggest that it was originally preached to friars, or at least to men.*

A particular sermon's theme, contained in the initial text chosen, had three elements, clauses or, as in this case, words (Parate/viam/Domino) *and the preacher treated of these in sequence. In this advent sermon, however, the order of treatment is changed:* Christ *(identified with 'the Lord') is preached on first; then the implications of the opening word,* Prepare, *are unfolded; and finally the middle word,* road, *is teased out for its spiritual significance, especially as to what* road *connotes in different parts of the Bible.*

This sermon for the Fourth Sunday of Advent happens to lay a heavy stress on the 'purgative way,' which for Bonaventure can never be fully relinquished this side of perfect union with God.[1] *The emphasis on the purging of sin is close to the theme of 'preparing the way,' if this is aligned with the image of a material roadway being cleansed of unsightly objects in anticipation of the transit of some personage. Preparation is conceived as 'clearing a passage' so that Christ may easily reach the soul to dwell in it as guest; so that the 'illuminative' way or stage is already in sight.*

The sermon has an introduction. This was a normal feature of the medieval sermon and another Scriptural text (protheme) was provided for this piece; its purpose being to invite the congregation to pray for the preacher and the fruitfulness of the sermon. Although short, these introductions with their prothemes are gems eliciting the richness of even a single line of Scripture and they reveal much on the spirit and style of medieval preaching. In this advent sermon both theme and protheme are taken from the Gospel of Luke.

The translation is based on the Latin text in the Grottaferrata Bougerol edition and is used with permission; the text in the Quaracchi Opera Omnia *edition has also been consulted.*[2]

We welcome again the expert work of Fr. Gregory, a member of the Editorial Board of **The CORD**. *A native of Ireland, he is currently doing research at Greyfriars in Oxford. Readers will appreciate his comprehension of the thought of St. Bonaventure as well as his ability to render it in such readable prose.*

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

1. *Prepare the road for the Lord,*[3] Luke 3;4

[Protheme] *Master, we have toiled all the night, and caught nothing; but at your word I will let down the net* (Lk 5:5).

This *net* is the preaching by which people are taken up as a net catches fish, and the fisherman is the preacher whose job it is to *let down* the nets, *wash*[4] them, and *mend*[5] them, that is to say, compose sermons, furbish them, corroborate them with authoritative citations. If that be so, then unless God the Master orders the nets to be let down when He says so, that preaching will be dark with murky fallacy, as is suggested by the words, *all the night;* it will be burdensome, heavy and laborious, as is pointed out by, *we have toiled;* and the futile work involved bears no fruit, as is indicated by, *and caught nothing*.

And so before all else, the Lord must be asked by prayer to give the word in His gracious goodness, and wash the net which is this sermon of ours. May he also make the net of our sermon wide enough to reach the clear light of truth, taking away from us the murkiness in which mistakes are made; give it the pleasing quality of peacefulness by sparing us any toilsome heaviness; and bring it to the useful purpose that charity serves, by not letting our efforts be fruitless. So that at last when we are clear and intelligible, when we are inclined to mildness, and when we are carrying out a fruitful task, we may be able to have things to speak of that will redound to his praise and glory, etc.[6]

[Sermon] 2. *Prepare the road for the Lord*. John the Baptist, like a good disciple, a faithful messenger and true herald, was sent on ahead to prepare the way for Jesus Christ the genuine master, the great king and impartial judge. Wishing to carry out carefully the task enjoined on him by God he does three things,[7] in accordance with that text. First of all he sounds a stirring alarm, to wake us from the sleep of sin; next, he sets us on course by giving us the idea of taking up a rule for good living; then he explains what is to be our motive: to go and meet the Lord in humble compliance. The stirring alarm he sounds is, *Prepare*. In speaking of *the road*, he sets us on course with the idea of taking up a rule for good living. Just as a physical road is a kind of rule which keeps a person on a straight course, not straying along side-tracks, and leads to a city residence, so is the spiritual road of penance a rule which keeps a person from the wrong pathways until it leads him to the dwelling-house of his heavenly home. When, finally, he adds *for the Lord*, he reveals what must be our motive force, namely, hastening to meet Christ in humble submission.

3. The inspiration for our action is there in that third statement, since the purpose of our preparations is the Lord's coming; so at this point let us first have a look at the Lord's characteristic qualities. Likewise, according to the measure of our capabilities, and in line with the manifold excellence of His qualities, let us prepare for Him a road that will lead to the soul's dwelling-house.

The Lord Jesus Christ has within Him a threefold noble quality by which he supplies motivation to our preparations. The first quality is a *profundity of wisdom* in virtue of which he is *wisest of masters;* the second is a *sublimity of power* in virtue of which he is the *most powerful of kings;* the third is an *impartiality of justice* in virtue of which he is the *most righteous of judges*. And so it is that in regard to the good and the wicked he possesses a knowledge of certitude; with respect to the wicked a regal governance, with respect to the dead and the living the final administration of justice.

4. First, Christ is wisest of masters by reason of His profundity of wisdom. Referring to this, Psalm 146 (5) says: *Our Lord is great and almighty; his wisdom can never be measured*. Indeed the *Lord is great*, for in his being he is close to each thing; and so we must not imagine Him to be absent while we defile the place that is His. *And almighty*, for in His action is maximum power; so, when we commit sins, we must not think to escape punishment as we disgrace His authority. *His wisdom can never be measured*, for in his knowing he is utterly present to everything; so, when we commit foul deeds, let us not imagine he is ignorant of it, for *everything is open and laid bare*[8] before the eyes of his infallible wisdom. As St. Gregory said: "If you keep your eyes closed in sunlight,

it is not you who are hiding from the sun, but the sun from you." It is by reason of such profound wisdom that the psalm in 1 Kings (1 Sam.) 2:3 sings:

> Let not arrogance come from your mouth;
> for the Lord is a God of knowledge,
> and by him actions are weighed.

This is as much as saying: human thinking must be subjected to the bidding of a truth that is eternal, not to the dictates of the quibbling reasoner[9] which, like the old arrogance, have no value; for the Lord Jesus Christ is the *God of the sciences,*[10] *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*.

5. Secondly, Christ is the most powerful of kings, by reason of his sublime power. Whence the psalm in Exodus 15 (11):

> Who is like you among the gods, O Lord,
> who is like you, so majestic in holiness,
> spreading fear through glorious deeds,
> you who do marvels?

All this happened to them as a symbol[11] of our liberation from the devil's power. It is because this has been shown us to be true, that we can say: *Who is like you among the gods, O Lord,* as you drown fiendish powers in the bottomless depths? *Who is like you, so majestic in holiness,* as you liberate a faithful people from an eternal death-blow through the shedding of your own blood? *Glorious* — in your passion, on account of its loving kindness and charity; *spreading fear* — in your resurrection, through the splendor of its glory and brightness. *You who do marvels* — in your ascension, on account of the lifting up of your earthly body to the right hand of God the Father.

6. Thirdly, Christ is the most righteous of judges by reason of His even-handed justice. Whence Zephaniah 2:3:

> Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land,
> who do his commands;
> seek righteousness, seek humility.

The lowly in heart are called the *humble of the land*, who seek the Lord in a spirit of subjection inspired by filial reverence. Those *who do his commands* do so by confessing their past sins and by not committing them again. *Seek righteousness* in penalizing those who act haughtily; *seek humility* in welcoming those who are repentant. St. Bernard put it thus: "The experience you will have of His advent will match the kind of image of yourself you present to Him, for *with one that is holy you will be holy, and with the innocent man you will prove yourself innocent*."[12]

7. We continue with that stirring alarm, *Prepare*. We are admonished to prepare ourselves in accordance with Christ's three qualities of excellence. First, since He is the wisest of masters let us prepare ourselves like disciples panting with desire to believe His teaching by surrendering our minds.[13] Secondly, since He is the most powerful of kings let us prepare ourselves like submissive servants ready to obey his orders by actually carrying them out. Thirdly, since He is a most righteous judge let us prepare ourselves like men of penance ready to accord with the judge by correcting our faults.

8. Let us begin preparing ourselves like learners eagerly desiring to give credence to the master's teaching by surrendering our minds. Ezra 7:10 might be expounded in this sense: *Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord*. Every good Christian should follow Ezra's example and prepare his heart by basing his quest for knowledge on the solid ground of faith, by rooting his inclinations in sound thinking and by infusing zealous application into his work. The aim is an exploration of the *law* of the Gospel; and this is not done at any quibbling reasoners bidding[14] but rather in accordance with the ordinance of an eternal truth. It is this law which offers light to our reasoning that till it comes to a knowledge of the true, kindles our faculty of desire to long for the good, and elevates our energies to hope for what has to be arduously sought.[15]

9. Let us make the second part of our preparation like submissive servants ready to obey and effectively carry out the master's orders. Psalm 118:60 refers to such readiness:

> I am prepared and not disturbed
> to keep your commands.

I am prepared, it says, indicating a prompt obedience; *and not disturbed*, for 'I shall offer sacrifice to you voluntarily and with love;' *to keep your commands*, dilligently fulfilling them in action. Likewise 1 Kings (1 Sam.) 7:3 speaks of it:

> Prepare your hearts for the Lord and serve him only,

allowing nothing to oppose you, recognizing none as His equal, but placing Him high above everything else, loving Him from your heart, reverencing Him in your activities with praise of Him on your lips and, if need be, undergoing for Him bodily suffering and dying.

10. In the third stage of preparing ourselves let us be like men of penance and correct our faults in accord with the judge's decision. Ecclesiasticus 2:20 speaks of it:

> Those who fear the Lord will prepare their hearts,
> and will humble themselves before him.

Those who fear the Lord, that is, with the reverential fear characteristic of sons; *will prepare their hearts*, by getting rid of mortal sin. "He who prepares a house for God in his soul," says St. Gregory, "wipes away the stains of perverse actions."[16] *Before him*, that is, before God, *will humble themselves* with a desiring love and obliging spirit.

11. Between *Prepare* and *for the Lord* in our text comes a third element, *the road;* by it we are given directives and a rule for living a good life. With utmost zeal and on the model of a physical road, let us prepare a road into our soul's dwelling-house. For unless the road into the soul's dwelling-house is well prepared for Him, Christ will never come to us nor shall we be able to hasten to meet Christ. There are three stages in the preparation of a physical road: removing dirt, laying down coverings, and placing flowers on the surface.[17] Similarly, a spiritual road is made ready by ridding it of uncleanness and foulness in a full confession, by laying low carnal wantonness with due and discreet punishment, and placing the floral carpet of chastity over and above everything else, by preserving purity of mind and body.

12. The road into the soul's dwelling-house is well prepared firstly by ridding it of dirt and foulness. Jeremiah 31:21 says:

> Set up waymarks for yourself,
> make yourself guideposts;
> consider well the highway.

Waymarks are to be set up, that the sinner may see in his conscience the sins he must confess; the *guideposts*[18] signify the compunction which bids us deplore what we have committed; *consider well the highway*, so as to perform good action.

13. Secondly, the road into the soul's dwelling-house is well prepared when coverings are laid down on it, meaning, the due punishing of carnal wantonness. Deuteronomy 5:32 has this to say:

> You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.
> You shall walk in all the way which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live.

When the flesh obeys the spirit's bidding not to go on a sinning rampage and the spirit stoops to the flesh's needs lest it succumb to death, then it is that the road of austerity and penance is not turned aside from either *to the right hand or to the left*. It is along a road of prudent mortification such as this that *God commmands* us to walk, so that we may have life; for *the reproofs of discipline are the way of life* when, at the behest of a discipline discreetly imposed, nature in its wantonness is checked, and compelled to obey the spirit. He who chastens his lusts, avoids the sin from which all evils are derived. As St. Gregory puts it, in his fifth homily

on Ezekiel: "if our soul is discomposed by carnal hankering, it is in no position to consider what naturally befits it; because it is misled by as many ideas as there are obstacles that impede its vision."[19] And so, since the devil believes a lot in his own power and takes advantage of human frailty and wordly vanity, we had better smash his intrigues, gain conquest over our own human nature and turn a scornful eye on the world's emptiness. And then we shall not be turning aside *to the right hand or to the left* along *the road commanded us to walk*.

14. The third stage of the preparation of the road into the soul's dwelling-house is by superimposing the floral carpet of chastity, and that by maintaining a pure mind and body. In Psalm 100 (6) we read:

> He who walks in the way that is blameless
> shall minister to me.

You *walk in the blameless way* of chastity and *minister to* Christ, the flower of virgins, when you not only have an outward bodily purity, but also when, inwardly, your heart is perfectly set in order and entertains sound inclinations. For as we notice in the human body, when many diseased and rotten fluids abound in it, these produce a scab and a foul tetter like leprosy and rid the body of its elegance. In the same way, when bad thoughts are plentiful they generate rotten fluids, as it were, and carnal desires which in turn produce the scab of incontinence and the leprosy of indulgence and carry off the elegance that belongs to chastity and purity. Whence it is said, *Perverse thoughts separate* us *from the Lord*.[20]

Let us ask the Lord therefore etc.

Endnotes

[1]Cf. A. Blasucci, *La Spiritualità di San Bonaventura* (Florence, 1974) 45; P. Boehner, *Saint Bonaventure's Itinerarium Mentis In Deum* (N.Y., 1956) 21.

[2]Jacques Guy Bougerol, *Sancti Bonaventurae Sermones Dominicales* (Grottaferrata, 1977) 163-169; *Opera Omnia* IX, 74-76a.

[3]The Vulgate reads, 'of the Lord.' *Road* could also be translated 'way' or 'highway;' but the sermon seems to imagine a roadway or street on which there is a (spiritual) dwelling situated.

[4]*Lk* 5:2.

[5]Cf. *Mt* 4:21; *Mk* 1:19.

[6]The initial prayer, which the introduction becomes, concludes here. On the connexion between *theme, protheme,* and *prayer,* and the structure of the medieval sermon, see J. G. Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure* (Paterson, N.J., 1963) 137 - 143.

[7]'Threes' or 'ternaries' occur very frequently throughout Bonaventure's works; for him, as for St. Augustine, the Trinity of God is reflected in created reality, including the order of things.

[8]*Heb* 4:13. The following quotation from St. Gregory the Great is in *Moralia,* XXV, c. 6, n. 11 (*PL* 76, 325).

[9]Literally, *the dictates of sophistic reason* (some MSS. read *philosophical reason*). The Greek sophist had the reputation of availing himself of reasoning fallacies to further his cause. Bonaventure was loath to allow any decisive position in Christian theology to pagan philosophy.

[10]Or, *the God of knowledge*. The following reference is to *Col* 2:3. This paragraph reflects Bonaventure's thinking in many other christocentric sermons, e.g., *3rd Sun. Advent,* Bougerol ed., 156-162; *Op. Omn.* IX, 57-74; *22nd Sun. after Pent.,* Bougerol ed., 465-473; *Op. Omn.* IX, 441-444; esp. *Christ the One Master of All, Op. Omn.* V, 567-574, directed against the promoters of a philosophy separate from and independent of theology, and whose central idea that Christ is primary source of all human knowledge is elaborated in other works, e. g., *The Knowledge of Christ, Op. Omn.* V, 17-27; throughout the whole of *The Soul's Journey into God;* cf. *Conferences on the Six Days,* coll. 1, n. 11, *Op. Omn.* V, 331.

[11]*I Cor* 10:11.

[12]Cf *Sermon 69 on the Canticle,* n. 7 (*PL* 183, 1116). The quotation is a paraphrase of the original: "The way you will have prepared yourself for God will be the way God will think fit to appear to you. *With the holy He will be holy, and with the innocent man He will be innocent*." Cf *Ps* 17:16 (Vulgate.

[13]Cf. 2 *Cor* 10:6.

[14]See note 9 above.

[15]The *good,* the *true,* the *arduous*. In Latin, arduous literally means *steep; the arduous* means what is difficult to reach. Theologically, when heaven is reached, the 'arduous' is the honor merited by 'arduous' virtue during the pilgrimage of life. See *On Evangelical Perfection,* qq. 2 & 43 for the 'arduous' as virtue in the context of vowed obedience (V, 139, n. 27; 183a, n. 10).

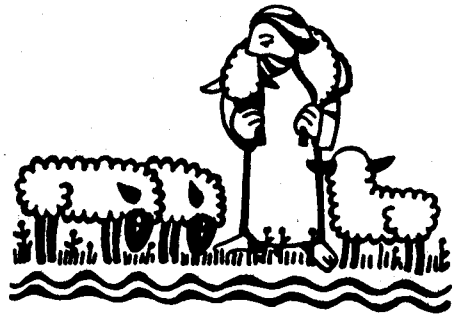
[16]*Homilies on the Gospels,* Bk. 2, hom. 30, n. 2 (*PL* 76, 1221).

[17]The scene imagined is of the adornment of a roadway for the arrival of a personage, when garments are laid on the ground (cf. *Lk* 19:36; 2 *Kgs* 9:13) and flowers strewn across the way.

[18]The Vulgate has *watch-tower* for *waymarks* and for *guideposts* has the word *amaritudines,* meaning, things that are bitter or pungent, thus suggesting 'compunction.'

[19]*Homilies on Ezekiel,* hom. 5, n. 8 (*PL* 76, 989).

[20]*Wis* 1:3.



Following in the Footsteps of Jesus Christ: Sameness and Difference in Francis and Clare

MICHAEL GRECO, O.F.M.

INTRODUCTION

There have been many studies which have outlined the similarities between the lives of Clare and Francis. Research shows that Clare was a most excellent emulator of Blessed Francis and the very flowering of his ideal.[1] Conversely, there has been little done in outlining the differences between Clare and Francis. Such findings could inform us more about Clare's character and her unique contribution to the Christian life. In particular, it would be of value to note any differences in how Francis and Clare understood what it meant to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

The aim of this essay is to do just that. It begins by noting the similarities between Clare and Francis' following of Jesus Christ, and then proceeds to discuss their differences which forms the major focus of the essay.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN CLARE AND FRANCIS

The "following of Christ" in the franciscan tradition has meant different things. For some it has been the practice of poverty, for others an interior

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Brother Michael Greco recently completed his theological studies at Yalla Theological Union in Box Hill (Victoria), Australia. He wrote this paper under the direction of Fr. Francis Berna, guest professor from St. Bonaventure University, for a course entitled "Sources for Franciscan Spirituality." Brother Michael holds a Bachelor of Science Degree and diploma of Teaching and now teaches at Padua College in Kedron (Brisbane).

devotion characterised by meditating on the words and deeds of the Lord. Still, others such as Elias, have interpreted the following of Christ as carrying out the work which he performed on earth.[2]

If we are to understand better the way that Clare followed Christ then we must examine her spirituality with reference to Francis. Clare's spirituality reflects that of Francis hence there are many similarities. Clare often referred to herself as the "little plant" of the Blessed Francis. The fact that the spirit of her Rule and Testament is in imitation of St. Francis shows that she strove to follow him.[3] Clare's Testament more than any of her other writings, with the exception of chapter 4 of her Rule, shows her close bond with Francis and the friars.[4] In it Clare states that it is Francis' "example and teaching" which were the origin of her life as a Poor Lady (Test. 2). Clare felt that God had called her Order into existence through his servant Francis.[5]

Poverty is seen to be the most common trait of Clare and Francis' new form of religious life. Francis was a follower of the poor, humble and crucified Christ. Similarly, Clare desired to imitate Jesus Christ in his poverty and humility. This adherence to the poor Christ can be seen in their devotion to the Birth and Passion of Jesus. The example of Clare and Francis caused these two events of Christ to become the central themes in the devotion to the humanity of Christ.[6]

Like Francis, Clare wanted to be poor so that her heart would not become attached to anything that would hinder her progress toward the Lord.[7] This striving towards poverty is concretised in her quest for the privilege of Poverty which was granted by Pope Innocent III in 1215 or 1216.[8] This request from Clare meant that the Poor Ladies did not have to accept property or other material security that would insure them regular income. Such a request was unheard of before.[9] This Privilege of Poverty became law for the Poor Ladies (under Pope Innocent IV) only on Clare's death bed on August 10, 1253.[10]

Like Francis, Clare shattered many of the traditional religious stereotypes. She would not let the purity of Francis' charism die. Even when the friars were trying to water it down, Clare clung to her pursuit of an authentic gospel poverty which was the poverty of the Franciscan charism.[11]

In their following of Christ, both Francis and Clare are aware of the immense love that Christ has for them. Clare speaks of Christ as a Spouse who lays down his life for us (2 Agnes 19-20) so that he can give himself totally to us (32 Agnes 15). This awareness of Christ's self-giving is the essence of Francis and Clare's love for Jesus Christ. It is a "love of Jesus Christ in response to his love."[12]

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CLARE AND FRANCIS

Athough Clare's life is a genuine reflection of Franciscan spirituality, her life is not a copy or duplicate of Francis but rather is a new expression of it. She gave the Franciscan charism a universal validity by giving it a feminine perspective.[13] Her life was not just an echo of St. Francis but an independent witness to the truth of Francis' deal.[14]

Armstrong and Brady have noted three prominent differences between the spiritualities of Clare and Francis. These are:

1. Material Separation from the world.
2. Total Permeation of Life with Poverty.
3. The Struggle to Preserve the Unity of Mutual Love.[15]

These are not so much differences in charism but rather differences in their emphases on how the charism was to be lived in everyday life. In other words, they are variations in one's method of following Christ. Each of these aspects will be discussed in more detail.

1. Material Separation From The World

Clare did not choose to travel through the world announcing the Word like Jesus and Francis. Rather, she chose to enclose herself in a monastery and to live a life of prayer and penance. Her desire was not to pursue an active apostolic life but rather to surrender herself to the Lord so that she might be totally transformed.[16]

The question arises of whether or not Clare would have chosen enclosure as a way of following Christ if she were living today or even a few centuries after her time. Most reports suggest that Clare, though a strong and confident woman, would still have opted for an enclosed life.[17] During her time there were women movements, such as the Beguines, who lived a life on the road as Christ did. But Clare did not choose to follow this type of lifestyle. So, how did Clare see her enclosure as a way of following Christ?

A study by Bynum shows that it was typical of religious women in the later Middle Ages to imitate Christ, not by an active apostolic life, but rather by their mysticism and suffering.[18] Mysticism was more central in female religiosity than in men's. Women's devotion was more marked by penitential asceticism, extreme fasting and illness borne with patience. The people tended to see female saints as models of suffering, and male saints as models of action.[19] In fact, women saw their helplessness and suffering as an imitation of Christ that brought salvation to neighbour as well as self.[20]

Clare was a product of the above spirituality. Her following of Christ was one based on interior devotion (cf. 2 Agnes 20). Late medieval devotion

Clare is not a clone of Francis, nor is she just the feminine expression of the Franciscan charism.

tended to focus on the themes related to the passion of Christ, to Mary, to the saints, and to the Eucharist.[21] However, Clare was somewhat different in that her devotion centred mainly on Christ as Spouse (cf. 1 Ag 12; 2 Ag 1,7; 3 Ag 1; 4 Ag 4, 15, 30).

Union with God was the apostolate of Clare and her sisters. Clare saw her Christian life as a deepening of life in Christ.[22] Hence, to follow in the footsteps of Christ was, for Clare, to remain faithful to her contemplative life. By doing this, the sisters were performing a service to the Church (cf. Test. 6, 22; 3 Agnes 8-9). Their prayers and "manner of being" would be a support and comfort to the downcast members of the Mystical Body of Christ.[23] Their prayers would also be a support to the friars (cf. 3 Ag 7-89). So, enclosure for Clare was an effective and lived reality which was reaffirmed by the canonical documents.[24] It seems that she wasn't forced to live an enclosed life but rather chose it freely.

2. Total Permeation Of Life With Poverty

Like Francis, Clare wanted to follow the poor Christ. However, the emphasis that each of them place on poverty is different. It appears that Francis' dedication to poverty became Clare's obsession.[25]

Francis concern is more in the realm of obedience.[26] He knew that conscious obedience and subjection to the will of another was contrary to masculine psychology which was more orientated to ruling and wielding authority. Therefore, Francis stressed obedience as the example of the Will over nature.[27] On the other hand, Clare realized that self-conquest for the feminine psychology was not in obedience but in poverty and humility.

Whereas Francis considered Christ under different aspects, such as obedience, Clare focused mainly on the Lord's poverty. Whereas Francis contemplated on various aspects of Christ's life, Clare drew her inspiration mainly from the two essential moments of the self-emptying of Christ, namely the Incarnation and the Crucifixion. That is, the crib and the cross of Christ.[28] Though Clare's writings are fewer compared to Francis, we find that her thoughts are directed to one point only, which is poverty in imitation of the poor and humble Christ. Her Rule, for instance, speaks

of poverty as a prerequisite to joining the Order, as a means of dress and as the foundation of their life which will lead the sisters to union with God.[29]

For Clare, it is poverty which is the "narrow way" that leads to the kingdom of heaven (cf. 1 Ag 29). Her poverty allows her to enter more profoundly into the mystery of God and His kingdom. Her poverty was far more dependent on the generosity of others than the friars because the Sisters were enclosed and could not beg. In this way, Clare recasts the vision of Francis into a more demanding form because her poverty was based on her faith in divine providence.[30] In fact, Clare's form of poverty was not found in any religious order up to that time.

Despite Clare's severe form of poverty, it is important to note that it was only an expression of her passionate love for Jesus Christ.[31] Love is really at the heart of Clare's spirituality. At the depths of Clare's heart was a desire to possess Jesus Christ and him alone (cf. 3 Ag 15). It was this love for the Lord and her understanding of Christ's love for her that inspired Clare to imitate Jesus Christ in his poverty and humility.

Clare's pursuit of poverty was not an exercise in ascetical practice nor a rule that is imposed. Her attitude to poverty was not about perseverance to principles. Rather her poverty is a complete renunciation of self in order to walk in the footsteps of Christ's humility. Poverty was not the practice of virtues but rather a way of trying to be like Christ.[32] Her poverty was a means of making her more receptive to the love of God and the spirit. It was the way in which God could take full possession of her. It could be said that Clare's poverty was an outward expression of a deeper reality where a person comes to know his/her only real possession, that is, "their vices and sins."[33]

3. The Struggle To Preserve The Unity of Mutual Love

Clare's poverty is also connected to both her contemplation and community life. The relationship between poverty and contemplation is a reciprocal one. Poverty is a means to deepening prayer but it also flows naturally from the contemplative gazing upon the mystery of Christ.[34] With regard to fraternity, poverty helps to deepen the quality of the relationship between the sisters.

Unlike Francis, Clare's experience of the apostolate within the community was much more intense because of the enclosure. As well as following the poor Christ in her devotion, Clare wanted to give birth to a community of women in the Church who did the same. She wanted the Poor Ladies to be a sign to the Church of the unity of mutual love. The sisters were not only seen as a support to one another, but a means of salvation in

that they manifest the profound relationships that exist in the inner life of God.[35]

Enclosure is not for Clare the means of avoiding the exercise of charity but a more profound way of practicing it.[36] It was Clare's and Francis' desire to live a perfect balance of action and contemplation as followers of Christ's example.[37] Clare finds this balance in the role of motherhood. Whereas Francis embodied the passion and crucifixion of Christ through the Stigmata, "Clare more subtly enfleshed a maternal expectancy."[38] In this way, Clare is more similar to Mary, the Mother of Christ.[39] That is, Clare's special strength is her compassion in contemplating the Passion rather than identification with the crucified (cf. 1 Ag 3).

CONCLUSION

Clare and Francis show a lot of similarities in their method of following the footsteps of Jesus Christ. In fact, we can not examine Clare's spirituality without reference to Francis since she was, in one sense, a product of the life and teaching of Francis. Her love of Christ and dedication to following the poor and humble Christ parallel the ideals of Francis.

However, Clare is not a clone of Francis, nor is she just the feminine expression of the Franciscan charism. Rather, Clare's life is a unique living-out of the Franciscan ideal. The lives of Clare and Francis are both apostolic but in different ways. Whereas Francis' following of the poor Christ centered around an itinerant and poor life with preaching as its major work and begging as its prime source of support, Clare's following of Jesus Christ was done within the bounds of enclosure and all that this entails. □

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A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

ARTICLES

WAS FRANCIS BETRAYED? 323
Daniel Pattee, T.O.R.

ST. BONAVENTURE AND ECOLOGY 336
Phil Hoebing, O.F.M.

FEATURES

EDITORIAL: IS CHRISTMAS MEANT TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE? 321
April Oursler Armstrong, S.F.O.

POETRY:
CHRISTMAS 324
Thomas Aldworth, O.F.M.

BOOK REVIEWS 346

INDEX 350

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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

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Is Christmas Meant to be Uncomfortable?

APRIL OURSLER ARMSTRONG, SFO

Dear St. Francis, help me!

This is not well-planned discourse. It's not a meditation. It's just me, a lay Franciscan, an SFO, who loves God and you. I need help, *re* Christmas '90.

For years I've been truly proud with the dark-brilliance of the Greccio creche that really did change Christian concept. But, Francis, is it just me, or do you too sense spiritual discomfort in many churches from advent on?

At last most American catholic Churches have lost the hidden and growing excitement toward Christmas. No fasting. No waiting and hoping in the church's new Beginning. Mangers, both inside and out, are lighted right after Thanksgiving. Even the Infants are already there, Wise Men and all. It's one thing when the stores are ready in October. But in the Church?

I don't think I can face another fake Christmas tree in the sanctuary on the first Sunday of Advent with Santa glitter. The idea of course is for families to buy and wrap presents for "the poor kids" and fill "Xmas" with the latest commercials. But why do this here in a meditating church, deep with mystery of Mary's womb? Don't Santa and presents belong elsewhere, before Christmas?

Your father had insisted you study not only Italian and French but also Latin and a bit of religious history. And so you did know that in the third century Christians were very aware that the pagans' own liturgy was held on the darkest night of the year, when the world just might stop. No Christian really knew the exact date when Mary brought forth her Child, but the spirit guided catechists to emphasize the divinity in a poor woman's

womb which worked to teach others of the Incarnate King for the next thousand years.

But it was also the Spirit who used you in a theatrical stroke to rekindle Christian hearts. By then just a thousand years of liturgy had become a bit ornate, a bit too majestcally and heavenly oriented. You were clever to get permission from the Pope ahead to try a new liturgical possibility. You asked Sir Giovanni Vellito, a lay franciscan. He had already given you a woods and cliff where you specially liked to meditate in Greccio. And you said:

> If you wish to celebrate the festival of our Lord at Greccio, hurry on ahead and prepare exactly what I am telling you. For I want to observe the memory of that Child who was born in Bethlehem, and in some way see before my bodily eyes the discomforts of his baby needs, and how, with the ox and the ass standing by, he was placed there on the hay. (1 Cel 84)

Thanks to Giovanni with the candles and torches not only your brothers but lay people climbed up near midnight to wonder. You, so much in love with Jesus, preaching in your deacon robe knew that in any minute you could just break-down and weep if you used His name. No wonder people later always remembered your way of speaking of the *Child of Bethlehem* instead. And they recall the unforgetable quiet bleating sound, almost like a lamb, when you spoke of Him.

You focused on the real normal smells both of the animal stink and angel breath. You knew the homey smell of the poor outsiders like the shepherds. And you also knew the incarnate cleanness of the soul of the son of God.

In your century — and in ours — people with living faith find joy honoring God. And those a bit weak in faith are the ones moved by the holy excitement of Franciscans and others living out a divine delight. In your century there were robbers, trouble-makers, and even wolves near Greccio. In our generation we have drug users and muggers, gangs and killers. So what else is new? Catholics who love God and love one another can face anything!

St. Francis, I started writing to you asking for help. Thanks to you, I found your answer right in front of me.

Years ago you said, in effect, that God had a reason to let the Babe be born away from all immediate corruption from evil! Visions of the Babe are basically there for those who will be willing to climb in order to see.

I had been worried about the obvious growing evil for 1991. But now I see evil had been ramping even in Greccio, in the world in Eden and in our time, before and in the Church, today. And yet truly, most souls aren't terribly evil.

I think you are telling us to continue the same holy folly we Franciscans

have done in the past! You said you believed Mary herself wanted to be sure there was "the best of good feed" for the ox and ass. And that "likewise on that day all the poor ought to be given their fill of good victuals by the rich." (MP 114) And *you* know like a fool I always go out and "strew... grains for the little birds." (2 Cel 200)

Why was I uncomfortable and uneasy, dear Francis? Because you gave us the understanding of the uncomfortable and uneasy growth of your idea of "perfect joy." In your age or in mine the living Church is holy and fine, and — with human beings — quite imperfect.

Yearly Christmas returns amazingly new. You always said: Pax et bonum, peace and good. And that may not be what *I* sometimes think is best.

Christmas

How to capture what cannot be caught?
So I wonder as Christmas comes bringing
Its visions of candy canes and cribs.
But as star-shine again strikes my eye,
I marvel over and over at this God child
Who burned to be born into this bruised
And battered place we call our world.

Let's try to comprehend if we can
How the One who gathers galaxies
Into His arms, stopped to embrace
One tiny world whirling through space.
And in that embrace took to Himself
All the hurt that has ever happened
And all the darkness that ever dawned.

Sometimes we get so easily caught
In Christmas chaos, that we forget
To remember who this baby was.
This baby who continues to tell
Us all we need to know about a God
Who chooses flesh to wrap Himself in.

This God who created all the worlds
That ever were and ever will be.
This God who dances across the sky
And dazzles the dark with His light,
Now comes to us crying in His crib.

Thomas P. Aldworth, O.F.M.

Was Francis Betrayed?

DANIEL PATTEE, T.O.R.

It is well known that the *Regula non-bullata* is twice as long as the *Regula bullata*. Paul Sabatier, in his now famous biography,[2] calls the *Regula bullata* the "code of 1223." He is very clear about how the *Regula non-bullata* came to be shortened: "If it is asked, who could have made these curtailments, one name springs at once to our lips — Ugolino."[3] Behind this statement is the belief that the ideal of Francis, indeed Francis himself, was betrayed at the time of composition. Ugolino, in the name of the Church, imposed his own views and forced Francis to compromise on his vision for a *forma vitae*. But Sabatier is not alone. Other modern authors, when they write about St. Francis and the Rule of 1223, look for villains even beyond Ugolino. Some of these other "villains" include Elias, the ministers, or the learned friars of the Order. Behind this search for villains is the belief that Francis was in some way betrayed when writing the Rule of 1223.

But was Francis betrayed? This is the question to be addressed by this essay. A careful reading of pertinent sources, as they relate to the composition of the *Regula bullata*, will follow as well as answers given to the question of whether Francis was betrayed by any one of the following: Elias, the ministers, the learned friars, or finally Ugolino himself. Of course, to approach the sources for the life of St. Francis is to approach another famous question, the "Franciscan Question." Hence a very brief summary of the position taken relative to the "Franciscan question" is first given along with some clarification of terminology.

The Franciscan Question

The position taken relative to the "Franciscan Question" is that it has three dimensions. It includes a search for sources of *2 Celano (2 Cel)*, offering solutions to the questions raised by the "Greccio letter" of 1246, and identification of the writings of Brother Leo. Basically these three dimensions come down to two works: *The Legends of the Three Compan-*

The author, a former instructor in theology at the Franciscan University of Steubenville, is a graduate of the Franciscan Institute. He is now pursuing a doctoral degree in Rome.

ions (L3S) and *The Legend of Perugia (LP)*. But a thorough study of *L3S* cannot be done without considering its relationship to the *Anonymous of Perugia (AP)*. My own position is that *AP* was written first, around the year 1241, and was used as a source for, and indeed corrected by, the author(s) of the *L3S* around the year 1246. But even more important for this study, *LP* contains genuine writings of Brother Leo called the *Verba Sancti Francisci (LP* 111 - 115) and, with a lesser degree of certainty, the *Intentio Regule (LP* 66 - 77).[4]

In summary of my position, then, *AP* is very early and so certain of its details can be trusted because it was written before controversy within the Order drastically increased. And while it is difficult to date the *Verba* precisely, there is a high degree of certainty that it was authored by Brother Leo. As we shall see, he was a close and intimate companion of St. Francis throughout composition of the Rule and so the *Verba* carries more weight as a source.

Another point needs to be made regarding terminology. The term "basic acount" will be used to designate those sources that carry with them a high degree of plausibility regarding certain historical facts relating to composition of the *Regula bullata*. Naturally, my position on the "Franciscan Question" determines the sources chosen. Hence, the *Verba* will be a highly trusted sourse. One criterion not used uniformly however, and one common to literary criticism, is that the earlier account is *necessarily* more accurate. This works off the principle that the account closer to the events in time is more reliable. In Franciscan studies this is not always the case. The *First Life of Celano (1 Cel)* is certainly earliest (ca. 1229), and yet it contains elements of style borrowed from the hagiography of that time. Yet a source like the *Verba*, given the proximity of its *author* to St. Francis, renders it very reliable even though it was most probably written later.

One final term used on occasion is "formative period" in reference to composition of the Rule. David Flood's theory is followed here which states that there was an ongoing development of the Rule from 1209 to 1221;[5] only I extend the development to 1223. The Rule of 1221 says: "Brother Francis and whoever will be the head of this Order promises obedience and reverence to the Lord Pope Innocent and to his successors."[6] Pope Innocent III died in 1216, yet Francis and the friars say they owe him obedience in 1221. This indicates there was but *One* Rule for Francis and the friars, designating the entire developmental process from 1209 to 1223. The Rule of 1221, therefore, represents "the Rule" at one particular stage in its development. Having said this, however, "formative period" as it is used in this essay will refer only to that portion of development which followed upon the crisis in the Order after Francis' return from the east during the summer of 1220.

Was Elias a Villain?

Having stated a position relative to the "Franciscan Question" and clarified some terms, we are now in a better position to answer the first question: was Elias a villain? Of course, beneath it — as with all the others — is the question of whether Francis was betrayed. We do know that Elias was involved with the composition of the *Regula bullata*. Just the name "Elias" seems to raise the eyebrow of suspicion. But do the sources support such a suspicion?

One of the first basic accounts is *Legenda maior IV: 11-12 (LM)*. Bonaventure focuses his account on Elias. He tells of how Francis, following the vision of the crumbs made into one host, went up "a certain mountain" with two companions to write the Rule. Francis, after writing it, "gave the rule to his vicar to keep." And then Bonaventure continues: "But after a few days had elapsed, the vicar claimed that he had lost it by an oversight."[7] Here we are told that Elias somehow *lost* the Rule. The temptation might be to conclude, therefore, that Elias is a villain: he "claimed" he lost the Rule "by an oversight." But an argument could be made that Bonaventure's account, in some respects, is not historically trustworthy. *LM* IV:11-12 begins and ends with divine inspiration, something the historian is unable to scrutinize. Also there can be discerned, within the narrative itself, Mosaic topology: Francis is like Moses who goes up the mountain and there receives the Rule as Moses had received the tablets. This suggests that the narrative may have been tailored to fit biblical imagery.

But we cannot be too hasty, given these elements, in saying that *LM* IV:11-12 is totally implausible. It would be well to recall that this is a *successor* to Elias, as Minister general of the Order, writing the account.[8] We might not expect a successor to write so disparagingly about his predecessor and yet, to our surprise, St. Bonaventure does state that Elias lost the Rule. And so we may walk away from this acocunt with at least one historical fact: Elias lost the rule which meant that St. Francis had to write a second one.[9]

No account, however, can or should be read by itself. Each of them needs to be weighed against other accounts and especially where those accounts may be very reliable. *LM* IV:11-12, if it were read by itself, could easily lead to the conclusion that Elias was a villain. Yet another account to pay close attention to is *Verba* 4 (*LP* 113) which, as was mentioned, is very likely authored by Brother Leo. Whereas *LM* IV:11 simply states that Francis was accompanied by two of his companions, *Verba* 4 names those companions: they were Brother Leo and Brother Bonizo.[10]

Brother Leo was present with St. Francis, therefore, when he wrote the Rule.

Verba 4 reiterates that the Rule was at first lost and then begins to narrate a story that occurred after this incident. The account tells of how "many ministers," who heard Francis was writing another Rule, approached Elias and asked him to tell Francis they will not be bound by the new Rule. "We are afraid that he may make it so severe that we will not be able to observe it."[11] But, as the account continues, Elias feared Francis' reproof and refused to speak with Francis and Francis, seeing Elias, asked the question: "What do these brothers want?"[12] Elias has to *identify* who they are for Francis, telling him that they are ministers. And then, as their *spokesman*, he relayed their message. Francis at this point turns to Christ with the question, "Did I not tell you?" Christ confirms the divine origin of the rule from heaven and expresses His desire that the Rule should be observed literally and without gloss. The ministers then retire in shame.

The surprising element of this account is the way Elias just seems to disappear from the narrative. His role was that of *spokesman* for the ministers! He is hardly portrayed, in *Verba* 4, as a Judas which we might expect from a Leonine writing. The Leonine tradition, as a whole, shows little fondness toward Elias and yet here they bypass an opportunity to make him look bad. This gives further evidence that the account in *Verba* 4, regarding Elias' role in the writing of the *Regula bullata*, is plausible even if the element of divine inspiration found within it cannot be historically evaluated. Elias served as a spokesman for the ministers and was no Judas.

Were the Ministers Villains?

The next figures to discuss, as to their role in the writing of the Rule, are the ministers. *Verba* 4 does tell us of opposition from the ministers, a fact supported by other sources as well. For example, 2 *Cel* 188 relates how Francis lamented the way some of the ministers were leading the friars in ways other than he envisioned.[13] This says nothing relative to composition of the Rule, but it does register the fact of opposition on the part of some of the ministers toward St. Francis.

Another account reiterating this same opposition comes from the *Intentio regule* which, as was mentioned earlier, may have been authored by Brother Leo even if less certain. In this account, namely *LP* 69, a minister approaches Francis to discuss the "chapter on poverty." More specifically, he wanted to speak with Francis about the Gospel text — still in the Rule at that time[14] — which reads, "Take nothing on the way..."[15] The minister had books with a total worth of fifty pounds and he desired to retain them

... another dividend has surfaced, namely, the true value of the Rule itself.

in good conscience. The important element to notice, however, is the concern he has with the text: "Take nothing on the way." This text was *not* included in the *Regula bullata:* it was droppeed. And so there were things dropped from the final, bulled rule that Francis held dear. Even in *LP* 69 Francis expresses his desire that the friars have but one tunic, a cord, breeches, and shoes if necessary. But were the ministers betraying Francis by their opposition?

To say "yes" would, I believe, overlook two things. First to admit betrayal would be to see Francis, at least to some degree, as a passive, victim soul who was forced to cave into the minister's demands. But Francis was not so easily swayed, as *LP* 69 tells us. The Gospel text, "Take nothing on the way," may have been dropped, but Francis did secure the clause at the beginning and end of the Rule that the Gospel was to be observed. Within the history of the Order, these clauses caused trouble for the friars as early as the Chapter of 1230 which sent a delegation to Pope Gregory IX (Cardinal Ugolino). One of their concerns was whether they had to observe the whole Gospel or just those texts quoted in the Rule! Gregory IX responded with *Quo Elongati* saying, while they were to observe the Gospel like all christians, only those specifically quoted in the Rule were binding under pain of sin.

But a second element to keep in mind is that, in 1217, the Order was divided into Provinces. The centralization of authority up till that time is well documented by Cajetan Esser,[16] but with Provinces came a more decentralized governance with the institution of provincials. The ministers shared in the authority of St. Francis (and his successors), each having some share of responsibility in the future direction of the Order. They were, therefore, within their limits of authority in registering opposition. Perhaps if they can be faulted, it would be on the strength of their opposition. But their role, of speaking concerns regarding a document to be observed by all within their Provinces and an order growing rapidly in numbers, was legitimate since the document (the *Regula bullata*) was to be agreed upon by all.[17] And so, in summary, we may say that Francis was not really betrayed by the ministers even if the strength of their opposition most probably became a source of great pain and suffering for him.

Were the Educated Friars Villains?

This brings us to the educated friars: what was their role? *Verba* 5 (*LP* 114) tells of one incident involving the educated friars. They approached Cardinal Ugolino at one of the chapters of the Order (Michaelmas Chapter of 1220?). In studying the account, there is an evident lack of antagonism. They requested that Cardinal Ugolino try to "persuade" Francis to be "guided by them" at least *some* of the time.[18] They desired certain, more orderly elements to be included in the Rule after the manner of the "ancients" (the Rules of St. Augustine, St. Benedict, and St. Bernard). It must be admitted that more methodical ways are conducive to the life of study, much more than a wandering life without a library. And so the learned friar's request was reasonable (as we might expect from learned friars) and, calling to mind the Roman principle of law, what is to be observed by all must be agreed upon by all.[19]

Francis dealt with this request personally as opposed to the divine intervention we saw in *Verba* 4. He took Ugolino by the hand and went before all the brothers claiming novelty of inspiration and way of life; "My brothers! My brothers! God has called me by the way of simplicity and shown me the way of simplicity. I do not want you to name any Rule to me, not St. Augustine's, nor St. Bernard's, nor St. Benedict's."[20] We shall return to this later when dealing with Ugolino's involvement, but for now it is well to note the lack of any real grinding antagonism on the part of the educated brothers. We could call their request "reasonable."

But what about *LP* 77 which concludes the *Intentio Regule*? In this account Francis rails against those who oppose him based on "the authority and foresight of their learning."[21] A closer look at *LP* 77 gives evidence of editorializing. The author(s) of the account suggest that they know of certain elements dropped from the Rule and other writings of Francis. According to them, these deletions "would have been of real value to the whole order, now after his death."[22] *LP* 77 shows the author(s) lamenting the fact that certain elements were dropped from the Rule more than it shows us any real concern of the historical Francis: this is editorializing. Also the presumption of the author(s), or at least their expectation, is that the Rule should be omnicompetent — addressing all situations, all times, and everywhere. This is simply unrealistic and so *LP* 77 may be deemed implausible for these reasons. The educated friars were no villains as was concluded in the previous analysis.

Was Cardinal Ugolino a Villain?

We arrived at a consideration of Cardinal Ugolino's role in the composition of the Rule of 1223. Basic accounts for his role include *AP* 44-45[23]

and *Quo Elongati*. Both of these documents attest to the fact that he *did* have a role in the writing of the Rule. Some of the elements in *AP* 44-45, however, need to be questioned. *AP* compresses time and has the *Regula bullata* (1223) being written in the wake of the first missions outside Italy (1217). The friars had experienced serious opposition "beyond the Alps," especially in Germany and Hungary because they were mistaken for heretics.[24] They returned to Francis complaining of the abuse they received and then acquainted Ugolino with the same troubles. The result was that Ugolino summoned Francis to Rome, brought him before Pope Honorius III and had him write a Rule to be officially confirmed by the Pope.

We know for a fact that the *Regula bullata* was not promulgated anywhere near the Chapter of 1217. Something to notice, however, is the title of *AP*'s account. It reads: "How the Church Protected the Brothers From their Persecutors."[25] This section of *AP* is about how the church saved the Order. It aims to show how Ugolino, now assigned Cardinal protector, sent out letters[26] and had a Rule officially approved by the church so that the friars would have safe passage into foreign lands. Ugolino is a hero who even became Pope in fulfillment of Francis' prophecy. And so *AP* needs to be read carefully in light of these clearly stated intentions for the narrative.

But, once again, such a clearly stated intention does not mean the entire narrative is discredited. The account does validate Ugolino's role at the Roman court in helping get the Rule officially confirmed. It also tells us that Ugolino was a prime mover in getting Francis to write another Rule. These elements need not be doubted since they are not contradicted anywhere else in the sources, but they *do* need to be read in light of other accounts.

One of those other accounts is *Verba* 5 (*LP* 114). We already studied this text in connection with the educated friars. They approached Ugolino with the request that he persuade Francis to listen to them at least some of the time. Ugolino relays their message, a message initiated by the friars, and thus he assumes the role of *spokesman* of their concerns.[27] Francis took Ugolino by the hand and went before all the brothers to say he does not want to hear anything about the other Rules of St. Augustine, St. Benedict, or St. Bernard. Is this the tragic Francis of Sabatier's biography who is unable to stand up to the mean pressure of Ugolino? And we might consider Ugolino's response: does he challenge Francis before the brothers as he had done at Florence in 1217 when Francis was leading a group into France?[28] *Verba* 5 tells us: "The cardinal was flabbergasted and said nothing, and all the friars were afraid.[29] It needs to be acknowledged that Francis dealt adequately and well with the Ugolino and the educated friars in this scene.

Here again we must be careful about presuming antagonism between

Francis and Ugolino, including antagonism *from* Francis *toward* Ugolino. There is evidence that Francis trusted Ugolino even to his dying day. Francis, in the *Testament* 31-33, speaks about how to deal with an incorrigible friar who refuses to observe the Rule in a Catholic manner. First he is to be delivered to the custodian by the brothers, then under guard to the minister by the custodian, and finally:

> The minister is strictly bound through obedience to send him with brothers who shall guard him as a prisoner day and night until they deliver him before the Lord of Ostia who is the master, protector, and corrector of the entire fraternity.[30]

An incorrigible friar was to be taken under guard to Ugolino. These are hardly the words of a man showing signs of being betrayed. Whom did Francis believe could guard and protect Catholic observance of the Rule? At least according to his own *Testament*, the trusted Ugolino.

Ugolino's relationship with the Order does not end with the composition of the Rule or even the death of St. Francis in 1226. We have looked at a number of sources relating specifically to the composition of the Rule of 1223. Whether or not Ugolino, as Pope Gregory IX, betrayed the vision of St. Francis in *Quo Elongati* (1230) is another question. But even if some think he did, and this will be debated for many years to come, it would mean that the vision (ideal) of St. Francis was there — intact and evidently causing some difficulty for the friars at the time — in 1230. This gives indication that, at least during Francis' own lifetime, Ugolino was no villain. But it also, and this is perhaps even more important, testifies to the integrity of the Rule of 1223. The form of the Holy Gospel, which was the ideal and vision of St. Francis, is preserved in the Rule.

Did Francis feel betrayed?

The integrity and value of the Rule may be seen in another way by considering whether or not Francis himself felt betrayed. There are many ways of approaching this question, but my focus has been on the composition of the Rule of 1223. And so the particular angle the question assumes, at least in this essay, would be to ask whether Francis was in any way displeased with the Rule. If he believed that his vision and ideal were betrayed in the composition of the Rule, then there should be at least some indication that he was dissatisfied with the document. Two writings of Francis will be briefly studied to help address this last query on betrayal.

First there is the *Letter to the Entire Order* which was most likely written after early December of 1224.[31] In this letter Francis gives the litmus test for being a Friar Minor: observance of the Rule.

> Therefore, through every means which I am capable of employing, I ask Brother H., the Minister General and my lord, to insist that the Rule be observed inviolably by everyone. Further, he should insist that the clerics say the Office with devotion before God... and I shall pass these things on to the brothers who are with me so they may be observed in the Office and in all other things established in the the Rule.
> 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.[32]

These are strong words, too strong for us to doubt that Francis held the Rule of 1223 in high esteem. Evidently he was not disillusioned with the Rule or he would not have commended its observance so strongly.

Later in the *Testament* the same esteem for the *Regula bullata* becomes evident. Francis tells us what the *Testament* is: "This is a remembrance, an admonition, an exhortation, and my testament, which I, little Brother Francis, prepare for all of you, my blessed brothers, so that we may observe in a more catholic manner the Rule which we have promised to the Lord."[33] Just prior to this statement he tells the brothers not to consider the *Testament* as "another Rule," presumably because there is no substitute for, or more valuable document than, the *Regula bullata*. But the text quoted immediately above also reveals Francis' dying wish that the Rule be observed in a Catholic maner. The Rule is the form of the Holy Gospel and is, therefore, to be observed as such.

By way of conclusion, my interest has been to study the sources relating to the composition of the Rule of 1223, and to critically evaluate whether Francis was betrayed during this formative period. But in a study like this, yet another dividend has surfaced, namely, the true value of the Rule itself.

It may be said that there is a tendency, witnessed within Franciscan history, to set up alternative documents to the Rule. Essentially this is what Sabatier did in his biography. Commenting on which Rule, between 1209 and 1223, was authentically Franciscan he writes: "That of 1210 alone is truly Franciscan; that of 1223 is indirectly the work of the Church.[34] This not only depreciates the value of the *Regula bullata*, it also sets up — as an alternative — another document we do not even have (i. e., the Primitive Rule). Saying that the Rule of 1223 is, even indirectly the "work of the Church" is possible only where it is admitted that Francis was betrayed when it was being written. Hopefully this essay has helped to shed some light on the question of betrayal and, in some small way, shown how the Rule is the most valuable writing not of the Church, but of St. Francis. It was certainly most valuable to Francis himself since the Rule gave *form* to life according to the Holy Gospel as he had conceived it and as God had shown it to him. □

Endnotes

[1]I am grateful to Fr. Maurice Sheehan, OFM Cap., who taught a course on the "Rule of St. Francis" at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University. This course gave me the opportunity to critically study and evaluate the sources and to formulate an answer to the question of betrayal. It is my own answer throughout and so too, therefore, are its shortcomings.

[2]Paul Sabatier, *Life of St. Francis of Aassisi,* trans. Louise Seymour Houghton (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1919).

[3]Sabatier, 258.

[4]For a good discussion of these works see: Rosalind Brooke, ed. and trans., "Introduction," in *Scripta Leonis, Rufini et Angeli: Sociorum S. Francisci* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1970) 51-66. Brooke's position gives a high degree of certainty for Leonine authorship of the *Intentio*. However even if it was authored by Brother Leo, it must be admitted that "intentions" are a very nebulous reality and so need to be read even more carefully when searching for historical facts. The *Scripta Leonis* also contains a translation of the *Legend of Perugia* which will be the one used throughout this essay. It will simply be referred to as "Brooke" after the translator's last name.

[5]David Flood, OFM, and Thaddee Matura, OFM, *The Birth of a Movement: A Study of the First Rule of St. Francis,* trans. Paul Schwartz and Paul Lachance (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 19754) 3-56.

[6]Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap., trans. and ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982) 109.

[7]Ewert Cousins, trans., *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey Into God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis* in *The Classics of Western Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978) 216.

[8]Most Franciscans historians refer to Elias as Francis' "Vicar," instead of "Minister General," during the formative period of the Rule. But Bonaventure, at least, was aware of himself as successor to Elias since he writes about his retreat on Mount La Verna in the *Itinerarium:* Following the example of our most blessed father Francis, I was seeking this peace with panting spirit — I a sinner and utterly unworthy who after our blessed father's death had become the seventh Minister General of the friars." Cousins, 54.

[9]It is generally accepted that there were four Rules: The Primitive Rule (1209), the Rule of 1221, The Lost Rule, and The (Bulled) Rule of 1223.

[10]Brooke, 285.

[11]Brooke, 285.

[12]Brooke, 287.

[13]Marion Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973) 512. This work will be referred to as *Omnibus*.

[14]*Regula non-bullata,* chapter XIV. V. Armstrong, 120.

[15]Brooke, 207.

[16]Cajetan Esser, OFM, *Origins of the Franciscan Order,* trans. Aedan Daly, OFM and Dr. Irina Lynch (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1970) 58-71.

[17]This was a principle of Roman law adopted by medieval canonists, i.e. what is to be observed by all must be agreed upon by all. The *Regula bullata,* being a juridical document in formation, fell under the guidance of this principle.

[18]Brooke, 287.

[19]See footnote Nr. 14.

[20]Brooke, 289.

[21]Brooke, 223.

[22]Brooke, 223.

[23]An English translation of *AP* has been done by Eric Kahn, OFM, and is available in: Damien Isabell, *The Franciscan Workbook,* 2nd ed. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979) 94-115.

[24]Cf. Jordan of Giano, *The Chronicle: 4-6* in Placid Hermann, OFM, trans., *XIIIth Century Chronicles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1961) 21-23.

[25]Isabell, 113.

[26]Ugolino most likely did secure letters of protection for the friars following upon the opposition they faced during the first missions. There are two bulls written by Pope Honorius III, most likely at the urging of Ugolino, assuring the bishops of the friars' good Catholic standing and their being an approved Order within the Church. The first bull entitled *Cum dilecti filii* was issued on June 11, 1218 and was addressed to all the prelates in the church. The second bull entitled *Pro dilectis filiis* was issued on May 29, 1220 and was addressed to only the bishops of France. This latter bull recalled for the French bishops *Cum dilecti filii* indicating that some of the friars were still facing opposition in that country even as late as 1220.

[27]We might be tempted to say that the learned friars' request was consonant with Ugolino's own interests for the Order, but then we need to be careful of isogesis: the text does not tell us anything about Ugolino's personal response to the friars' request other than he fulfilled it.

[28]See *LP* 82 (*Omnibus* 1957) and paralels.

[29]Brooke, 289.

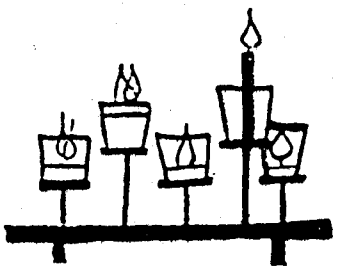
[30]*Testament* 33 in Armstrong, 156.

[31]On the dating of this document see: Ottaviano Schmucki, "St. Francis' Letter to the Entire Order," trans. Ignatius McCormack, OFM, *Grayfriars Review* (April, 1989) 1-33.

[32]*Letter to the Entire Order* 40-44 as quoted from Armstrong, 59-60.

[33]*Testament* 345 quoted from Armstrong, 156.

[34]Sabatier, 254.



St. Bonaventure and Ecology

PHIL HOEBING, O.F.M.

In this paper I wish to explore the thought of the 13th century theologian and philosopher, St. Bonaventure, in the belief that Bonaventure's thought can contribute some concepts and attitudes to the present ecological discussion. In the 20th century many voices, scientific, philosophical, theological, conservationist, and preservationist, have expressed a deep concern about our ecological crisis. These people have observed the damage that man has done to his world and have offered explanations as to how man has gotten into this crisis and also recommendations as to how to ease or solve the crisis. Many who have studied the 20th century predicament with the environmental problems are convinced that man must change his attitude toward the world around him before any major change will occur in man's treatment of our land, air and water with its many forms of life.

For the formulation of the current questions I will first give a brief sketch of the positions of Aldo Leopold and Lynn White. White who has a great admiration for St. Francis, does, I believe, misrepresent Bonaventure's relationship with St. Francis.

Aldo Leopold, whose book *A Sand County Almanac* was posthumously published in 1949, was among the first ecologists to call attention to the need for a land ethic. Leopold, a conservationist, a scientist, a writer, and a university professor, was deeply concerned with the state of the world in which we are living. In his many articles and lectures Leopold summarized his views in a number of pithy statements, such as, "many incorrectly believe that a stump is a sign of progress." Leopold was among the first in the U.S. to challenge the American way of conservation, recreation and sportsmanship. When he saw how timbers were being destroyed, whole species of wild life eliminated, and rivers and lakes

Fr. Phil Hoebing is a member of the Sacred Heart Province of Friars Minor. He has taught philosophy at Quincy College (Illinois) for several years. This paper was read at a meeting of the Illinois Medieval Association.

polluted, he called for a change of attitude. Leopold proposed a land ethic which called for love and respect for the world, the plants and the animals.

> It is inconceivable to me that an ethical relation to land can exist without love, respect and admiration for land, and a high regard for its value. By value, I of course mean something far broader than mere economic value; I mean value in the philosophical sense.[1]

In this book *In Defense of the Land Ethic,* J. Baird Callicot discussed in detail the views of Aldo Leopold whom he refers to as a seminal environmental philosopher. In his book of essays Callicott tries to spell out the underlying assumptions and principles on which Leopold based his ethics of the environment. He takes exceptions to the views of contemporary philosophers, such as John Passmore, Robin Attfield and H. J. McCloskey, who for one reason or another do not put much credence in Leopold's views. In support of the land it can be argued that one of Leopold's most important contributions to an ethics of the environment is his concern for the biotic community. Leopold's intepretation of the position of man in the world is that man is a member and not a conqueror of the land. The implications of this view are manifold because all of nature is interconnected and interdependent. Calicott summarizes the principles of the land ethic in the following manner.

> According to the land ethic, therefore: Thou shalt not extirpate or render species extinct; thou shalt exercise great caution in introducing exotic and domestic species into local ecosystem, in exacting energy from the soil and releasing it into the biota, and damaging or polluting water courses; and thou shalt be specially solicitous of predatory birds and mammals. Here in brief are the express moral precepts of the land ethic. They are expressly informed — not to say derived — from the energy of the environment.[2]

In discussing some of the causes of our environmental problems, Lynn White, in a presentation to the AAAS meeting in 1966, suggested that the Judeo - Christian tradition must share some of the blame for our present ecological crisis. His argument was partly based on the first chapter of Genesis.

> And God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Gen. 1.28)

White suggested that Adam and Eve took this command very seriously as did their followers so that today man dominates nature and uses it as he pleases. As White concluded his presentation he noted that at least one person did not follow the traditional view of man's dominance and that man was St. Francis of Assisi. Francis, a radical in his time, did not follow the common view that man was to dominate nature but rather saw

all creatures as having a certain equality. Because of Francis' appreciation of nature, White concluded his presentation with these words:

> Possibly we should ponder the greatest radical in Christian history since Christ: St. Francis of Assisi. The prime miracle of St. Francis is the fact that he did not end at the stake, as many of his left-wing followers did. He was so clearly heretical that a General of the Franciscan Order, St. Bonaventure, a great and perceptive Christian, tried to suppress the early accounts of Franciscanism.[3]

Some authors might view White's view as expressing only the tradition of Genesis and that if one looks further into the Bible one will also find that man is asked to be the gardener and caretaker of the Garden. (Gen. 2, 15) The story of man's position in Eden is found in the J-tradition which pictures man in a different light than does the P-tradiiton. The J-tradition is compatible with many of the modern concepts of the ethics and the environment such as those of Leopold and Callicott. The Franciscan view of nature as exemplified by Francis and Bonaventure is also compatible with the view that man is a steward and caretaker of nature.

I suggest that Francis' vision and life were central to Bonaventure's philosophical - theological synthesis. To develop this claim, I suggest, at the risk of oversimplifying, three main views on the relationship of man to nature that can be discerned in the Western World. The first position is the dominance view which believes that all of nature is a commodity to be used, manipulated and enjoyed by man. The stewardship view believes that man does not have absolute control of nature but must use it wisely and respectfully in accord with God's plan. The third position, known as the "participation in nature" view, is found in Eastern thought and in some Western thinkers. This view believes that all of nature is interconnected and that man himself is also a part of nature. Since Darwin's "Origin of Species" many twentieth century writers, for a number of reasons, have espoused this position. St. Francis is classified with those who accept the interconnectedness of nature and the participation view.

One often sees the statue of St. Francis in a bird bath or in a flower garden. These would seem to be appropriate places for his statue provided one understands why St. Francis loved the birds and peached to them and why he admired the beauty of the flowers. One must avoid two extremes when considering Francis and his love of nature. First of all, Francis is clearly not a pantheist, even though he sees the presence of the Creator in everything. Celano writes about Francis and his attitude to all creatures:

> The realization that everything comes from the same source filled Francis with greater affection than ever and he called even the most insignificant creatures his brothers and sisters, because he knew that they had the same origin as himself.[4]

The second extreme position to avoid would be to make Francis a sentimentalist and a naturalist. Francis realized that things were good because they came from God and can lead man back to God.

> In every work of the artist, he praised the Artist. Whatever he found in the things made he referred to the Maker. He rejoiced in all the works of the hands of the Lord and saw behind things pleasant to behold their life-giving reasons and cause. In beautiful things he saw Beauty itself; all things were to him good... through his footprints impressed upon things he followed the Beloved everywhere; he made for himself a ladder by which to come even to his throne.[5]

The footprints of the Creator in creation and the ladder by which man can ascend to union with God are concepts developed by Bonaventure in his "Journey of the Mind to God" and in many of his other writings. Like all the professors in the 13th century he could not help but be involved in the controversy over Aristotle and his thought. Although Bonaventure saw much good in the works of Aristotle, his own metaphysics took a different direction, being influenced by the Greek Fathers, the Pseudo-Dionysius, St. Augustine and the Victorines. In developing his synthesis of man's relationship to God, Bonaventure employed the Trinitarian theology of the Greek Fathers as the keystone for his view. His views on emanation, exemplarism and the return of creation to God are intimately connected to his concept of the Trinity as essentially dynamic. Bonaventure developed his subjectivity along the lines of Augustine whom he admired very much and referred to him as "The greatest of the Latin Fathers." In his works he quoted St. Augustine more than 3000 times. Bonaventure was a student and friend of Alexander of Hales who introduced him to the Victorines, the Pseudo-Dionysius and through him, to the Greek Fathers. Bonaventure's view of God as essentially dynamic has a different perspective than that of Thomas Acquinas, his contemporary. Moreover, the Neoplatonism of the Pseudo-Dionysius differed from the Neoplatonism of Augustine. The dynamic God with his exemplarism and illumination has a more intimate role to play in the creation and development of the universe than a God who is interpreted to be more transcendent than immanent. In his synthesis Bonaventure attempts to synthesize the apparently opposite interpretations of God's role with the universe.

The Pseudo-Dionysius had a great influence on the thirteenth century thinkers and especially on St. Bonaventure. Bougerol in his book writes:

> The Areopagite's teaching is hard to summarize. We may say, however, that his influence on Bonaventure was threefold: he gave Bonaventure a viewpoint, a method, and a few fundamental themes. Bonaventure himself

says: "The first (dogma) is exposed chiefly by Augustine, the second (morals) by Gregory, and the third (the end of both), or mystical anagogy by Dionysius."[6]

Bonaventure held the view that to have a true metaphysics one has to be concerned with emanation, exemplarity, and consummation. The metaphysics, thus, had to consider creation, the ideas of God in creation, and the return of creation to God. Bonaventure states this in his *Collationes in Hexaemeron:*

> Through the first Truth, all come back as the Son expresses it: "I have come forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again I leave the world and go to the Father." (Jn. 16, 28) Likewise let anyone say: "Lord, I came out of You, the Supreme Being: I will return to You and through You, the Supreme Being."
>
> Such is the metaphysical Center that leads us back, and this is the sum total of our metaphysics: concerned with emanation, exemplarity, and consummation, that is, the illumination through spiritual radiations and return to the supreme Being.[7]

Ewert Cousins insists that the metaphysics of Bonaventure must be grounded in his theology of the Trinity and that the act of creation takes place because of the dynamism in the Trinity.

> the root of Bonaventure's doctrine lies in his conception of the Father as dynamic, fecund source of the Trinitarian processions. In examining the Father, Bonaventure employs two principles: the principle of fecund primordiality and the principle of the self-diffusion of the good. Both of these principles he applies to the divinity in relation to creation and to the Father in the Trinity.[8]

Because Bonaventure believed that the Trinity is dymanic he was able to join two conceptions of God that appeared to be irreconcilable in Western thought, namely, the self-sufficiency of God and the self-communication of God. Bonaventure unites both in his theological synthesis. He did so by appreciating St. Francis' vision that the whole of creation is an expression of God's love. Love becomes the means of reconciling the concepts as Cousins states:

> For Bonaventure God's self-sufficiency and self-communication are so intimately united that his principle can be stated as follows: Because He is self-sufficient, he is absolutely self-communicating.[9]

Being a Christian thinker, Bonaventure could not accept either an eternal universe or a necessary universe. Without going into the arguments as to why he opposed both Aristotle who postulated an eternal universe and the arab philosophers who accepted a necessarily created universe, Bonaventure argued that the world was created in time, that the world was created from nothing, and that it was created freely by God. In the *Breviloquium* Bonaventure writes:

> Having summarily considered the trinity of God, it is proper to speak next of creation. Briefly, the following must be held. The entire fabric of the universe was brought into existence in time and out of nothingness, by one first Principle, simple and supreme, whose power, though immeasureable, disposed all things by measure and number and weight.[10]

The second important theme of Bonaventure's methaphysics is concerned with exemplarism. Bonaventure believed that Aristotle had made a fundamental error in separating the Ideas from God. In his unique way, Bonaventure places the Ideas in the second Person of the Trinity and makes them the exemplar ideas of all the individuals in creation. Surely, this relates to the idea of emanation because creatures reflect the perfections of God and God can be found in all of His creatures. Francis knew this intuitively but Bonaventure structures a theological explanation with his exemplarism. He often states in his writings that God can be found in two books; the book of Sacred Scripture and the book of nature. Regarding the question: "Whether God is Knowable through Creatures" he writes:

> I reply: it must be said as the cause shines forth in the effect, and as the wisdom of the artificer is manifested in his work, so God, who is the artificer and cause of the creature, is known through it.[11]

And again:

> From this we may gather that the universe is like a book reflecting, representing, and describing its Maker, the trinity, at three levels of expression: as trace, as image and as likeness. The aspect of trace is found in every creature; the aspect of image in the intellectual creatures or rational spirits; the aspect of likeness, only in those who are God-conformed. Through these successive levels, comparable to the rungs of a ladder, the human mind is designed to ascend gradually to the supreme principle who is God.[12]

That God is the exemplary cause of all creatures is at the very center of Bonaventure's metaphysics. Bonaventure reasoned in this way: if God created the world He would act, not in a blind manner, but rather in an intelligent way. Bonaventure was convinced that Plato erred when he put the Ideas in a world apart from God because it is necessary that these Ideas exist in the divine intellect. It would be more correct to say that these ideas or patterns are in God and that he acts according to them. Being a Christian and a believer in the Trinity he developes his interpretation of the ideas along these lines. God is supremely intelligible to Himself and comprehends Himself in a single act, but in performing this act, he equals himself. This similitude, as a Christian knows, is the Divine Word, which is equal to God and expresses all His being, all His power and all His knowledge. (*Hex*. III, 4, v. p. 343) It is in the understanding

of the Uncreated Word that everythiong is known and understood. In his interpretation of the exemplar ideas in the Word, Bonaventure differs from some of the other medievalists by stressing the activity of the divine Intellect in the production of the Ideas. Besides being representations of the essence of God, which are imitable by creatures, they are also active. Bonaventure compares them to the ideas of an artist who plans to produce a work of art. God knows the creatures through His Ideas which are not universal but individual and specific. Thus, Bonaventure in explaining the relation of creature to creator used his doctrine of analogy.

One of the characteristic features of Bonaventure's exemplarism is his doctrine that every creature is an analogy of God. Since all things are made according to their pattern in the divine ideas, they bear the seal of their descent. There are many degrees of analogy between the creature and God, namely, shadow, vestige, and image. A rock, for example, represents God in a distant and indistinct way, a vestige represents God in a distant but distinct way. All living things are vestiges of God whereas man who represents God closely and distinctly is an image of God. The man who is conformed to God by grace is a similitude because such a person represents God most closely.

All creatures must bear the seal of the divine because they are made according to the patterns in the divine Word. Bonaventure, like his teacher, Alexander of Hales, emphasizes the positive aspect of analogy in seeing creatures as reflections of the creator. In treating analogy in this way there is no longer an infinite distance between God and the creature.

Bonaventure saw analogy as the structural law of creation. Since all things are made according to their pattern in the divine ideas, all things bear the seal of their divine descent. All things are analogies of God. Man, however, being the image of God in this world of analogies, has the central position because he is able to appreciate the various levels of analogies and refer them back to their Maker.

Consummation or the return of creatures is the third part of Bonaventure's metaphysics. In the return of creatures to God, man plays a central role in the synthesis of Bonaventure. Man is a composite of the spiritual and the corporal and is the natural mediator between creation and God and the rest of creation becomes a mirror which reflects the perfection of God. The visible world is a book through which, God, the artist, proclaims His infinite perfection. Bonaventure admits that man can view nature simply as objects to be appreciated in themselves or he can see them in their symbolism which gives them real meaning. Until man see creatures in their relationship to their Creator he does not really understand his position in the world or the value of nature.

After briefly considering a few of Bonaventure's basic ideas one sees that he is in agreement with St. Francis in his love for nature. With his

exemplarism, his analogy of creatures with God and man's central position in the return of things to God, Bonaventure has given a philosophical - theological rationale for Francis' exuberant and enthusiastic love of nature.

St. Bonaventure, because of his metaphysics of exemplarity and analogy, can make a contribution to the 20th century discussion of ecological ethics. Many writers argue that man must see the intrinsic value in nature to change man's use of nature. If nature has only instrumental value then it can be used in any way by man but if it has intrinsic value then it must be respected for that value. Bonaventure, with his metaphysics, has given nature an intrinsic value.

Today some authors like to speak of the intrinsic value of nature rather than discuss the rights of animals. Callicott, for example, in responding to Peter Singer and Tom Regan, discusses the intrinsic value of species and the need to preserve those species. Although the men who lived in the 13th century had different problems and attitudes than the people living in the 20th century they did realize the intrinsic value of nature. They had different reasons for their views than some 20th century ecologists as the Franciscans saw things as valuable because they came from the goodness of God. Contemporary writers see things as intrinsically valuable because all of nature is interconnected. Since every species is valuable because all things in nature are interdependent, man is harming himself by his destruction of species. The 13th century thinkers did not realize the danger of eliminating species because they did not have such a problem. It would be hypothesizing to say what Bonaventure and Francis would say about our current ecological crisis. There are so many situations in Francis' life where he showed respect and concern for the world and its creatures that it is easy to put words in his mouth. For example, when St. Francis delivered his famous sermon to the birds he was expressing a special concern and respect for the flock of birds that listened attentively to his words.

One may speculate as to St. Bonaventure's comments on problems that were unknown in the 13th century. Since that time science and technology, although they have solved many of man's problems, have not been without questions regarding their values and development. Some ethical questions that are discussed frequently in our daily newspapers are the following: Do animals have rights? Is it ethically permissible to use animals for medical experiments that will benefit only humans? Does the non-human and non-animal world have any moral rights or moral status? Is it ethical to have animal farms whose only purpose is commercial? Do members of endangered species have more rights than members of a species that is not endangered? What is the status of such predators as the mountain lion and the timber wolf? Does our present generation have an obligation

to future generations? Do future generations have a right to a beautiful and unpolluted world?

These questions are difficult to answer but there is another problem which seems unique to the last years in the 20th century. This is the problem of species extinction. Conservationists tell us that from 1600 to 1900 species became extinct at the rate of about one every four years. From 1900 to 1950 the rate of extinction was about one a year. If man continues to exploit in the future as he has during the last 40 years, conservationists think the extinction of species would be more than a hundred a day. This is seen as one of the biggest problems in our ecological crisis. If all of nature is interconnected how many species can nature lose before it is harmed beyond repair?

These questions may seem very distant both in time and in concept from a thirteenth century Franciscan teacher at the University of Paris. As one reads Aldo Leopold's "Thinking Like a Wolf," which is an essay on the need for the wolf, one appreciates his message on attitudes. During his early years as a conservationist, Leopold was adamant in his view that the wolf had to be destroyed because it was ruining the deer population. He took part in wolf hunts and wrote articles advocating the extermination of the wolf. Later in life his view is the exact opposite because he came to realize that by eliminating the wolves the deer became overpopulated and seriously damaged the forests when their food became scarce. He learned that it was more difficult to repair the damage done to the forests by the hungry deer than it was to replace the deer destroyed by the wolf. He learned that all of nature is interconnected and that to destroy parts of nature is to weaken and harm all of nature.

In struggling to find answers to the many problems in our ecological crisis many writers, like Leopold, believe that we must learn to see the intrinsic value of nature. They believe strongly that the non-human world does not exist solely for the manipulation of man. Bonaventure certainly gave an intrinsic value to all of nature in that it reflects the perfections of God, but he also viewed nature in an instrumental way. He would advocate a reasonable use and appreciation of God's world in which man lives. In his *Retracing the Arts to Theology* Bonaventure, for example, considers hunting as an external art that also leads one to God. It would seem that Bonaventure, with his metaphysics, would be able to offer valuable concepts to a twentieth century discussion on ecology from both a philosophical and a theological aspect.

In his thoughtful New Year's address Pope John Paul II called on all people to respond to our ecological crisis which he called a "moral problem." He specifically addressed himself to those people without any particular religious conviction, to those people who believe in God but are not Christian, to the entire body of Christians and to the Catholics. In

our discussion of Bonaventure and his philosophical - theological principles it is fitting to conclude with Pope John Paul's conclusion to "Peace with All Creation":

> In 1979, I proclaimed St. Francis of Assisi as the heavenly patron of those who promote ecology (cf. Apostolic Letter "Inter Sanctos": AAS 71 (1979), 1509f). He offers Christians an integrity of creation. As a friend of the poor who was lived by God's creation — animals, plants, natural forces, even Brother Sun and Sister Moon — to give honor and praise to the Lord. The poor man of Assisi gives us striking witness that when we are at peace with God we are better able to devote ourselves to building up that peace with all creation which is inseparable from peace among all peoples.
>
> It is my hope that the inspiration of St. Francis will help us to keep ever alive a sense of "fraternity" with all those good and beautiful things which almighty God has created. And may he remind us of our serious obligation to respect and watch over them with care, in light of that greater and higher fraternity that exists within the human family.[13] □

Endnotes

[1]Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*. (Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 223.

[2]J. Baird Callicott, *In Defense of the Land Ethic*. Essays in Environmental Philosophy (State University of New York Press, 1989) p. 91.

[3]Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Environmental Past." *Science*, March 10, 1967, Vol. 155, Number 3767:1203-1207 p. 1206.

[4]Celano, *Lives of St. Francis, his Writings and Early Biographies*. English Omnibus, ed. Marion Habig, O.F.M. (Franciscan Herald Press, 1972) p. 692.

[5]Celano, p. 494.

[6]José de Vinck, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure* (trans. from the French of J. Guy Bougerol, O.F.M.) St. Anthony Guild Press, 1963) p. 40.

[7]José de Vinck (trans.) *The Works of Bonaventure*. Vol. V. *Collationes on the Six Days* (St. Anthony Guild Press, 1963).

[8]Ewert Cousins, *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites*. (Franciscan Herald Press, 1978) p. 101.

[9]Cousins, p. 102.

[10]José de Vinck trans. *The Works of Bonaventure*, Vol. II. *The Breviloquium* (St. Anthony Guild Press. 1963) p. 69.

[11]Richard McKeon, ed and trans., *Selections from Medieval Philosophers*, St. Bonaventura (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930) p. 131.

[12]Bonaventure (trans. José de Vinck) Vol. II, p. 104.

[13]Pope John Paul II. "Peace With All Creation." Bulletin Institute for Theological Encounter with Science and Technology (Winter, 1990, Vol. 21, No. 1.) p. 10.

Book Reviews

Francis and the Franciscan Movement. By David Flood, O.F.M. Quezon City, Philippines: The Franciscan Institute of Asia, 1989. Pp. 173, n.p.

Reviewed by Francis Berna, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Fordham), Theology Department, St. Bonaventure University.

"Once upon a time..." — what a wonderful time! In this magical, mythical time everthing was just as it should be. It was a time of life and unbounded energy; a time of inspiration and creativity; a time of change and great revolution. But eventually "once upon a time" met on "hard times." This is David Flood's reading of Francis and the communities which bear his name.

Even if one is unfamiliar with the previous work of the author the first pages of this text immediatley inform the reader that "something different" will unfold in the pages to follow. At the end, however, one recognizes that the difference lies only in the particular details, not the overall tone.

The "foreward" alerts the reader to the essential difference which Flood intends to detail. He notes that he will refer to the early Franciscan writings in the customary way save his reference to Francis' *Letter to the Faithful*. This text he prefers to title *Commonitorium*, insisting that with this text Francis intends to "shake the hearers loose from a world without vision" and "challenges them to break with normal Christian ways" (p. 1). Throughout the text Flood will draw on this work as well as the *Early Rule* to accentuate the radical nature of the primitive community and to suggest how this radical vision was dimmed by the ideological structures of the patriarchal Church.

As with the *Letter to the Faithful* Flood insists on a different title for the *Early Rule*. Rather than a "rule" it is the "basic document of the Franciscan movement." A "rule" employs the language of recognized Church institutions. The "basic document" arises from the movement's creation of its own terminology. In Flood's estimation, as Francis and his friends "marginalize Assisi," (p. 49) so, he would seem to also suggest, they "marginalize the institutional Church." This is the "once upon a time." And as Flood later observes, it is not new. It is a variation and detailing of Desbonnets' theme of "intuition and institution" (pp. 149ff).

In detailing the "hard times" which bring the ruin of "once upon a time" David Flood raises some challenging though questionable observations. The person of Francis and the question of poverty, not surprisingly for Franciscan circles, are the two topics needing the most attention.

In what first appears outrageous Flood writes, "Francis was not poor" (p. 32). He then goes on to specify that by poverty he means being a person without social supports. And certainly, within the brotherhood, Francis had social supports. This kind of confusion caused by reinterpretation follows Flood's already established practice. When addressing the role of money in the primitive movement he contends the motivation rested in a disregard for an economic system and not the virtue of poverty — "whatever that may be" (p 23). One would hope that the author could suggest the meaning of that virtue. That hope finds a justifiable ground in light of Flood's conclusion which highlights the *Praises of the Virtues*, especially Lady Poverty!

Flood's problem with seeing poverty as a virtue lies in his perception that once Francis is identified with traditional Christian virtues he fits too neatly into the institutional church. Flood prefers Francis on the outside. Flood goes so far as to suggest that Francis rejects asceticism, or at least any rule about asceticism, as this would have Francis fitting into traditional religious asceticism, the work of an order and not a movement. If there were no references to asceticism in any of the other works by Francis then Flood's position might be plausible. However the numerous references to penance and the established fact of Francis' own mortification reduce such a position to fantasy.

Afraid to identify Francis with anything that might possibly seem traditionally (institutionally) religious David Flood reinterprets Francis' insistence to be placed naked on the naked ground as he lay dying. Flood holds, "The learned in the order lacked the knowledge to reflect on Francis' closeness in prayer to 'our sister, Mother Earth' " (p. 163). No, Thomas of Celano with his failure to appreciate this part of Francis, or perhaps because he had given himself over to the ideology of the hierarchical institution, had to see in this event of Francis a "being with the naked and humble Christ." First, one could question what is so intitutional about Celano's interpretation. Second one could wonder, is not Flood doing exactly what he accuses his brother Thomas of doing — having ideas ready to explain the event of Francis? Instead of interpreting Francis along the lines of the traditional institutional model, Flood interprets the Poverello in terms of contemporary critiques of the institution.

It is precisely this which is continually disturbing about Flood's text. He comes to the event of Francis with his own categories of interpretation, indeed his own theology, yet tries to pass it off as if it were the event itself disclosing its meaning. If only Flood would admit to the prejudice of his own perspective, one could get on with considering one's own interpretation of Francis in light of the author's suggestions. Though he recognizes the complexity of interpretation because of "restrictions laid on the mind by social interests" (p. 169) he fails to recognize the restrictions of his own interpretations imposed by his own social interests.

The social interests of David Flood, and others, do not allow him to see any possibility of the Spirit of God at work in the charisms of Thomas of Celano, Bonaventure, Haymo of Faversham or any of the other later "institutional" figures. Flood boldly asserts that the likes of Peter Damian "did not become Fransicans". (p. 153) He suggests the same of Bonaventure. This perspective leads to a real contradiction of the evidence about Francis himself as well as the community's recognition of these later saints.

One might be so bold to say that if the Franciscan movement died with the canonization (institutionalization) of Francis, as Flood lays claim, then let the movement rest in peace. And, one should be so bold to say that the argument proposed by Flood should rest in peace.

However, despite the severe limitations, *Francis and the Franciscan*

Movement is worth a careful reading. It is always good to know what is on the mind of David Flood. What is on his mind will always stir up what is on one's own mind. And his insights, though prejudiced, ring true with the contemporary interpretation given to Francis and Franciscan life — interpretations which claim the inspiration of the Spirit. The socially radical Francis depicted by Flood enables the contemporary Franciscan to image well ways of being redically Franciscan today. One need only be cautious in proposing a "once upon a time" — even if that time be today.

Visions of a Future. By Zachary Hayes, O.F.M. Michael Glazier: Wilmington, Delaware, 1989. Pp. 213. Paper, $14.95.

Reviewed by Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D., Assoc. Professor in the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University.

In the last decade a number of interesting books have been published on future prospects such as the very recent Jonathan Weiner work, *The Next One Hundred Years* or the Paul Kennedy best seller, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*. Before that there was Herman Kahn's study *The Next 200 Years*. These books have a futuristic perspective on what the near future holds in store for us. The perspectives are described by scientists, sociologists or even economists.

The present work is not another prophetic statement of that type. It is a theological work, "a study of Christian eschatology." The title is significantly different in that it points only to "a" future.

The book is part of an eight volume series. Each of the contributions is meant to be of use esepcially to the advanced student of theology. The series includes works on standard theological subjects: fundamental theology, the Trinity, Christ, the Church, anthropology.

Zachary Hayes has already published extensively on the subject of eschatology. Apart from his numerous articles, such as those in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, also printed by Michael Glazier, he had written monographs, *What are they saying about The End of the World*, and a pertinent translation, *The Theology of History of St. Bonaventure*.

The present work is developed to be a good guide and a high level challenge to the advanced student. The author who is very conversant with the contemporary scene leads the reader through some of recent discussions, both Protestant and Catholic. He mentions often Catholics such as Rahner, Urs von Balthasar, and even Ratzinger, but also such first rate Protestants as Moltmann and Pannenberg.

The first two chapters cover scriptural commonplaces of both the old and new testaments. Here is a good summary of apocalyptic texts leading to a compact conclusion: "God leads history forward to a fulfillment, not backwards to a Golden Past nor pointlessly in circles."

Fr. Hayes then reviews the current theological discussions on death and the afterlife, on theology of history, on the end of history, and on the final conditions (heaven and hell). The author never trivializes, but looks in depth at whatever aspect of the question he is examining. At the end of each chapter he leaves the serious student with a short contemporary bibliography.

I was particularly impressed by his chapter on theology of history, where he leads the student through an early Christian-Marxist dialogue, then through the debates at Vatican II, and finally gives an analysis of the Moltmann-Panenberg hope literature and the Catholic stance on liberation theology. The survey probes the proper limits of attitudes toward the historical situation: must we be involved in the historical task to be Christian at all or is it best for us to merely hope for a transcendent future?

The author's judgment and elegant use of language are both remarkable, particularly as he touches such themes as "signs of the end," and parousia. He is especially keen in alerting the reader to symbols and to the problems of metaphorical language.

This is not a simple book. It does go over some of the tougher existential questions of faith. The book certainly is recommended to serious students of theology.

Naked Before the Father: The Renunciation of Fancis of Assisi. By Richard C. Trexler, Vol 9, *Humana Civilitas* Center For Medieval and Renaissance Studies, University of California. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1989. XIV .. 129 pp., 32 illus. $22.95.

Reviewed by Peter F. Macaluso, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History. Montclair State College and Adjunct Lecturer Bene Merenti *Saint Peter's College.*

This work by Richard C. Trexler is a careful examination of the dramatic confrontation in 1206 between Francis of Assisi and his father, Pietro di Bernardone. The author does not mean to offer a general assessment of Francis' life but aims to better delineate Francis in his passage from boyhood to manhood and from secular to religious preoccupations.

The images of the renunciation of Francis have come down to us by way of paintings and written words but Trexler considers the latter to be last in importance in shaping the pictures. Since the pictures that are examined range over a longer period than the Latin written sources, they help the author to investigate not just what happened, but how the paintings of Francis' renunciation addressed changing concerns about the young, about gender, about dependence, and about property. They also indicate the interaction over time of written and printed sources.

In this intepretation of the documentary and artistic evidence in order to understand the event Trexler finds that the conflict between the men was actually over women's property — that of Francis' mother, Pica. He presents several plausible conclusions to show a threatened father. In a meticulous study of the early biographers, he also discovers that they created two different tales of renunciation, to match two different notions about Franciscan poverty.

There are continuities between Francis' renunciation and his later life such as his undressing to clothe the poor. The dying context lived on in Francis in many ways and the author feels this idea deserves exploration.

This beautiful book contains 32 photographs, a substantial bibliography of primary and secondary sources, and an appendix of the Renunciation in the Primary Lives of Francis.

Index to THE CORD — 1990

I. Index to Authors

Agnes, O.S.F., Sr. Roberta
"The Sound of Silence: Empowerment for Fraternity and Mission; 37-43.
Aldworth, O.F.M., Thomas P.
Poem: Christmas, 324.
Armstrong, April Oursler.
Editorial: "Is Christmas Meant to be Uncomfortable," 321-23.
Book Review: *Francis of Assisi: The Way of Poverty and Humility*, 287-88.
Aveling, T.S.S.F., Harry.
"St. Bonaventure on the Last Supper," 112-20; "The Spirituality of Kanzantzakis' 'God's Pauper,' " 263-72.
Balk, O.S.F., Virginia
Poem: View From the Friary, 140.
Beeman, Thomas E.
"The Impact of 'Il Poverello' on Twentieth Century Literature," 257-62.
Beha, O.S.C., Sr. Marie.
"Go Forth Swiftly," 211-221.
Berna, O.F.M., Francis.
Book Reviews: *Did Jesus Know He Was God?*, 27-28; *Francis and The Franciscan Movement*, 346-48.
Biscaine, Lisa.
Poems: Variations, 94-95; Your Silence Seized Me, 141.
Buechel, William
"How to Become 'Worthy Men'," 1-3.
Carozzo, O.F.M., Anthony.
"A Triple Way for Refounding," 273-82.
Book Review; *Religious Life: Rebirth Through Conversion*, 248-49.
Chiarilli, Anthony.
Poems: Blanche and Willie, 96; Two August Failures, 222.
Conley, T.O.R. Seraphin.
"The Diversity of the Third Order Regular — In Isolation Its Weakness, In Unity Its Strength," 121-124.
Editorial: "Do We Really Need a Commentary?," 161-63.
Coughlin, O.F.M., F. Edward.
Book Reviews: *The Skilled Participant; When Society Becomes an Addict; The Addictive Organization*, 249-52.
Davies, O.F.M., Julian A.
Book Reviews: *Faith & Fame: Celebrities Talk About Their Lives and Spirituality*; 31; *Mentoring: The Ministry of Spiritual Kinship*, 253-54.
De La Vars, Gordon.
Book Review: *A Poor Man's Legacy: An Anthology of Franciscan Poverty*, 125-26.
D'Emic, S.F.O., Jack.
Feature: "A Kitchen Table Prayer," 179-80.
De Ruijte, O.F.M., Francis.
"Computers for Church Use," 190-92.
Book Review: *Theology in a Digital World*, 187-89.
Doino, O.F.M., Joseph.
Editorials: "Making a Mission Statement," 97-99; "Requiem for a Brother and Friend I Never Had Met," 129-30.
Duryea, Polly.
"Clare Reflected in Visual Art," 283-86.
Eulberg, O.S.F., Sr. Mary Thomas.
Book Review: *"Franciscans Under Fire. Twenty Nuns, a Girl and a Dog*, 126-28.
Poem: My Prayer, 50.
Faley, T.O.R., Roland J.
"The Third Order Regular and Parish Ministry," 57-62.
Francis, P.C.C., Mother Mary.
Book Review: *Clare of Assisi: Early Documents*, 27.
Greco, O.F.M., Michael.
Sameness and Difference in Francis and Clare, 312-318.
Grennan, O.S.F., Violet
"Clare of Assisi: A Light to the World," 198-210.
Guider, O.S.F., Sr. Margaret Elizabeth.
Editorial: "About the September CORD," 225.
Hoebing, O.F.M., Phil.
"St. Bonaventure and Ecology." 336-345.
Hurley, O.F.M., Daniel.
Book Reviews: *They Bore the Wounds of Christ: the Mystery of the Sacred Stigmata*, 252-53; *Memoirs of the Oratory of Saint Francis De Sales from 1815 to 1855*, 255-56.
Jordan, O.F.M., Brian
"Between the 'Letter' and the 'Spirit': A Reflection Upon Admonition VII of St Francis," 173-78.
Kelly, O.F.M. Conv., Phil.
"An Idea Whose Time has Come," 68-71.
Editorial: "Facing the Sultan," 65-67.
Kennedy, O.S.F., Sr. M. Francis Assisi.
"Francis of Assisi's Unnoticed Legacy," 44-47.
Kunz, O.S.F., Sr. Gretchen.
Book Review: *A Short History of the Franciscan Family*, 159.
Logue, O.S.F., Sr. Mary Collete.
Poem: Autumn Beauty, 272.
Lynch, O.F.M., Stephen
Editorial: "The Cry of the Poor," 33-36.
Macaluso, Peter F. Ph.D.
Book Review: *Naked Before the Father*, 349.
Marcil, O.F.M., George.
Book Review: *Visions of A Future*, 348-49.
McGovern, O.F.M., Donan.
Book Review: *The Marginal Catholic: Challenge, Don't Crush*, 29-31.
McKelvie, C.S.B., Sr. Roberta.
"First Celano and the Mirror of Perfection: Seeing Francis with Double Vision," 18-25.
McNichols, S.J., S.F.O., William Hart.
Poems: Isaiah 60, 100; I Saw a Young Father, 158; The Secret of the Golden Flower, 197; Legend of Three Companions, 282.
Molleur, S.S.J.E., Br. Joseph
Poem: Matins, 111.
Mucowski, O.F.M., Richard.
Book Reviews: *Facing Codependence; What It Is, Where It Comes From, How It Sabotages Our Lives*, 26-27.
Mulholland, O.F.M., Séamus.
"Christ: The Haecceitas of God. The Spirituality of John Duns Scotus' Doctrine of Haecceitas and Primacy of Christ," 165-172.
Poems: At Laverna, 236; St. Francis and the Birds, 262.
Muller, Robert.
"New Genesis: Building Up Our Planet," 71-81.
O'Mahoney, O.F.M. Cap., Donal.
"Reflections on the Vision Statement for Franciscans at the United Nations," 82-87.
Pattee, T.O.R., Daniel
"Was Francis Betrayed?", 325-335.
Payne, O.F.M., Roderick.
"J. W. Fowler (Faith Development) and St. Francis." 131-40.
Paterson, O.S.F., Ingrid.
"Corporate Loss in the Franciscan Family," 237-43.
Pirkl, O.S.F., Margaret.
"Grieving for Earth," 228-235.
Rampton, Martha.
"Francis as Troubadour," 295-303.
Robertson, O.F.M., Theophane.
Poem: Rest Home Mass, 172.
Rochford, O.F.M. Conv., Jude.
"Franciscan Poverty and Culture," 142-56.
Schalück, O.F.M., Hermann.
Features: "The Plenary Council in India and Its Understanding of the Words, 'Light from the East'," 51-56; "How Brother Francis Preached in the Ruins of the Former Franciscan Church in East Berlin," 90-92; "On How the Fruits of the Spirit were Distributed to the Masters of Novices of Our Fraternity Assembled in Assisi," 181-87; "When God Closes a Door He Opens a Window," 289-294.
Sheehan, O.S.F., Sr. M. Clarice.
Poem: Pieta: A Diptych, 99.
Shanahan, O.F.M., Gregory.
"Preparing the Way of the Lord," 304-311.
Small, O.S.F., Rosemary.
"In the Home that Wisdom Builds, We will Grieve No More." 244-47.
Thom, O.S.F., Sr., Frances Ann.
Feature: "Poverty — as a Positive Attitude," 193-96.
Thompson, O.S.F., Francesca.
Poem: Thea... "Going Home Song," 226-27.
Tripka, T.O.R., Michael.
"Franciscan Mission to Non-Christians and the Rules of 1221 and 1223," 4-17.
Vining, T.O.R., Timothy.
"A Theology of Creation Based on the Life of Francis of Assisi," 101-111.
Whelan, Dr. Winfred.
Book Review: *Harper's Encyclopedia of Religion*, 254-55
Weinheimer, O.S.F., Sr. Rita Kristina.
Poems: You Have Nurtured Love, 43; To Ease Your Pain, 164.

II. Index of Subjects

Admonition VII of St. Francis, 173-78.
Advent, 304-311.
Bernardine, St., Sermon of 1-3.
Bonaventure, St.
Sermon on Last Supper, 112-120.
Sermon on Advent, 304-311.
and Ecology, 336-345.
Celano, Thomas, First Life, 18-25.
China, Friars in, 289-94.
Christmas, 321-23.
Clare, St.
and Enclosure, 211-16.
and St. Francis, 312-16.
and Poverty. 193-96.

Spirituality of, 198-209.
in Visual Arts, 283-86.
Computers for Church use, 190-92.
Creation, Theology of, 101-111.
Culture, and Franciscan Poverty, 142-56.
East Berlin, Sermon, 90-92.
El Salvador, Murders in, 33-36.
Faith Development, 131-140.
Fowler, J. W., 131-40.
Francis, St.
Biogrpahies of, 18-25.
and Creation, 101-111.
Admonition VII, 173-78.
and Clare, 312-18.
and 20th Century Literature, 257-62.
and Refounding, 273-82.
and Liturgy of the Hours, 44-49.
and Poverty,263-72.
as Troubadour, 295-303.
and Faith Development, 131-140.
and Betrayal, 325-335.
Franciscans at the United Nations, 65-67; 68-81; 82-88.
Grief: 225; 228-35; 237-43; 243-47.
Horgan, S. A. Thaddeus, 129-30.
Last Supper, Sermon of St. Bonaventure on, 112-120.
Letter and Spirit, 173-78.
Liturgy of The Hours, 44-49; 179-80.
Mirror of Perfection, 18 - 25.
Mission Statement, 97-99.
Novice Masters of Assisi, 181-87.
Non-Christians, Franciscan Mission to, 4-17.
Parish Ministry, 56-62.
Penny Leroux, 33-36.
Plenary Council, 51-56.
Poverty, 142-56; 193-96.
Primacy of Christ, 165-171.
Refounding, 273-82.
Rules of 1221 and 1223, 4-17.
Scotus and Primacy, 165-71.
Silence, 37-43.
Third Order Regular; 57-62; 121-24.
TOR Rule, 161-63.
United Nations, 65-88.
Worthiness, 1-3.

II. Index of Books Reviewed
(SN — Shorter Notice)

Arbuckle, S.M. Gerald and Fleming, S.J., David L., ed. *Religious Life: Rebirth Through Conversion* (A. Carrozzo), 248-49.
Anthony, Edd and Johnson, Curtis E. *Faith & Fame. Celebrities Talk About Their Lives and Spirituality* (SN, J. A. Davies), 31.
Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Regis J. Ed. & Trans. *Clare of Assisi: Early Documents* (M. M. Francis), 27.
Champlin, Joseph M. *The Marginal Catholic Challenge, Don't Crush* (D. McGovern), 28-31.
Clark, O.F.M. Cap., Keith. *The Skilled Participant* (F. E. Coughlin), 249-50.
Cook, William R. *Francis of Assisi: The Way of Poverty and Humility* (A. O. Armstrong), 287-88.
Cully, Iris B. and Cully, Kendig Brubaker, Edd. *Harper's Encyclopedia of Religion* (W. Whelan), 254-55.
Dreyfuss, O.P., François. *Did Jesus Know He was God?* (F. Berna), 27-290.
Flood, O.F.M., David. *Francis and the Franciscan Movement* (F. Berna), 346-348.
Freze, S.F.O., Michael. *They Bore the Wounds of Christ: the Mystery of the Sacred Stigmata* (D. A. Hurley), 252-53.
Hayes, O.F.M., Zachary. *Visions of a Future* (G. Marcil), 348-49.
Hutchinson, Diane, Ed. *Franciscans Under Fire: Twenty Nuns, A Girl and a Dog.* (M. T. Eulberg), 126-28.
Lockhead, David. *Theology in a Digital World* (F. DeRuijte), 187-89.
Lynch, O.F.M., Cyprian J., Ed. *A Poor Man's Legacy: An Anthology of Franciscan Poverty* (G. De la Vars), 125-26.
Melody, Pia. *Facing Codependence. What it is, Where it Comes From, How it Sabotages Our Lives* (R. Mucowski), 26-27.
Memoirs of the Oratory of Saint Francis de Sales from 1815-1855(D. A. Hurley), 255-56.
Schaef, Anne Wilson. *When Society Becomes an Addict* (F. E. Coughlin), 249, 250-51.
Schaef, Anne Wilson and Fassel, Diane. *The Addictive Organization* (F. E. Coughlin) 249, 251-52.
Sellner, Edward C. *Mentoring. The Ministry of Spiritual Kinship* (J. A. Davies), 253-54.
Trexler, Richard C. *Naked Before the Father: The Renunciation of Francis of Assisi* (Macaluso), 349.
Vorreux, O.F.M., Damien. *A Short History of the Franciscan Family* (G. Kunz), 159.

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and every grace and good
from our heavenly Father
throughout the new year.