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### 100 P

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

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## A Commentary on the Psalms:

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

story of King Saul is the

paring to resist a Philistine attack, reign auspiciously. In the second year as king, however, while preking of Israel, Saul began his anointed by Samuel to be the first to God. Chosen by God tragedy of a proud man's disloyalty

> fattest rams" (I King 15:9). Samherds, the choicest garments, the and "the best of the flocks and the sparing Agag, the king of Amalec, possessions, Saul disobeyed by Amalecites and to destroy all their

had waited a full week for Samwin God's blessing on the army of uel's coming to offer sacrifice to he first forfeited God's favor. He

self performed the sacred sacrifice. to appear, Saul, fearing wholesale desertions, impetuously ordered Just as the sacrilege was concluded, the victims prepared and he him-

Israel. When the prophet failed

have destined thee, here and now, violation of God's ordinances.
"But for this, the Lord would to found a line of kings that should Saul the consequences of his rash Samuel appeared and revealed to

instead of thee; such is the reward of disobedience" (I Kings 13: his purposes and rule his people Lord has found a man to fulfill dynasty shall fall with thee; the have ruled Israel forever. Now thy

Saul but it seems not to have taught him any lasting lesson. When com-manded later by God to kill the The rebuke must have shocked

fits of melancholy. Something should be done, his courtiers

these events Saul began to fall into

It is no wonder that soon after

a better man than thyself" (I Kings

15:26-28).

moods of depression. So David agreed, to lift the king from these

drive away the evil spells. Saul and thus comfort the king and

mand of the Lord had already did not know—and David did not tell him—that Samuel at the com-

ally Saul "began to fear David David. These multiplied until finturned the king's affection against other things that little by little leader of Israel. But there were

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uel solemnly announced God's punishment for this act of delib-

thee, and given it to another and to him . . . The Lord has torn away the kingdom of Israel from since thou hast revoked the loyalty revoked thy kingship over Israel, erate defiance: "The Lord has

play the harp in Saul's presence was fetched from Bethlehem to

to prepare him to become the secretly anointed the shepherd boy

of the Dead Sea.

Killing David was by this time an obsession with Saul. Understandably then, when informed by the men of Ziph that David was in their neighborhood, he set out to capture him. The expedition almost succeeded at the Rock of Division—an episode already noted in the discussion of Psalm 18. You can imagine the exasperation of the king when he had to call off his troops to meet a new attack by the Philistines and thus leave David to go free.

closer to the Dead Sea, for traces scour the desert of Engaddi away, he called out to Saul, held off the edge of the king's cloak tented himself with merely cutting the king had entered. David conof David and his men. On this forehearance as evidence of his begged Saul to take this proof of up the fragment of garment, and and then stealing out of the cave his men, lay hidden in a cave that into the hands of David, who, with expedition Saul unwittingly fell the chase again, Saul began to When he had got some distance As soon as he could undertake

loyalty to his king. Saul was deeply moved. The words he spoke show how surely he knew that he was fighting a losing battle: "This I know past all doubt, that one day thou wilt be king, and have this realm of Israel in thy power" (I Kings 24:21).

less king took his life by falling battle, badly wounded, the hopeby the death of his three sons in enemies on Mount Gelboe, crushed People. Finally trapped by his tide went against the Chosen with the Philistines in which the mystery. A new war broke out would never again try to kill him. affected and assured David that he evident loyalty. Saul was visibly camp, David called out loudly to they did. When they had reached proof of their presence and their pitcher of water near his couch as very tent where the king rested. sleeping at night and to enter the seize him. This time David and and men in a desperate effort to and Saul set out with three thoushave lasted will forever be a How long the resolution might the king and protested his all-toothe mountains above the Israelite generosity in sparing his life. This king but take the spear and David insisted that they spare the Abisai was all for killing him. the king's forces as they lay Abisai managed to steal through reported the whereabouts of David getting the better of his common sense. The men of Ziph once more Saul's bitterness was not long in

> on his own sword. And so ended in defeat and darkness a career that had commenced with such promise of glory.

nearly three fourths of those in chanted at Prime. This Psalm, like purposes can be discovered in a er, and sometimes all of these of a Psalm to describe its nature, the Psalter, has a title prefixed to supplies for the adequate appreci history is the background composition. Now one, now anothto give the author's name, or to for the musical or liturgical use seem intended to give directions sight of by the Chosen People upheavals that mark their history, and circumstances which, in the them because they refer to things have a certain obscurity about quity. For the most part, too, they it. These titles are of great antiindicate the circumstances of its said certainly is that these titles themselves. The most that can be had long ago and early been lost ation of Psalm 53, the first Psalm The relevance of all this tedious

In illustration of these facts we have the title of Psalm 53. The first part of it is evidently some kind of direction for its rendition: "For the leader; with stringed instruments." Next comes a description of the poem and the attribution of it to David: "a maskil of David." A maskil, as nearly as can be discovered, may have been "a Psalm with musical setting of a specially delicate and artistic

character." Finally we are told the circumstances in which David composed the poem: "when the Ziphites went and said to Saul, 'David is hiding among us.'"

not, David probably composed it wrote it while in headlong flight out insisting that David actually pursuit of David. We can read the background of Saul's murderous must be read against the historical prayer. them artistically in this beautiful sentiments that had filled his soul in memory, feeling once more the ous days of his youth, reliving them and he himself was king of Israel. after the event when Saul had died from the king. More likely than poem in this way, however, withbecause it reveals that Psalm 53 is this final section of the title in his hours of peril, he recorded Looking back then on the danger-Most helpful to us, of course,

suspicion that a line may have Psalm is, a confident prayer of a man in great peril. The first stropho tercet in the poem-has led to the and the fact that it is the only ceding lines in the verse. This, strophe seems not to echo as supreme confidence. The strophes of three verses is a sincere petition perfectly as it should the two preonymous parallelism in each of have in common the use of synbe made: the final line of the first the verses. One exception might four verses is an expression of for help; the second strophe of That is essentially what the

each with exactly two lines to each two equal strophes of four verses poem perfect. It would then have would render the symmetry of the presence of a line in just that place weight to the opinion is that the final one. What lends further fallen out of place just before this

strophe: much more than it seems to say. striking imagery are convincing evidence of the intense sincerity strophe of Psalm 53 is its simplicachievement. It is actually saying poem, the more certain you become the more carefully you read the of the plea that David is making. starkness and the utter absence of fairly obvious in meaning. Their might be pointed out that the that its simplicity is an artistic heart too full for many words. Yet, His case is too desperate and his statements are brief, direct, and ity. In defense of that opinion it that the chief quality of the first Take the first verse of the It is quite natural to conclude

O God, by your name save me, and by your might defend my

who bore it precisely because it or a sentence applied to the one trary, a name was usually a phrase appellations casually attached to persons and things. On the consignificance. They were not mere Hebrews names had a special to recall that among the ancient meaning in that first line you have To comprehend the depths of

> bore it. utmost intimacy with the God who to be in a special relationship of being. And to know this name was the font and source of all created infinite self-sufficiency which is His name was a symbol for this self-sustained, essential existence. name described his being: perfect, who am" (Exodus 3:14). His valent to the statement, "I am the name of God as revealed to ality and character of the bearer. Yahweh, which is roughly equibe known to the Israelites as Moses on Horeb. God willed to This is eminently illustrated by described or revealed the person-

decision in his favor? The very he depend so confidently for a plead it. On what grounds does humble soul, an obedient will, to present his case rather than to 49:6). Yet he seems content merely is a plaintiff in the court where there are traces of a metaphor. He prayer that God defend his cause thee" (Judith 9:16). In David's at the very outset that "from a Much more by suggestion, then, his utter dependence upon God. "God himself is the judge" (Psalm must come the prayer that wins than by statement he professees is admitting his complete reliance, who bears it. Necessarily, too, he premacy of that name and the God acknowledging the absolute suof such intimacy. He is, moreover, fore, David is taking advantage name of God for salvation, there-In calling specifically upon the

> which he leans most heavily: what must be the evidence on simplicity of his statement suggests

Do me justice, O Lord, because I am just.

Do me justice, because you are embody the plea his heart makes: the more eloquent because they words he speaks, therefore, are all faith and confidence. The few his innocence but his unshakable on this issue alone reveals not only come of his case be determined That he is content to let the outjust, O Lord.

he begs to be heard: somewhat the urgency with which which God knows, serve to temper knows, and his own innocence, Thus God's justice, which David

O God, hear my prayer; hearken to the words of my

occasioned David's prayer: depict the perils which final verse of this first strophe Three short sentences in the mouth.

For haughty men have risen up and fierce men seek my life; against me,

responsible for his plight, Saul. single out by name the one man his position as God's anointed More forgetful as time went by of and sharply is that of the king. But the picture drawn so swiftly charitable about David's refusal to There is something noble and

(Psalm 34:24). (Psalm 7:9) mission to God as evinced in the rounds out the strophe with a of God? It is with this final incould tell beyond doubt that the ively more self-willed, independent, loyalty of Saul and his own subsubtle contrast between the disdictment, I think, that David but outright defiance of the will thirsty intent. And since "Saul with single, fierce, and bloodhate David, finally pursuing him haughty. Brooding over the reservant, Saul had become progress-18:28), what else was his conduct Lord was with David" (I Kings he had begun to envy, then to jection of himself and his dynasty,

belief that David has about God: you recognize that what binds them tween them seems abrupt unless help; the second one is a profession Toward the faithful you are faithof confidence. The transition betogether is a fundamental personal very opening words of the Psalm. The first strophe is a prayer for

toward the wholehearted you are wholehearted,

they set not God before their Toward the sincere you are sincere, but toward the crooked you are

For lowly people you save but haughty eyes you bring low.

is grounded the confident statement opens: with which the second strophe These are the convictions in which (Psalm 17:26-28)

Behold, God is my helper; the Lord sustains my life.

who threaten him. "You have risen haughty, fierce, and godless men strophe, affords an insight into assurance of the words makes them sustains my life." The solid up against me; God is my helper. not so much to God as to the a kind of proclamation addressed testation strikes you, somehow, as This verse, like those of the first "set not God before their eyes." a challenge to these men who have You seek to kill me; the Lord sustains his life. The blunt proprays, God is his helper, the Lord Here, now, already, even while he his persuasion about the future. his certainty about the present, not David's mind. The words express

The thought of the vicious men who surround him brings his prayer back to God with the request that he

How impossible for the beleagured David to realize then how literally his petition would be answered on that day when Saul, with all lost in Gelboe, would turn against himself the very sword he had so often lifted against David. But David knows that his prayer will be granted. You know that because he says so plainly, as he repeats his request while indicating the grounds of his assurance:

In your faithfulness destroy them. He had been chosen by God, anointed by Samuel, "and on him, on David, the spirit of the Lord came down, ever after that day" (I Kings 16:13). So long as he

strives to be humble of soul, obedient of will, innocent, just, generous and charitable, so long as he lives worthy of his vocation, David knows that he can depend upon the faithfulness of the Lord to protect his anointed one.

Perhaps that is just the point that has to be grasped: this is the prayer of a man whom God has consecrated to his own uses and purposes. Such a man need not be timid or faint-hearted. He may be surrounded by enemies but he knows that he will never be downed by them. He knows that victory is ultimately his. So he can confidently promise God who is his helper:

Freely will I offer you sacrifice; I will praise your name, O Lord,

for its goodness.
Gratitude is for David as much a foregone conclusion as the victory itself. And its expression will be the free offering of sacrifice and the triumphant praise of God's name. This is the promise David makes. In a way, then, he has come right back to where he started in the poem: to the name of God, the revelation to man of God's infinitely rich and perfect being; the revelation to man of his total dependence upon the source and origin of all life.

The last verse of the poem flows logically from the preceding one. It declares that David's prayer has been answered and so gives his reason for worshipping and praising God:

Because from all distress you have rescued me, and my eyes look down upon

good to him. offers to the God who has been so companiment to the sacrifice he of which will be a fitting ac-Holy Spirit, a Psalm, the singing past, and the inspiration of the of the present, memories of the comes into being, from thoughts faithful servant he is. And so there help he had trusted then as now, ed. By the God to whom he had fierce defeated, the godless destroycollection-how completely the and moved deeply by the rehave all gone by. Calling to mindnow. The picture forms of an older verses of the poem? The mood the haste and urgency of the earlier about it that contrasts sharply with who still sustains him, whose had prayed so ardently, in whose haughty had been humbled, the David, living again the days that seems more certainly retrospective verse that there is a certain serenity Does it strike you in reading the my enemies.

In describing the dangers that threatened him, David, as we noticed, tolerantly omits any direct mention of Saul. If you compare Psalm 53 with the situation which occasioned it, as this is recorded in the First Book of Kings, you will notice that David is similarly reticent about specific aspects of the persecution he was suffering. His language for a poet is fairly general. It never becomes so

particular that we can identify this or that person, recognize a certain place, or picture circumstances graphically. When we remember that David was writing under inspiration, we realize that the decision to omit such vivid details from his poem was radically not his. What is in the poem is in it, and what is not in the poem is not in it, because the Holy Spirit would have it so. And 'why' is not the complete mystery it may seem.

fierceness of those who will resent stand and misjudge us; from the names and dates and details, it is pride of those who will misunderthe same. They spring from the terrify us, perhaps, are generically these dangers. But those which do things we can never experience today. By the very nature of ally the dangers that surround us easier for us to make it our own. the Psalm is not encumbered with us today. And precisely because courage from the Holy Spirit, for It is a "message of endurance and happened to David a long time ago. 53 is no mere record of what bring us" (Romans 15:4). Psalm and courage which the scriptures from the message of endurance struction; we were to derive hope Paul, "were written for our inthe words written long ago," writes Saint Paul to give some insight into his purposes. "See how all heights of Engaddi are not specificthe wilderness of Ziph and on the The evils that menaced David in The same Holy Spirit inspired

will persecute us and do all in we achieve; from the godless who us and hate, maybe, the success must make their dangers our own for strength to face them. So that as we pray with them in the liturgy

destroy us.

blessed by being spared such trials, their power to wreck our work and brothers and sisters in the Mystical have to face them. They are our we can not forget those who do we personally may be singularly as David faced his. And although We have to face these dangers of our deliverance from all the was for David, the sure means that this will be for all of us, as it confident prayer and assures us Spirit teaches us the power of words, can become for us a Psalm 53, in the truest sense of age." Because through it the Holy "message of endurance and cour-

Body of Christ. That is why we

dangers that threaten us.

SONG FOR HER SORROWS

(Feast of Our Lady's Dolors)

Scripture study hours, Tranquil temple days, Betrothal, Nazareth and peace! Needlework and psaitery, These were yours, my Mother, Unbroken nights of prayer, In the spring of your pure life; For renegades, this sea of men Making you witness of the Father's love These pinions covered you most jealously Received your mangled Son in death; Until the tomb's white jaws From Joseph's anguished cloud of doubt, Wrapped themselves around you, And suddenly, the wings of sorrow Then came the little Seed!

ADDRESS BY

### Pres., Franciscan Educational Conference Very Rev. Pius J. Barth, O.F.M., Ph.D.

42nd ANNUAL MEETING, LORETTO, PA., 1961

Father Pius J. Barth, O.F.M., Ph.D.

Many an eyebrow might be raised at this year's conference theme:

Franciscan Financial Administration. If St. Francis spurned money, ought not his followers find such a

monetary methods should not mean an improvident irresponsibility theme as finance most distasteful? Yes, indeed! But unconcern for

of God and man. Poverty and the precept against money are means of social sanctity and not ends in themselves. from loving money for itself and using it judiciously in the service in the modern world of affairs; rather it should signify detachment The dramatic rejection and prohibition of money by the Poverello

which would reduce the Christian spirit to economic servility. Unless served to alert the world to the dangers of greed in the possession and kept, unless priority values guide its disbursement, abuses of the precautions are daily observed and unless a strict fund-accounting is use of money and also to place mankind on its guard against an invention

gravest kind can debase the noblest Franciscan work.

When Feudalism and the barter system gradually gave way to the

serviential concept of financial administration will safeguard capitalistic societies from an exaggerated liberalism in the free-enterprise system, to the necessity of making creatures serve rather than rule. This the apostolic syndic. Herein the Order again led in calling attention a strict code of financial control and by introducing the concept of the Franciscan spirit against abuse and deterioration by drawing up

so, however, the Holy See and the Superiors of the Order safeguarded

Franciscan Order to accomodate itself to a changing society. In doing

emergence of money as a commodity, it became necessary for the capitalistic system of the merchants at the cross-roads with the resulting

and protect the poverty of religious orders. will preserve the common good, take the initiative from communism To cite just one example of Franciscan alertness in this regard

In the harvesting of Time! Through you, our Mother Bringing its blood-red tides

Sister M. Josephine, F. SS. S.

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I need but rely on last November's issue of Fortune<sup>1</sup> magazine! A

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supplement to the Summa Arithmetica of Fra Luca Pacioli, O.F.M.

ADDRESS BY REV. PIUS J. BARTH, O.F.M., Ph.D.

his time such as the discovery of the New World and the theory of the Oswald Spengler ranks Pacioli's work along with other great events of keeping as "one of the finest discoveries of the human intellect" and of his age, namely, Fra Luca. Goethe refers to double-entry book-Vinci as a stroke of genius from the mind of the greatest mathematician this innovation in financial reporting was acclaimed by Leonardo da continuing related enterprise. He introduced double-entry bookkeeping; growing awareness of their companies and business concerns as a the father of the accounting profession since he gave merchants a (c. 1445-1523) won for this Franciscan friar the distinction of being

strict income and expense statement and the proper use of journal when Fra Luca Pacioli published his work which emphasized also the now call the fiscal year.3 status of an enterprise within a specified period of time which we and 'ledger to discipline the operation by determining the financial The concept of "balance" on a single ledger was unknown until 1494

various kinds of transactions but each transaction was viewed separately may have kept some individual journals in different colors to record and separate "deals" into an ethical system of continuity and trust.2 but specific period of time brought money transactions out of isolated making two entries, one of receipts and one of expenditures, over a long earth's rotation around the sun. Keeping track of business affairs by

Merchants, such as Pietro Bernardone, the father of St. Francis

what they wished, led many honest men and idealists in St. Francis? Luca's invention brought finance back within the realm of morality and day to regard money as an evil in itself, whereas evil men had made who sought to take in whatever the traffic would bear and only expend made it serve the interests of God and man. Without this check and it so by refusing self-restraint. The vigilance made possible by Fra The rampant excesses of the taxing powers and merchant class.

reception, particularly with the development of corporations. Balance justice and charity, to a potentially chaotic economic condition. in jungle living. Franciscan restraint based on Gospel Counsels brought balance shrewdness would have run riot like physical might over right

sheets developed, laws were passed and the accounting and auditing which already from the early thirteenth century made the desire for professions came into their own to exercise control over the excesses <sup>2</sup> Robert Emmett Taylor, No Royal Road; Luca Pacioli and His Times, University of North Carolina Press, 1942. Especially in England did Pacioli's system find a most hospitable

Franciscan Herald and Forum, April 1961, p. 128.

approach we might take in discussing Franciscan financial administration. Our vow and virtue of poverty not only set aright our sense the use of money for God and man. The creative example of progressive Friar Luca points up an

incentive to objective honest accounting prevents abuse and fosters money the source of much evil. Disciplining this level of monetary

times of complex financial ventures which call for fund-raising initiative, reasons, this year's theme, Franciscan Financial Administration, has ready to give a strict accounting of them to our superiors. For these spend them wisely for spiritual advantage and religious pursuits, always continually the better life to an ever increasing number of God's on our spiritual life and apostolate in distributing effectively and activities. While we do not work for money, we realize that without been heralded as a most realistic area for Franciscan education in these bonds." We need also these to provide the physical facilities to carry his benefactors: "Money isn't everything-there are also stocks and money we cannot work. As Bishop Ryan of our Amazon mission tells of values but also enable us to save for our apostolic and charitable Poverty demands that we safeguard the alms of the faithful,

outlook on money and the things which money can buy. modern Franciscan of efficient business management reflecting a spiritual providing stimulation that will cause you to inform yourself as a not so much with the purpose of giving education in depth and with board has attempted in this conference to run the complete course finality but rather with the objective of educating in breadth and ing, auditing and general financial administration. Your executive

expenditure, for insurance coverage, salary schedules, reporting, accountfor budgeting in capital outlay purchasing and operational income and

services of our members and the substantial donations of our benefactors. profit; we are a spending institution, endowed with the contributed criteria of the secular business world. Our success is not measured by and the burdens we bear for others. financial skills are demanded if we are to be true to our vocation profit-making and short-sighted saving, solid business techniques and poverty and the alms of our faithful, wise spending rather than This does not mean that we slavishly adopt the financial success

the protection of our clientele, accounting and auditing to preserve

Up-to-date fiscal policies, insurance, not for investment but for

eternal framework of Franciscan spiritual accomplishment. Monetary reckoning can only be evaluated within the larger and

## A Dream Come True

Rev. Valentine Long, O.F.M.

This is just another occasion in the story of St. Bonaventure University: a story that, for all its long century of achievements, began as a fine dream in the mind and heart of one man.

When on a spring day in 1854 Nicholas Devereux stood looking over his wide 200 acres of land in Cattaraugus County; which was known as his farm, he saw it rather as a wasted expanse of ploughed fields and wildwood reaching down to the Allegheny River. For he was wondering how to turn it to a better use. A successful financier of Utica, who made money to spend it on charities, he could not recall having come across a single Catholic church or rectory or school anywhere in this vast and neglected area of the diocese. It disturbed him. It set him dreaming, and in that dream of his that day, he looked over his land, it was no longer his, nor a promising farm, but a campus with its first building, and then another, and another, and another: the site of a monastery, a seminary, a parish church, a college, all combined to become a training base for young aspirants to the priesthood, the nursery of a staunch laity, a nerve centre of Catholic Action for a wide radius of miles around.

The visionary was doing more than only seeing what his eye could see. He was planning and picturing to himself, however vaguely, and insofar as possible, the steady growth of his dream the fulfillment that is now St. Bonaventure University. He was looking into the future. Fr. Joseph Butler was then a youth in his teens. Fr. Alexander Hickey had not yet been born. Nor had Fr. Thomas Plassmann. But the same unswerving devotion with which the three were to give their best years to St. Bonaventure's, to make the presidency of each a shining epoch in the school's history, was already alive in the heart of Nicholas Devereux—before the school was here.

The great old champion of Catholic Action knew what to do with his idea. Eager to see it realized, he went with it to the bishop of Buffalo.

"Your Excellency," he said in words to this effect. "I own along the Allegheny just the right piece of land for a college campus on which it is my desire to see the first of its buildings erected. I'll give over the land and for the construction of that building the necessary funds, so that with God's will and your approval we can get a centre of Catholic influence started there. Heaven knows there is a crying need of it."

Bishop Timon listened as to the echo of his own idea. For in his

anxiety over what to do about that neglected western reach of his diocese, he had been thinking along the same lines. But where was he to find in his diocese the priests to send?

"We can get them elsewhere," replies Mr. Devereux.

Whether they could or not, the bishop liked the resolute confidence of this layman and together they were certainly going to try. They accordingly went to Rome, not together it is true; but once there, both worked together toward the same purpose. If in the end they had to return from the Eternal City without a faculty of pioneer teachers, at least Bishop Timon carried in his portfolio the written promise of their coming over on some future boat, and the prospect looked bright.

In June of the next year, exactly eight months later, an ocean liner docked in New York harbor and off stepped four Italian Friars. None of them looked quite at ease wearing civilian clothes for a change instead of their brown habits, and only one could speak English with fluency, but all had the academic degrees to certify their scholarship. Their Minister General, following an old Franciscan custom, was making good his promise. He had sent the four in advance of others to come, three years before they would have a school to teach in, so they might begin without further delay their missionary labors in Cattaraugus County. The odds against them, even under the guidance of so able a superior as Fr. Pamfilo, were those of any new comer to a foreign country. However, they enjoyed a welcome from their American host that must have warmed their hearts.

Need I say that the gentleman in question was Nicholas Devereux? He met them at the boat, arranged for their lodging overnight at St. Peter's rectory in downtown New York, ferried with them the next morning across the Hudson River, got them into a train and accompanied them on their long journey to Salamanca, then with them transferred to a stagecoach bound for Ellicottville, where he had a house ready to receive them. There they set up headquarters at once, moving after three months to another residence which served them as a friary for the remainder of their stay in Ellicottville.

Thus began the St. Bonaventure story. Thus did the dream of Nicholas Devereux unfold into a reality through its preliminary stages until, by virtue of his generosity, the first anticipated building stood complete in its pride of place: on the campus which had almost remained a farm, but because of that very dream is now the site of a worthy university.

Fittingly on St. Francis' Day, three years after the band of Franciscans had arrived, Bishop Timon dedicated that first building,

A DREAM COME TRUE

a house of studies with friary and chapel included. And of course it was a day of rejoicing, although not without its shadow of regret. The man who had so fondly dreamed of this day, who had indeed dreamed the building, was not there. Nicholas Devereux had gone to his eternal reward.

His physical absence did not mean, however, that the saintly old benefactor was absent and did not participate in the joy of the occasion. The blessed, we have reason to believe from our doctrine on the Communion of Saints, retain their interest in what happens on earth. And if so, then you may be sure that a great soul has watched from eternity the St. Bonaventure's of his dream go on developing even to the present hour: when this beautiful friary, just now dedicated as the latest addition to the campus, stands ready to serve the university.

Nicholas Devereux from the ranks of the blessed saw De La Roche Hall go up, before ever it was called that, and he was pleased. He saw Alumni Hall go up and was pleased. He saw the fr. Joseph Butler Memorial go up as a neat little gymnasium, and was pleased. He saw the great fire of 1930 devour the old monastery along with the old church and the old seminary; and when their flaming walls crumbled and fell, included in the debris was all that remained of the building his initiative and generosity had made possible; for it had stood alone on the campus only for a while in its original dimensions, and then was added to again and again, until it had grown into that single huge structure which went down in flames. There were the other buildings untouched by the flames, to be sure, but none the less a vital half of St. Bonaventure's had been reduced to ashes. Did Nicholas Devereux look on from eternity in sorrow? The blessed know nothing of sorrow. In his beatitude he prayed, and rejoiced in the hope, that new and finer buildings would triumph over the ruins.

And they did. Within a year after the ruins of the old monastery had been cleared away, the Alexander Hickey Dining Hall stood there, solid testimonial to human courage, a solid indication that St. Bonaventure's was rallying from the disaster. Other construction promptly followed: a new parish church (no less true to the Devereux dream for being erected a mile or so off campus) a new library, a magnificent new seminary, two new dormitories, a new arts hall bearing the illustrious name of Thomas Plassmann, and during this interval of time quite a number of lesser buildings, of a temporary nature, yet still serving their purpose. All in all, Nicholas Devereux had abundant cause to be proud of his dream: it was prospering as never before, in its recovery from a catastrophic setback.

Yet, by some strange quirk of circumstance, the blessed old

dreamer had to wait a full thirty-one years to see dedicated this afternoon a new monastery to take the place of the old: a genuine new monastery set a little aside from the traffic of the campus as a unit of its own.

It cannot but stand out as a favorite of his. One who had on earth so devoted his energies to Catholic Action as did Nicholas Devereux, and given of his wealth to promote it, would of course look upon this particular building with an especial regard. The reason why follows a dictate of plain logic. This monastery or Friary, call it by either name, being now a proper home for the friars who teach at St. Bonaventure's, a haven of privacy in the conducive atmosphere of which they can the better cultivate the presence of God and then enrich their work, put into their training of youth a deeper motivation and therefore a greater inspirational appeal,—such a nursery of Franciscanism in those who run the school,—becomes by that very token the powerhouse of Catholic Action on the campus.

It has been needed. The distractions of our modern world being so thoroughly pagan as they are, any monastery or convent that excludes them is beyond a doubt the answer to a need. Not that a person of good will cannot in the world cultivate that interior life of the soul without which there can be no solid piety; the untold number of those who have done it, to become men and women of true sanctity, would give the lie to such a fallacy; but for all that, with none of the advantages of a conducive environment, it is much more difficult to do so, and so much more rarely done. That the cloister has a peculiar aptitude for producing saints, and saints of the most heroic outgoing activities, one has only to consult a catalogue of the canonized to know.

Does anyone suppose that Francis of Assisi could have earned his title, the Patron of Catholic Action, had he not recruited his zeal in the cloistered quietude of St. Mary of the Angels or on the solitary heights of Mt. Alverna? Wherefrom, may I ask, did St. Bonaventure himself derive the sweet fluency of his pen and the spiritual charm in his teaching if not from the prayerful climate of his monastery? Certain it is, that he never allowed his schedule of classes nor the toil of preparing them to keep him from his daily meditations in chapel. Did this militate against his efficiency? The pupils who sat entranced over his lectures didn't seem to think that the Seraphic Doctor had been overdoing his religious exercises.

Nor will the students here, at the university which proudly bears his name, have any such thought of their Franciscan teachers who combine study with prayer, with saying Mass, meditating, reciting the Divine Office, and are thereby the likelier to have the drive to put

across their subject matter. Of what avail is it to his pupils if a professor has the necessary knowledge but none of the enthusiasm to convince them of its worth? And where else does a teaching friar get that enthusiasm, once the inevitable monotony of work sets in, than from a dedicated sense of duty nourished on prayer? The demands of religious life upon his time, far from antagonizing or lessening his efficiency reinforce it. They predispose his will toward doing his job, condition him against inertia, so that he comes to class when he is supposed to be there, and comes prepared. The same fidelity to duty which marks his attendance at chapel will induce him to put forth his best efforts, and make the most of what talent he has, in the classroom. The saintlier the teacher, if he knows his subject at all,

And so, every Franciscan teacher who will reside in this newly dedicated Friary, will avail himself of its inducements to prayer, could do no greater service to St. Bonaventure University as well as to his own soul than to appeal habitually to the Source of all holiness in some such words as these beautiful ones of St. Augustine, if only like St. Augustine, he means them and speaks them from his heart:

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, That my thoughts may all be holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit, That my work, too, may be holy.

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, That I love but what is holy.

To defend all that is holy.

Guard me then, O Holy Spirit,

That I always may be holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,

A prayer of what superlative wisdom! Need it surprise us that its learned author, whose other writings as well, breathe of just such a tender intimacy with the Holy Spirit, should have won by his brilliant pen the right to be called the Doctor of Grace? May this his prayer, or its equivalent, become to us, too, a familiar prayer unto the sanctification of all: so that those of us, who are to live here, will be living in accord with the dream of Nicholas Devereux to make St.

Bonaventure's a stronghold of the Faith; so that also those of us, not in residence here, will be following his broader desire to see the spread of Catholic influence no matter where on earth, to the honor and glory of God.

(Sermon at dedication of the new Friary at St. Bonaventure University, July 16, 1961.)

### AND FAITH IS BORN

Time is not a moment overtaken
And not the measured circle made complete.
Time is growth when hope and love are shaken
As cycling, the Calvaries repeat.
Time is, then, ascent into faith's night
Where all that came by senses once before
Comes now into the soul by unseen Light
And every loss shows deeper sight and more.

The mind hangs trinkets on a coffin's side:
Laughter for a glittering, grinning mask
To hide the little dark it fears inside.
But time will show that darkness is a task
For growth is not a moment left behind
But faith begot when hope and love go blind.

Sister M. Florian, O.S.F.

# In Christ Jesus Our Lord

Valentine M. Breton, O.F.M.

(Translated from the French by Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M.

#### INTRODUCTION

of God made man, by following His footsteps, by imitating His actions, Saints. Like St. Paul, he could glory in being a perfect copy of the and by animating himself with His sentiments. presenting to the Church and to the world a perfect image of the Son disciple of his Master. Like St. Paul, too, he was a unique success in divine Type of all sanctity, a perfectly docile, convinced, and generous Francis of Assisi has rightly been called the most Christlike of

attest, and endorse an identity with Christ which must have existed divine seal upon Francis' success. For the stigmata declare, demonstrate, Christ Himself has added His own: the stigmata, the authenticating To the external testimony of ecclesiastical and literary tradition,

declared of St. Francis: "This is My perfect disciple; imitate Him." in Whom I am well pleased; hear Him," so Christ might well have within the soul first. As God said in praise of Jesus Christ, "This is my beloved Son,

members of other Orders have been granted the stigmata, they seem to have received them more as a reward for intense devotion to the founder has been accorded so solemn an approval; and even where done thus for every nation" (Ps. 147:20). Indeed, no other religious to have a Founder so highly accredited by our Lord, for God, "has not the 88th Psalm: "Francis alone is like God among the sons of God." Or again, according to the Franciscan Sequence which paraphrases We members of the triple Order of St. Francis are justly proud

likeness of our spiritual Father. Our vocation demands that we know and admiration, but we are bound by noblesse oblige (and still more, to bring it into our lives. We cannot be satisfied with sterile praise followers we must seek both the significance of his perfect imitation for our own benefit) to make ourselves over into the image and of Christ-its causes, methods, and exemplary value-and the means content merely to proclaim our Father's glorious privilege, but as his meaning for us, the spiritual progeny of Francis. We cannot be Father, this ratification by Christ of his work has a particular value and Passion than as a token of the divine ratification of their entire lives. But over and above this legitimate pride we can take in our

> in this same seraphic imitation. than any other man in history, and that we are called to follow him conduct bears for us. This book has been written to answer these out HOW he went about imitating Christ and WHAT LESSON his acknowledged to be the most successful in history, we must try to find Christian life, that Francis practiced this imitation more perfectly questions-to show that the imitation of Christ is the sum-total of WHY St. Francis imitated Christ. And since Francis' imitation is

and sanctification we have been entrusted to him. He has merited source and the cause of our predestination. In the order of salvation only Head, Saviour, Master, and Model, Jesus Christ. We shall find grace for us; he has given us his example; he sustains us in our efforts perfection; so let us take to this road, with Francis as our guide. nowhere else (and certainly not in ourselves) a surer way to attain to follow him as true, sincere, generous disciples and imitators of our For under God and in Christ Jesus, Francis is our FATHER-the

"O God, Who hast given us Blessed Francis as our guide and teacher Solemn Commemoration of St. Francis' Profession (April 16th): That this is God's will for us is clear from the oration in the

of Christ, we must first act and then teach-or rather, both act and THEY BE BETTER CHRISTIANS" (Letter III, to a certain minister). nothing for your friars, and demand nothing of them, EXCEPT THAT his letters, for example, he gave this highly significant advice: "Seek vocation-of his responsibility as the founder of his Order. In one of in following the footsteps of Your only-begotten Son . . ." teach at the same time." Finally, Francis summed up his entire dogmatic in the Mirror of Perfection (chapter 73), he says: "After the example His Sixth Admonition treats explicitly of the imitation of Christ, and for the interior life of his followers and crystalized the meaning of his before his death. In this prayer, he established a hierarchy of values and spiritual theology in a prayer sent to the General Chapter shortly own mission: Nor has Francis left any doubt that he was fully aware of this

God almighty, eternal, just and merciful, grant to us wretched creatures, for Your own sake, the grace to do what we know to be Your Will, and always to will what is pleasing to You; so that purified in body, illumined in mind, and after with the love of the Holy Spirit, WE MAY FOLLOW IN THE FOOT-STEPS OF YOUR SON, OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST, and by Your grace alone come to You, O most High, Who in perfect Trinity and most simple Unity lives and reigns and is glorified, God almighty, forever and ever. Amen.

For Francis, then, the imitation of our Lord was not just one

IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD

more ascetical devotion, nor even the best among them all; it was the unique WAY of access to our Goal, the Holy Trinity. And to render this imitation possible and effective, he urged us to strive toward "purification, illumination, and consummation," the three classical stages in all spiritual advancement.

Even to this day, Francis continues to echo the clarion call of St. Paul: "Follow my example, then, as I follow the example of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1). But he does not seek simply to conform us to himself; rather he urges us to become more like Christ. He wants us to imitate him only that we may emulate his success, only that we may assume the characteristic mentality of our Franciscan family, which is, purely and simply, the Mind of Christ.

To paraphrase again the great Apostle with whom Francis had so much in common (precisely because of their mutual identity with Christ!), was it in the name of Francis that we were baptized? True, we are named after St. Francis, and we are proud of it. But he himself preferred to call us Lesser Brothers, Poor Ladies, Brothers and Sisters of Penance, so that we might become BETTER CHRISTIANS. It is exactly in our efforts to attain this goal that his merits, his example, and his prayers will be our support.

Although we are unworthy children of Francis, still we can ask through his merits the necessary strength of body and of will; we can be confident of obtaining them through her who made the Son of God our Brother, who brought Him down to us, who made Him our Model in His mysteries and in His entire life.

### I. THE LAW OF OUR LIFE

To be a Christian is to imitate Christ. This a fundamental truth which needs no demonstration, but it is important that we realize its significance in our own lives.

Granted that the fundamental law of Christianity is imitation of Christ—conformity with Him so that in and through Him we may be united to God—we can see his law from three points of view: in the eternal counsels of God, in its promulgation by our Lord and His Apostles, and in its implementation by the Church.

The Will of God is revealed to us in St. Paul's letter to the Romans, where he declares: "All those who from the first were known to Him, He has destined from the first to be moulded into the image of His Son, Who is thus to become the eldest-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). Elsewhere, progress in the spiritual life is

described as a refinement of this image: "It is given to us, all alike, to catch the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, with faces unveiled, and so we become transfigured into the same likeness, borrowing glory from that glory, as the Spirit of the Lord enables us" (II Cor. 3:18). Finally, we are told that God has predestined Christ to "form this humbled body of ours anew, moulding it into the image of His glorified body, so effective is His power to make all things obey Him" (Phil. 3:21).

When the Son of God came among us, He explained how we must fulfill this plan of His Father. He taught us this lesson not in learned and scientific formulas, but in concrete images adapted to the average intelligence; His meaning is clear and unmistakable: "If any man has a mind to come My way, let him renounce self, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). That is, if we want to be His disciples and follow Him we must first become detached by renouncing everything that might hinder us from taking on His likeness. Then we must remould our souls in the image of His own. In this way we shall be perfect pupils of the divine Teacher (cf. Luke 6:40).

This is how the Apostles understood our Lord's lesson, and this is how they passed it down to the faithful (see, e.g., Luke 5:5). St. Peter wrote: "You must not retain the mould of your former untutored appetites. No, it is a holy God who has called you, and you too must be holy in all the ordering of your lives" (I Pet. 1:15). Further on, the Dean of the Apostolic College speaks more pointedly of imitating the sufferings of the Saviour: "He suffered for our sakes, and left you His own example; you were to follow in His footsteps (I Pet. 2:21).

St. Paul drove home the same lesson to the Corinthians: "Follow my example, then, as I follow Christ's" (I Cor. 11:1); and St. John explained why: "One who claims to dwell in Him must needs live and move as He lived and moved" (IJn. 2:6).

Christian Tradition, as recorded in the Fathers, the Doctors of the Church, and the masters of the spiritual life, has always recognized this universal law of imitation; yet it has never denied that some are bound to work harder at it than others. Whereas the faithful in general are bound to deny themselves and put on Christ only to the extent of keeping out of mortal sin, we who are enrolled in the school of perfection must follow the Master more closely. The term of our effort is perfect identification with Christ (cf. Gal. 2:20).

Imitation of our Lord aims at an interior conformity of our sentiments and affections to those of Christ (af. Phil. 2:5). But this conformity, if we understand the teaching of St. John and St. Paul correctly, results not from our own effort alone, but largely from

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the workings of Christ and the Holy Spirit within us. Yet this divine action from within does not utterly supplant our own effort. The process is one of cooperation between God and ourselves. Sanctification and merit are endeavors which are both subjective and supernatural, both human and divine.

Understanding the basic facts of the supernatural life is vital to our actual practice of imitating Christ. It is essential that we grasp what is being accomplished within us—what part the Church plays in our transformation, what part the Holy Spirit, and what is left to us to achieve.

The Church, first of all, presents Jesus to us for our imitation; Indeed, from one point of view, we can say that this is her entire mission. All her endowments, her infallibility, her holiness, her power of Orders and of jurisdiction—all serve to guarantee the authenticity of the Model she proposes for our knowledge, love, and imitation. In her liturgy, in her history, and in her dogmatic and spiritual teachings, she alone preserves intact the true likeness of Christ; everywhere else we find it deformed and altered according to human whimsy.

But it would avail little for the Church to present this ideal externally, if the grace of the Holy Spirit did not work within us to make it attractive. Here we touch upon one of the most profound points in the whole of the spiritual life—a principle little known and widely misunderstood. The Church has been entrusted with the mission of controlling this inner activity; of supervising our interpretations of what happens within us. Therefore we must carefully check our interior inspirations against the official teaching of the Church. For since the Church cannot err, and the Spirit of Jesus cannot contradict Himself, a discrepancy between the truths of Faith and our own interpretations of spiritual phenomena can only indicate a dangerous error on our part.

It is clear from the foregoing that we have our own part to play in becoming like Christ, that we are not merely passive objects in the hands of the Church and under the action of the Spirit. But since our own course of action will be determined by the example of our Seraphic Father, which we shall consider later on, we can pass now to the final point of our meditation.

We know well enough why God has made conformity with Christ the unique way of salvation and holiness: Christ is the universal meritorious, exemplary, and final cause of all creation, our only Head and Mediator. Only in and through Him can we gain access to God, please Him, and be saved; therefore we must be united to Him, conformed to Him, and moulded into the likeness of Him Who alone is the perfect Object of the Divine Pleasure.

We shall reach our goal only insofar as we have become identified with Him, for no one comes to the Father but through Him; the Name of Jesus is that of our only Saviour, and Jesus is the sole foundation for our supernatural life (See Matt. 11:27; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; I Cor. 3:11).

Like all Christians, then, we are called to this identification with Christ and we are bound to use the only existing means to achieve it: we are bound to imitate Him. The whole of asceticism, the entire spiritual life, the essence of all holiness consists in fostering in ourselves the grace and virtues of Christ. In the words of St. Paul, who first mapped out this way for us, we can sum up our entire task as "forming Christ within ourselves" (Eph. 4:15).

Sons of God by grace as Jesus is by nature, we must develop in ourselves the Spirit of this Sonship by putting on Christ, by partaking of His life as Son of God, by making our own His characteristics, His virtues, His works, and His holiness; thus we shall attain as far as possible to that fulness of perfection which enabled the Apostle to exclaim: "I am alive; or rather, not I; it is Christ that lives in me" (Gal. 2:19-20).

Since union with God is our final goal, and since we can attain to this union only in and through Jesus Christ, we must conform to Christ by imitating His interior dispositions as well as His external actions. This imitation is the law of our life, laid down by God and taught by His Son.

Therefore it is no exaggeration to say that the imitation of Christ is the whole of Christianity and that everything else depends upon it. The teaching Church presents Him as our Model; dogmatic theology delineates that Model in His Person and His actions; moral theology gives us a psychological pattern to help us copy that Model within ourselves. And the Liturgy, the Sacraments, and mental prayer work from within to achieve this transforming union whose fully developed splendor is heaven.

We have done well to place ourselves in the hands of St. Francis, for in no one has this universal law of holiness been better verified; with him as our guide we shall indeed become perfect imitators of Jesus Christ our Lord.

(To be continued)

## ALEXANDER of HALES: On Manual Labor

a means of fulfilling himself and of re-making the world in the image essential to man, and more particularly to the Christian man. It is of Christ. as possible. Others see it as a means of combating concupiscence; while upon it as punishment which must be borne and accepted as graciously the vast majority of contemporary writers try to see in work something and necessity of labor in the life of a Christian. Some prefer to look There is much being written on the subject regarding the usefulness Work, manual work, is a much discussed topic in Catholic circles

to say on the subject, and to see how he treats of the question. The matter enlightening or at least interesting to see what a scholastic writer had is taken from Alexander of Hales.1 Due to the current discussion, we thought that it would be

- former must be also. so from the greatest authority for immediately preceding (we read), "Remember keep holy the Sabbath." Since this latter is a precept, the First of all, is manual labor of precept for every man? It seems to be 1. What2 is meant in Ex., 20, (9), "For six days you will work"?
- might be kept free of sin . . . worship, so it is right for there to be a precept that through work man is right for there to be a precept that man might have leisure for divine one must give himself to manual work on the other six days. Just as it cannot be unoccupied without sin unless it is intent on a good work divine worship unless one abstains from manual labor, so the soul sin in working on the Sabbath. But since there can be no leisure for might have leisure for divine worship; otherwise there would be no Therefore, since one must abstain from manual work on the Sabbath, · Likewise, the precept to abstain from manual labor is that man
- only right for them to be governed by some precept: "For six days nature." But such things can be done well or not so well, hence it is "In six days . . . you shall do all your work" is that it is "suited to our our heart be filled with the briars of sins." His comment on Ex. 20 (9), Gregory says, "At all times some good must be done lest the field of 2. About Ezechiel 16 (49), "This was the iniquity of Sodom . . .",

ALEXANDER OF HALES ON MANUAL LABOR

you will work." This is preceptive and all are bound by precept to work, that is, to do manual work!

- "He who doesn't wish to work" etc. According to the command of that the thought of the Apostle refers to marrual labor. He adds, worked spiritually, "We preach, we read," etc. But Augustine declares claimed that the Apostle meant spiritual labor, hence they said they and, for the same reason, all are bound to manual labor. St. Paul, it seems as though some time must be given to manual work of the Apostle refers clearly to manual labor. For they (the monks) labor. But "according to the very same passage," the declared opinion reasons the monks used to claim that they were not held to manual say simply, 'We read, we preach, we console, we exhort.'" For these monks) say they do not wish to work and when asked why not, they 3. Augustine in "De opere monachorum" says, "They (the
- sweat of your brow you will eat your bread." Thus there is the precept, "With labor you will eat all the days of your life." the Glorious Virgin), so in every man the penalty follows that8 "In the seen in every generation. Therefore due to the violation of this with work and sweat. This is clear because it was said earlier,7 "In follows the penalty of bringing forth children in pain, (yet I except precept, just as in every woman who has submitted to man there whatsoever day you will eat of it, you will die the death." This is been passed down to posterity. Therefore all must obtain their food "In the sweat of your brow, you will eat your bread" and this also has and this has been transmitted to her posterity for every woman who has submitted to man, has given birth in pain. It has also been said, 4. To Eve it was said,5 "In sorrow you will bring forth children"
- of not doing temporal work (1) care for them)?" Therefore the Apostle and hence others have power and Barnabas, have we not the power of doing this (having a woman 7. On the contrary, Augustine10 quotes I Cor. 9 (6), "Or I only

so that He might better take care of the souls of the sick persons. who ministered the necessities of life to Him from their own wealth, for cattle" says that Christ in His following "had religious women Likewise the Glossa<sup>11</sup> regarding Ps. 103 (14), "Producing grass

Alexander of Hales, Questiones Disputatos, III, Appendix IV, Q. VIII (College of St. Bonaventure, Quaracchi: 1960), pp. 1588-92.
 There have been sections omitted in the English translation, for the sake of brevity, 8 Ex. 20, 8.

<sup>4</sup> De opere monachorum, cc. 1, 3 and 7 (PL 40, 550ff, 564ff.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Gen. 3, 16. <sup>6</sup> Gen. 3, 19. <sup>7</sup> Gen. 2, 17.

<sup>\*</sup> Gen. 3, 19.

\* Gen. 3, 17.

10 op. cit., c. 7 (PL 40, 554).

11 On Ps. 103, 14 (PL 191, 935 C).

For He foresaw that there would be many sick who would seek these things . . . Although Paul did not seek such things from his converts, yet Christ acted more sublimely, because more mercifully, lest He harm the infirm who came seeking these things. For their sake, He gave the example of taking the necessities from His subjects.." Therefore the Apostle was not bound to work, although he was free to work; the same holds for all others.

The Glossa comments on Mt. 10 (10), "the laborer is worthy of his wages," "Behold he commands them to carry nothing, for all things are owed to them." Hence for the same reason he commands them not to work, for all things are owed to them.

or if he has parents, they don't need his temporal support. This proves precept is broken, for example, not having parents he cannot give, one's mother and father. This is taken to mean also that the son must mentioned above. Nor does this follow: There is a precept to honor demands it, and according to time, place and the nature of the work . . . when the interior or exterior necessity of oneself or one's neighbor shall work for six days" is to be understood that one is bound to work work only as long as the necessity exists. Hence the expression, "You can be accomplished in less than six days, then one is prescribed to to work six days, one must work that long. If what has to be done the work and according to the time and place. Thus if it is necessary neighbor's interior or exterior need, according to the suitability of say that a man is bound to work corporeally due to his own or his in the command, "Honor thy father and thy mother." Therefore we interior man, the other of the exterior man. We say that affirmative is a corporal work. But here is a two-fold necessity of man; one of the work-speaking. Sometimes corporeal work can be taken as working corporeal. A preacher works corporeally for he performs a corporal One works corporally, that is, works on or with something which is that one is bound to work only in so far as necessity demands it . . . give them temporal goods. But this man does not do so; hence the demanding him to work and unless there are present the other conditions precept is broken, even though he is not bound unless there is a necessity work for six days and this man doesn't work for six days; hence the The fallacy of the following argument is evident. There is a precept to (ad semper), but rather according to time and places as is evident precepts, even if they bind always (semper) do not bind continuously for the external necessities of man; for example, to dig in a vineyard 8. SOLUTION: Corporal work is taken in a two-fold sense.

(Translated by Philip J. Martin, O.F.M.)

## Early Sources for the Life of St. Francis

Father Byron Witzemann, O.F.M.

### IV. ST. BONAVENTURE TO THE DECREE OF 1277

St. Bonaventure was born in 1221 in Bagnorea five years before St. Francis' death. When John Fidenza, as Bonaventure was called, was a child, he was cured of a sickness by St. Francis.

"While a child, as I can well remember, I was snatched from the jaws of death by his intercession and merits." (Prologue, n. 3)

Bonaventure went to Paris and studied under Alexander of Hales. In 1243 he entered the Order. Upon the request of the Minister General, John of Parma, he was elected Minister General of the Order at the Chapter of February, 1257.

At the Chapter of 1260 the Ministers asked St. Bonaventure to write a life of St. Francis. He withdrew himself for a while from the cares of his office and went to Assisi. There he talked to some of the Saint's surviving companions, and on Mount Alverno he wrote what we today call the Legenda Major. In his prologue he tells us why he wrote it and what he used for his sources:

"Realizing my lack of ability and unworthiness, I would never have attempted to write this venerable man's life, which is so worthy of imitation, were it not for these reasons: the unanimous insistence of the General Chapter and the devotion which I am bound to have toward our holy Father. While a child, as I can well remember, I was snatched from the jaws of death by his intercession and merits. Now if I were silent in proclaiming his praises, I fear that I would be guilty of the crime of ingratitude. My principal reason for assuming this task is that I, who realize that God saved my life through him, and who have also experienced his in me, may gather together from every source the virtues of his life, his deeds and sayings, lest these perish with the death of those who lived with him. I intend to collect various incidents which have been passed over to a certain extent or which have been written in various places, although I realize that my work will not be perfect.

"That I might hand to posterity a clearer and a more definite account of his life, I travelled to the place where Francis was born, lived and died. There I spoke with his close friends who were still living, especially with those best acquainted with his sanctity and who were his chief followers. Because of their known trustworthiness and proven virtue these men are certainly to be believed." (Prologue, nn. 3 & 4)

What are the motives which led the Ministers of the General Chapter to command St. Bonaventure to write a life? There are two

supporting them. We will quote arguments for both opinions. The historical value of the Legenda Major depends upon the position one opinions in this matter both of which have noted Franciscan historians

Father Ignatius Brady, O.F.M. with Father Michael Bihl, O.F.M.

"A... plausible reason: the need of a new synthesis of all material into one legend. Celano's three works had to be taken together to get one whole, since each by itself was incomplete... Furthermore, we might imagine that the brethren were tired of hearing the florid and ornate style of Celano as his works were read yearly at table... all this, plus the need of a Legend that could be given to the whole world, seems most probably to have led the injunction of the chapter of Narbonne, that a new Legend be compiled from the preceding works." (p. 19)
The other school says the Ministers had St. Bonaventure write

the Legenda Major because:

"The official Life (Celano), even with Celano's omissions and gave too much support to the contentions of the zealous upholders of the Rule to suit the new times . . . It (the new modifications, preserved too much of the primitive spirit and historical value lies in its omissions and in its subsequent influence." (Little, p. 22, quoted by Father Ignatius Brady, Legenda) was compiled mainly with a view to pacifying the discords in the Order. It adds little that is new, and its chief

p. 19)
Father Ignatius and Father Michael would answer this opinion

who was gentle, meek, just and holy. He preferred to reserve his censures for his official letters, rather than embody them in a Life of St. Francis." (p. 19) thirteenth century.—And if the calm and peaceful tone of the Legend seems to give some support to Sabatier, (Little), etc., this is rather owing to the personal character of St. Bonaventure, this view rests on the exaggerated opinion that in 1260 and earlier there were such grave and public disruptions in the Order as to imply the existence of clear-cut factions. Undoubtedly there were differences but not such disputes as came later, disputes that would require a new Legend of St. Francis. The divisions came into focus only at the end of the

Miracles with a few legendary elements added. Joergensen says: very little to our already existing knowledge of St. Francis. His work give this answer: His Legenda is of little historical worth, for he adds who would believe that it was written to bring peace to the Order is just a compilation of Celano's Vita I and II and the Tract on the What is the historical value of St. Bonaventure's Legenda? Those

"There is little new in St. Bonaventure; most that is new consists

EARLY SOURCES FOR THE LIFE OF ST. FRANCIS

Also the tale of the man in Assisi, who in Francis' youth honored him by spreading his cloak before him in the street, is found for the first time in Bonaventure. In this and other new details we seem to hear the echo of all the more or less by the firesides in the evening when they were entertaining each other with stories." (p. 379) of further adornments of the legends. Thus the Priest Silvester, in the vision which converts him, sees not only a cross issuing from the mouth of St. Francis, but sees also a dragon that surrounds the whole of Assisi, and which Francis puts to flight from mouth to mouth in the market-place in Assisi, or were told fabulous and numerous tales about St. Francis, which went

Sultan (Bonaventure had a personal interview with Bro. Illuminate who was in the Holy Land with Francis), details on the stigmata, etc. . . ." (p. 21)

Instead of stressing the historical value of the Legenda, they would rather "Yet how is one to judge whether such additions are legendary the rule, etc. Are these details that appear legendary? Again, there are many completely new items: the care of a leper, the story of Bro. Moricus, the consultation of St. Clare and Bro. Sylvester on his vocation, many items on St. Francis before the Assisi which was driven off at the sight of the cross, that Inno-cent III gave the tonsure to the Friars when he orally approved or actually historical? Certainly the text reveals a great number ere he joined the Order, saw not only a golden cross coming from the mouth of Francis, but a black dragon surrounding the Crucifix in San Damiano spoke thrice, that Bro. Sylvester, of new details that enlarge on scenes already known; e.g. that But the other side, Fathers Ignatius and Michael, would say:

have us dwell upon its spiritual value. Father Ignatius says:

of St. Francis in keeping with speculative and mystical theology. In it, he stresses the Christiformity of St. Francis, the Signifer Christi, and the example Francis was to follow. Not only are we to admire Francis with the Vita Prima of Celano, or be overwhelmed by the warnings of Celano II, but led by gentle suasion and holy eloquence to follow the exemplar of Seraphic perfection.—And in this picture we can find nothing that militates against the portrait of Celano, nothing that reveals a compromise or a misunderstanding of the ideals of St. Francis! It is a portrait of the inner life of the Seraph rather than a mere external historical study. But Sabatier, who had no in the Order, because of the spiritual value it has. In it the author reveals himself as a theologian, for he interprets the life "... let us call this Life the Legenda aures, as tradition has it of St. Francis and pious and faithful in your imitation, you will do well to follow the portrait of St. Bonaventure!" (p. 21) appreciation of the inner spiritual life, cannot appreciate this work, and has perverted too many of his ilk into the same trend of thought. But if you wish to be both learned in the life

legends, namely, Celano I and II, the Tract on Miracles, Julian of The sources for St. Bonaventure's work were: the already existing

Speyer's works, and no doubt, the notes which Crescentius collected from the decree of 1244. He also went to Assisi to contact the living companions of St. Francis: Leo, Illuminato, Masseo, Giles, etc.

He divides his work into 15 chapters which treat of different phases of St. Francis' life or his virtues and ideals, that is, St. Francis' secular life, conversion, founding of the Order, austerity of life, humility and obedience, love of poverty, ardent love and yearning for martyrdom, real in prayer, understanding of Sacred Scripture, preaching, Stigmata, his sufferings and death, and lastly his canonization and translation of his body. He then adds a separate section on miracles, which embraces ten chapters. This later section usually is not translated with the rest.

Condemnation of Previous Legends

St. Bonaventure's Legenda was so well received and brought about such an excellent coordinated life of St. Francis that the Ministers at the General Chapter of 1266 banned all other lives of St. Francis:

"The General Chapter directs that as an act of obedience, all former legends of the Bl. Francis be destroyed, and wherever the brothers can find them outside the Order they must endeavor to do away with them, since this legend drawn up by the General is compiled from accounts of those who nearly always accompanied the Bl. Francis. All that they would know without doubt and all that has been proved to be true has been carefully inserted." (Arch. Franc. Hist., VII, p. 678)

It is to noted that, as St. Bonaventure was asked to write the Legenda by the Chapter, so also the other legends were condemned by the General Chapter. Therefore, St. Bonaventure did not condemn Thomas' works because of jealousy, nor because he realized his Legenda in style and content could not come close to the eloquence of Celano.

The decree of the General Chapter was so effective that it has taken, (and still is taking) over 600 years to uncover various Legendae. For 500 years St. Bonaventure was the main source for the life of St. Francis. It was only in 1768 that the Bollandists discovered and first printed the Vita Prima of Celano. The Vita Secunda was re-discovered only in 1798 and first published in 1806 by Rinaldi. He was the first to publish both the Legenda Prima and Secunda together. We have only two manuscripts of Celano II and seven of Celano I. In 1899 the Tractatus de Miraculis was first found and published; 1902 saw the first printing of Julian of Speyer's Vita.

egenda Minor

With the destruction and banning of all early Legendae, a new Legenda for Choir had to be composed. St. Bonaventure executed this task shortly after that of the Legenda Major, and he called it the Legenda Minor. It is based entirely on his Legenda Major. As Celano's Choral Legend did not add anything new, neither did St. Bonaventure's.

### EARLY SOURCES FOR THE LIFE OF ST. FRANCI

The Latin text for St. Bonaventure's Legenda Major and Minor can be found in the Analecta Franciscana Vol. X, pp. 557-678. Some English translations of the former are: Salter, The Life of St. Francis by St. Bonaventure (London, 1902, 1905); the same can be found in the "Everyman's Library": The Little Flowers of St. Francis . . . the Life of St. Francis by St. Bonaventure (London, and New York, 1951); Miss Lockhard, The Life of St. Francis by St. Bonaventure (London, 1898). Mountaque, The Life of St. Francis by St. Bonaventure, (1635).

#### Legenda Aurea

Blessed James of Voragine, a Dominican, was born about 1228. He became a Dominican and for many years a provincial in his order. In 1292 James was consecrated bishop of Genoa and died in July 1298. Pius VII beatified him on May 11, 1816.

Between 1250-1270 he wrote a book called the Legenda Sanctorum. In it he had a chapter on St. Francis of Assisi, which today we call The Golden Legend. This chapter he wrote shortly after 1226. In it he quotes the four works of Thomas of Celano on St. Francis, but more extensively that of St. Bonaventure.

He begins by giving seven reasons why St. Francis received the name, Francis. This paragraph seems a little far fetched, but perhaps no more than some of the other mediaeval writings. This is the only section that originates from Bl. James. Since he draws from reliable sources, his work is accurate.

The legenda, made up of 57 paragraphs, begins with the birth of St. Francis and ends with a list of miracles taken from St. Bonaventure, Celano II and the Tractatus de Miraculis.

The Latin version has been published in the Analecta Franciscana, Vol. X, pp. 679-693. There is an English translation edited by G. Raymond and H. Ripperger, The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine (New York, 1951), 2 vols.

Jordan of Giano

"Once upon a time when I was telling the brethren some stories about the coming of the first friars into Germany and about their lives and their deeds, the brethren were greatly edified and I have been urged by many, many a time, to write down what I had told them as also other events that I might be able to call to memory and the years of the Lord when the brethren are sent to Germany and during which this or that thing happened . . I resolved to gratify the devout wish of the brethren, mainly at the behest of Brother Baldwin of Bradenburg . . It is then in this year of the Lord 1262, after the chapter of Halberstadt, . . . that we remain in the place where the chapter had convened, and, myself dictating and Brother Baldwin doing the writing, I endeavored to give the best possible sattisfaction." (Prologue)

his Chronicle. Thus Jordan informs us of the occasion, the time, and the place of

positions of responsibility. which had success in Germany. In the German province he held various to Germany along with Caesar of Speyer. Thus he was in the first group Italy. In 1221, at the General Chapter in Assisi, he went as a deacon Jordan was born about 1195 in Giano, in the valley of Spoleto,

is a very controversial period in the History of the Order. The period 1219-1240 about which Jordan mainly treats in his Chronicle fourteen lines; the period between 1240 to 1262 is covered in three pages. Jordan's Chronicle, composed of 78 paragraphs, begins with the year 1207 and ends in 1262. The years 1207 to 1219 are covered in

can and does furnish us with first hand information concerning this Germany to Gregory IX to complain about Elias' regime in 1238, he Elias and his generalate. Since Jordan was sent by the tells us about the Chapters of 1227 and 1230 and also expatiates on and the relaxation of Poverty in Italy while Francis was absent. Jordan and heard. He gives us insight into St. Francis' work in the Holy Land other hand, composed his totally from memory—the things he copious notes which he had taken through the years. Jordan, on the As we saw, Thomas of Eccleston composed his Chronicle from the friars

the whole they are accurate. Some of the stories are amusing, for in the beginning that he is old and his dates may be unreliable, but on in regard to the introduction of the friars in Germany. Jordan tells us plaints against Brother Elias. example, the incident of Gregory IX's refusal to listen to the The Chronicle of Jordan of Giano gives us interesting information

"When Brother Jordan arrived before (His Holiness) he made his obeisance but was told to go away. Brother Jordan declined to do so, but sidled playfully up to the bed of the Pope and pulling out his naked foot he kissed it and exclaimed loudly to his companions: 'See, we have no such relics in Saxony'. And when the Lord Pope even then demanded that they get out, he retorted: 'Right! Lord Pope, we really have nothing to ask of you just now, for thanks to you we abound in all good things and live in glory. For you are the Father, Protector and Corrector of our Order! We just came to pay you a little visit!' Well, even the Lord Pope could no longer remain serious; laughing he sat up in bed and asked why they really had come."

in the Analecta Franciscana, Vol. I, pp. 1-19. An English translation is: Salter, The Coming of the Friars Minor to England and Germany, (London, 1926) The Latin edition of the Chronica Fratris Jordani a Jano is printed (To be continued)