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the CORD

August, 1965

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The illustrations for the August issue were done by the Sisters of St. Elizabeth's Cloister (p. 218), Father Francis X. Miles, O.F.M. (pp. 224, 226, 239), Father Robert Smyth (p. 234), and Sister M. Joanne, S.S.J. (p. 238).

OUR COVER:

This month's cover, by Sister M. Violanta, S.S.J., points out that, in the spirit of St. Francis, the Christian loves the world and its goods, in, with, and through Christ. He believes and hopes that during the course of sacred history, man and his world will be constantly "becoming" redeemed until all will be restored in Christ at the Parousia (see p. 229).

GUEST EDITORIAL

SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS

Sister M. Teresa Avila, O.S.F.

Not without reason is an article on religious authority written by an ordinary subject viewed by some with a certain feeling of skepticism at a time when all authority seems to be under question and regarded as a target of ballistic writings. What is here presented are thoughts and suggestions that may well be representative of a cross section of the whole body of religious subordinates seeking to clarify ideas in the search for truth as it pertains to the present reality of religious life. Obviously, sincere dialogue in an atmosphere of mutual respect based on theological principles is the prerequisite for mutual understanding.

Everyone is aware that this is an age of confusion of ideas, of rapid change brought about by technical progress; an age when society seems to continue shedding the shell of old values for the supposedly more timely ones of secularism. It would seem that the "old values" no longer serve for the good of man, that man needs a new structure of values that can stand the acid test of today's encounter and direct him toward his goal. It was this human condition which the vision of the modern Popes penetrated with perspicacity and deep concern. The Church now, more than ever before, assumes the role of a mother to meet the challenge of the day in the jungle of confused ideologies where man desperately seeks the perspective which the simplest yet most profound principles of Christianity give. The crisis of today has called for an evaluation of the old to bring Christianity into the context of today's living, and through this process of analyzing and synthesizing and finding relationships of parts to the whole, the Church has brought about the dimensions necessary for Christianity to be nothing less than a living religion in the midst of all confusion. These are well-known facts and their reiteration serves to point to the Church as the exemplar in dealing with universal problems. On the practical level, this approach can be applied to smaller groups of society such as religious communities.

The Church today as the defender of intellectual as well as religious freedom has given a new focus on the search for truth, clearing away the false notion of the seeming opposition between natural and supernatural knowledge; she has established a means of genuine dialogue with broadmindedness and humility.

Within religious communities there is also a growing awareness of the need for vertical and horizontal communication. Social, cultural and educational differences among those entering religious life bring a gamut of factors creating the diversity of problems to which no stereotyped formula or pious platitude can offer a valid solution. Before the problem can be analyzed those confronted with the problems have to be aware of the existence of various approaches in arriving at

some possible solution. They must see that the findings of the behavioral sciences can make valuable contributions in the field of human relationships.

It seems highly probable that if the structure of religious communities were evaluated with the aid of professionals skilled in both the spiritual and natural knowledge acting as advisors to those in authority, genuine and effective dialogue with every religious subject could be established and the nature of many problems could be discovered. Not only would the burden of responsibility for undesirable situations in religious life be alleviated, but the superiors themselves could find a wealth of knowledge necessary for the prudent decisions they must make for each individual as well as for the common good.

There is nothing new in this idea except perhaps the fact that it has not been taken seriously. It seems bold to say that some religious authorities may well lack the courage to listen, or perhaps they await the directives of the Vatican Council. At any rate, now is the time to encourage a dialogue with sincerity and truth. No longer can authority lay claim to competence and wisdom on the basis of years spent in religious life; ironically, it may be that the longer the time in religious life the more distant a religious, particularly a superior in office continuously, can be from the core of the real human problems, the problems of the ordinary religious subject, who is the concern of Holy Mother the Church.

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

We are very sorry that, through editorial oversight, proper credit was not given in the June issue to *Sister Mary Joanne, S.S.J.*, for the art work on pages 168 and 174. Also, the name of *Father Fulgence Buonanno, O.F.M.*, was unaccountably left off his review of *PSYCHO-DYNAMICS OF PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT*, on page 206 of the July issue. Our apologies to Sister M. Joanne and Father Fulgence, and our assurance that we shall do everything possible to guard against similar omissions in the future.

All the Days of Her Life

Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C.

PART II

"She rises while it is still night, providing food for her household," Proverbs goes on to tell us in describing the valiant woman. "She makes her arms sturdy by work. She knows the usefulness of labors; her lamp does not go out the whole night long." For the contemplative nun who does literally rise while it is still night to chant the Divine Office and to pray silently before the Tabernacle for all the souls in the world who form her "household," her spiritual family, these words have a highly specific meaning. But they couch a strong generic meaning for all religious.

To aspire to practice or even to understand the self-sacrifice essential to the religious life, it is first necessary to understand that self-sacrifice is the special vocation of women in general. To give of her love, her compassion, her service, and in the end to give her very self is natural to a normal woman. It is, in fact, a compulsion of her nature. In marriage, a woman has the beautiful opportunity to surrender her person to another creature and thus to exercise her basic feminine potential for giving in a particular way. If it is a true Christian marriage,

this surrender will be only a reflection of a much deeper surrender of thought, taste, choice, ambition, and all their company. But it is only to the religious woman that there belongs the opportunity of a really total surrender. Only the nun can surrender her very soul to her Lover. Thus the religious vocation, far from warping or diminishing the feminine instinct for surrender and sacrifice, should be its highest fulfillment.

It would be futile, however, to talk of surrender of the very soul, of self-giving at the profoundest level, without exhibiting the fruit of sacrifice. The nun who does not pour out the riches of her love on God's children, who does not sacrifice all her energies in his service, may speak of surrendering herself to God but she has not achieved it.

Eternity is for rest; life is for labor. And the Book of Proverbs has it that the valiant woman "knows the usefulness of labor." Not less for the contemplative than for the active Sister must the truth be exhibited that "the charity of Christ urges us." The valiant woman of Holy Scripture "makes her arms sturdy by work." It is by working that we are able to work more, just as it is by loving much

that we are able to love still more. Nothing could be less indicative of a true contemplative than apathy. For the contemplative vocation is a vocation to a life of pure love. And love cannot be sterile of works. Whether its works be material or spiritual, love knows no repose in the sense of lethargy. Even the mystic repose of the soul in prayer will, if genuine, flower afterward in works of love. "By their fruits you shall know them." Certainly we shall know love by its fecundity whether that fecundity appears in productivity,

apostolic work, or penance and hidden sacrifice.

The truly religious woman is not the one absorbed with God and oblivious of his creatures, but the one absorbed with God and all that is his.

Genuine love inflames us with desire to serve. Thus did Saint Therese of Lisieux explain her cloistered vocation as the means of fulfilling a burning desire to be a missionary to the whole world at once. The poet Sister M. Maura, S.S.N.D. shows delicate psychological insight into the feminine im-

VIGIL OF THE ASSUMPTION

GERTRUDE VON LE FORT

Your voice speaks:

The angel of the Lord came in unto Mary, and brought her the home-call of infinite love.

Rise, soul of Mary, the heavenly messengers have come,

They are here to fetch the cradle that your Divine Child lay in.

Now take your rest on the heart under which His life slumbered,

Nestle deep in the garment that so tenderly enfolded Him.

Rise, soul of Mary, rise in the cradle of the All-high.

What is to befall you snow-pure one? You shall be taken up into Heaven.

Reprinted from *Hymns to the Church*, copyright Sheed and Ward, New York, 1937. Used with permission.

pulsion to give when she writes of Saint Martha that "Martha was wise as any woman, in love construing/ To ease the burden of her love in doing." What woman has not experienced times beyond number the psychological reflex love begets in her: "What can I do?" "What can I give?" A woman is most a woman when she is giving: giving her service, giving herself. A nun is most a nun when the fullness of her surrender to God is evidenced in her consuming desire to give her energies to souls.

Some religious are much preoccupied these days with their insecurity, with their emotional barometers, with the abnormalities or subnormalities of their personalities. It might be helpful to recall that a woman is never so psychologically insecure as when she is self-absorbed. Her security is achieved in sacrificing herself for the beloved. And for the religious, the beloved is every soul in her orbit of activity, as for the contemplative the beloved is every soul in the world.

"She knows the usefulness of labor," declares Holy Scripture of the great woman. Much of its usefulness redounds on herself. Labors, sacrifice, self-donation — how useful they are in the formation of a spiritually beautiful and perfectly balanced religious woman! Self-absorption is the inevitable end-product of our endless italicizing of our modal actions, reactions, and interactions, of our spiritual fixation upon ourselves. And self-absorption carries a life-long-guarantee tag of malfunction in a woman's personality. She is made to give, created to serve, formed by God for surrender of

herself. When she is not giving, not laboring, not surrendering herself, she is unwomanly, a not even reasonably accurate facsimile of what God made her to be. And if as a religious she is unwomanly, then she is in that same measure un-nunly.

There is, after all, only one commitment for a woman. It is to give herself. When driven by that excess of love which should be the synonym for religious vocation, she will give unceasingly, "rising while it is still night, providing food for her household, making her arms sturdy by work, knowing the usefulness of labor." A religious is called to mother souls, to clasp all the hurts of the world to her heart. She will need to make her spiritual arms sturdy for such a task. The usefulness of labor will show itself here. For its usefulness serves the laborer as well as the labored-for.

With engaging terseness, the Book of Proverbs also tells us that the valiant woman "looks over a field carefully — and buys it." She is a person capable of making her own considerations, drawing a conclusion, and acting on her judgment. The "helpless type" female is not put forth in the Scriptures as a proper type of femininity; it is the resolute, capable, and energetic woman who is held up before our eyes, the one who can make decisions and abide by them. While this in no way implies the outthrust jaw of the "do-er," the unfeminine personality that constantly seeks to dominate situations and persons, it does indicate strength of purpose and action. There is scarcely a type of woman less endearing than the domineering woman. In fact, we can dis-

*"Dutifulness flows naturally out of great love,
but does not beget it . . ."*

cover in our own pained reaction to this kind of personality one of the fundamental proofs that woman is created to cooperate with man and in a very beautiful and ennobling sense to serve him, not to dominate him.

If, however, the authoritarian type of female is a caricature of true womanly grace, the perpetually irresolute, pusillanimous, indeterminate female is scarcely an ideal type of femininity, either. Between these two unhappy and unappealing extremes is the valiant woman of Holy Scripture who has a sense of dedication to the vocation to which God has called her, who probes the depths of her duties and responsibilities and discharges them with a strength and resolution which is completely purposeful and yet wholly feminine. Without aggressiveness, she fulfills her lofty charge of wifehood and motherhood together with the multitudinous implications of each, conscious of the unique dignity of her position yet avoiding the tense preoccupation with it which begets the type of "dutiful wife and mother" which scratches our sensibilities like an over-dose of starch. The loving wife and mother is what the situation of life calls for, not the dutiful. For dutifulness flows naturally out of great love, but does not beget it.

If balance, purposefulness, and a humble sense of her great responsibility are essential for the married woman, they are not less for the religious woman. The need

for a strong sense of personal responsibility in each religious is being pointed out and pointed up in much current writing on the religious life. It is a good thing. For there has been all too much emphasis in the past in some quarters on the type of "obedient religious" by whom we mean the nun who eschews independent thinking and personal judgment like any other "temptations," and who disclaims any personal responsibility in making decisions with an energy worthy of a far better cause than this. Each nun must determine the quality of her own obedience, the depth of her own poverty, the comprehensiveness of her own virginity. To make vows is not to say an ultimate "Amen!" and then fold one's mental hands on one's spiritual lap for the rest of one's life while the rule winds one up, the constitutions lay the track, and the superior sights the course.

A superior is not a coxswain calling "stroke!" at prescribed intervals. She ought to be somewhat of a guide, much of a maternal haven, and above all a channel of God's authority which she herself serves as well as exercises. But each religious has her own course to sail, her own vocation to fulfill in exquisite measure or to betray with half measures. Each nun will be as holy as she desires to be, not as the superior desires her to be. Every religious woman's life will provide her with many "fields" which she herself

must "look over carefully" and buy or refuse.

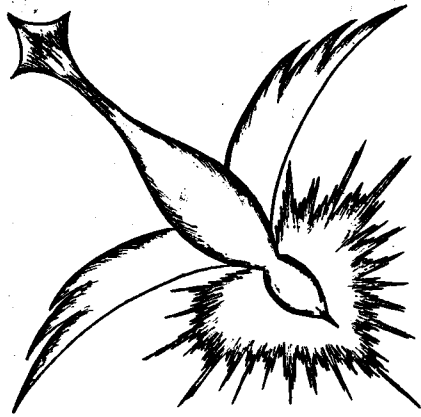
There is a limitless opportunity for mediocrity in religious life, just as there is immeasurable scope for high sanctity and complete surrender to God. To each, the field to buy and tend, to waste or to fence off with compromises and irresponsible half measures. There must be few men who are content with a fluff of a wife who may be highly decorative but who never accepts wifely or maternal responsibility in the details of practical living. In fact, a theorizing nun-writer could suspect that the very decorativeness of his wife might rather pall on a man whose dinners are consistently burned, whose socks need mending and shirts need ironing, and whose gold cuff-links got sent to the laundry. God has no less a right to expect womanly responsibility in his spouse. The souls he redeemed have a right to expect maternal responsibility to be exercised toward them by religious women who are chosen by God to pray for and to sacrifice for and to serve humanity.

Each new day in religious life will present certain fields which must be considered for purchase or rejection. To flee from the responsibility of choice, to prefer personal stagnation to decision, to disclaim one's God-given powers of judgment in the countless situations in which personal judgment is clearly called for, is to fail quite abysmally in projecting the image of the valiant woman of Holy Scripture. It is, in fact, to fail to be a woman. And to fail in womanliness is always and simultaneously to fail in nunliness.

"She is clothed with strength and dignity," this noble woman whom the Book of Proverbs describes. "And she greets the future with a smile." The religious who renders her Lord and Lover "good and not evil all the days of her life," the lonely days, the weary days, the frustrating days, and the heartaching days as well as the joyous days, the exuberant days, the successful days, the emotional high-tide days, this religious has good reason to face the future with a smile. She is a woman who loves and is loved and who is exercising her womanly powers of constancy and loyalty. Because she "opens her arms to the poor and stretches her hands to the needy," she is clothed with something of the strength and dignity of God. For these are the prerogatives of his mercy which is ever open-armed and reaching toward human misery.

"Making her arms sturdy by work," the religious woman daily exercises her potential for sacrifice, daily enlarges her capacity for self-surrender, so that she is happily and securely driven by a sense of her dedication, of her responsibility to the extent that "she rises while it is still night, providing food for her household." Which is to say that she becomes a woman utterly given.

And that is indeed to be clothed before God "in strength and dignity." A woman's strength is in sacrifice. Her dignity is in surrender. Such a one can "face the future with a smile." She shall indeed "laugh in the latter day," when she shall see him face to face whom on earth she has loved with all her heart.



Monthly Conference

Jerome A. Kelly, O.F.M.

KNOWLEDGE

Saints and scientists have marvelled at the way man sums up and concentrates in his being all the perfections of the world around him. In common with the elements he is composed of matter. Like the plants he can nourish himself, mature, and propagate his kind. Like the animals he moves from place to place and learns about tangible things by using his senses. Saints have usually gone beyond the scientists, however, in recognizing that man, however much he resembles all the other creatures in the world, transcends them by his rationality. Which is another way of saying that man is unique on earth because he can know and love, learn and will, grasp truth and enjoy goodness. These uniquely human attainments are achieved by two powers, man's intellect and his will.

Knowledge on the Natural Level

I want you to consider for a few minutes the first of these powers, man's ability to know things. The intellect is helped in its task of reaching truth by three habits or virtues. One of these aids the intellect in understanding fundamental principles on which all other truths rest as on a foundation. For example, we understand that two and two must be four — no matter what the two and two may be, apples or atom bombs. We understand that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. We understand that the whole is greater than any of its single parts. We understand that nothing can be true and false at the same time.

Another quality aids the intellect in knowing what things really are; how they came about and what they are used for; what are the relations between them and other things. In this sense we talk of people's knowing how to build houses or to write letters; how to fix clocks or to run a business; how to write books on geometry or to give lectures on economics. In all these cases the people who know

these things have investigated problems, studied facts, learned their causes and their effects, explored their relations to other facts until they have amassed a body of knowledge or, to give it its proper name, a science.

There is, finally, a virtue that aids the intellect in appreciating how all things — the principles it understands and the facts it knows — are related to man's ultimate happiness. Let me illustrate this virtue of wisdom. I understand that human life as we know it in its totality cannot come from inert matter. When I study biology, sociology, and anthropology, then, I refuse to accept any explanation of man that makes him the product of merely physical forces or material agents. Thus I gain an accurate knowledge of man from these independent sciences. Now, if I am wise, I begin to see that all I have learned about man leads me to inquire about his maker, about his reason for being in existence at all, about the effect that the answers to these questions must have on his actions on earth. In considering this final and ultimate relation of man to his First Beginning and his Last End, my mind is in pursuit of true wisdom.

Supernatural Knowledge and Faith

It helps thus to explore the natural order in which man is created in order to understand more perfectly the supernatural order in which he is "recreated" through faith in Christ. Revelation assures us that we have been raised to a supernatural level. Saint Paul's inspired words justify each of us in claiming that "it is now no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20). "In this has the love of God been shown in our case," Saint John reminds us, "that God has sent his only-begotten Son into the world that we may live through him" (1 Jn. 4:9). Saint Peter, in words that startle us, assures us that through faith we "become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4).

Surely God would never have lifted us to the level of the divine life and then left us on our own in living it. Not at all. Through the Holy Spirit we are given power not only to be the children of God but to live the life of God. Sanctifying grace is a sharing in the life of God. Faith, Hope, and Love, with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, help us to live the divine life while on earth, the life that will have its fullest exercise and expression when we are united to the Trinity in heaven.

Let us now concentrate upon Faith, the virtue God gives us to enable our intellects to know him in a way that transcends merely natural knowing. By Faith we assent completely and fully to all that God has told us "with regard to the oneness of his nature, and his Trinity of Persons ... to Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Mediator, who is none other than the eternal Son of God made man in order to save us ... to the work of Redemption and to whatever is connected therewith" (Tanqueray, p. 551).

"The things presented for belief by faith must be grasped . . . so their inner meaning becomes clearer and more compelling."

Now, what must be noted is the marvelous resemblance between the order of grace and the order of nature. Faith is perfected in the supernatural order, as the intellect is in the natural order, by certain habits or virtues; these are the three Gifts of the Holy Spirit known as Understanding, Knowledge, and Wisdom. Although this conference will concentrate on the Gift of Knowledge, its relation to the other two Gifts demands brief comment.

The Nature of the Gift of Knowledge

The things presented for belief by Faith must be grasped and penetrated by the intellect so that their inner meaning becomes clearer and more compelling. This is achieved by the Gift of Understanding, so that in the words of the Psalmist, "in your light we see light" (35:10). It is further necessary that the things presented to Faith for belief be judged rightly: that we see the relation between one doctrine, for example, and another; that we discover the implications and the ramifications of both of them; that we realize that we must adhere to them and repudiate whatever is contrary to them. This knowledge, if it is concerned with God directly, is usually associated with the Gift of Wisdom. If it is exercised in relation to created beings, the knowledge is associated with the Gift of Knowledge. Saint Augustine sums the matter up in this way: "The knowledge of divine things may properly be called wisdom and the knowledge of human affairs may properly be given the name of knowledge" (*De Trin.* 14,1).

We can, therefore say, that the Gift of Knowledge, "by the illuminating action of the Holy Spirit, perfects the virtue of faith and thereby gives us a knowledge of created things in relation to God."

The Gift of Knowledge must not be identified with great learning, however solid and impressive the latter may be. Nor is it limited to college graduates who, in fact, may run the danger of not possessing as much true knowledge as janitors and kitchen workers may have. "I am he who teaches a man wisdom and gives more understanding to humble persons than can be given by man's teaching. . . . I am he who also suddenly illuminates and lifts up a humble soul, so that it can take and receive in a short time the true reason of the wisdom of God more perfectly than another who studies ten years in the schools and lacks humility" (*Imitation of Christ*, 3, 43).

These words suggest another aspect of the Gift of Knowledge: It is not gained by plodding study, diligent searching of books, attentive investigation of curricula. This Gift of God "gives such knowledge instantly, as Adam had it before his sin, without labor, also a love of truth and a facility, docility, a predisposition to know and to act

on the truth. This idea of facility . . . must never be lost sight of in every one of the Gifts. It is fundamental to the conception of them" (Blunt, *Life with the Holy Ghost*, 103).

The Gift of Knowledge as Intuition

While attending to the knowledge bestowed upon us by the Gift, let us note, finally, that "it is not a rational judgment so much as a sort of intuition which comes of living with God and so learning unconsciously to share his mind" (Vann, *The Divine Pity*, 87). The implications of this fact are two. First, we obtain an increase of the Gift of Knowledge more by prayer to the Holy Spirit and by cooperation with his inspiration in action than by study or by speculation only. Secondly, as Saint Bonaventure points out (3 *Sent.* 35, 1), this Gift is directed towards perfecting the active, rather than the contemplative, life.

Exploring this distinction made by the Seraphic Doctor may help to clarify our notion of the Gift of Knowledge. The intellect is adapted for contemplation by the Gift of Understanding which enlightens it, by the Gift of Fear of the Lord which purges it, and by the Gift of Wisdom which perfects it. The intellect is prepared for effective action in fulfilling necessary obligations by the Gift of Knowledge which directs its consideration of its relation to creatures, and by the Gift of Piety which directs it in the fulfillment of its duties towards creatures. But there are actions that lie beyond the call of duty. In this area the Gift of Counsel directs man in his relation to creatures, and the Gift of Fortitude directs him in his conduct towards creatures.

Against this background we can inquire about the kind of enlightenment we receive from the Holy Spirit by his Gift of Knowl-

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edge. By it, actually, we attain to a right attitude towards creatures. Christian common sense begets a sane acceptance of creatures as gifts of God, reflections of his power, beauty, and generosity, intended for our use in perfecting our union with "the Father of Lights, with whom there is no change, nor shadow of alteration" (Jas. 1:17).

We are thus saved from the sterile repudiation that characterizes the Puritan and from the sensual idolatry that marks the hedonist. We are guarded against the austerity which has its roots in pride or fear, and from the indulgence which springs from softness or sentimentality.

We are, positively, guided along the same path that Saint Francis took in his attitude towards creatures. The Gift of Knowledge made it easy for Francis to learn the secrets God had hidden in the heavenly bodies, natural phenomena, the fruits and flowers of the earth, animals wild and tame, his fellow men, whether saints or brigands, princes or lepers.

Like all pious souls he realized in the highest degree the worth of all things and had reverence for them as for something precious and holy. He understood God's presence among his creatures; when he felt the immovable firmness and strength of the cliffs, he directly felt that God is strong and to be trusted. The sight of a flower in the silence of the early morning or the mouth of a little bird confidently opened revealed to him the pure beauty of God and his purity and the endless tenderness of the Creator (Jørgensen, Saint Francis of Assisi, 311-12).

The "Canticle of Brother Sun" endures as the splendid memorial of the deeply poetical and truly spiritual vision Francis had of God's creatures, "which we daily use, without which in fact we could scarcely survive, although we so often misuse them and so offend their Creator" (*Speculum Perfectionis*, 119).

Conclusion

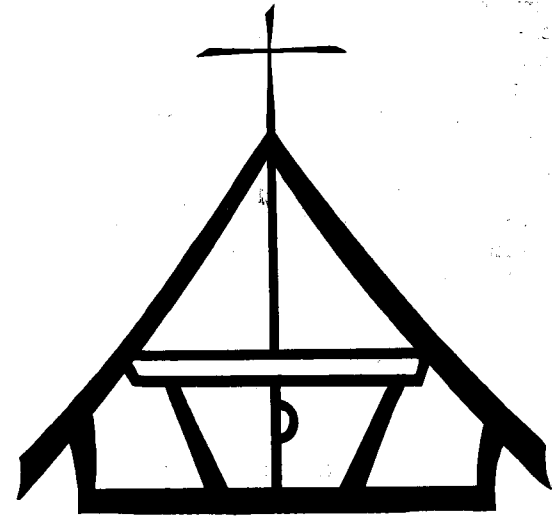
If we are to share the vision Francis had of creatures, however, we must recognize that they can be misused. Or, more accurately, that we can misuse them. Creatures led Francis to God; they never became his gods. He knew them truly for what they were because his vision was purified by penance and mortification, purged by suffering, and perfected by love.

Such must be the program of our lives, if the Gift of Knowledge is to have full scope within us. It will be in this way only that "we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen. For the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:18).

Aggiornamento and the Parish

LIONEL MASSE, O.F.M.

This is the fourth in a series of short feature articles on the new demands being made on pastors and their assistants by the recent updating and deepening of Christian life. — Ed.



IV. THE SACRAMENTS

Jesus Christ, who is present and active in each sacrament.

The Word of God, who joins men together into the People of God, invites them to a personal encounter in which their salvation and incorporation into the Church takes place.

The Eucharist

Most Christians (at least until recently) considered the sacraments "things." And that is, after all, what they learned in school: "sensible signs ... to give grace." But such an understanding is not far from magic; people must be made to understand that it is not around "things" that we gather, but around a Person —

Despite the profound changes taking place in the more enlightened and dedicated strata of society, it is probably true to say that for a while to come most people will lack that renewed appreciation of, and insight into, the Mass which pervades current literature. As far as the man in the street is concerned, Mass is still a long ceremony. He wants to do something while attending it, not so much because such activity

"... pastors cannot institute the required reforms suddenly, without sufficient preparation."

flows from the essence of the Mass, but more as a means of distracting himself. He is not really aware that the Mass is the summit of the Christian life — that it "constitutes and manifests the Church." Its importance, in his eyes, stems from the serious obligation of attending it.

Our work in the face of this situation is immense: it amounts to working a thorough change in our people's mentality. To be sure, the Council's decrees in liturgical matters are to the point. But pastors cannot institute the required reforms suddenly, without sufficient preparation. If the faithful are not ready, the changes will be fruitless — old habits will simply be replaced by new ones, just as mechanical and just as stultifying.

To insure the reform's success, then, some form of co-operation in liturgical matters is not only advisable, but necessary. Co-operation, that is, between the priest and his parishioners: for this, care must be taken to provide a special, intensive formation for a core of laymen. And there must be a serious, well planned follow-up so that there is never a real end to the process of renewal, and the breath of the Spirit continues to quicken and stir up the flames of love in the parish.

Baptism

To partake of the Eucharist, a man must first enter the Church of the saved through baptism. Baptism is the sign of the acceptance of the new Christian by the Com-

munity which then assumes the responsibility for his Christian education. For this reason baptism seems to make little sense (except in the case of emergency) outside the context of the parish.

Our faithful never seem to fuss much about baptism; they seem to consider it a private ceremony and want to keep it brief and relatively unimportant. Our work here is cut out for us: we must see to it that Christian Initiation regains the importance it once had and should by right have in a parish. The restoration of the baptismal rite to its proper place in the Easter Vigil has once again enabled it to stand out in the fullness of its meaning as a death to sin and resurrection with Christ.

The members of the parish should be invited to come on Sundays to take part in the incorporation of their new member. Many baptisms should be performed on the same occasion, and steps taken to solemnize as much as possible this joyous event. A commentator might be useful, for example, and so might the introduction of some added symbols. (One that has proved effective in our case is a gray robe for use before the actual reception of the sacrament, symbolizing alienation from God). Another good idea is to call the family together on the evening before the baptism where possible to give them a baptismal instruction.

Marriage

Marriage is the hallowing of an important reality in human life.

It is the symbol of the union between Christ and his Church. It assures the multiplication of God's children. But for many of our people it is a very worldly ceremony: the important things are fashion, the length of the train, the romantic songs (they can hardly be called hymns), and the flowers. Some go so far as to ask that the ceremony be performed apart from the Mass so they can have more time for the reception afterwards!

Thanks to the Cana and pre-Cana courses that are becoming more and more popular these days, some fitting instruction can be given on this sacrament. In fact, the pastor who is willing to go a bit out of his way, can have a get-together with the families as well as the bride and groom shortly before the wedding — the night before, or two nights before — and in this way give a short and informal instruction on the mysteries about to take place.

These and other means can be used to transform the marriage ceremony from the spectacle it has become in so many cases, into a true celebration in which all join the priest in offering the Mass. And, incidentally, why must we schedule one marriage after another on a Sunday morning? Would a celebration including several couples not be more in accord with the spirit of the times, which impels us to rediscover the communal dimension of all the sacraments?

The Forgiveness of Sins

If it is worldliness which prompts us to re-examine our attitude toward marriage, it is perhaps an

opposite difficulty that attracts our attention with regard to confession. Many people have made it so routine an act — one which centers wholly on themselves as individuals, instead of realizing that it is an encounter with the Person of Christ. And then there are those who barely make it each Trinity Sunday ... and those who don't quite do even that. And how about the school children — and the "assembly line" confessions?

Faced with this situation, must we not insist above all on the meeting with Christ that takes place in the sacrament — and on the deep conversion this demands? Some form of "Liturgy of the Word" before confessions would help the faithful prepare better for the sacrament itself, just as it prepares them for the Sacrifice of the Mass. There are doubtless other solutions, but we seek, here, mainly to state the problem.

The Anointing of the Sick

This sacrament, whether given for the sake of a cure or administered as strength for the final passage, is less and less frequent in our parishes. The explanation is simple enough: when people are seriously ill now, they go to a hospital. In practice, then, we are rarely left with anything except the cases of sudden death. It is difficult, therefore, for us to prepare the faithful for this passage from death to Life. They are too afraid of the "last sacraments" to ask for them while there is still time. The anointing of the sick is, as far as they are concerned, a condemnation to death — and it is up to us to change this attitude.



A CONTINUING DIALOGUE

The lead article in the November-December, 1964, issue of **THE CORD** was a hard-hitting, perceptive article on Franciscan Re-evaluation by Sister Lenora, O.S.F. In the following letter, a professor of theology takes exception to some of the views expressed in that article. We feel that this is a dialogue well worth keeping up; send us your comments on the subject, and we shall try to publish them. —Ed.

Christ the King Seminary
West Chicago, Illinois
May 31, 1965

Dear Editor,

Sister Lenora's article "Re-evaluating Franciscan Life" (Nov.-Dec. '64) — which came to my attention only now — was well-written, exciting and challenging. If **THE CORD** remains bold enough to print essays that criticize the existing order in the name of principle, it may very well awaken Franciscans to their heritage and contemporary applications.

As much as I enjoyed Sister's article, I had to disagree on several points. My main criticism is that her evaluation was based on non-Franciscan authors. Once she shouted "Francis is

not God" and disagreed with him on some crucial points — not very competently.

Teilhard de Chardin looms large in Sister Lenora's thinking, a natural thing in view of her involvement in Catholic Action. His theology-philosophy seems to be the touchstone of her critique. But I'm not so sure that Francis was as incarnational as Chardin. Consider the following points of difference.

1. Francis' Canticle of the Sun and Chardin's vision of creation are far apart. Francis saw creatures as **symbols** of the invisible world, of the Lord himself. Chardin stressed the **historical** evolution of creation, man's creativeness and their final fulness in Christ. For Francis, nothing here below was profane because it came from God's hand and symbolized him. Chardin went much further in seeing all creation as attracted to Christ and finding fulfillment in him. Francis, I think, favored a radical discontinuity between this world and hereafter. After he lost his sight and could no longer wonder at the beauty of creation, he visibly lost interest in the visible because he longed for the invisible.

In my opinion, Francis would have been closer to Malevez and Congar who are in the middle between the incarnational and eschatological positions. They stress Christian engagement in the world and at the same time a radical discontinuity between the world, its achievements, and the Kingdom of God.

2. Francis was wholly concerned with the reform of the heart and not with the reform of institutions — a position that Christ and St. Paul took (e.g. slavery). I realize that this does not sound quite right inasmuch as Francis rejected — unsuccessfully — the monastic structure. But that was because he felt strongly that following in Christ's footsteps had to be radical. At the time the Benedictine structure was not evangelical enough.

In this connection I'd like to add that Francis' view of the liturgy would not have been quite that of Sister Lenora (Perhaps I did not understand her) who seems to put the emphasis on the horizontal community. Her approach is man-centered, her community oriented primarily to the solution of social problems. Francis, to the contrary, underlines **adoration**. If he had had the advantage of the present biblical orientation, he would have liked the term "**priestly kingdom**" or the "**Temple of God**" — images that portray the Christian community as a worshipping one, without neglecting social responsibilities. In Sister Lenora's paper what stands out is I-thou, rather than I-Thou. Sister has too much Fromm, too much humanism, apart from the motif of man as the image of God. It is clear in Francis' writings that the vertical relation holds the horizontal ones together.

3. Cagnet criticized Chardin for not facing the historical reality of original sin. As a matter of fact, Chardin's position on original sin may not even be orthodox. Yet original sin is a large factor in Francis' theology of the flesh. Again, Cagnet reproaches

Chardin for speaking readily of the Incarnation (as Sister does), less readily of Redemption. Francis would have agreed with Cognet. Francis was not a humanist. He respected nature but at the same time he was realistic about its depravity. And let it be said that Francis found it difficult to appreciate art or elegance or housing or affluence. He belonged to the tradition of the Essenes who were suspicious of Solomonic splendor. He found the nomadic way of life more conducive to the pursuit of the heavenly city; he was not keen on Cain's culture (cf. Gen. 4:17-22).

This suggests that the role of religious is eschatological. Anyway the Constitution on the Church says so: We read in chapter VII, about religious life:

The people of God have no lasting city here below, but look forward to one that is to come. Since this is so, the religious state, whose purpose it is to free its members from earthly cares, more fully manifests to all believers the presence of heavenly goods already possessed here below. Furthermore, it not only witnesses to the fact of a new and eternal life acquired by the redemption of Christ, but it foretells the future resurrection and the glory of the heavenly kingdom.

Whenever Sister Lenora refers to something specific in the life of St. Francis, she dissents. One instance is obedience. She is unhappy about the image of the corpse. But Francis was hardly submissive in that way. He was willing to obey a novice, but he was not naive. The great grief of his life was the conflict with his own superiors and the Curia over the Rule. Francis did not want a monastic structure, because it hampered the apostolate and disposed the friars to a secure and comfortable life in a monastery. Nor did Francis want laws; at any rate, not a legalistic rule. He did want the historical life of Christ as the only Norm, or at least as the principal one. Eventually, he gave in — not without protest, e. g. The Testament — when Rome insisted. This submission distinguished Francis from contemporary heretics such as the Waldenses who chose to live the gospel on their own terms and to break with the Apostolic See. Obviously, Francis was not obedient as a corpse!

Another issue on which Sister expressed dissent with Francis was learning. It is well to remember that Francis had a great reverence for the learned, and consulted them. But he wanted his followers to concentrate on living. He seems to have been suspicious of a life of study because it disposed one to scepticism and criticism, to talking and thinking, rather than to living. I agree with Sister that we have to be competent, but to achieve competence and grow in prayer is quite a trick.

In short, Sister Lenora made some very fine points, but I'm not sure they were Franciscan.

Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M.

Franciscan Hope

Sister Mary Therese, O.S.C.

Faith, hope, charity — these three fundamental virtues can rightly be called man's supernatural passport to heaven. True, the chaotic conditions of modern times would seem to deny the existence of a people professing a sincere faith in an all-provident God. Yet the great ecumenical movement of our day and the universal interest which the Second Vatican Council has aroused are two powerful indications that the light of faith is still aglow in this world. The same may be said of the virtue of charity. While self-interest and materialism wage an ever increasing warfare against this queenly virtue, again and again we see it emerge victorious in splendid deeds of mercy and kindness, springing from a deep love of God and neighbor. What, then, can be said of the third God-going virtue, that of hope? Can we state with equal conviction that the hearts of men are animated by a genuine spirit of trust in God?

It would be difficult, no doubt, to find a man devoid of all hope, but there are many who have forgotten what it is for which they must hope above all else. They have forgotten the simple words of their childhood catechism which taught that to hope in God is to trust that he will grant us his grace in this world and eternal life hereafter. And so, despite pro-

fessions of faith and works of charity, innumerable souls lead lives fraught with endless worry and vain striving after the things of this world. They hope, it is true, hope that God will give them health, success, material prosperity; hope that he will never permit the shadow of the Cross to fall upon their lives. All of these are legitimate requests, you may protest, and form the subject of many a prayer of petition. They even fulfill our Lord's injunction bidding us to ask that we may receive and seek that we may find. Admittedly, the majority of good people who pray thus are unwavering in their faith, constant in their love and firm in their conviction that God will bring them to eternal beatitude. Yet, the greater number have failed to grasp the essential truth which the virtue of hope holds out to them, one which will enable them to "hope against hope" when they are stamped with the image of the Crucified by an all-loving Father. For the one mighty hope in our lives, which must transcend all others, the one which will bring us from darkness to light, is an unreserved hope in the grace of almighty God. This conviction must be at the root of all our hope. Then, and then only, will it be firmly founded on God.

That many present-day Chris-

tians should frequently lose sight of the prime object of the virtue of hope is not at all surprising. Certainly it is no easy matter for people immersed in the materialistic atmosphere of our twentieth century to anchor their hope solely in the things of the spirit. But they must learn to do just that if they are ever to achieve true liberty of soul and free themselves from the anxieties of a mundane society. It is the office of the Church to teach such lessons and she does so by the powerful method of example. Almost two thousand years of Christianity have produced saints without number whose indomitable trust in God has shone like a beacon light across the centuries. There was the great Saint Paul who hoped that God would relieve him of a troublesome affliction, only to be reminded by the Lord himself that his grace was sufficient. And what was the Apostle's response if not a splendid act of trust in the power of the divine Life within him, "Gladly therefore I will glory in my infirmities, that the strength of Christ may dwell in me" (2 Cor. 12:9). We, as Franciscans, can proudly look to another hero of God, our own Saint Francis of Assisi. In him we find a saint whose very life became one tremendous act of perfect hope.

The world of the Poverello had much in common with our own, despite the lapse of over 750 years. Then, as now, there was the relentless seeking after prestige and power. Society was in ferment and the simple piety of the Middle Ages, so well exemplified in the Holy Gospels, was being discarded as a relic of the past. Many, even among the ranks of the clergy, fell under our Lord's sad dictum,

"This people honors me with their lips but their heart is far from me" (Mt. 15:8). The changing social order, with its stress upon wealth and display, found many adherents in the small Italian city of Assisi. Not the least among these was Francis Bernardone. Like the other high-spirited youths of his day, Francis desired to make a name for himself. And so he hoped, hoped to perform great deeds of valor on the battlefield, and return home, the pride of Assisi. But God had his finger on the soul of this little man. It was not long before he realized the futility of such a hope. Then, before the crucifix of a crumbling San Damiano, the beauty of the virtue of hope was revealed to Francis and it transformed his life.

Henceforth Francis Bernardone was to live according to the Gospels. A great spiritual ideal was taking form in his ardent soul. His dreams of knighthood and valor did not abandon him, but under the enlightening influence of God's grace, he saw himself as the herald of the King of Kings, espoused to the fairest of brides, the Lady Poverty. In one supreme act of renunciation he cast his inheritance at the feet of an enraged father, proclaiming to all the world his generous intentions, "From now on I shall be free to say, 'Our Father who art in Heaven,' and no longer, 'Father Peter Bernardone.' To him right here I now not only return his money but give up all my clothes. Thus, naked will I go my way to the Lord."

Yes, Saint Francis was to go naked to the Lord, divested of all that could shackle his soul to

earth. God had called him to this way of salvation, and his grace would sustain him through all the joys and sufferings which were to mark his steep ascent to the summit of perfect love. With deep spiritual insight, the saint saw that this privilege of holy poverty, this complete dependence on the providence of God, was a treasure to be desired above all else. Can we not see in his love and practice of poverty a sublime expression of supernatural hope? Francis prayed, "Give us this day our daily bread," he labored, he begged, and then he accepted with great joy whatever the good God chose to send him. He saw in all of creation the hand of the Creator; the persons and events which touched upon his life were but so many messengers of God's grace, molding his soul to the image of his divine Master. Repeatedly, he admonished his brothers to cast their care upon the Lord and He would provide for them.

The world scoffed at the Poor Man of Assisi, declaring that he had gone mad, or at best, that his trust was the height of imprudence. But in his soul a great and beautiful truth was revealing itself with ever-increasing intensity: God is, and that was sufficient for Francis. Not that the saint was blind to material needs or insensible to spiritual and physical suffering, for he was to endure in both soul and body the most bitter afflictions. Yet, these only served to redouble his hope and assure him of God's friendship. Often to console his brothers in their sufferings he would remind them that nobody ought to consider himself a perfect friend of God except insofar as he passes through many trials and tempta-

tions. These were not the sentiments of a dreamer. They were the words of a man who knew the world and the ways of men, a man who had come truly to know himself. And this knowledge, which has tempted so many timid souls to discouragement, inspired Saint Francis to exclaim, in words aflame with unbounded hope, "My God and my All."

We cannot speak of Franciscan hope without recalling how brightly it illumined the way of Saint Clare and her spiritual daughters. If worldly-minded men shook their heads at Francis, what must they have thought of Clare? It required a lifetime of prayer and pleading to obtain for her Sisters the privilege of holy poverty which has always been for the Poor Clare a loving expression of absolute trust in the providence of God. Clare, who was plagued for years by painful illnesses, was once asked the secret of her patient endurance. In the true seraphic spirit she replied, "Ever since I have known the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, through Francis his servant, no suffering has troubled me, no penance has been hard, no illness too burdensome." How the heart of the blessed Francis must have rejoiced to hear these words from one whose life was ever a perfect image of his own!

Of all God's saints perhaps none is more universally loved and admired than Saint Francis of Assisi. His life, so simple and yet so profound, has been extolled by believers and unbelievers alike. Truly, he was unique among his fellowmen, among men of all times, but the message of hope which he brought to a world grown cold with sin, is one that can be taken

up and lived by every person of good will. Those of us who have the privilege of calling him our Holy Father Saint Francis have a corresponding obligation to be today's messengers of Franciscan hope. Some may object that primitive Franciscanism is not compatible with twentieth-century living. It is true that the Church has wisely regulated the observance of religious poverty in accord with present-day conditions; yet it still remains the Franciscan's most effective expression of the virtue of hope.

In Francis' day the people needed the startling example of extreme exterior poverty, and the saint had the wisdom to recognize this need. Those first Poor Men of Assisi, by a total dedication to the ideals of early Franciscan poverty, re-kindled the fire of supernatural hope in the hearts of men and made firm the foundations of a tottering Church. Today's Franciscan must continue to cast his care upon the Lord. Yet it is not for him to imitate the barefoot, begging friar of the past, for the sophisticated society of our day would regard him as little more than an oddity. The twentieth century, with its stress upon the psychological, has actually paved the way for the modern Franciscan's apostolate of hope. His power to influence lies, not so much in the practice of rigorous material poverty, as in the spirit with which he exercises his trust in Divine Providence. This spirit, which is as old as Franciscanism itself, is one of irrepressible joy and love in the Lord.

Joy and love — these are the fruits of Franciscan hope, the marks by which all men will know

that we are the true disciples of the Poverello. The Franciscan bases his trust on the fundamental truth that God has promised his grace in this world. He is not one whose hope is expressed by a determined set of the jaw and the joyless declaration that we must endure because better days are coming. It is true, better days are coming, days of eternal blessedness, but the Franciscan knows that wonderful days are already here. Every day of his life is God's gift to him and by complete abandonment to his loving providence, he finds God's grace at each moment and he knows that he has not hoped in vain. Not all of us who claim to be the friends of Saint Francis have made profession of religious vows; yet there is not one among us who cannot sow the seeds of Franciscan hope in the vocation to which he has been called. In this way we will be instruments of peace and hope in a world where both are so sadly lacking. To do this we need not close our eyes to distressing world conditions or the anxieties which press upon us from every side, any more than Saint Francis did in his day. We must face reality but always in the light of the gospel precept, "Do not be anxious saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?'" (Mt. 6:31). Like our Holy Father, we know that we have only to "seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be given . . . (us) besides" (Mt. 6:33). Franciscanism has been so beautifully termed "love at work." May we not as truly call it "hope in action"? It will become just this if we fulfill our vocation as loyal Franciscans.

Diary of a Country Nun

Mother M. Edwardine Horrigan, O.S.F.

V. GETTING UP IN THE WORLD

Mission clubs surely were a god-send to us. After depending completely on one set of army vestments, black on one side and white on the other, it was luxury indeed to be able to fill a bureau drawer with a full set of vestments in five colors! No longer would I have to answer Father's patient remonstrances, "Sister, it should be red vestments today," with "I know, Father, but we only own one chasuble." Now I could actually let finger towels pile up for the weekly wash, since we no longer depended on just three. I fondled the vestments as lovingly as an old master stroked his Stradivarius. I, who loved Requiem Masses for their brevity, was now perfectly willing to labor through Glorias, Credos, even Sequences, just to see the Holy Sacrifice set off in the colors Holy Mother Church intended for her liturgy. No longer did I worry about the bump caused by the altar stone, that might bring trouble to the priest as he put down the chalice; after all if we had obtained vestments who knew the extents our prosperity would reach?

One evening just as we finished up the supper dishes, a knock was heard at our door. I answered it and found a salesman already opening his box of vacuum cleaners and beginning his spiel about the wonders of Eureka. When he

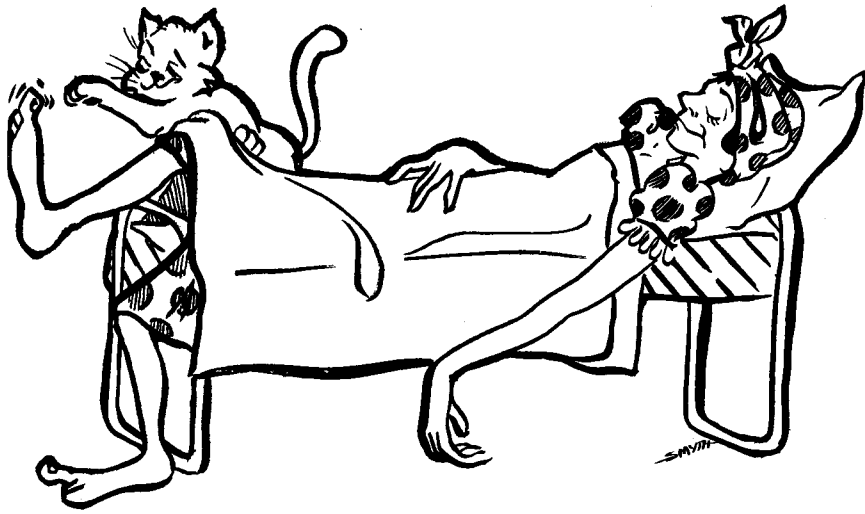
looked up at my, "Good evening, sir," never have I seen such blank astonishment on a face!

"Oh, excuse me," he muttered, "I thought people lived here."

I laughed and said, "I think we are people, all right, but after one of our tours up icy Genesee Road, I'm not so sure. I often feel too stiff to be alive."

The poor man fought to regain his composure, as he dropped parts of his vacuum. I assured him that we couldn't give him any business as we owned not a single rug, but he was welcome to come inside to organize his wares and warm up. In this process I learned that he was married to a Catholic outside the Church. My explanation of the goodness and zeal of the missionary apostolate seemed to strike a spark of interest. Thus was begun a long, rough journey back to the Church for his wife and eventual reception into it for himself. Three years later he drove me back to Delevan for a forgotten First Communion set for his very own son — at a mere ninety miles an hour! It seems he once drove an ambulance.

Auctions are a boon to the rural dweller and we took advantage of one to acquire two chenille rugs and a floor lamp. Our heating system consisted of a gas stove in the parlor and kitchen stove which we kept on all winter. Covers for the cold floor were much more a necessity than a luxury. The lamp



needed a bit of painting and a new shade, but we were expert hunters of bargains so a new shade was no problem.

My desk and filing system combined was a box of stationery perched on my knee. The cover of the box had served me well for two years, and so had addresses and all sorts of pertinent information. It must have been the growing number of Mass stipends that made us feel wealthy enough to look at a sale of unpainted furniture. This was a sad trip because the only one in our price range was not only unpainted but crooked, and had one cracked drawer. We could paint but we were not carpenters, so I went back to my stationery box desk again. After all, if an orange crate lined with oilcloth housed our canned goods, who was I to fuss over a well-used stationery box and a sturdy knee for a desk!

Father had a friend who was manager of a furniture store, so

great was our joy when a desk was put off the sales list because it was shop worn and had two badly fitted drawers, and given to us. Did our parlor now achieve distinction! We shined that desk to mirror perfection. That no chair came with it was negligible, for didn't we own three kitchen chairs and we were only two!

A mission club in New Jersey gave us a portable record player and a kind school superior sent us an album of records on the lives of the saints. We had a fine time lugging this along with us, despite its weight, on days we weren't using the film strips or other audio-visual aids. At home we used it to advantage playing our one album of "Oklahoma." We had an attachment for "forty-fives," so I stopped in the Franklinville Five and Dime to get the cheapest "forty-five" they had just to try it out. The best they had was "Ricochet Romance." We had many a chuckle over this until our re-

cord player refused to work. When I mentioned this to the Hungarian refugees who worked at the apostolate, they volunteered to come down to try fixing it. Their discussion of the beauties of music was confined to such classic pieces that I was ashamed to have them find out our sole "forty-five" was "Ricochet Romance." My only consolation was that their meager command of the English language would prevent their understanding the inane words.

We both loved company and worried not about our lack of dishes until one day two of our Sisters with their pastor from a lovely city school stopped in on their way to Allegany. We insisted on giving them lunch. One completely matching set of dishes was found for Father's place; therefore we felt all was well, but in the shuffle of getting four people settled in our tiny kitchen, Father got the place intended for me where not only were the dishes unmatched but they were chipped. At any rate the coffee was good.

The second time we had overnight guests, the pastor asked me if they slept in the bureau drawer — Moon Mullins' style. We let him in on our secret possession — a medical stretcher. This we put on the kitchen floor. The other sister slept with me. Her version of it was that she slept on the window sill, mine was everytime she turned over I landed on the floor. With all this we had plenty of fun and adventure.

Just listening to the people who visited our landlady, was a liberal education. "I'm just as good as common," meant "I'm all right." They sought your agreement to what was said by "Hain't it so?" Everything ended in "ed": a man

"drunked himself to death," "they heered this or that." It was such sessions that I should have learned that one doesn't have a private disease in small towns. Despite this I was badly prepared for my own attack. One morning I woke up with a badly swollen lip; my first thought was I had been bitten by a bug. So I went to Buffalo to find out the nature of my malady. It was hives and by the next morning I was literally covered, even to the soles of my feet so I couldn't go out to Mass. When Father saw Sister alone he asked about me. Nothing would do but that he would come to give me Holy Communion. Was I ever excited! My Irish-Jansenist streak had me convinced that you must have a major disease before the priest would bring Holy Communion. We needed to set up no table because I slept just a few steps from the tabernacle. All that needed doing was to pull back the curtain, yet my temperature must have gone up to 104 degrees. Three days of this and never since have I eaten pork — the cause of it all. The next week I happened to be parked uptown and a lady whom I did not even know by sight came up to me and asked if it was I or the other Sister who had hives! On learning it was I, she spent the next ten minutes inquiring about causes and remedies. Her son had just come down with hives.

Laundry posed many a problem. We had a washer which we pulled over to the kitchen sink which then became our rinsing tub by the process of inserting a suction stopper. Come what may as far as weather was concerned, our clothes went out on the line! This sometimes meant shoveling a path a-

MOVING ?

Please tell us.

From the supernatural viewpoint, this Franciscan mobility of ours is a wonderful thing. But when it comes to such practical considerations as mailing out a magazine, it can cause a considerable added expense—unless you give us your new address in advance. Three weeks' notice will save us ten cents on every magazine. Thank you.

long the clothes line, and hanging onto each piece for dear life, because if it blew out of your hand you had to plow through hip-high snow to rescue it.

The thawing-out process was what really caused the trouble. Just as surely as we would drape clothes all over the kitchen, even hanging them in the living room doorway, we would have company. Sister would grab all the clothes and stick them in the bathroom, while I took a bit of extra time on the hellos. This worked fine until the man who came to fix our stove turned out to be a plumber too. He wanted to inspect that part of our equipment since it hadn't worked too regularly. I opened the bathroom door and there were all our clothes stretched out like Marley's ghost.

This is a minor embarrassment compared to the unexpected visit of our very erudite confessor. It was again washday so Sister managed to strip the line and head for the bathroom while I slowly ushered Father into the parlor where I had been mending. I piously sat on the stockings I had been darning, completely forgetting the more intimate bits of ap-

parel I had hung on the lamp behind me which Father was facing. When Father rose to go into chapel, I got one look at the lamp and wondered how I could quietly disappear before he came out of the chapel! No wonder he had been smiling as we chatted.

One Tuesday just after we brought up the wash, I happened to glance out the window and there was our friend, Albert, with a night cap in his hand and a puzzled look on his face. No doubt he was trying to figure out how to fold such a handkerchief. Sure enough after due inspection and the discovery of my name on it he paraded right upstairs to return it!

Christmas was indeed a milestone. We bought a real crib and three lovely figures, investing most of our capital in these. We had to go to the Five and Dime for the shepherd, the lambs, and the donkey. It looked so sweet and so right in our little chapel, and we had real poinsettias for the first time! In order to have a Christmas tree I had to sleep on the top of the sofa but the smell of pine and the cheer of the Christmas tree was worth rolling up in a blanket and sticking my toes into the tree branches. The crowning point was having three Masses in our chapel! There was, it is true, something less than liturgical propriety in our being roused in the morning by fire sirens as the volunteers roared up Mill Street to hilltop blaze, but it was most like a real Christmas to discover that our friends had left a few gifts on the doorstep: butter, coffee cake, and candy.

Now that they had learned to know us many a goodie was left on our doorstep. In fact it got so I

began looking for them as I dashed up the stairs. Deer season brought us gifts of venison but budget failures notwithstanding, I simply couldn't eat it. I was haunted by visions of Bambi's gentle eyes.

In early spring on one of our home visits, the man of the house—without a doubt the most ramshackled house I had ever entered—offered me cowslips. I figured that they must be the harbingers of spring because I knew they were flowers. This knowledge I had garnered from a poem I studied in school. I stood up eager to receive a bouquet in so unlikely a setting, when he returned and handed me a frozen mass of green stuff, a twin sister to spinach if I ever saw one. Somehow we managed to murmur thank you and get out before we collapsed with laughter.

Old Mr. Voegel up on the hill, was a county care so now that gifts were coming our way, we decided to share our stocked larder with him. Was he ever delighted to have an audience. His joy in receiving gifts was secondary to that of having visitors. His staunch Methodist neighbors told him to be careful because those "church ladies" were trying to make him a Catholic. Little did they know that it was he who quoted reams of passages from the Bible at us. His defense of Catholics was, though, rare. He had once gone to vespers with a Catholic and found out that Catholics were not so bad. His greatest compliment was: "Too bad my missus didn't live to meet you girls; you would have been great friends."

We became prospective cover-girls for our mission magazine, Zeal, so when photographers came

out to take pictures of us incorporated, a shot of Mr. Voegel was a must. When we knocked on his door on our picture-taking quest, he smilingly asked us in. When we told him that we wanted to take his picture he said, "I knowed a body ought to shave every morning. He can never tell when someone's a-coming to call. Just let me get dressed up. I ain't had my picture took in years." That was fun but dear old Mr. Voegel looked too dressed up to be our hillside farmer friend so he never made the magazine.

He was allowed so much for groceries so he made daily jaunts up to the store. One Friday morning just as we finished cleaning Mr. Voegel came up to see us carrying his basket on his arm. With a great flourish he took out a pint of ice cream and a small cake, explaining all the while that he wanted to have a party with us because we had been so good to him. We dished out the ice cream and cake and were regaled with tales of when he worked for Judge Hamon. Suddenly the party was over and Mr. Voegel wrapped up the remains of the cake and took it home with him.

In these stories of his working for Judge Hamon I somehow always became Exhibit A. For as sure as you're born, it would be my arm he'd poke to show where he shot the deer, or where he winged the duck. Sister would manage to place herself where she could deftly move out of his range, but I usually found myself solidly backed up by the refrigerator. I can testify to the fact that while eighty-four years does something to weaken a person's vision, it certainly leaves his aim unpaired.



REVIEWS

The Primacy of Christ. By Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1964. Pp. xii-217. Cloth, \$4.95.

Several years ago Cardinal Suhard warned against prevalent false attitudes towards the world. The materialist, he said, wishes to possess the world without offering it to God; some Christians wish to offer themselves to God yet are indifferent to the world. The true attitude is that we must strive to possess the world in order to offer it to God. In *The Primacy of Christ*, Father Meilach shows us how this may be accomplished.

The book has a twofold thrust. The first part gives an historical and theological explanation of the Incarnation in God's plan. The second is an eloquent and compelling plan of practical spirituality with Christ as the center. The author admits that there is a great tonal difference in the two sections of his book. In effect he has written two books and both are well done.

Part 1 often speaks in the arcane accents of the specialist. The reader has the feeling that he is a U.N. observer in the no man's land between Thomists and Scotists. The author persuasively sets forth the Scotist teaching regarding Christ's role in the plan of salvation. Could the Incarnation be conditioned on the sin of Adam and thus seemingly limited in its overall purpose? Are not contemporary theologians com-

ing to see the Incarnation as the beginning and end of all creation? Father Meilach admirably synthesizes a vast body of writings on the Primacy of Christ and then just when you feel that for all its merit, it is still only the fussy speculation of the theorist, the second part of the book begins with its practical applications.

Though it should be obvious that Christ must be the focus of our spiritual life, too many Catholics have been content with ersatz spirituality. Christ's role in the liturgy, spiritual life and the apostolate is clearly outlined with many concrete applications. Only rarely does the author lapse into the beautifully phrased generalization.

The careful student will find this book and its detailed references a treasure trove in understanding the mission of Christ in the world. The concerned Catholic will begin to see all the aspects of his life permeated by the presence of Christ as in the story of the two boys from the basque country who learned that Christ was present even in their game "as the ball sped toward the brick red goal."

— John E. Corrigan

The Church Tomorrow. By George H. Tavard, A. A. New York: Herder and Herder, 1965. Pp. 190. Cloth, \$3.95.

This volume is a series of ten chapters some of which appeared in

various publications and were written before and during the present Vatican Council. The author proposes suggestions for the renewal of the Church in contemporary life. Some ideas, for example, the vernacular in the liturgy, have been implemented since the article was written. But most suggestions remain to be considered and to be fulfilled. Perhaps some Catholics may not agree with all specific details but nearly all will concede the need for change and development of theology and the apostolate in the Church.



The most provocative chapter for this reviewer is that dealing with the "Reform of the Religious Life through the Liturgy." Fr. Tavard would find the liturgy as the source for the renewal of religious life in all its aspects; whatever way it may be specified there is need for a re-assessment of religious life, so that the Church may be renewed and may in turn renew all mankind. The author rightly points to the past to show that when crises arose in the Church the religious communities that confronted them and adapted to conditions prospered, while those that had flourished but would not change became simply an historical remnant. The Church vibrates with the life of Christ meant for all times and for all society. The Church must be renewed for this age.

The blueprint for renewal is not always simple; in execution mistakes will be made. But renewal must come, for the sake of the Church, for mankind, and for the good of the religious body as an order, a

congregation, a society or in any other form. Such an attitude of need for change is not disloyal to community but is the fulfillment of what the founder would do if he were living today — and most founders would probably be far more radical (in the good sense) than most of their spiritual progeny. Just recently a well known Jesuit spoke of the "holy daring" of St. Pius X in permitting the Society of the Atonement to enter the Church as a religious community in 1909. And it was more than human prudence that guided Fr. Paul Francis, S. A. in his vocation of Christian Unity.

This is the best of Fr. Tavard's books. This is so not simply because it appeals to the reviewer but because it has the greatest potential for good. It is not merely informative, as his other works are, but it is intended to stimulate, to move to action.

Perhaps I am misinformed but I have the feeling that the religious in the Church have not had the impact on the Council that they should have had. My point has nothing to do with privileges of religious, relations with bishops etc.; it is that religious, who have usually been the vanguard in promoting the welfare of the Church in the past, might perhaps do so much more at the present time.

It seems that religious life should be fully alive to the needs of the times and the apostolate; there should be an adaption, especially in the United States, of customs and practices that no longer fulfill their original purpose.

There are two chapters on Unity: "Ecumenical Dimension" and "Two Faces of Unity," both of which are enlightening. The final chapter deals with the missionary church. There must be a new concept of the Church's activity as missionary in character. This does not mean she ought to abandon her role of bringing the gospel to all parts of the earth, but that she must realize a-

new her role as witness to Christ in and to the world. The book is well worth reading and prayerful pondering as a stimulating guide to the action now demanded of us.

— Titus Cranny, S. A.

How to Read Saint Paul. By François Amiot, S. S. trans. Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1964. Pp. 120. Cloth, \$2.95.

A tiny book, Father Amiot's study is yet packed with valuable information. St. Paul's lively temperament, he remarks, led the Apostle to love hyperbole and paradox. Unless the reader of his epistles appreciates this Semitic mode of expression, he will find it hard to grasp, for instance, the thought that, to redeem us, Christ "became object of a curse" (Gal. 3:13), sin personified, as it were (see pp. 21-22). Treating St. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith, the author reminds us that for St. Paul faith is not a merely intellectual assent but the Christian's "total and irrevocable gift of his person" to Christ (p. 63).

These are only two of Father Amiot's rich glimpses into the Apostle's style, teaching, and spirituality. Still, I cannot withhold some reservations. Because of Christ's death, redeemed mankind need not be burdened with the Mosaic law, the author tells us as do others. Yet, Christ came to free us from the constraint of all law, to lead us to that summit where we no longer need the threatening imperative: "Thou shalt not," where the power of the Spirit impels us to spontaneous obedience, to loving conformity with God.

Again, Father Amiot speaks of the proudful observance of the Law by numerous Jews, but the Apostle tells of their "unenlightened zeal for God" (Rom. 10:2). One would also wish that the author had given the mystery of Israel the significant place it holds in St. Paul's theology.

These few criticisms notwithstanding,

this is an excellent book, competently translated. I hope it will be read and enjoyed by many.

— Monsignor John M. Oesterreichs

Saint Bernadette. By Leon Cristiani, trans. Patrick O'Shaughnessy, C.S.B. New York: Alba House, 1965. Pp. 181. Cloth, \$2.50.

"I have not chosen the strong, but I have chosen the weak and the humble of heart to confound the strong." Msgr. Cristiani adroitly sketches the life of this humble village girl in these words of Christ. In bringing Bernadette's life to us, the author tries to show us "... true history, the very little story, ... of a girl resembling the other small girls of her time and country, perhaps less wise and fortunate than most of the others" (p. 19). Basically, then, Msgr. Cristiani gives us an historical account, stripping away the barnacles of myth, yet weaving a certain devotional thread through his treatment. Characteristic of his view of St. Bernadette is his conviction that her sanctity rests not so much on the apparitions of Mary Immaculate but rather on her practice of heroic virtue.

In contrast to other biographies of Bernadette, the author focuses the reader's attention on her virtuous state during and after the apparitions. He presents the apparitions in a simple and direct manner, keeping to their main import and their surrounding facts. He also places the apparitions against the background of the incredulous and rationalistic times in which Bernadette lived. With this approach the author presents us with a new insight into the mystery of Lourdes.

Because of the many controversies concerning St. Bernadette and Lourdes, Msgr. Cristiani should have documented his sources. This would give greater weight to an already forceful account.

— Lionel Bergman, O.F.M.

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