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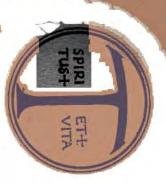


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A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

VOL. X, NO. 9, SEPTEMBER, 1960

THE CORD

Institute, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure P. O., New York, Editor: Eligius Buytaert, O.F.M. Assistant Editor: Sister Mary Frances, S.M.I.C. Managing Editor: Sabbas J. Kilian, O.F.M. Editorial Board: Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., Innocent Daam, O.F.M., Columban Duffy, O.F.M., Gaudens Mohan, O.F.M., Allan Wolter, O.F.M. Annual subscription \$2.00.

Entered as second class matter on November 25, 1950, at St. Bonaventure P. O., New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879. All communications, whether of a business or a literary nature, should be addressed to THE CORD, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure P. O. New York. Cum permissu superiorum.

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Sister M. Josephine, F. SS. S.

MONTHLY CONFERENCE

A Commentary on the Psalms:

Father Jerome A. Kelly, O.F.M.

Psalm 8

This series of conferences will consider the Psalms used in the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, beginning with those of Matins and continuing with those of Lauds, Vespers, Compline, and the Little Hours. The reason for the choice of topic is twofold: the pre-eminence of the Psalms in the prayer-life of one who recites the Little Office regularly and the necessity of reading these Psalms properly for a fruitful recitation of the Office.

might say, a supra-personal quali-God himself. "They originate in are after all prayers given us by Sacrifice of the Mass. The Psalms communal act of liturgy, the Holy complement to the supreme and ty, which makes it a kind of bulk of the Office, give it, you they are, for what he made them, must necessarily be taken for what purpose in giving them to us, they planted in them by God himself, God-inspired hearts—were impresupposes an attitude very like telligent reading of the psalms poems. This is to say that an in-Psalms are going to fulfill God's of all mankind." Now, if the to rise up to him as an offering the one you bring to the reading The Psalms, which form the

> cause I would not want you to or Dante, or Rilke, or Eliot. Beis analogous to the experience of ing us what God has revealed in they are of limited value in showthem. No matter how carefully experience of the men who wrote make us share in the poetic the function of the Psalms is to ness: "Since . . . they are poems, the Psalms, Bread in the Wilderstatement in his unique book on of a good poet and a holy monk, alone, I offer you the statement take that claim on my authority of poems by Longfellow, or Keats, the inspired writer." hended in a poetic experience that revealed in the poetry of the tent of the Psalter is poetic . . . the Psalms, for the revealed conence which the Psalms convey, us to enter into the poetic experithese investigations do not help their historical background, if the words of the Psalms, and study and scientifically we may interpret Father Merton, who makes this Psalter and is only fully appre-What is revealed in the Psalter is

What Father Merton says—that whatever else a Psalm may be, it is first of all a poem—needs to be driven home to us because the usual handling of the Psalms helps us to overlook the fact. It is

mence is Psalm 8. with which I am going to com-Christian Doctrine. And the Psalm mittee of the Confraternity of sponsored by the Episcopal Comthat I intend to use is the one of any poem. The translation intelligent and enjoyable reading the techniques you learned for the what they are, divinely inspired terial, however, need not keep us articulate on the true meanings bring to your reading of them as I propose to illustrate, is to poems. All that you have to do, from appreciating the Psalms for of the Psalms. Scarcity of mawhen they were abundantily poetic aspects of the Psalms, even little, if anything at all, about the practically up to the day before mentaries on the Psalms, too. rhythmic quality revealed. Compatterns clearly evident, their Psalms have been printed as only in most recent editions of yesterday managed to say very poems, their verse and stanza the Psalter, for example, that the

we shall tend to reduce the Psalms grasp this fact at the very outset artificial, a poem. If we fail to to fashion a work of art, something using expert and deliberate care and feelings spontaneously, but is is not pouring forth his thoughts with the composition of the Psalm. simply that David, who is credited derogatory statement; it means 8 is highly artificial. This is no to sheerly personal utterances-The first discovery is that Psalm

> the land of the spirit." on his "journeys of discovery in own. It is actually, then, it possible for us to join its writer artificiality of a Psalm that makes time enough to make them his by any human being who takes presented that they can be shared and defeats are so organized and discoveries, struggles, victories try of the poet, his personal human beings. Through the artis versally valid and valuable for all transmuted into something uniindividual was purified, refined. process, the experience of the position was an intelligent, artistic viduals, but because the comcomposed, it is true, by indiand feelings. The Psalms were thoughts and aspirations, hopes outpouring only of an individual's We shall consider them to be the even though divinely inspired ones

and it ends as it begins: closes and the poetic structure of refrain with which it opens and it. The Psalm begins as it ends, notice two things about it: the To see that Psalm 8 is artificial,

O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name over all the earth!

him of the experience recorded in on David and the meaning for the Psalm; they hold the poem together and make it a unit. At You could say these verses frame the theme of the poem: the effect the same time these verses reveal

> meditations. of harbor into which he brings the treasures gathered in his They are two arms, forming a sort the words that run between them.

think of the matter, what a name they have made a name for themselves. Now, when you stop to ness; we say, admiringly, that people who have achieved greatwhat David wants to say through effectively these verses sum up his achievements! God has made for himself by his poem. We are all familiar with We must not miss, either, how

How glorious is your name over all the earth!

other, from its very beginning to to the heavens that arch above ments raises the thoughts of David fact, the range, the magnitude, creative and providential work of its ultimate consummation, the from the earth on which he stands the multiplicity of God's achieve-God is stupendously evident. In From one end of the earth to the

You have exalted your majesty above the heavens.

his poem. has moved us into the body of And with that statement, David

of "earth" and "heaven" to give poetic structure to his work. By deftly David relies on this mention You can easily discover how

> revelations of God's glory on earth you will. The first contrasts the plan according to which the poem poem, or, better, perhaps, the framework, the skeleton of the poetic structure all I mean is the with the manifestation in the verse-paragraphs, call them what parts, sections, stanzas, strophes, is built. There are in Psalm 8 two heavens:

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings

You have fashioned praise because of your foes,

to silence the hostile and the vengeful.

When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers-

The second part extols the myster-You have made him little less all the works of God: ious pre-eminence of man among

than the angels,

and crowned him with glory and honor.

You have given him rule over the All sheep and oxen, putting all things under his feet; works of your hands,

The birds of the air, the fishes of yes, and the beasts of the field, the sea,

and whatever swims the paths of the seas.

that is the second strophe: strophe and induces the reflection question that closes the first gether; they are linked by a The two parts are not stuck to-

What is man that you should be

mindful of him,

or the son of man that you

touched, in those long night watches, by the wheeling stars

deeply his boyish heart had been

should care for him?

entirely new direction of

thrust his speculations into the

answer to his question. second strophe, which

as David does:

and you must cry out in just awe planets without number! See this, galaxies and systems of stars and

The answer is, in a sense, a

A COMMENTARY ON THE PSALMS

Himself and his representative on man to be the chief revelation of "the marvel of God's choice of

earth which is the theme of this

and sucklings" at the sight of the good men always share with "babes some of the transcendent awe that poem, into which he weaves, too,

star-studded heavens; men who

"two things fill the mind with

like Kant, for instance, find that

expresses David's admiration at

by a refrain that beautifully to that question, held together flowing from it, and the answer woven of a statement, the question

You have, therefore, a poem

such wonders. These boyhood

Providence now-

What is the son of man that you

should care for him?-

had, that he could take the

What gifts do you suppose David

memory of a boyhood experience,

is a double one: God's continual double one because the question

how glorious is your name over all

the world!

O Lord, our Lord,

moved to praise the Maker of ly and how rightly he had been him in the Judean sky; how strong and the silvery moon high above

flocks by night, became, years meditations as he watched the

later, the material for a lovely

sucklings," who in their helplessfragile acclaim of "babes and praise of God's majesty, from the imaginatively how widely runs the The first stanza demonstrates starry heavens above and the steadily we reflect upon them: the admiration, the oftener and more ever new and increasing awe and

are the associations we bring to

stars" spell out in brilliance the we have read, of course, the richer omnipotence of God. The more ness proclaim his infinite mercy, "heavens," where the "moon and to the awesome tribute of the

moral law within."

Continue to read the Psalm

which Jesus used to justify the sucklings" The very words children of Jerusalem when they

"Out of the mouths of babes and meanings he scarcely dreamed David's words and so give then

thens our conviction that David recollection of this episode streng hailed him as their king! The

firmament that his

against the vast backdrop of the so slight, so infinitesimally small the world of man. Man appears between the heavenly world and is making some such association carefully and you find that David

provokes a question: mindful of him,

sides of Bethlehem, recalling how youth as a shepherd on the hill-

thought with feeling behind it, with emotion strong enough to

in value, worth, and beauty, whole and you know why man outweighs dominion over all things. See this,

in upon the quiet train of David's This mysterious question breaks

dreaming back the days of his

More likely than not he was

was right in what he said.

What is man that you should be or the son of man that you should care for him?

mindful of him?

piece-What is man that you should be

Creation of man as his masteris the consequence of his original

all into the artistic wholeness of

this poem? Well, he had a keen

build upon it, enrich it, and work

that could grapple successfully

with the deep question of man's

and active mind, certainly, one

nature and destiny. He had, too,

God does not: Let man forget his sublime dignity,

> cast his speculations into rioh and a superb imagination that could

But, most precious of all, he had

God does not: You have given him rule over the Let man forget his kingly estate, You have made him little less than and crowned him with glory and works of your hands, the angels, wrought this poetic masterpiece all of these together could have agination, sensitivity of feeling, the wisdom of one who had in concrete, colorful language. had David never learned that "God beautiful form, could express them

artistry, none of these alone nor

words of God. Intelligence, immeditated long and often on the

pre-eminence: he alone in the universe is made to the image and This is the foundation of man's putting all things under his feet

likeness of God; he alone in the

universe is made to share in God's earth. And God created man to said: Let us make man to our image and likeness; and let him his own image: to the image of have dominion over . . . the whole

God he created him" (Genesis 1:26-27). Even more went into the making

well the story of Christ's life will of this poem. We who know so

radiance of his Father's splendor, and the full expression of his the Living God . . . who is the mean to tell us that the "Son of his poem, therefore, not only did David also know it? And is the Christ, the Son of the Living that David uses, "the son of man." firstborn of every creature" (Colimage of the invisible God, the being" (Hebrews 1:3) . . . "the of the Living God"? Does David he mentions, "the Christ, the Son he has in mind, the "son of man" poetry but prophecy? Is the "man" Living God." And, if we know this, is "the answer: "the Son of Man" is "the Christ, the Son of the God" (Matthew 16:13-16). That Simon Peter answered, Thou art Who do you say that I am? Then Who do they think he is? . . . do men say of the Son of Man? ered around him one day. "What Philippi when they were all gathquestions that he asked at Caesarea tested his Apostles. You recall the happened on the day that he to mean is clear from what What Jesus always intended it fell back on the very expression often Jesus, in describing himself, not have failed to remember how

across the centuries and long before it came to pass, of the triumph of this Man to whom all things are to be subject and through whose obedience God in his Providence fulfills the destiny of mankind as he had it in mind from the moment of its creation?

recall that he and all the other course, is understandable once we common origin, all of them; he is underwent . . . on behalf of all . . . "crowned, now, with glory and That he could and did do this, of meaning that is everlastingly true. wove into his poem to give it the great mystery that David them" (Hebrews 2:9-14). This is too shared their inheritance with inheritance of flesh and blood, he these children have a common as his brethren. And since not ashamed, then, to own them sons who are sanctified have a The Son who sanctifies and the honor because of the death he the angels, I mean Jesus," he says, who was made a little lower than Blessed Savior. "We can see one words of this very Psalm to our cal Body, Saint Paul refers the and Priest and Head of the Mystipre-eminence of Christ as King Hebrews, wherein he proves the us it is so. In his Epistle to the under divine inspiration, has told We know this because Saint Paul, not only poetic but prophetic. David is saying in a Psalm that is This is—all of it—precisely what

"who so moved and impelled them to write, he was so present to them, that the things which he ordered, and those only, they first rightly understood, then willed faithfully to write down, and finally expressed in apt words and with

point. The very mention of the poetry of the Psalms frightens especially over-sensitive on this characteristics. Some people are cause you take serious pains to supernatural character simply bethat you will miss its divine and while it is in all truth David's study of Psalm 8, we discover that get thinking of the Psalms as them; they suspect that once you appreciate its human and natural poem. You need have no fear, then, poem, it is with equal truth God's infallible truth." inspired poetry. to realizing that they are divinely poetry, you will never get around So that, at the conclusion of our

Actually the more you study the Psalms as poems written by human beings, the more you realize that these human beings had to have heavenly help to do so magnificently. That is one fruit of such study of the Psalms. Needless to say, you can not wait until the time comes to recite a Psalm in Office before giving to it the steady concentration it demands before it will reveal all it has to

offer. That work has to be done outside of choir as a kind of leisurely study, a kind of spiritual reading, a kind of pastime, even, to match the more worldly hobbies that seculars cultivate. When you do this work is up to you to decide. That you can do it, I intend to demonstrate for you in these conferences, in each one of which I shall try to use only those techniques I think you know for the intelligent and enjoyable reading of any poem.

captivated by the artistry of becomes also our poem. And we share the thoughts and feelings drawn by its beauty into it, that Psalm 8, for example, that we are part of our purpose in reading know and feel what made David and is being fulfilled in us." And what was said of him has been and that he lives in us, and that that we are Christ in this world, in a way, while it is his poem, it of David as he wrote it. So that, We want to be so charmed and the Psalms, an enjoyable reading. learning that, we shall surely "it will tell us over and over again because, truly, it is God's poem After all, and finally, that is

how glorious is your name over all the earth!

whom all men must become incorporated? Is David telling us,

writers of Sacred Scripture were inspired by the Spirit of God death and resurrection all other men must become implicated and associated? The One Man into ossians 1: 15) ... "the Word who was made flesh and came to dwell among us" (John 1:14), that he

is the One Man in whose life and

Novena To Saint Francis

Father Julian Fuzer, O.F.M

Starts on September 25th

Editor's Note: Time and again we have been asked by our readers to publish some prayers of Franciscan devotion. The "Novena to Saint Francis" is our first attempt to satisfy the many requests.

Father Julian, commissioned by his Superiors, has prepared a "Prayer Manual" for the use of his confreres. A part of the manual consists of Novenas. By the Regulations of the General Constitutions or by the instructions of the Holy See, certain feasts should be celebrated by us with great solemnity. In the mind of Father Julian this means a special preparation for them. He prepared his Novenas in conformity with these regulations and ecclesiastical instructions and conceived them as "special evening devotions at which the entire community is present and the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is held." As a sample of them, we publish the "Novena to St. Francis". We hope that our Readers will like it. It has a scriptural and liturgical taste and a refreshing originality. For the Scripture, Father Julian used the Kleist-Lilly Version of the New Testament; the psalms are taken from the Confraternity Edition; the Canticle of Brother Sun is from St. Francis of Assisi by Otto Karrer, translated by N. Wydenbruck, Sheed & Ward, New York.—Father Julian is in charge of "The Portiuncula in the Pines" Retreat House, Dewitt/P. O. Box 218/ Michigan./For private use only/

FIRST DAY

FRANCISCUS, AMATOR CHRISTI — Francis, the Lover of Christ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

ANTIPHON: "Always was he occupied with Christ. Christ was in his heart, on his lips, in his ears, in his eyes, in his hands, in all his members." (Celano)

PSALM 95, 1-6

Sing to the Lord a new song; - sing to the Lord, all you lands.

Sing to the Lord; Bless his name; — Announce his salvation, day after day.

Tell his glory among the nations; — among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.

For great is the Lord and highly to be praised; — awesome is he,

For all the gods of the nations are things of naught, — but the Lord made the heavens.

beyond all gods.

Splendor and majesty are before him; — praise and grandeur are in his sanctuary.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, — and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, — world without end. Amen.

ANTIPHON: "Always was he occupied with Christ. Christ was in his heart, on his lips, in his ears, in his eyes, in his hands, in all his members."

LESSON: Colossians 1:15-20. Brethren, Christ is the image of the invisible God, begotten before every creature, because in him were created all creatures in the heavens and on the earth, both visible and invisible, whether Thrones, or Dominations, or Principalities, or Powers. All have been created through him and for him. He exists prior to all creatures, and in him they are all preserved in being. Further, he is the head of his body, the Church, in that he is the beginning, the first to rise from the dead, so that he may have pre-eminence over every creature. For it pleased God the Father that in him all fullness should dwell, and that through him God should reconcile to himself every being, and make peace both on earth and in heaven through the blood shed on the cross.

R. Thanks be to God!

CHAPTER: O most beloved brethren and eternally blessed children, hear me, hear the voice of your Father: "Let us desire nothing else, wish for nothing else, take pleasure and delight in nothing else but our Creator, Redeemer, and Savior, the only true God, who is the perfect good, everything good, wholly good, the true and sovereign good; he who alone is good, loving and gentle, sweet and lovable; he who alone is holy, just, true and fair; who alone is kind, innocent and clean; from whom and through whom is all pardon, all grace and all glory for all the repentant and the just, and for all the blessed rejoicing together in heaven."

R. Praise be to you, O Christ.

PRAYER: Let us pray. O God, who has given us Blessed Francis as our guide and teacher, graciously grant us that we may be similar to him in the love, praise and service of our Lord, Jesus Christ, your Son, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

V. Pray for us, O Holy Father Francis,

R. That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.

PRAYER TO SAINT FRANCIS: O holy Father, be mindful of us, your children, who are pressed on all sides by inescapable dangers. You know, O most Holy One, that we follow your footsteps only from afar. Obtain for us the grace to persevere! Pray for us that the spirit of grace and prayer be poured out over us, so that we may possess the true humility which you possessed; observe the poverty which you observed; and merit the love with which you ever loved Christ, the Crucified. Amen.

SECOND DAY.

FRANCISCUS, IMITATOR CHRISTI — Francis, the Imitator of Christ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ANTIPHON: "O truly Christian man, who by perfect imitation tried while living to be conformed to the living Christ; when dying to be conformed to the dying Christ; when dead to be like the dead Christ; and who merited to be adorned with an exact resemblance of him!" (Legenda major)

PSALM 2

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. — In verdant pastures he gives me repose;

Beside restful waters he leads me; — he refreshes my soul. He guides me in right paths — for his name's sake.

Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side — with your rod and your staff that give me courage. You spread the table before me — in the sight of my foes; You anoint my head with oil — my cup everflows.

Only goodness and kindness follow me — all the days of my life; And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord — for years to come. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, — and to the Holy Spirit, As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, — world without end. Amen.

ANTIPHON: "O truly Christian man, who by perfect imitation tried while living to be conformed to the living Christ; when dying to be conformed to the dying Christ; when dead to be like the dead Christ; and who merited to be adorned with an exact resemblance of him!"

LESSON: Philippians 2:5-11. Brethren, be of the same mind as Christ Jesus, who, though he is by nature God, did not consider his equality with God a condition to be clung to, but emptied himself by

taking the nature of a slave, fashioned as he was to the likeness of men and recognized by outward appearance as man. He humbled himself and became obedient to death; yes, to death on a cross. This is why God has exalted him and given him the name above all names, so that at the name of Jesus everyone in heaven, on earth, and beneath the earth should bend the knee and should publicly acknowledge to the glory of God the Father that Jesus Christ is Lord.

R. Thanks be to God!

CHAPTER: O most beloved brethrem and eternally blessed children, hear me, hear the voice of your Father: "My friars are called 'Minors' for the reason that they should not presume to become the greater. Our calling teaches us to remain standing in the lowland, and to follow the humble steps of Christ, whereby the Friars will one day be exalted above others in the order of the saints."

R. Praise be to you, O Christ.

PRAYER: Let us pray. Grant, we beseech you, almighty God, that the example of Blessed Francis, our Father, may teach us to think, feel and act like Christ, Our Lord, your Son, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns world without end. Amen.

- V. Pray for us, O Holy Father Francis,
- R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

PRAYER TO SAINT FRANCIS: O holy Father, be mindful of us, your children, who are pressed on all sides by inescapable dangers. You know, O most Holy One, that we follow your footsteps only from afar. Obtain for us the grace to persevere! Pray for us that the spirit of grace and prayer be poured out over us, so that we may possess the true humility which you possessed; observe the poverty which you observed, and merit the love with which you ever loved Christ, the Crucified, Amen.

THIRD DAY

FRANCISCUS, IMAGO CHRISTI CRUCIFIXI -

Francis, the Image of Christ Crucified

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the He Amen.

ANTIPHON: "The love of Christ Crucified pervaded like the fragrance of a bundle of myrrh, and he desired by the fire of his love, to be completely transformed into Him."

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge; I say to the Lord, "My Lord are you. Apart from you I have no good."

O Lord, my allotted portion and my cup, - you it is who hold fast my lot.

For me the measuring lines have fallen on pleasant sites; fair to me indeed is my inheritance.

I bless the Lord who counsels me; — even in the night my heart exhorts me.

I set the Lord ever before me; — with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices, — my body, too, abides in confidence.

Because you will not abandon my soul to the nether world, — nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.

You will show me the path of life, fullness of joys in your presence,
— delights at your right hand forever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, — and the Holy Spirit, As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, — world without end. Amen.

ANTIPHON: "The love of Christ Crucified pervaded his soul like the fragrance of a bundle of myrrh, and he desired by the intense fire of his love, to be completely transformed into Him."

LESSON: Galatians 6: 14-18. Brethren, as for me, God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world is crucified to me and I to the world. What really counts is not circumcision or its absence, but being a new creature. May peace and mercy rest on all those who follow this principle, and on God's Israel. From now on let no man give me trouble, for I bear the marks of our Lord Jesus in my body. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

R. Thanks be to God!

CHAPTER: O most beloved brethren and eternally blessed children, hear me, hear the voice of your Father: "If you were so clever and wise as to possess all learning, and if you knew how to interpret all kinds of languages and could penetrate deeply into heavenly things, you could not glory in all these things... Likewise, if you were more wealthy and more handsome than all men, and even if you could work wonders and put to flight demons — all these things are disadvantageous to you, and in no way belong to you and in them you

can have no glory. But in this we can glory, namely, in our infirmities and in carrying daily the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

R. Praise be to you, O Christ.

PRAYER: Let us pray. O God, who by your grace has transformed Blessed Francis, our Father, into the image of your Crucified Son, inflame, by his prayers and merits, in our hearts an ardent love of the sacred Passion of our Lord because by his holy Cross he has redeemed the world. Amen.

V. Pray for us, O Holy Father Francis,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

PRAYER TO SAINT FRANCIS: O holy Father, be mindful of us, your children, who are pressed on all sides by inescapable dangers. You know, O most Holy One, that we follow your footsteps only from afar. Obtain for us the grace to persevere! Pray for us that the spirit of grace and prayer be poured out over us, so that we may possess the true humility which you possessed; observe the poverty which you observed, and merit the love with which you ever loved Christ, the Crucified. Amen.

FOURTH DAY

FRANCISCUS, CHRISTI APOSTOLUS — Francis, the Apostle of Christ In the name of the Father, and of the Son,, and of the Holy Spirit.

ANTIPHON: "Francis was sent by God to give testimony to the truth in the whole world after the example of the Apostles." (Celano)

PSALM 33, 11-16.

Come, children, hear me; — I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Which of you desires life, and takes delight in prosperous days? Keep your tongue from evil — and your lips from speaking guile; Turn from evil, and do good; — seek peace and follow after it. The Lord has eyes for the just, - and ears for their cry.

The Lord confronts the evildoers, — to destroy remembrance of them from the earth.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, — world without end. Amen.

ANTIPHON: "Francis was sent by God to give testimony to the truth in the whole world after the example of the Apostles."

LESSON: 1 Corinthians 4: 9-13. Brethren, it seems to me that God has put us apostles on exhibition in the last place, like men doomed

angelic and human. We are fools for Christ, but you are wise in Christ!

We are weak, but you are strong! You are renowned, but we are

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God." (Celano) and was filled with reverence towards the servants and the service of ANTIPHON: "He was entirely imbued with the Catholic Faith, PSALM 18, 8-11

FRANCISCUS, VIR CATHOLICUS — Francis, the Catholic Man In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever; — the ordinances command of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eye;

of the Lord are true, all of them just;

They are more precious than gold, than a heap of purest gold; —

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, — world

without end. Amen.

commandments".

who has overcome the world, will speak in you and through you by

but preach penance with courage and simplicity; trusting that the Lord Fear not if you are regarded as mean and contemptible and ignorant, penance for their sins and to observe the commandments of God

His Spirit to move all to be converted to Him and to observe His

through the world exhorting all nations by word and example to do

us unto the salvation not only of our souls but of many, that we go

well our vocation, and bear in mind that God in His mercy has called children, hear me, hear the voice of your Father: "Let us consider

CHAPTER: O most beloved brethren and eternally blessed

the world's scum, the scapegoat of society.

R. Thanks be to God!

they insult us, we speak gently. We have practically become at present speak well of them. When they persecute us, we bear it patiently. When ourselves out with manual labor. When men call us ugly names, we we are poorly clad and knocked around; we are vagabonds and we wear without repute! To this very hour we are victims of hunger and thirst;

and was filled with reverence towards the servants and the service of

LESSON: Ephesians 4: 11-15. Brethren, He established some

hearts the same Holy Spirit that we, too, may preach to others by our Father, the Spirit of the Apostles, graciously breathe into our PRAYER: Let us pray. O God, who has given to Blessed Francis, R. Praise be to you, O Christ. evangelists, and others as pastors and teachers, thus organizing the saints proportions that befit Christ's complement. Thus we shall no longer be the Son of God. Thus we attain to perfect manhood, to the mature of Christ, until we all attain to unity in faith and deep knowledge of for the work of the ministry, which consists in building up the body men as apostles, and some as inspired spokesmen, others again as

words and example the Gospel of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns world without end. Amen.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

R. Pray for us, O Holy Father Francis

us, your children, who are pressed on all sides by inescapable dangers You know, 0 most Holy One, that we follow your footsteps only from PRAYER TO SAINT FRANCIS: O holy Father, be mindful of

of grace and prayer be poured out over us, so that we may possess the afar. Obtain for us the grace to persevere! Pray for us that the spirit

observed; and merit the love with which you ever loved Christ, the true humility which you possessed; observe the poverty which you

Crucified. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, - and to the Holy Spirit,

ANTIPHON: "He was entirely imbued with the Catholic Faith,

respect in love and bring about union wih Christ who is the head. suggests. Rather by professing the truth, let us grow up in every which wicked men devise with the ingenuity and cleverness that error

children tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine,

R. Thanks be to God!

CHAPTER: O most beloved brethren and eternally blessed

subject and submissive at the feet of the same Holy Roman Church, protector, and the corrector of the fraternity; so that, being always of the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, who shall be the governor,

Ministers by obedience that they petition our Lord the Pope for one children, hear me, hear the voice of your Father: "I command the

sweeter also than syrup or honey from the comb.

The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; - the

The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul; — the decree of the Lord is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple.

promised." and steadfast in the Catholic Faith, we may observe poverty and humility and the Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, as we have faithfully

R. Praise be to you, O Christ.

and reigns with you and with the Holy Spirit, world without end observe the holy Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives always obedient to the teaching, governing and sanctifying authority of the Church, so that rooted and grounded in faith, we may faithfully that the example of Blessed Francis, our Father, may urge us to be Amen. PRAYER: Let us pray. Grant, we beseech you, almighty God.

Pray for us, O Holy Father Francis,

V. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

observed; and merit the love with which you ever loved Christ, the true humility which you possessed; observe the poverty which you of grace and prayer be poured out over us, so that we may possess the afar. Obtain for us the grace to persevere! Pray for us that the spirit Crucified. Amen. You know, O most Holy One, that we follow your footsteps only from us, your children, who are pressed on all sides by inescapable dangers. PRAYER TO SAINT FRANCIS: O holy Father, be mindful of

SIXTH DAY.

FRANCISCUS, BEATAE MARIAE VIRGINIS FAMULUS

Francis, Servant of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Majesty our brother, and through her we have obtained mercy." love that cannot be described, because she had made the Lord of (Celano) ANTIPHON: "He loved the Mother of the Lord Jesus with a

CANTICLE OF MARY

My soul magnifies the Lord, - and my spirit rejoices in God my savior.

Because he who is mighty has done great things for me, — and holy Because he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaid, - for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. is his name;

And his mercy is from generation to generation - toward those who fear him.

> He has shown might with his arm; — he has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones - and has exalted

The hungry he has filled with good things - and the rich he has the lowly.

As he promised our fathers, - toward Abraham and his descendants He has given help to Israel, his servant, being mindful of his mercy. sent empty away.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, - world Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, - and to the Holy Spirit, forever.

without end. Amen.

Majesty our brother, and through her we have obtained mercy." love that cannot be described, because she had made the Lord of ANTIPHON: "He loved the Mother of the Lord Jesus with a

sons. God sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba subjection to the Law, in order to redeem those who were in subjection also an heir through God's grace. Father." You are, then, no longer a slave but a son; and if a son, to the Law, that we might receive the adoption. And because you are of time had elapsed, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born in LESSON: Galatians 4: 4-7. Brethren, when the designated period

R. Thanks be to God!

can, and to have the greatest devotion and veneration for her. I also always to honor her and magnify her by every way and means they children, hear me, hear the voice of your Father: "Praise God and want us always to be her faithful servants." And in this connection I command all my brothers, present and future, His Most Holy Mother, whom we always pray to be our Advocate. CHAPTER: O most beloved brethren and eternally blessed

R. Praise be to you, O Christ.

salvation was conceived by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin we may faithfully serve you and your Son, Jesus Christ, who for our Mary and dwelt among us. Amen. his children, a special patroness, grant us that under her protection Mary has given to your servant, Blessed Francis, our Father, and to us, PRAYER: Let us pray. O God, who in the Most Blessed Virgin

R. Pray for us, O Holy Father Francis,

V. That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.

LESSON: 2 Corinthians 6: 4-10. Brethren, we reflect credit on

observed; and merit the love with which you ever loved Christ, the true humility which you possessed; observe the poverty which you of grace and prayer be poured out over us, so that we may possess the afar. Obtain for us the grace to persevere! Pray for us that the spirit SEVENTH DAY Crucified. Amen. FRANCISCUS, PAUPER CHRISTI —

us, your children, who are pressed on all sides by inescapable dangers. You know, O most Holy One, that we follow your footsteps only from

PRAYER TO SAINT FRANCIS: O holy Father, be mindful of

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Francis, the Little Poor Man of Christ

O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name over all the earth!

virtues as she had become so radiantly manifest in the King of kings

ANTIPHON: "He maintained that Poverty was the queen among

and, as pilgrims and strangers in this world, serving the Lord in poverty

appropriate nothing for themselves, neither house nor land nor anything, children, hear me, hear the voice of your Father: "Let the Friars

CHAPTER: O most beloved brethren and eternally blessed

enriching many, as having nothing yet possessing everything.

R. Thanks be to God!

but not killed, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as beggars yet death's door, yet, wonder of wonders, we continue to live; as chastised deceivers and yet truthful, as unknown yet well known, as ever at by holiness; in honor and dishonor, in evil report and good report; as that comes from God; with the offensive and defensive armor supplied Spirit, in unaffected love; in the preaching of the truth, in the power in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in the gifts of the Holy ourselves in all circumstances, as befits God's ministers — in integrity,

and the Queen, His Mother". (St. Bonaventure)

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings you have fashioned praise, - You have exalted your majesty above the heavens.

of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise be to you, O Christ

to this, may you never wish to have aught else here below for the sake leading into the land of the living. Dearest brethren, clinging wholly earthly things, but raised you up in virtue. May this be your portion, This is that summit of highest poverty which has made you poor in ashamed of this because the Lord made Himself poor in this world for us. and humility, let them go confidently for alms; and they should not be

What is man that you should be mindful of him, — or the son of When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers, — the moon and the stars which you set in place -man that you should care for him? because of your foes, — to silence the hostile and the vengeful.

You have given him rule over the works of your hands, - putting You have made him little less than the angels, — and crowned him all things under his feet: with glory and honor.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, — and to the Holy Spirit, O Lord, our Lord, — how glorious is your name over all the earth! The birds of the air, the fishes of the sea, — and whatever swims All sheep and oxen, - yes, and the beasts of the field the paths of the seas.

and the Queen, His Mother."

the virtues as she had become so radiantly manifest in the King of kings

ANTIPHON: "He maintained that Poverty was the queen among

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, — world

without end. Amen.

reigns world without end. Amen. V. Pray for us, O Holy Father Francis

Jesus Christ, your Son, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and never desire to possess anything in this world for the sake of Our Lord

poverty, grant us, we beseech you, that following his way of life we may

Blessed Francis, our Father, the riches and the delights of evangelical

PRAYER: Let us pray. O God, who has graciously revealed to

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

us, your children, who are pressed on all sides by inescapable dangers. PRAYER TO SAINT FRANCIS: O holy Father, be mindful of

true humility which you possessed; observe the poverty which you of grace and prayer be poured out over us, so that we may possess the afar. Obtain for us the grace to persevere! Pray for us that the spirit You know, O most Holy One, that we follow your footsteps only from

Crucified. Amen.

observed; and merit the love with which you ever loved Christ, the

EIGHTH DAY

Francis, Loving Friend of the Holy Eucharist

FRANCISCUS, AMICUS SS. EUCHARISTIAE

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

he marveled at the condescending love of the Lord". (Celano) Sacrament of the Body of Christ, and with exceeding great admiration ANTIPHON: "Every fiber of his heart was aglow with love for the

The heavens declare the glory of God, — and the firmament PSALM 18, 1-7

Not a word nor a discourse — whose voice is not heard, Day pours out the word to day, - and night to night imparts proclaims his handiwork. knowledge;

Through all the earth their voice resounds, - and to the ends of the world, their message.

He has pitched a tent there for the sun, which comes forth like the runs its course. groom from his bridal chamber, — and like a giant, joyfully

At one end of the heavens it comes forth, and its course is to their other end; — nothing escapes its heat.

ANTIPHON: "Every fiber of his heart was aglow with love for the Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, - and to the Holy Spirit, As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, — world without end. Amen.

Sacrament of the Body of Christ, and with exceeding great admiration he marveled at the condescending love of the Lord". LESSON: 1 Corinthians 11: 23-27. Brethren, I have received as

of the Lord unworthily will be held responsible for a sin against the and drink this chalice of the Lord, you proclaim the Lord's death until you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after he had coming from the Lord, and have passed on to you, how the Lord Jesus he comes. Consequently, whoever eats this bread or drinks the chalice it, in remembrance of me." In reality, every time you eat this bread is the new covenant sealed with my blood. Do this, as often as you drink finished supper, he took the chalice in his hands and said, "This chalice given thanks broke it and said, "This is my body which is given up for on the night of his betrayal took bread in his hands and after he had

body and blood of the Lord".

Thanks be to God!

celebrate Mass, being pure, they offer the true Sacrifice of the Body and desire to be priests of the Most High, that when they wish to God. I also beseech in the Lord all my brothers who are and shall be of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom the things that are in heaven and all reverence and all honor possible to the most holy body and blood the things that are on earth are pacified and reconciled to almighty

kissing your feet and with the charity of which I am capable, to show children, hear me, hear the voice of your Father: "I conjure you all,

CHAPTER: O most beloved brethren and eternally blessed

holy and a clean intention." R. Praise be to you, O Christ

and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ purely, with reverence, with a

Our Father, in honoring and loving these most holy Mysteries of Our see nothing corporally of your most High Son except His most holy Body and Blood, grant us that we may always imitate Blessed Francis, PRAYER: Let us pray. O God, who willed that in this world we

world without end. Amen. Lord Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns V. Pray for us, O Holy Father Francis, R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

us, your children, who are pressed on all sides by inescapable dangers.

PRAYER TO SAINT FRANCIS: O holy Father, be mindful of

You know, O most Holy One, that we follow your footsteps only from

FRANCISCUS, CANTOR GLORIAE OMNIPOTENTIS

Crucified. Amen.

observed; and merit the love with which you ever loved Christ, the true humility which you possessed; observe the poverty which you of grace and prayer be poured out over us, so that we may possess the afar. Obtain for us the grace to persevere! Pray for us that the spirit

Francis, the Troubador of Almighty God

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

the name of brother and sister, because they sprung from the same original principle as he himself". (St. Bonaventure) would be filled with overflowing piety, and he called all creatures by ANTIPHON: "When he considered the origin of all things, he

Praise the Lord from the heavens, — praise him in the heights:

Praise him, all you his angels, — praise him, all you his hosts,

Praise him, sun and moon; — praise him, all you shining stars.

Praise him, you highest heavens, — and you waters above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Lord, — for he commanded and they were created.

He established them forever and ever; — he gave them a duty which shall not pass away.

Praise the Lord from the earth, — you sea monsters and all depths; Fire and hail, snow and mist, — storm winds that fulfill his word.

You mountains and all you hills, — you fruit trees and all you cedars;

You wild beasts and all tame animals, — you creeping things and you winged fowl.

Let the kings of the earth and all peoples, — the princes and all the judges of the earth,

Young men too, and maidens, - old men and boys,

Praise the name of the Lord, — for his name alone is exalted;

His majesty is above earth and heaven, — and he has lifted up Nie horn of his people.

Be this his praise from all his faithful ones, — from the children of Israel, the people close to him.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, — and to the Holy Spirit, As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be — world wihout end. Amen.

ANTIPHON: "When he considered the origin of all things, he would be filled with overflowing piety, and he called all creatures by the name of brother and sister, because they sprung from the same original principle as he himself."

LESSON: Romans 1: 20-21. Brethren, since the creation of the world his invisible attributes are clearly seen — especially his everlasting power and divinity, which are understood through the things that are made. And so they are without excuse, because although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or give thanks, but their reasonings became absurd, and their senseless minds were darkened.

R. Thanks be to God!

CHAPTER: O most beloved brethren and eternally blessed children, hear me, hear the voice of your Father: "Let us love God and adore Him and offer Him praises by day and by by night:

Most high, omnipotent, merciful Lord,
Thine is all praise, the honour and the glory of every benediction
To Thee alone are they confined
And no man is worthy to speak Thy Name.

Praised be Thou, my Lord, with all Thy creatures.

Especially for Sir Brother Sun.

Through him Thou givest us the light of day,

And he is fair and radiant with great splendour,

Of Thee, most High, giving signification.

Praised be Thou, my Lord, for Sister Moon, and the stars Formed in the sky, clear, beautiful and fair.

Praised be Thou, my Lord, for Brother Wind,
For air, for weather cloudy and serene and every weather
By which Thou to Thy creatures givest sustenance.

Praised be Thou, my Lord, for Sister Water
Who is very useful and humble, precious and chaste.

Praised be Thou, my Lord, for Brother Fire By whom Thou didst illuminate the night Beauteous is he and jocund, robustious and strong

Praised be Thou, my Lord, for our Mother Earth
Who sustains and rules us
And brings forth divers fruits and colored flowers and herbs.

Praised be Thou, my Lord, for those who grant forgiveness through Thy love

And suffer infirmities and tribulation.

Blessed are they who bear them with resignation, Because by Thee, most High, they will be crowned.

Praised be Thou, my Lord, for our brother bodily Death From whom no living man can ever 'scape, Woe unto those who die in mortal sin.

Blessed those who are found in Thy most holy will, To them the second death will bring no ill.

Praise and bless my Lord, render thanks to Him And serve Him with great humility."

PRAYER: Let us pray. O God, in boundless love you have created us, and for us you have created useful, beautiful and wondrous things. Graciously grant us that by the example of Blessed Francis, our Father, we may always thank you, praise you and bless your Holy Name for them. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

V. Pray for us, O Holy Father Francis,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

PRAYER TO SAINT FRANCIS: O holy Father, be mindful of us, your children, who are pressed on all sides by inescapable dangers. You know, O most Holy One, that we follow your footsteps only from afar. Obtain for us the grace to persevere! Pray for us that the spirit of grace and prayer be poured out over us, so that we may possess the true humility which you possessed; observe the poverty which you observed; and merit the love with which you ever loved Christ, the Crucified. Amen.

INVESTITURE

I shall remember always what I felt
There in the sanctuary light,
As I knelt before His face!
A restless happiness
Divested me of veil and bridal gown
And stirred my heart
In words of wine,
"Beloved, you are wholly Mine!"

I shall remember that I wear
The garment of a living prayer!
That day, when kneeling there
I understood in silence
Thoughts that must unworded go,
New dreams, new hopes
Stretching far to God's Elysian fields,
Inheritance to keep
In some last nuptial hour!

You Have Wounded My Heart

The Life of St. Charles of Sezze, Franciscan Lay Brother

(Continued)

Raphael Brown, Tertiary

CHAPTER VI

TRIALS AND TESTS

Speaking of his novitiate, Charles wrote: "It was not just in one way that Our good Lord allowed me to be tried during that year," "but in many different ways, not only exteriorly by means of human beings, but also interiorly with the spirit of melancholy that afflicted me right to the bone."

This trial of a deep and prolonged depression began only a few days after he received the habit, "It weighed down my soul, putting me into a state of pain and anxiety, without enjoying a moment of relief"

relief."

Almost overnight, his eagerness to be a Franciscan friar left him. All his joy on entering the Order changed into bitterness. Everything around him only depressed him still more: "When I saw the sun, its rays filled me with sadness; when I heard the birds sing, they renewed my suffering."

Soon he felt strongly tempted to leave the Order and go home. Charles unwisely endured this serious spiritual trial for two or three weeks before he disclosed it to his confessor, the Father Guardian. The latter advised him never again to feed such a fire by concealing it, and urged him to concentrate much more often on his goal in becoming a religious, which was to advance in the love of God.

This sound advice, combined with the graces of the Sacrament of Penance (as Charles stressed), sufficed to give him new courage, although it did not eliminate the trial, which continued throughout his novitiate. But at least he stopped thinking of leaving the Order.

Nevertheless, he often felt those natural pangs of home-sickness which attack many novices from happy homes. Often he seemed to see before him his dearly loved brother and the tasty meals they used to enjoy at home, and he seemed to hear a voice saying to him: "Look at the good meals they are eating at home! And here you can hardly bite into the hard bread and get enough to eat!" He also recalled the

YOU HAVE WOUNDED MY HEART

loving kindness of his father and mother, and he regretted how little he had returned it. Somehow he felt that he had never known his good parents so well as now when they were absent.

Yet he was able to endure this trial too with the help of God's grace. For after all, he told himself, "I did not come to this place to eat and drink and enjoy myself, but to suffer for the love of Jesus Christ and to do penance."

As if all these troubles were not enough, many nights when Charles tried to get some much-needed sleep on the hard bed in his little cell, he endured various kinds of attacks from devils. Even as a boy he suffered such persecutions; in those instances his devout grandmother had tried to protect him with relics or religious objects that had been blessed.

Now in the novitiate his night's rest was often disturbed by appparitions of devils disguised in human form. One night one appeared as the Father Guardian and summoned him to his cell for a talk. But when Charles knocked on the Father's door, the latter told him it could not have been he who summoned him. At other times the devil came disguised as a fellow novice.

Frequently when he fell asleep, demons would awaken him in a way that frightened him. Then he would always strive to make the Sign of the Cross, call on Jesus Christ for help, and recite some prayers, particularly the one to Mary beginning Sub tuum praesidium. But often they attacked his body in such a way as to make his heart beat violently and render him physically incapable of uttering a word.

One night before lying down, Charles was reciting his Franciscan Crown (the Rosary of the Seven Joys of Mary), when he felt almost overcome by a desire to sleep. As the Brother Master had instructed him to do in such cases, he stood on only one foot, holding up the other with his cord, and thus was able to finish all seven decades. Then he lay down on his straw mattress and was about to fall asleep when he became aware of a bright light filling the cell. Looking up, he distinctly saw a clear picture of the Seventh Mystery or Joy of Mary he had just been meditating on: the Crowning of the Blessed Virgin in Heaven. His immediate reaction was expressed in these words: "O Most Holy Madonna, due to my sins I am not worthy to look upon you!"

As soon as he said that, the vision vanished, and a number of devils rushed at him and began to beat him cruelly. His outcries fortunately brought a friar to the rescue. Yet the attack was so painful that Charles was unable to do his usual work the next day.

Naturally he reported the incident to both the Brother Master

and the Father Guardian, who told him that if he had accepted the vision, the devil would have acquired a strong hold on him.

Nevertheless, some time later, the devil tried to deceive Charles by a false vision of the Blessed Mother with the Christ Child, but was again unmasked and gave the humble novice another pummeling.

Twice at night in church a man came up to Charles and offered him a drink. When he consulted the Master, the latter gave him the same realistic advice that according to the Fioretti St. Francis gave to Brother Rufino, namely, to tell the fellow to open his mouth that it might serve as a depository for ordure. When the Saint did so—and spat in his face for good measure—the Devil vanished.

Despite his trials and even despite the attacks from the demons, Charles enjoyed deep spiritual peace during the first six months of the novitiate. For to him—and this is an important lesson for our tranquilizer-addicted times—true peace, peace of heart and soul, was nothing more nor less than peace of conscience. As he wrote, "peace of conscience helps a great deal to bear our burdens and crosses with joy and to remain in continuous union with God, and among all the trials of this world it enables us to enjoy paradise on earth." Indeed, he goes so far as to state that "in the spiritual life the principal thing that we should concentrate on is always to keep our conscience pure and at peace. Because once man is without sin, through grace, union with God follows, and we are once more disposed to enjoy the lofty fruition of divine contemplation, which is a state of peace and consolation, inspired by the Holy Spirit."

For some months Charles lived in this high degree of spiritual bliss, finding deep happiness in loving, serving, and blessing God. So intense was his joy that often it actually seemed to permeate his body too.

Perhaps his exhilaration was too lofty to last indefinitely. In any case, when the year's novitiate was at the halfway point, two events happened which suddenly shattered his peace of mind.

One day two of the friars walked by a place where Charles was working. They were discussing the merits of the novices, but were apparently unaware that he was within earshot. However, he distinctly heard one of them say to the other: "That Brother Charles of Sezze is an angel in human form!"

Those fateful words, by causing a little passing pleasure and vanity in Charles' mind, so aroused his conscience that he bitterly regretted his first reaction, not only for the remaining six months of the novitiate but in fact for the next six years. Despite frequent confessions, he went through a prolonged period of self-accusation and scrupulosity.

YOU HAVE WOUNDED MY HEART

All the faults and sins of his twenty-three years came back to his mind and attacked his soul "with ravenous teeth and frightful shrieks," claiming they had not been fully confessed and repented. Such was his mental anguish that far from being an angel, he felt more like a devil in hell. He looked upon this severe trial as a well deserved blow from the hand of God, aimed at repressing his pride. In describing the incident, he penned a strong warning against all praise of devout persons as "a pestilential poison that easily brings spiritual death."

His eighth month in the novitiate drew near while he was in this state of mind, and he knew that still greater trials lay just ahead. Some time before he and his friend Pietro had gone to Rome, they had talked over their vocations with a holy hermit who lived a life of penance in an abandoned chapel near Sezze. The hermit prophesied that from the eighth to the eleventh month of the novitiate Charles would be in serious danger of being sent home, but that if he remained until the twelfth month, all would go well.

Now as this period of crisis arrived, Charles' superiors began to test his vocation by giving him more and heavier penances, for they had observed an alarming degree of absent-mindedness in him, which made them doubt whether he would be capable of performing the exacting duties of a brother efficiently. Actually, whatever distractions he might be guilty of were due either to lack of sleep or to genuine absorption in prayer.

During the cold winter months, Fra Diego would call the brother novices into the kitchen after the midnight office and give them lessons in both spirituality and cooking. Whenever Charles made a mistake—and apparently he made quite a few—he was ordered to perform especially severe penances, such as taking the discipline until dawn or carrying a heavy stone suspended from his neck throughout the hour or two of work in the kitchen. And if he chanced to say something wrong, he had to lick the kitchen floor from end to end. One hot summer afternoon "the Lord allowed the Master to forget" that he had ordered him to do this, and Charles licked the kitchen floor for six hours! The Saint's only comment in his autobiography was: "It was quite right that that part of my body, which the Lord had given me to honor and bless Him, but with which I had so much offended Him, should receive such a punishment."

The Father Guardian also did his share of testing. He would often give Charles severe scoldings in the presence of the entire community in the refectory, and then impose on him such penances as the discipline or eating bread and water on his knees, with the stone

YOU HAVE WOUNDED MY HEART

hanging from his neck. An additional humiliation was inflicted on him by two house cats "who did not have good manners" and who were allowed to lap up Charles' soup from his bowl when he tried to take it too.

In the ninth month of the novitiate, Charles found himself going through that period of crisis which the hermit had prophesied. Or, as he put it, "our good Lord was introducing me into the house of His love by the sure path of suffering."

Just at this time his absent-mindedness somehow became so obvious that almost all the friars in the community, including his fellow novices were unanimous in their conviction that he was unfit to be professed.

Often at the end of the midnight office, when the bell rang and the friars left the chapel, Charles remained motionless, so completely absorbed in contemplation that the Master had to tell a novice to wake him up. Then a hearty slap on the shoulders and an exclamation, "You're sleeping on your feet, like a horse!" would bring him back to himself.

Unfortunately for Charles, these trances would come over him not only in church but also during periods of manual labor. Finally the Father Guardian had to give him a strange command: not to concentrate on God except when praying.

However, Charles was relieved to find a fellow contemplative in a Fra Taddeo, who understood the novice's problem and urged him to persevere and to hope in God. The two would often work in the garden or go together to the village on begging trips.

Charles especially admired his companion's unusual way of praying the "Our Father." Fra Teddeo would kneel, and after uttering each clause he would spend a good interval in silent meditation. Charles would secretly watch him praying thus in the chapel before the midnight office.

Inevitably the Saint's mind turned to considering what he should do in case the fathers sent him away, as now seemed very probable, if not certain. Whatever happened, he was determined not to deviate from the rocky road of spiritual perfection on which he had begun to travel.

If he was forced to leave, he decided to take with him his habit, out of devotion to St. Francis, though he planned to give his breeches to a poor novice who had been handed some old ones. But the main problem was: would he have enough courage to return home? He felt tempted to live in a cave as a hermit, but gave up the idea because of its spiritual and material risks. Finally he resolved that if necessary he

with the consolation that he had given at least a year to God. would humbly accept this humiliation and live in chastity at home

he had consistently invoked as protectress of his vocation. fervent prayers to God and especially to the Blessed Mother, whom As the fateful eleventh month approached, he redoubled his

Stefano di Sezze, who had known Charles in the world. painful uncertainty, sent on a brief visit to Nazzano a holy friar, Fra Perhaps it was she who now, just at the climax of this period of

would be professed and leaving him "much consoled." simply knelt silently before Fra Stefano and listened to him. The friar rule for a novice to speak to anyone without special permission, Charles gave him a brief encouraging talk, telling him not to doubt that he He found the Saint alone in the kitchen. As it was against the

profession of the novices. The Fathers assembled in the refectory, day dawned when the priests of the community were to vote on the At last the eleventh month came and went. And soon the decisive

while the novices were sent to pray in the church.

beg you to give it to me." send me back into the world. It seems to me that I have corresponded chapel, and said to her, "with heart and voice: 'O Most Holy Mother, to my vocation. So the only thing left for me is your help. I humbly in chastity in the holy Order of St. Francis. Now these fathers wish to you know that I came here to keep my promise to you-to serve you There Charles knelt before an image of the Madonna in a side

and peace of heart, with a perfect abandonment to the will of God. While praying, he experienced an extraordinary sense of relief

and whispered to Charles: "This time, Fra Carlo, it's your turn-be barely able to murmur: "May God's will be done!" patient!" These words were like a dagger stab in Charles' heart. He was As each genuflected before the church's main altar, one of them turned Soon the novices were summoned to the meeting in the refectory.

told that he would be professed. and ordered two friars to divest them of their habits. Another was announced. Next he proceeded to reprove two novices for their faults accepting the will of God as manifested in their decisions about to be In the refectory the Guardian gave the novices a brief talk on

that if he did not improve, he would have to leave. delay of three weeks, during which he was to work in the kitchen, and to send him away like the two others-but that he would be given a ness and inefficiency, and declared that it had therefore been decided on the floor, the Guardian scolded him severely for his absent-minded-Then Charles' name was called. After he had prostrated himself

YOU HAVE WOUNDED MY HEART

was a great relief to him. Soon he was told that he would be professed. charitable priest who led souls to God by the way of love, like Jesus came to Nazzano, Father Angelo Maria di Roma. He was a very Christ. Moreover, he was favorably disposed toward Charles, which Before the date of the final decision, however, a new Guardian

throughout this difficult year. During his meditation the Saint experithat unite the soul to God in such bliss!" expressed his grateful reaction in these words: "Oh, holy sufferings enced a state of mystical prayer which bordered on ecstasy. Later he God, and thanked the Blessed Mother for all the help she had given him after Mass. There he fervently made an entire offering of himself to When the great day came, Charles was sent to meditate in his cell

brother. He was twenty-three years old. bell rang for vespers, Fra Carlo de Sezze became a professed Franciscan On the afternoon of that joyful Sunday, May 18, 1636, when the

(Continued)

FOR TOLL

The heart is free, From my poor lips! Our rivers of unending song! Our timeless symphonies, Little coins of dust O blessed temporalities, Shot through and through These little coins of dust And love's unlatching may come suddenly. Though they may be mute with pain Be not too quick to pass the cup So soon to yield to vision's ecstacy, Of this short day, O happy griefs and tears Wherewith to buy My toll must be! With Eucharistic life,

Sister M. Josephine, F. SS. S.

BOOK REVIEW

ONE FOLD: ESSAYS AND DOCUMENTS TO COMMEMORATE THE GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THE CHAIR OF UNITY OCTAVE 1908-1958.

Edited by Edward F. Hanahoe, S.A., S.T.D., M.A. and Titus F. Cranny, S.A.,

With the announcement by the Holy Father of a new Ecumenical Council, a major portion of the work of which will be devoted to the union of Christendom, interest in Church unity and the means of attaining it have greatly increased. One Fold, edited by Frs. Hanahoe and Cranny of the Society of the Atonement, gives an historical and theological insight into one phase of the Catholic Church's efforts to achieve such unity during the twentieth century.

were founded by Father Paul James Francis Watson while he was still an Episcopalian clergyman. In 1908 as part of his deep-seated belief in the necessity of a united Christendom he initiated what was called the Church Unity Octave. The next year he and the members of his community were received into the Catholic Church. Since that time the Atonement Fathers have made Church unity a principal part of their apostolate. The Friats of the Atonement, as is well known to the readers of this magazine,

and the particular emphasis it takes. Included here are valuable articles by Fr. Cranny and Fr. Hanahoe and sermons by Bishop Scully of Albany and Fr. Francis Connell. Part two consists of a number of articles on the general subject of Church unity. The present reviewer found those on the "Anglican Mind." "Judaism and Christianity Today," "The Eastern Rites of the Catholic Church," and "The Concept of Catholic Ecumenism" of particular interest. The final essay in the volume is also the longest: "Vestigia Ecclesiae: Their Meaning and Value," by Fr. Hanahoe. Treating the subject in traditional theological fashion he gives a clear and well ordered exposition of what is surely a complex and difficult topic. contains a number of historical documents concerning the Octave's origin and progress of Unity Octave itself, its history, its implications and its objectives. This section The present volume is divided into two parts, the first devoted to the Chair

growth of the Octave and the popularity it has achieved during the past fifty years indicates the importance this particular apostolate has in the movement towards unity. One Fold should serve as a valuable source book for the future historian as which it sponsors is only one of the many ways in which the Church attempts to spread her message to mankind throughout the modern world. But surely the great of the ecumenical scene. well as offering a stimulating intellectual experience for the contemporary observer The work of the Society of the Atonement and the Chair of Unity Octave

FATHER ALFRED A. CAREY, O.F.M.