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### COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

This month's cover, drawn by Sister Mary Constance, O.S.F., of St. Catherine's School, Pelham, N. Y., captures symbolically the message recently given to all Franciscans by Pope Paul VI, during his visit to their Chapter in Assisi: "Christ must be the center of all Franciscan Renewal." The illustrations for this issue were drawn by Father Francis X. Miles, O.F.M., of St. Bonaventure University's theology department.

# the CORD

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## Light from a Lamp



It is oddly paradoxical that, in an age when Protestant theologians are producing some fine marian theology, the Blessed Virgin should be all but forgotten in certain Roman Catholic quarters. It cannot be denied, of course, that the devotion of some Roman Catholics to our Lady has sometimes bordered on the superstitious and the idolatrous; yet we suspect that there is some application here of the old maxim, "Corruptio optimi pessima"; we

think that the Virgin Mary is so central to Catholic life and teaching that serious thought should be given to (1) her true role in God's plan, and (2) concrete means of ensuring continued,, solid Catholic devotion to her.

Mary does matter. She is the Mother of God, the Mother of the Church, and our foremost patron in heaven. In our day of Christian renewal, many tend to forget that through her God set about his goal of renewing all things. In our day of "incarnational spirituality," we forget that but for her there would have been no Incarnation. In our day of "involvement," we fail, at times, to bear in mind that it was through Mary that God "became involved" in the bloody and glorious business of saving mankind and leading the world to its consummation in his own Son.

In clarifying our understanding of Mary's place in our lives, we might meditate on the striking comparison drawn by Pope Paul in his sermon at the parish church of Castelgandolfo three years ago: "We must not separate devotion to Mary from that which we have to pay to her divine Son... It would otherwise be like wanting to look at a lamp without paying any attention to the light that it brings with it."

"The lamp is beautiful if it has light," Pope Paul continues; "and Mary's light is Christ, whom she bore and generated for us." This month we celebrate the feast of Christ the King. Some people have tried to demythologize the mystery commemorated on this feast, but until they succeed in furnishing another title for One who is our Lord, our Lawgiver, and our Judge, we must reject their attempts as futile. And if Mary is the lamp who radiates Christ, we must likewise reject as futile centain attempts which have been made to minimize devotion to her. The thoughts are not new; but they bear repeating and serious consideration.

Fr. Michael D. Meilach, ofm

# Gospel Simplicity

Some Suggestions for the Updating of the Franciscan Order through an Analysis of Its Origins

Bertin Miller, O. F. M.

The appropriate renewal of religious life involves two simultaneous processes: First, a continuous return to the sources of all Christianity and to the original insipration behind a given community; second, an adjustment of the community to the changed conditions of the times.<sup>1</sup>

The Vatican II Document on Religious Life then delineates what the Fathers had in mind about renewal for religious communities:

Since the fundamental norm of the religious life is a following of Christ as proposed by the Gospel, such is to be regarded by all communities as their supreme law. It serves the best interests of the Church for communities to have their own special character and purpose. Therefore loyal recognition and safekeeping should be accorded to the spirit of founders, as also to all the particular goals and wholesome traditions which constitute the heritage of each community.2

Two areas to be considered in religious renewal are scripture and the spirit of the founders. In the renewal of Franciscan life we must search the scriptural bases and Saint Francis' particular character and spirit which stamped the mark of distinction on the Order of Friars Minor. What particular and distinctive way of life can be gleaned from the Rule of 1223?

The Rule and life of the Friars Minor is this: namely, to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, by living in obedience, without property, and in chastity.<sup>3</sup>

In the first sentence of the Rule approved by Pope Honorius III it is apparent that Francis' founding vision was a scriptural one: the gospel. This founding vision, Francis testifies, was inspired by God: "There was no one to tell me what I should do; but the Most High himself made it clear to me that I must live the life of the gospel." What appears to be distinctive

<sup>1</sup> Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life, §2.

<sup>2</sup> lbid

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> B. Fahy and Placid Hermann, O.F.M. (eds.), The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1963), 31.

about Francis' spirit is the simple and literal interpretation of the gospel life to be applied to all who would follow Francis as Minor Friars. Following this inspiration from God, Francis takes the words of the gospel as his rule of life:

The Rule and life of the friars is to live in obedience, in chastity and without property, following the teaching and the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ who says, "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me" (Mt. 19: 21); and, "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mt. 16:24). Elsewhere he says, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:26). "And everyone who has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting" (Mt. 19:29).4

This is more evident in the Rule of 1221 wherein we find each chapter built around one or several scriptural passages. And this same Rule of 1221 was superseded by a second rule of 1223 only because

the first Rule did not meet the more precise demands of the scholar and the law. The abbreviated precision of the Rule of 1223 seen in the light of the Rule of 1221 still retains its specific characteristic of literal simplicity even though many of the scriptural references have been deleted.

The basic question of this essay is this: Has the Franciscan Order retained the spirit of its founder. Saint Francis? Do we still rejoice in the literal simplicity of a gospel life as envisioned by our Father Francis and inspired by the Most High? If over two hundred pages of modifying and complicating constitutions are to speak for themselves, they would say that we do not. But they would say just as quickly that their reason for existence is the complexity of the world and the number of those who would follow Francis. Is this a valid reason: complexity? Modifying influences?

The modifying influences on the vision of Saint Francis were evident even at the very time when the Saint first requested verbal approval for his little band. Pope Innocent, fearful that Saint Francis' vision was not practical enough to be lived as a rule of life, and influenced by caution prompted by the existence of the heretical band of Waldenses at that time, tried

to persuade Francis to join an established Order or at least follow a way of life already tried and proven for centuries. But Francis pleaded that he was not called by God to found an order of monks but was called by our Lord himself to repair the crumbling Church of Christ by a distinct way of life shown to him by the Lord simply living the gospel life literally. A sceptical pope granted hesitant approval to be tested by time. The date on which Francis received this approval was April 16. 1209. During the next twelve years, the band of twelve grew in numbers. Twice a year they came together in general chapters. There they discussed problems and adopted solutions. Some of these solutions became additions to the first primitive Rule of 1209. They are found in the revisions of 1221, and are finally seen in the Rule of 1223.

But even before the 1221 revision of the Rule, contradictory innovations appeared in the form of certain constitutions initiated by the two Vicars, Matthew of Narni and Gregory of Naples. This matter caused Francis to hasten from the Orient to salvage his threatened Order and Rule.

The needs of the growing Brotherhood and the necessity to forestall any further revisions of his Rule by contradictory innovators caused Francis, with the help of God and his band of friars, to set down a more precise rule, the Rule of 1221, to guide the growing band. These modifications were approved

by the founder seemingly without any real threat to his original spirit found in the Rule of 1209.

But another source of modifying influence is found after Francis handed control of the Order over to his Vicar, Elias. Many contradictory statements and legends may be found concerning the character of Saint Francis' Vicar during his last years on earth. Elias, the second Minister General, seems to have been a turbulent figure who was questionable in his motives and was found guilty of sinful independence in the final stages of his proud life. Nevertheless, Elias influenced the Order deeply.

Elias modified directly and indirectly the spirit of the literal simplicity of Saint Francis. Directly he influenced a very fundamental modification concerning how the friars would live in common. Elias, the visionary of order and centralization of power, established large monasteries wherein the friars would live, pray, work, and study. This was approved by the Papacy.

At this point there is a possible area of further investigation. Was the relationship of Elias and the Papacy one of friendship only? Granted that Elias was personable to many within and without the Order, could it not have been the case that the ecclesiastical authorities might have found Elias a welcome friend insofar as they could use him to lessen the likelihood of the Order of Francis going astray — i. e., protect the Order by cultivating monastic

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

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trends within its ranks? (Remember that the Papacy was apprehensive about establishing a new order unstructured in the familiar mores).

Already the literal simplicity of the Rule was contradicted in essence, i. e., in the ideal that the friars possess nothing themselves or in common:

The friars are to appropriate nothing for themselves, neither a house, nor a place, nor anything else. As strangers and pilgrims (1 Pet. 2:11) in this world, who serve God in poverty and humility, they should beg alms trustingly. And there is no reason why they should be ashamed, because God made himself poor for us in this world.

This is the pinnacle of the most exalted poverty, and it is this, my dearest brothers, that has made you heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven, poor in temporal things, but rich in virtue. This should be your portion, because it leads to the land of the living. And to this poverty, my beloved brothers, you must cling with all your heart, and wish never to have anything else under heaven, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup>

According to Francis' literal interpretation of the gospel, he should have no place whereon to lay his head, and he should wander from place to place serving the people. But indirectly Elias and

his band of supporters had modified this simple spirit, and even the counter-movement against Elias' group accepted the established violation of the sixth chapter as the only practical way of life.

Thus points of indistinguishable similarity between the established Orders of Monks and the infant Friars' Order began to show. The monks possessed their property in common. The friars claimed that they did not possess in common, but they lived according to "Quo elongati," the papal Bull of 1230.

With regard to the question of poverty, it was stated that the Friars could possess nothing at all, neither personally nor as a community; however, they had the use of household furnishings, books, and necessary residences. The property right of immovable goods remained with the donors, and the alienation of movable goods is invalid without the express authorization of the cardinal protector.6

In this Bull, moreover, the Pope and the leaders of the Order concurred that the Testament of Saint Francis had no binding force, "since Francis, considered in himself, had no power to make laws." Thus the prohibition of our founder concerning laws and interpretation of the Rule could be safely disregarded, and the literal simplicity of the gospel life was bent and modified into a complexity that rivals that of the Rule of

Benedict, with a resulting loss of the spirit of our founder.

Bonaventure, saint, scholar, and Doctor, became the second founder of the Franciscan Order when he founded anew, not the Order founded by Saint Francis, but an order modified by ecclesiastical privileges and dispensations and recreated in the Elias mold and counter-reformed by men like Saint Anthony and all the other renovators and modifiers after Francis. Bonaventure did not continue the spirit of literal simplicity of the gospel life established by Francis. The Order that has evolved into the triplet of today actually used Saint Francis as the model of life in founding a new Order. It seems apparent that the spirit of each renovator has left essentially deeper modifying marks of influence on Franciscan living than has the influence of our father Francis. Why today the tremendous struggle to find a distinct Franciscan spirit? Why the problems with integrating the active and contemplative life (terms that are not Franciscan but monastic)? Why the problem of bringing our Order up to the expectations of Mother Church as set forth by Vatican II? Why the difficulties as to the role of obedience to local Ordinaries versus religious exemption? These are problems belonging to an Order foreign to the literal and simple gospel life.

Saint Francis pursued a course of service and love of Mother Church and Christ uncomplicated by human legalism and spirited simply by the life of Christ, the



lover and servant of mankind. Those who would follow Francis were expected to know and understand this Christian life and follow it literally in its love and service. Their external identity was seen in their lack of possessions and poor appearance. The Rule of 1223 in the fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters further emphasized poverty in possessions, specifically in money.

The question to be asked is this: Was Saint Francis' theory and way of life beyond the grasp of ordinary men? We must be very careful in attempting to formulate an answer. If we say "yes," we run the risk of saying that Christ's example was too ideal and attainable only by a select few. If we say "no," Christ's example is not beyond the grasp of those who would dedicate their lives to him. But then we must go on to ask, Is the present structure called the Franciscan Order the literally simple gospel life that Francis founded? Perhaps, but if anyone sought to live the gospel literally, would he adopt the Franciscan

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> H. Holzapfel, O.F.M., The History of the Franciscan Order (Teutopolis, Ill.: St. Joseph's Seminary, 1948), 19.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

life as his rule of literal gospel living? Would Francis recognize this simple, literal gospel life in his Order today?

I wonder. Suppose we dare to surmise how a literally simple gospel life would be led today according to the pattern drawn up by Saint Francis. Would it be practical and feasible, or would it be considered too idealistic because of accepted structures and traditions?

If our life were like the literal and simple gospel life, this author would envision the candidate prepared in a seminary on the secondary level in which studies are taken in common with other students. Residence would be in a friary wherein the Franciscan life is taught by word and example. The friar, having completed his training in this way, would be assigned to a Franciscan center. which would resemble the Portiuncula in its purpose. It would be a place where the friars could congregate for the spiritual and fraternal revitalization which Saint Francis so often encouraged. At this place the friars would pray. recreate, and confer in common. Each of these friars' centers would have a local superior whose function would be to encourage, advise, and support the friars in their Franciscan and spiritual life.

In our province, because of its size and geographical extent, five or six such centers would seem to be necessary. Each center would accommodate over a hundred

friars. These centers would be the only "houses" or friaries in the province and the only guardianates. From these friaries the friars would go out into the world and diocese, home and abroad, to preach the gospel the way they think would best please our Lord God and follow in his footsteps in poverty.

Simply put, this would mean that each individual would respond to the call of Christ through Francis to preach the gospel life by word and example. Each would assess his proper talents and Godgiven gifts and then, in the spirit of the first disciples of Christ, use them as he saw fit before God, applying himself to the apostolic needs to which he is drawn with the blessing of Obedience. Francis himself gave this advice to Brother Leo when he wrote:

As a mother to her child, I speak to you, my son. In this one word, this one piece of advice, I want to sum up all that we said on our journey, and, in case hereafter you still find it necessary to come to me for advice, I want to say this to you: In whatever way you think you will best please our Lord God and follow in his footsteps and in poverty, take that way with the Lord God's blessing and my obedience. And if you find it necessary for your peace of soul or your own consolation and you want to come to me, Leo, then come.8

This statement of Francis seems to capture the whole spirit of the

Franciscan vocation as God had inspired Francis to live and lead others to live: "In whatever way you think you will best please our Lord God and follow in his footsteps and in poverty, take that way with the Lord God's blessing and my obedience. And if you find it necessary for your peace of soul, or your own consolation, and you want to come to me, Leo, then come."

The friars would go out after assessing the talents and abilities as confirmed by the Minister Provincial personally or through his local Guardian. These men would go forth into the world to preach. to teach, to assist pastors and bishops according to the needs of time and place, and according to the call God has placed in their individual hearts and has supported by his gifts and grace. The friars would be under obedience to the Ordinary of the place in which they labor, and there would be no privilege of exemption. The only clause or condition would be that the Ordinary respect the relationship the friar owes to his own superiors, and his right to return to a Franciscan Center as spiritual and Franciscan needs dictate.

The friars, having donated their time and their talents to the needs of the bishops, would live where they work, but would not assume administrative roles unless special necessities arose and their own superiors allowed it. Therefore no "Franciscan" parishes, high schools, or other institutions would be found.

When they are no longer needed in a particular apostolate, the friars should withdraw easily and look for places that do have a need. They should live on the salary, room and board provided as wages for their labor. No labor no wages. They should send back the abundance to their Centers to provide for the sick and retired friars according to the sixth chapter of the Rule of 1223. The friars should return to their Centers at least once a year for a period needed to replenish worn spirits with the grace of God and the encouragement of the Fraternity. No specific time need be legislated as a general norm.

What should be noted in the above is this: that the individual friar will work in accord with his talent and training. He will be responsible to the Ordinary of the territory as a cleric; he will be responsible to himself for his support; he will be responsible to the Fraternity for his behavior and loyalty. He will be unique in his vocation, hardly distinguishable in his position. His garb will reflect the status of the common man, and by his example people will know that he is a follower of Christ.

If a friar were to fail to live up to the trust placed in him, he would be recalled to discipline at the Friar Center, and if he turned out to be persistent in his error, he would be discharged from the Fraternity without delay before his obstinacy became an obstacle to the perfection and growth of his Fraternity.

<sup>8</sup> Fahy and Hermann, 118-19.

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When a friar had exhausted himself in the work of the apostolate, he would return to his Center to retire among his contemporaries and assume labor according to his lessened capacities.

The life of the friar would have to be one of individuality, simplicity, and humility. Ambition for power and position would not be part of his life. Service and love would be the Rule as Christ taught and lived. His possessions would be like Christ's, the barest essentials dependent upon his work. The abundance earned by his labors would be the support of his brothers at home, and his work would concern the needs, the real needs, of the Church.

Such a life evidently demands a maximum of responsible maturity because it is led, for the most part, under the watchful eye of Christ and the guiding inspiration of the Paraclete. The Guardian of the Fraternity would have to rely upon the good will of each individual who assumed the Franciscan rule of life, just as Christ relied upon the good will of his early disciples to found and spread his kingdom. Thus the Order

would comply with Francis' wish that its members simply follow the gospel life literally.

There are many areas that could be expanded in this brief treatise on the life of literal simplicity, but the gospel itself would constitute the additional material. There are many risks involved in this way of life, but no more than those assumed by those who set out to follow Christ during his life on earth. The greatest risk would be that entailed in defying a tradition that has over fifteen hundred years of tried existence. Francis tried to resist that tradition in his day, but he seems to have been overcome by his immediate followers. Can Vatican II give the Franciscan way of life the impetus it needs to become the literal and simple gospel life that the Poor Man of Umbria so much loved and imitated?

Let us pray that such ideas and ideals as have been presented here may inspire men to find a practical synthesis of all that is good and Franciscan in the Order now and in the original spirit of Saint Francis.

## The Spirit of Francis and Renewal

Scott Seethaler, O. F. M. Cap.

Change in the Church today necessarily affects every type of life within the structure of the Church, Religious in general, and the Franciscan family in particular have found the need to reconsider their role in the Church today. When a person takes a long, serious look at himself this usually involves some moments of fear and uncertainty. With the call for the renewal of our Franciscan way of life, we are also experiencing moments of uncertainty. One guideline that the Council Fathers have given to religious orders in their attempt to update, is that they must sincerely try to understand the mind of their founder and to maintain always that distinctive spirit he has passed on to his community.

## The Legacy of Francis

There is real value for us Franciscans in looking to the life of Saint Francis in this time of change in the Order. For in many ways we can see history repeating itself. The last few years of Francis' life were marked by pain, doubt, darkness, and then finally the calm after the storm. They were marked with the struggle between the idealists and the pragmatists. It seemed a time when

Francis' whole dream was crumpling about him, but in time the struggle showed itself to be a necessary adaption needed for vitality. And on the very human, the very personal level, it was a time of great suffering for Francis, suffering that had a purifying effect.

After handing over the leader-ship of the Order to others, Francis retreats to Mt. Alverno and spends a long winter in which nature itself seems to reflect the agony he is going through. He feels utterly alone. This combined with the great physical torments that he is suffering leads him to the brink of despair. But the Lord's grace is sufficient, and slowly he finds the peace of mind he enjoyed in the early days of the Order. One by one he answers the questions that haunt him.

Francis time and again faced the problem of adaption. He recognized the very human need for security and stability, yet knew well that when these needs are overemphasized they can produce stagnation and rigidity. It would have been so easy for him to settle his brothers in large houses, but then he would have had to protect them with guards and a giant wall. His friars were to be like the Lord's disciples, preaching

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the good news. He never wanted his brothers to have a special mission in the Church. He said he wasn't called to fight the heretics. or reform and defend anything in the Holy Church. The Lord revealed to him how he should live; after the manner of the Holy Gospels. To live, yes simply to live, but to live the life of Christ by following him in humility and poverty. Not worrying about ownership, power, or prestige. Never concerned whether the Church noticed and praised his work. "I know Christ poor and crucified, that is enough for me."

Yet Francis answered a serious need of the Church at his time. He answered it with a mobile and flexible brotherhood. The monastic rule and its tight organization couldn't be applied to his way of life without stifling it. To live the authentic life of Christ might never produce a powerful order, but his brothers would be able to follow the Lord, never setting limits on their search for Christ. And the Spirit of the Lord could breathe in them as he pleased.

The brothers of Francis would be like the anawim of the Old Testament, poor but joyful, suffering and bearing all for love of God. Never bringing attention to themselves, but decreasing so that Christ could increase in them. Willing to be moved and changed at the Lord's wish. Always sensitive to the will of God whether expressed through their ministers, the Church of their fellow brothers. Never owning enough to complain when asked to move. Never

settled so comfortably that they lost contact with the people. They took the good points of the Humiliati and the Waldenses, and won the people's hearts.

This is the heritage that Francis left his Order. A revolution in an age of change. Answering the call of Christ for someone to prove that the gospel life could be lived. The poor men of Assisi, how could the Lord not bless them? They depended completely on him.

## The Order Today

The Order today is being questioned from all sides. The perceptive friar finds himself faced with the question of the ideals vs. the practical adaption in the modern world. He sees friars leaving, and the number of vocations dwindling. He finds many areas of uneasiness, and often feels uncertain about the direction in which the Order is heading. This friar, I feel, can find the questions that he is asking himself answered in the life of Francis.

We have seen that for Francis, life remained vital and real as long as it was open to the call of God. Such a thought can soothe the troubled hearts of the friars today, because we will learn that our impatience can sometimes spring from a neglect of listening to the Spirit of the Lord. Many of the problems that we face, must be closely analyzed to see if there are any traces of pride and de-

sire to be like the other Orders Francis wanted us to be radically different, and if we lose all of our differences, then what is the reason for our existence? Yet our difference is not a uniqueness but rather a recapturing of the spirit of the anawim.

Is the spirit of the gospel still a vital part of our life? Do we still depend on the Lord, or has our need for security and stability made us rigid? The Vatican Council called the Church a pilgrim Church, a Church on the move. Franciscans should be happy to be in the ranks of the pilgrims; they should feel right at home. The danger of living in an affluent society is the chance of becoming attached to the little comforts of life. Yet this was Francis' greatest fear. Once the friars grow attached to anything, be it books, land or benefices, they lose their flexibility, they become sluggish and insensitive to the call of God.

Christ is again calling on someone to prove that the gospel life can be lived. Are we Franciscans willing to answer the call today as our namesake did in the thirteenth century? This is the question that we friars must ask ourselves as we face renewal. Once we answer it, we won't allow ourselves to get confused about changing our Constitutions, or reconsidering our apostolates.

Our Constitutions are meant to supply us with the norms for living a vital, meaningful life in the

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Church. They are to be rich in the spirit of Francis, yet understanding the problems of the Church today. We know that our Order was meant to be flexible and mobile. So if the legislation of our Constitutions becomes burdensome with minute details we are stifling ourselves. This is particularly true of an Order that is international, containing many cultures, and attempting to render many services in the Church. If we get bogged down in legalism,



then God and man will no longer seem to speak the same language. Legalism has the tendency to make a man small-minded, introverted; and this would be a tragedy in a world that cries out for help.

Of all the problems of renewal facing the religious orders, the problem of reconsidering their apostolates is mentioned most often. This is perhaps due to the challenge that the world is giving to religious orders. "Come out of your monasteries, and help the people in their struggle to find God." Often this problem is oversimplified and exaggerated; but no one can deny that it is a real problem. Fortunately, the Franciscan Order does not have one particular work or mission in the Church. For if we found that this work was no longer necessary, we would experience a real crisis. Yet we Franciscans must take a careful look at the work we do. Is it harmful to a spirit of detachment? Is the vitality of our spiritual life, our prayer life in danger? Some may feel that these questions are irrelevant, that a friar's work is his prayer life. Here we can have a real tragedy. A man may feel that he is pleasing God with all the work he does, yet he can suffer from an ex opere operato spirituality in which his religious life is reduced to the bare minimum. All the good work that a friar may do will not necessarily bring him closer to God. For he may in reality be hiding behind his work and never really communicating with his God.

The Achilles' heel of the Franciscan Order will be its approach to serving the poor. Francis wanted his Order to take care of the poor. The poor in Francis' day were the lepers. And although it took a great effort for Francis to overcome his physical repulsion for them, he nevertheless recognized Christ in them. Are we Franciscans committed to the poor of our time? As a matter of fact a large percentage of the poor of our country are the Negroes. We must take seriously our obligation to serve these people. The Franciscan

should be among the leaders in the cause of social justice and human rights. Granted that our society has hundreds of organizations to take care of today's poor, still, are we giving them the personal love and service that has been characteristic of our Order in the past? Not bringing attention to ourselves, but humbly serving the needs of the poor. Like the anawim, we will be willing to serve wherever the Church needs us.

#### Conclusion

There are no simple solutions for our problems as we face renewal. But it will help if we take time out to consider what is the basis of our desire to change. As Francis did, so I honestly think that there is a need for us to suffer, in the very positive sense of the word. Our Lord demands of us a purification of our life so that

we reject anything that does not lead us straight to him. If there is darkness experienced, and we sincerely continue in our effort, we will find the peace of Francis. Idealistic? For only a few? No; each of us must be honest in our endeavor to lead the Order along the road to sanctity. And this becomes imperative when we have such a loose framework guiding us. The friars cannot fall back on the Franciscan rule of life to enable them to breeze through life. Our rule of life is simply the gospel; and the gospel demands that we strive for sanctity.

If we make these thoughts the basis of our attempt at renewal. then the Franciscan Order will retain the inner dynamism which was so characteristic of Francis. It will manifest to the world a dynamism that receives its force from love - love of God and love of God's people.

## THE JADSET SYSTEMS

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## "Jesus"

## Richard Poillucci

And there is a rock garden on that green hill where all the birds are searching full of flowers and stones and water cutting teeth in dirt, lemon yellow rocks melting in the fury of existence grubs and grubs beneath each stone and twig and leaf and beetles by the numbers eating leaves and thorns in rose's blood and there is a rock garden on that green hill and I am that green hill.

## "Transitus"

Hugoline Sabatino, O.F.M.

lark voices
bleeding wounds
from charismatic light beams
Brothers Leo and Jacoba
a family together
as only a death bed
can bind
candle light
of unending October third evenings
feet in dust —
and in the clouds
a slow brown whirlwind
stealing our souls

# The Liturgy

## **Wellspring of Franciscan Love**

Pius Teixeira, O. F. M. Cap.

Shortly after his coronation, Pope Saint Pius X issued a Motu Proprio on Sacred Music in Church

in which Our people assemble for the one purpose of acquiring that spirit [the true Christian spirit] from its first and indispensable source, namely, their own active participation in the sacred mysteries and in the solemn public prayer of the Church.

These only now famous words are over sixty-three years old.

## I. The True Christian Spirit

For the religious, who is called to be an exemplary Christian, the liturgy is even more indispensable. No religious can ever fulfill his purpose without being immersed in the spirit of the liturgy. The Church's sacramental life is the source of all her strength, and the summit grace to be full Christians, to be true religious, therefore flows from the liturgy.

In the recent past, the liturgy and the religious life had become increasingly separated. Even mystics and devout Catholics began to neglect the liturgy. They sought a more direct contact with God without vague symbolism. We can

understand this if we realize the mystics' consciousness of Christ acting compared to the many embellishments that had then alienated the Christian laity from the liturgy — especially the Mass.

Quietism also aided the divorce. To combat this heresy theologians, notably an Italian Jesuit, Scaramelli, began to split spirituality into the unnatural dichotomy of ascetical and mystical theology. The reason for this was to isolate mysticism somewhere on the nebulous periphery of Christian perfection. Religious were no longer to be full Christians, but ascetics or mystics! Imagine how Christ's action in his Community was obscured by this unfortunate development.

But the liturgy and religious life belong inseparably together. To live an exemplary Christian life is impossible without involvement and identification with the central act of Christ's Church. The blunt truth is that the degree to which we possess the Holy Spirit — the degree to which we are more or less one with the will of Christ — is the degree to which we are devoted to the Church. Saint Paul sums up the will of Christ in the following words: "Christ showed

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love to the Church when he gave himself up on its behalf" (Eph. 5:25-27). We must follow this example.

Neither liturgy nor religious life is a game. They are living witnesses today of the presence of the kingdom of God. They are the union of the heavenly and pilgrim Jerusalem. They are mainsprings of the divine plan. No one can touch them without touching the essential Christian mystery of God manifesting himself in history.

#### II. Come, Lord Jesus!

"There are not two liturgies, any more than there are two Churches." The liturgy of the earthly people of God is essentially the same as that of its heavenly counterpart. Our liturgy is a presence through time of the timeless self-giving of the Son of God climaxed in the Incarnation. The liturgy of the pilgrim Church is the heavenly sacrifice of praise sung on earth.

Christ forever loved the Father. He therefore instituted the Church to manifest with him his love for the Father and to lead all things into the kingdom of his Father. The Church truly manifests her nature in the liturgy, showing herself to be Christ's everlasting sacrifice of praise to the Father. It is here that the children of God respond to their baptismal conse-

cration to make themselves a "living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1). And the whole purpose of sacrifice is the union of God and man by man's open acceptance of God's transcendent Reality and his own dependence.

In the liturgy the Church confesses with Christ her dedication to the Father. She acts as one completely given over to God and the things of God, as realizing already on this earth an eschatological preoccupation with the glorification of the Father. The witness of foretasting the glory of Christ is the core of liturgy.

Oneness with the praise of the heavenly Jerusalem is also seen in the very congregation of the people of God. Joined with the heavenly Church, Christians on earth express their common devotion to God in personal freedom. We on earth who "remain in communion with one another in mutual charity and in one praise of the most holy Trinity... are... partaking in a foretaste of the liturgy of consummate glory."

All this is true whether a Pope, bishop, poor pastor, or layman is praising in love. Where do religious fit in? Addressing religious nuns in Milan, the Archbishop — now Paul VI —once referred to them as "the Church in her most genuine, most authentic, most complete, and most vibrant expression."

Religious, as vibrant expressions of the Church, are special living sacrifices of Christ. By their vows in union with the holocaust of their profession Mass, they have given themselves over with him in martyrdom. This concept dates back to early Christianity when the martyr was the epitome of Christian perfection in the Church, a witness of complete mystical transformation into Christ. After the persecutions ended, martyrdom was still the only complete sanctity. Religious life sprung, then, from the desire to accomplish an unbloody martyrdom. Religious were to become, like the Church, a sign of the sacrificial love of Christ.

Not the extension of himself but rather the density of his involvement in the life of Christ's Church is what matters to the religious. He signifies the primacy of the divine, an essential other-worldliness in this world. Anticipating the Last Things and the kingdom to come, he cries, "God is my life!" And the holy witness of his life, weak human life, becomes a sign of hope in the power of the Paschal Spirit to make "all things new" (Apoc. 21:5). He is a prophecy and reality of the resurrected life.4

"Come, Lord Jesus!" (Apoc. 22: 20) is the call of the religious united to the life of the Spouse. His vows are far from a flight from day-to-day commitment. By his poverty, he places his heart in his one treasure-house: Christ. By devoted chastity, he is able, like



the Apocalyptic virgins, to follow Christ wherever he goes. By his obedience, he destroys himself to be paradoxically more fully alive. The religious lives for and in the Parousia.

Religious life, as community, is pre-eminently a presence of the communal love of the blessed in heaven. It is a minor sacrament of agape. A few Christians have been called together to live their life to the full publicly. They must live in union, in a fraternal spirit impossible without Love. As such they are a sign to all — within and without their immediate community — of the peace and love to come.

The liturgy is the Whole Christ's commitment to the Father. Religious life has no meaning outside of its union with the liturgy, for it is but the exemplar of full active participation in the Paschal Mystery. "The profession of the

<sup>1</sup> I. H. Dalmais, O.P., Introduction to the Liturgy (Baltimore, 1961), 49.

<sup>2</sup> Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, §51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Pope Paul VI, "Discourse to Sisters, Feb. 11, 1961," Sisters' Formation Bulletin 10 (1963), 3; cited in Paul Hinnebusch, O.P., Religious Life: a Living Liturgy (New York, 1965), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, §44.

evangelical counsels, then, appears as a sign which can and ought to attract all the members of the Church to an effective and prompt fulfillment of the duties of their Christian vocation."<sup>5</sup>

#### III. Given for You

Christ accomplished his transitus from sarx to pneuma through submission to the Father. "In its actual content his human life becomes the religious expression of his abiding submission to the Holy Will of the Father... This is the whole content of his human life... Christ as man realizes his divine sonship in his living human form."6

Since Christ performed this act on our behalf, we have become sons of God, new creatures. Revelation is accomplished in Christ. Our High-Priest has already entered the sanctuary. Jesus is the Kyrios, dwelling in the glory of the Father. These are the Last Times; the kingdom of God is among us now. Yet Saint Paul also says that he helps "to pay off the debt which the afflictions of Christ still leave to be paid" (Col. 1:24).

The debt Saint Paul refers to is that of submission unto the salvation of men. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy assures us that "liturgy is considered as the exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ." It also adds three articles later that through the liturgy "the sanctification of men

in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as towards their goal, are most powerfully achieved" (Art. 10). The Church's liturgy is, then, the primary way to put the finishing touches to Christ's mission of renewing mankind. This is the essential Christian mystery that "the Church is his body, the completion of him who everywhere and in all things in complete" (Eph. 1:23).

The Christian, caught up in this mystery of Christ, must celebrate the liturgy. He must work for the accomplishment of Christ's mission in the world. This he does by immersing himself more fully into the liturgical act of Christ's saving submission. Through a real encounter with the Lord in his Paschal Mystery he reinforces his sonship with the Father. By acting as another Christ, he also sanctifies the world in his own life. The communal act of Christian worship is a source of continuous sanctification for the world.

ø

Every Christian shares in the Priesthood of Christ. By his share, he becomes a priest of the New Law, consecrated for man, a priest whose fullest expression is in the liturgy. But of course there are different degrees of sharing in the one priesthood. The layman, ordained priest, and bishop represent three degrees of this sharing.

Religious, called from the laity and hierarchy, have their peculiar

The work of the religious, as the major sacramental, is the perfecting of God's plan: universal salvation, cosmic consecration under Christ. He must realize that he is no static sign. Like Christ, he has been placed in the eye of the forces of Life and Death. He too has been "given for you" (Lk. 22: 19). For he has come close to the God who "sent his only-begotten Son into the world, so that we might have life through him" (1 Jn. 4:9). Christ has embraced creation forever. The religious must do likewise.

Religious strive to be especially identified with Christ. They must therefore live a life of Christian adulthood, of selflessness, of openness, of self-giving, of "beingwith," of tolerance. They must feel in the heart of their soul the words that God became man "so

that they may have life, and have it more abundantly" (Jn. 10:10). They must deny that Christianity is an addition to full human life, but affirm its meaning as the answer to the Fall, the divine return to the humanness God intended for us in the very beginning. They must love men, love and cherish their being, because it merits love as Christ proved in his Incarnation. Christ came to make men more fully men, the world more truly secular. Religious must be signs of that Church that is the sacrament of the Lover of mankind. They must love the world, for it is Christ's.

In the liturgy the religious exercises his own degree of priesthood. He praises the Father with Christ. He sanctifies the world in Christ. Praise and sanctification, his total responsibility, have become to him one reality. For what greater praise of the Father is there than uniting all to the love of Christ through his Spirit, than saving men? Dostoevsky's Zossima of The Brothers Karamazov has an insight intended originally for the Russian monk: "... there is one means of salvation, then take yourself and make yourself responsible for all men's sins ...."

## IV. My God and My All!

What then is the relation of liturgy to religious life? First of all, liturgy must be seen as the source and at the same time sum-

5 Ibid.

share in the priesthood, the essence of the Christian vocation. "Religious life, by its total consecration made to God in the Church, clearly manifests and signifies the essential nature of the Christian vocation."7 The Church, moreover, places religious consecration within the liturgical celebration to impress the religious with his role in the Church. As the liturgy is a means of dispensing the saving mystery-graces of Christ, so should the religious "be devoted to the welfare of the whole Church. Thence arises their duty of working to implant and strengthen the kingdom of Christ in souls...."8

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> E. Schillebeeckx, O.P., Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God (New York, 1963), 29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Clementinus of Vlissingen, O.F.M.Cap., On the Increase of Missionary Work in the Order (Rome, 1966), 3.

<sup>8</sup> Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, §44.

mit of the Christian life. It follows that the religious, consecrated in a special manner to perfecting his Christianity, cannot ever succeed without being preoccupied with the liturgy.

Liturgy is the mystery-presence of Christ's life-worship. It is also in its communal aspects a sign of the glory and the joyous union of the blessed praising God. Religious life is also a presence of the glorified Christ in his Church. And the religious imitates, by his consecration, the complete dedication of Christ and his saints now joined together in the joy of glory.

In the liturgy Christ's priesthood is especially exercized. Men are saved by the sacramental mystery of the transforming power of the Christ-Action. Grace is given for the salvation of many others. Specially consecrated to perfect his essential Christian character as a visible, historical sign-witness of the grace of Christ, the religious must perpetuate in his own way the divine mission. He must draw the strength and grace to renew all things in Christ from the liturgy. Then with his every act, his prayer, his ministry, his works of love, he reveals and imparts Christ.

But what, you may rightly ask, would our Father Francis say about this? We can have no doubt that Franciscan devotion is centered in the Eucharistic liturgy. At Mass Francis met the Christ who daily lowered himself into a white wafer to bring God's love to men. This tremendous humility and love of Christ won

Francis' heart and was his salvation. Celano tells us, "Every fibre of the heart of Francis was aglow with love for the sacrament of the Body of Christ, and with exceeding great admiration he marvelled at the loving condescension and the condescending love of the Lord. He considered it an unpardonable negligence not to attend Mass every day whenever possible" (II, 201).

Francis strove to be transformed into the submissive Christ by renouncing all things in most simple poverty. No one can look on the Poverello and not see the other-worldliness that made him a brilliant sign of his All. The same Francis founded his Order of "little brothers" to live in holiness and childlike freedom, afire with the presence of a heavenly reality.

The Christ in the liturgy also taught Francis an eloquent compassion for men. Francis preached by word and especially by example the gospel of metanoia, for he knew men's needs. Vitally aware of the pains of the leper, the hunger of the poor, the weakness of man, he knew Christ as the only answer and hope in man's quest for life. His desire to save as Christ saved, to be one with the salvific sacrifice of Christ, was wonderfully consummated Mount Alvernia.

Where did Francis draw his spirit? From Christ's dynamic act of love: the liturgy. Here Francis received the grace to love God and all creation as God loves. Though Francis lived seven hundred years ago, the Mass was to him a real encounter, a true commitment to love. The twentieth-century Franciscan, as a member of the sublime "mixed life" of action and contemplation, has special need for the beacon of his Father's example in these times of aggiornamento. Were Francis alive today, speaking our language of eschaton and salvation history, what a revelation he would be!

Vatican II has these closing words in article 47 of its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church:

Let all who have been called to the profession of the vows take painstaking care to persevere and excel increasingly in the vocation to which God has called them. Let their purpose be a more vigorous flowering of the Church's holiness and the greater glory of the one and undivided Trinity, which in Christ and through Christ is the fountain and the wellspring of all holiness.

They are, surely, the words of Christ and Francis addressed directly to the Franciscan religious of today.

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## **Book Reviews**

Compelled to Speak. By Cassian J. Yuhaus, C. P. Glen Rock, N. J.: Newman, 1967. Pp. 343. Cloth, \$5.95.

For his painstaking research into original sources and for his remarkable ability to synthesize the material, Fr. Yuhaus was given the 1966 Gold Medal Award in History from Gregorian Pontifical University, Rome. Even if there were no other compelling features, Compelled to Speak could be recommended as a sampler on "How to Write History." Full-treatment footnotes indicate that it is a reworked doctoral thesis, but these are undistracting and even interesting. In the text itself there is only one flaw: the sometimes sicening (sic) use of the parenthetical "sic" breaking up the flow of a quotation (p. 257 has five of these in one paragraph!). The title sounds rather triumphalistic and the title page will probably seem somewhat parochial - a centenary edition, concerning the origin and apostolate of the Passionists in America (something like an anecdotal yearbook which could be of interest only to old grads).

It is not that way at all. Triumphalism is sentenced to the prison of hard facts. There are real people involved in the difficult, and often discouraging, charge of setting up a new religious order in United States during the zenith of No-nothingism and the span of the Civil War (c. 1852-66). The men who figured most prominently — the Bishop of Pittsburgh, the General of the Passionists, the four religious who began the project, the first Superior and the outstanding missionary — are dis-

played with judicious honesty in their successes and shortcomings, jealous unselfishness and quarrelsome opinions.

The book is not an historical novel, although Fr. Yuhaus' command of language and the way in which he embodies history in believable personalities give much of the book the flow of a bestseller. The subheads, in particular, are a pleasure to read—for example: The Nuncio says "No", From Leavenworth with Candor, Showdown at the Widow Swinds, Rush to the Epistle Side, From Rome—Accelerated Confusion, An Eloquent Thorn, —Demons and Commotion in Connecticut, A Clear Call at Clarion.

There are limitations. The history covers a bare fifteen years as experienced by a handful of people founding a specific religious order for their particular apostolate in a few pockets of North America, a hundred years ago. But the crisis that developed and that called for provisional solutions was the same one that is currently challenging the whole Church — how to adapt to the demand for apostolic relevance in a changing culture and still keep the essential spirit of Christian witness.

There are consolations to history and lessons to be learned from it. Compelled to Speak is a case in both points. Progressives and conservatives locked horns long before our post-conciliar 1960's. They even used the same language, within the same patterns of persuasion. It is interesting to learn what happened, and who won, and how it worked out, and why. It is profitable to learn about it, too; sometimes it is

more profitable to take a little section of history where landmarks are familiar, personalities easy to follow, debates about adaptation adaptable to all religious orders even now. Fr. Yuhaus has written a book that candidly deals with a mini-history which has an index finger on one of the maxi-crises of today.

- Isaias Powers, C.P.

The Religion of Teilhard de Chardin. By Henri de Lubac, S. J. Trans. René Hague; New York: Desclee, 1967. Pp. 380. Cloth, \$5.95.

"...I am a little too absorbed to be able to philosophize much; but the more I look into myself the more I find myself possessed by the conviction that it is only the science of Christ running through all things, that is to say true mystical science, that really matters" (Letters from a Traveller, 83-84). It was just forty-five years ago this August 26th that Teilhard de Chardin wrote these words while on his first field trip with Pere Licent, S. J., on the way to the Ordos plateau in Western Mongolia.

Father Henri de Lubac, S. J., finds in this quote "...the very soul of [Teilhard's] soul," and "...what constitutes the essential core of his work." And so he has written this 380-page study entitled The Religion of Teilhard de Chardin — a study wherein he concentrates "on the spiritual teaching of Pere Teilhard de Chardin" (p. 15).

Among all those who set about to write on Teilhard's life and work, few come to the task as well prepared as Father de Lubac. This courteous and respectable gentleman, this thought-provoking and penetrating French Jesuit had the opportunity of reading and commenting on many of Teilhard's works that are still not easily available. For more than thirty years he shared in Teilhard's ideas either through correspondence or conversation. Teilhard asked him

for his helpful comments and criticisms and de Lubac responded in the openness and frankness which is so common to the French and so sought after by the really open and humble scholar.

De Lubac wrote this book to present Teilhard's spiritual teaching, and it is therefore more expository than interpretative. The author is in the exceptional position of being able to clear up certain areas of Teilhard's thought (better than many other scholars) because it was he who helped and advised Teilhard on so many matters — and heard Teilhard's personal explanation in so many areas. De Lubac feels that Teilhard's spiritual teaching is the necessary prolegomenon for any understanding of Teilhard's thought. In view of the expository nature of the work the author quotes profusely from Teilhard's major and minor, published and unpublished works. These quotations, which find their place in both text and notes, may seem excessive to some, but the reader should recall that de Lubac is a scholar of uncommon erudition; his strong historical bent, which served him so well in patristic studies, would naturally lead him to make ample use of citations.

Father de Lubac makes a number of important points in this study which are worth pointing out here. First, he distinguishes two "classes" of Teilhard's writings. The first class contains writings of a scientific (philosophical) nature and are developed from the data of experimental science (central to this group is The Phenomenon of Man). The second "class" is composed of writings of a mystical and religious nature, based on the data of Christian Revelation (central to this group is The Divine Milieu). The author stresses that any attempt to reconstruct Teilhard's religious thought from "Class 1" alone, must result in a mutilation and even a falsification of his work. For "Class 1" is incomplete without "Class 2". Teilhard "continually endeavored, sometimes with more success, sometimes with less, to bring the two together without confusing one with the other; and it is in fact the transition from one to the other that raises the nicest problems in interpretation" (p. 12).

In chapter II, "Nature and Grace," de Lubac raises a second important point: the interplay of the natural and supernatural forces. The reader will recall that the whole question of "l'affaire surnaturel" came about through Father de Lubac's Surnaturel, études historiques (Paris, 1946). De Lubac received an uncommon and even unexpected amount of criticism both personal and otherwise. Many claim, in fact, that he was the object of one of Pius XII's censures in Humani generis. This chapter is interesting not only because of l'affaire surnaturel, however, but also because of Eulalio R. Baltazar's Teilhard and the Supernatural, published last year by Helicon. One might read de Lubac's chapter II and then go back to all that Baltazar has to say, especially on pp. 48-49, and 73.

Lastly, Father de Lubac gives a well needed warning (in view of certain interpretations) and insight into the Point Omega question. For Teilhard, evolution is headed toward fulfillment in the now famous Point Omega, But. Point Omega does not always have the same meaning in Teilhard's writings. In point of fact it has one of three meanings: (1) Omega is a point of arrival, the climax of the world's maturation. (2) Omega is the point of encounter between the universe that has reached the limit of centration and another, transcendent Center. (3) It is this Center itself, the absolute, ultimate, self-subsisting principle, the Alpha and Omega of Sacred Scripture.

Although not enough praise can be given to Father Henri de Lubac for this excellent work, still there are one or two points which deserve

mention (if not criticism). First, this book was written in 1962 and followed, in 1964, with La prière du P. Teilhard de Chardin (English, Teilhard, the Man and His Meaning). From what the author says in this book, The Religion . . ., i. e., "our attention will be concentrated on the spiritual teaching of Pere Teilhard de Chardin. (A study of his spiritual life can be attempted only later)," it is clearly evident that he meant his works to be read in a chronological order. Yet this earlier book has appeared, here in the United States, two years after the later one.

Secondly, although René Hague deserves much credit for translating both these significant volumes, still we wish that the publishers had included in the American edition that beautiful photograph of Teilhard which appears between pp. 16 and 17 in the French edition, a photo which is not even included in the Teilhard de Chardin Album.

This book cannot be too highly praised or recommended. Anything that comes from Father de Lubac's masterful pen (and there is still much more that he wrote on Teilhard which awaits translation) is of the utmost importance to all serious Teilhardian scholars and students.

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- Romano S. Almagno, O.F.M.

The Vision of the Past. By Pierre de Chardin, S.J. Trans. J. M. Cohen; New York: Harper and Row, 1966. Pp. 285. Cloth, \$5,00.

This is the ninth book by Teilhard de Chardin published by Harper and Row. It is an English translation of the French version La Vision du Passé published in 1957 by Editions du Seuil. Like several others in the series, it is a collection of essays by Teilhard, some of which were never published by him. This particular collection includes 21 essays on various aspects of evolution, a few very short. Of course they do not exhaust Teilhard's contributions to the topic

of evolution. Evolution plays a cardinal role in most of his writings.

The essay "Hominization" written in 1923 gives the essential ideas which 15 years later Teilhard expanded into his masterwork The Phenomenon of Man. In two essays, "How the Transformist Question Presents Itself Today," and "What Should We Think of Tranformism," Teilhard explains and defends the essential ideas of evolution in terms still very relevant. If there remain any Christian intellectuals who do not see the validity of the concept of evolution, they should read these two essays, especially the second. The essay "The Natural Units of Humanity" gives a profound and original treatment of the nature of race, considered first as a biological phenomenon and then in its sublimated state in man. This essay was written (1939) just at the time when the Nazis with their emphasis on the purity of the "Aryan" race were at the height of their power. Teilhard is able to be optimistic and to see progress toward eventual amicable union of the peoples despite the dissensions of his day. For he conceived that progress toward synthesis would for a long time inevitably involve alternations of divergence and convergence. His long-range view is certainly a consoling one to bear in mind as we experience our current international troubles. The final essay in the collection. "A Defence of Orthogenesis in the Matter of Patterns of Speciation" was written only a few months before Teilhard's death. There is a poignant touch to it since in it we find Teilhard still vigorously defending his scientifically unorthodox view that the upward progress of evolution depends essentially on an inner psychic drive of life to ever greater consciousness and spontaneity.

The main value of this collection of essays is that they increase our knowledge of the development of Teilhard's ideas and consequently our understanding of them. Serious students of Teilhard will want to read them for these reasons. Novices to Teilhard's thought will find them a fairly good introduction to some of his main themes. They will find here flashes of that grand sweep of his thought which is fully revealed in The Phenomenon of Man.

- Paulinus F. Forsthoefel, S.J.

Life and Rule: A commentary on the Rule of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis. By Cajetan Esser, O.F.M. Trans, Sr. M. Honora Hau, O.S.F.; Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1967. Pp. 124. Paper, \$2.50.

This detailed, phrase by phrase commentary, liberally sprinkled with quotations from St. Francis and St. Clare, is intended to be "of assistance, not only for instructions in the novitiate where the objective is to form the spirit of the novices through a study of the Rule, but also for all religious as a companion throughout their life in such exercises as meditative reading, retreats, daily examination of conscience, discussions of the Rule and Life." It would seem to be an excellent brief introduction to the Rule. and so to fulfill the first of its aims. but its value as a "companion throughout life" for more experienced religious is questionable. Those who have read Love's Reply and Repair My House will find Life and Rule a generalized and superficial summary of the discussions contained in them. Its heavily eschatological slant may be irritating to some readers, but they should feel compensated by its emphasis on fraternity and its insistence that the profession of the Rule (community) is in some way more basic to our life than the profession of the evangelical counsels. While it neglects direct treatment of most of the particular problems facing Franciscans today (e. g., the question of owning and administering institutions) and is often repetitious and vague, it should at least

provide discussion material for Franciscans seeking to express Francis' spirit in their own era.

- Sister Cecilia Marie Andrews, SMIC

A Christian Natural Theology Based on the Thought of Alfred North Whitehead. By John B. Cobb, Jr. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966. Pp. 288. Cloth, \$6.50.

"Natural theology" has had a roller-coaster-ish sort of history. Plato's intuitions and Aristotle's demonstrations combined to impart to the mainstream of ancient thought a profound and fertile vision of things divine, or "theology." Once Christians had outgrown their initial antipathy to everything pagan, they sought avidly to incorporate this "natural" theology into their Revelation-based world-view. The Augustinian-Platonic and Thomistic-Aristotelian schools of the middle ages may have shared little else in the field of natural theology, but they were certainly in agreement regarding the right and duty of the theologian to use "reason" to interpret God's revelation about himself. Late medieval and Reformation thought introduced a reaction (foreshadowed in ancient scepticism) which questioned man's ability to reason about God and the ultimate concerns of human life. Since then there have been combinations of every degree. together with the pure positions themselves, of extreme rationalism, on the one hand; and extreme fideism, on the other.

But, while history is very pertinent indeed to our subject, it most emphatically is not the central point at issue. Nor is the subject itself a purely academic matter. On the contrary, it is one of the utmost practical importance today; if you doubt this, just pay a few moments' visit to your nearest bookstore and count the number of books on prominent display dealing with God's "death," the meaningfulness of re-

ligious language, human alienation, etc. If you insist on dismissing "natural theology" as an irrelevant, esoteric discipline, two courses are open to you: you can go along with the crowd and agree that God is indeed dead (in which case you have no real right to call yourself 'Christian'), or you can take refuge in fideism (which is to adopt an impossibly ostrich-like position- see Kai Nielsen's brilliant refutation, "Can Faith Validate God-Talk?" in New Theology No. 1 [Macmillan, 1966]. 131-49). What you cannot do is ignore the whole question and hope it will go away. It won't. Like it or not, we who have chosen to follow Christ now find ourselves in an age when we are justifiably being asked to speak articulately to others about our beliefs. In this respect, our "witness" to Jesus parallels strikingly that of the early Apologists like Lactantius and St. Justin.

But even granted that the educated Christian of our age should be able to make use of a valid philosophical framework, what system should he choose? Dr. Cobb's recommendation is, obviously, that he use Whitehead's philosophy. His reason, with which I heartily concur, is that in that philosophy we have a genuinely contemporary metaphysics which takes into account sufficient data from all fields of knowledge that contemporary man can consider relevant to a natural theology and forges these data into a sufficiently comprehensive and coherent scheme.

The major disadvantage is that Whitehead's terminology is radically new and highly technical; his metaphysics was formulated after a long period of time devoted to the intricacies of mathematical physics and formal logic. Adding to the difficulty is the fact that the older Whitehead was concerned far more with general human values than with God as an explicit object of study. The present work by Cobb, however, goes a long way toward neutralizing these problems. Although White-

headian terminology is used in a very precise way all through the book, I like to think that the ground has been broken, now, for more popular renditions of this fertile descriptive metaphysics. And the author has placed us very deeply in his debt by "entering into dialogue" with Whitehead and developing those aspects of his theology which are most in need of such development.

Were it necessary to characterize in a single phrase the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, one would have to say that it is a "philosophy of process." Indeed, it is the paradigm case of such a philosophy; readers who have been captivated by Teilhard's vision of a constantly developing universe would do well to look into Whitehead for a far more precise and radical transformation of the traditional "substance" into categories of developing process.

For this purpose - i. e., for an elementary introduction to Whitehead's patterns of thought- Cobb's book is not the place to start. He has, it is true (despite his modest disclaimers) provided a first-rate exposition of the relevant aspects of Whitehead's philosophy. But a more detailed exposition is certainly needed for one as yet unfamiliar with the categories involved. Victor Lowe's Understanding Whitehead (Johns Hopkins, 1962) is the best book yet published for this purpose, although Ivor Leclerc's Whitehead's Metaphysics (Macmillan, 1958) and A.H. Johnson's Whitehead's Theory of Reality (Dover, 1962) would be adequate introductions too.

A Christian Natural Theology is divided into seven chapters. The first simply presents the most basic aspects of Whitehead's metaphysics, according to which reality is composed of ever-new pulsations of experience closely interrelated by mutual "prehensions." The five succeeding chapters present and develop (the line between the two is always carefully indicated) Whitehead's thought on man's soul; man himself as a re-

sponsible being (ethics); God — first as the doctrine on God actually developed in Whitehead's presentations, and then in a more systematic and original way; and, finally, religion. The final chapter, "The Theological Task," may, as the author suggests, be read first; it gives the rationale of the entire book and vindicates masterfully the author's conception of natural theology.

The complex thesis of this book is one that this reviewer wants very much to make his own: Natural theology is more than ever a discipline of the utmost importance; while it is necessary to emphasize the genuinely Christian character of the version of natural theology which Christians will see fit to elaborate, I am equally certain that whatever in that discipline makes truth claims beyond the pale of the believing community, has to give a convincing justification of those claims. I emphatically agree with Cobb that Whitehead has provided an excellent set of conceptual tools for this task; and, though much more undoubtedly remains to be done in its execution, whatever work is done in the future will surely have to take into account Dr. John Cobb's extremely competent ground-

- Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M.

Trojan Horse in the City of God. By Dietrich von Hildebrand. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1967. Pp. xi-233. Cloth, \$4.95.

Trojan Horse in the City of God is a polemic against just about everyone new. Heidegger, Chardin, Dewart, Cox, Robinson, not to mention Callahan and Novak, get their lumps. "Progressive Catholics" — the votaries of these men, have lost their faith, says von Hildebrand, though he does not propose any concrete way of getting them back to true belief. Von Hildebrand sees no possibility of anything good coming out of non-thomistic philosophy from Kant to Chardin, "for most of them



are in "complete error." Such a stance is doubly unfortunate, for it not only expresses what I should regard as a heretical distrust of the power of human reason to come to truth and to a greater understanding of truth, but it also so offends the reader that the valid insights von Hildebrand has are forced into the background.

The fact that the publisher omitted the footnotes to chapters 11-17 (p. 231) hurts the book immeasurably, for these notes contain references which would serve to prove or disprove von Hildebrand's allegations. No one, certainly, should borrow his ideas on any of the contemporary thinkers from what von Hildebrand says about them.

Of value in the work are von Hildebrand's insistence that liturgical reform should never lose sight of the human need for beauty and mystery: his warning against two-way dialogue with those who have no intention of seeking the truth but only of using dialogue as a political measure; his criticism of the cult of honesty and sincerity at the expense of charity and human decency and the consequent glorification of shamelessness as a virtue. His final summary, reproduced on the flaps of the book, in which he insists that love of God cannot be reduced to love of neighbor, is powerful and pertinent. However, I have a feeling that most of the progressives I know would deny holding such a pure position. Undoubtedly social action is being oversold a good deal nowadays, as is liturgical change and the need for

theology to speak in "meaningful" terms to contemporary man (after all, there are mysteries which speak only to those touched with the gratuitous gift of faith). BUT enthusiasts have always overstressed and always oversimplified. Every preacher extols the virtue he happens to be talking about as the indispensable road to holiness.

I fear that there is a contemporary weakening of faith - von Hildebrand is not in "complete error" — but patient understanding and a clear eye for what is really essential are what is called for today, lest we "extinguish the smoking flax." Vatican II's concern for the person of the atheist, a fortiori, should be extended to progressive Catholics, for the first great Paul told us to do good to all men, especially those in the household of the faith.

- Julian A. Davies, O.F.M.

The Nun: Sacrament of God's Saving Presence. By Gabriel Marie Cardinal Garrone, Trans, Paul D. Collins; Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1967. Pp. 190. Cloth, \$3.95.

The author had high ambitions for this collection of conferences aimed at nourishing Sisters' monthly days of recollection: "I wish that these conferences may be a useful, precious aid and admonition - indeed a rescue — to each community and to each religious." Unfortunately the style and content of the book limit its value for those communities and individual religious who have been profoundly influenced by the Council's Decree on adaptation and renewal. They are trying to determine the bare essentials of the vows and community life, the unchanging core of their founders' spirit, the message of the gospel for their age, and the particular service that they can best render the Church today. On this solid, unadorned foundation they hope to erect a consistent way of life described and governed by rewritten constitutions,

directories, custom books, and the rest. Garrone seems unaware of this movement in religious communities. His conferences on the interior life are simply exhortations to live for God alone, to see in the daily schedule the holy will of God, to preserve self-possession in this time of agitation, to concern oneself with defending the honor of God in this blasphemous age, and to avoid the contagion of the world. His reflections on the apostolate, which are balanced and practical, seem almost contradictory to the principles from which they should spring: his standards for the interior life.

While it is true that basic spiritual values do not change, it is also true that our understanding and application of them do change according to the needs of the world in which we live. If The Nun: Sacrament of God's Saving Presence really attempted to justify its title by explaining how Sisters today could become a more intelligible sign of God's presence to the world, it would be a "useful, precious aid and admonition - indeed a rescue." But it only answers questions that were asked and answered long ago by other spiritual writers, while it neglects the particular problems of religious today.

- Sister Cecilia Marie Andrews, S.M.I.C.

The Brother in the Church. Compiled and edited by Brother William Modlin, C.S.C. Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press., 1967. Pp. 209, Cloth \$6.50.

A dedicated, competent, professionally qualified man cannot help sharing his convictions and experiences with his fellows. In this book there are contributions by seven such men. They are a part of something bigger than themselves, and they spare no effort to make this something — the brothers' vocation more understandable to other religious and laity alike.

Cardinal Shehan, in his foreword to

the book, notes that one of the most painful problems facing the brother today is that of identification. In the first chapter, Father William Hogan, C.S.C., (the only priest contributor in the book) attempts to answer the problem by spelling out in detail the theology of the brothers' vocation, or more correctly, the theology of the religious life itself. There is a fine chapter on "Brother Formation" by Brother Thomas Kretz, S.J., in which he says (p. 26) "Youth of today love freedom and, paradoxically, desire to be led, but only by mature competence." He also notes (p. 27) that contemporary man needs a universality of knowledge to inform the universality of love the gospel demands. He speaks of a formation program in the light of Vatican II and offers practical experimental methods for developing the integral human personality during the formation years.

There is a chapter called "Psychological Reflections," by Brother Daniel Kirk, a Marist Psychologist. Reading his comments on principles of change, obedience, celibacy, priestbrother relationships, and maybe even middle age slump, may lead you to some serious reflection yourself, as it did me. Brother Daniel's deep appreciation of the brother's living situation is reflected in his thinking on change itself. He notes that the more consciously the brother permits himself to be confronted by change, the more satisfying and the sounder will be the final solution. He speaks about obedience and authority and I believe he excavates much of the present built-in security which tends to hamper the full resourcefulness of the vow of obedience. "Like our founders, our lives cannot be comfortable and settled. There is always the need for tension. which generates the interest and effort to do more for ourselves and others..." (p. 100).

This reviewer finds it difficult to pass over the other chapters without a word, but space will permit no

more than a mention of the titles: The Brother's Life of Worship. The Brother in Education, The Brother in Clerical Communities, and The Brother in the Church. Reading - and re-reading — them has been most fruitful. Call this book a kind of dialogue for brothers and for others who want to know more about this vocation. The book brought home to me very clearly that all religious brothers, whether teachers or cooks. social workers or maintenance mechanics, share a common calling. We are, before all else, brothers. This is at the core of our vocation and it is this which we must communicate to the world. The book is worth a careful reading.

- Brother Carl Anderson, O.F.M.

The Apostolic Spirituality of the Nursing Sister. By Jacques Leclercq. Staten Island, New York: Alba House, 1967. Pp. 138. Cloth, \$2.95.

Father Leclercq makes an attempt to identify the main elements in the spirituality of the nursing sister in her apostolate. He lists the three main tasks of the hospital sister as (1) giving comprehensive nursing care under the doctor's directions, (2) giving human care by fulfilling basic physical needs, and (3) giving spiritual help.

The book's strong point is its persistent adherence to the conviction that the essence of the sister's vocation is "...the orientation of her life towards God" (p. 42). "Throughout the whole world, the sister represents the Church; that, and only that, sets her apart; from all other points of view, she is like anyone else" (p. 68). From this vantage point Father endeavors to discuss the spirituality of the nursing sister: her prayer life, spirit of cooperation, the problem of suffering and the role of the sister among the living. This is not a "how-to-do-it" book for the beginner, or even a "what-to-do" book. One has the feeling that the author is captivated by

the "angel of mercy" complex regard ing hospital sisters. Throughout the book one has the uneasy feeling that relevant questions are being approached but somehow are never asked.

The idea of a hospital apostolate seems to be accepted without question as is the nursing sister's place in the hospital, but the recurrent and almost defensive distinctions drawn between the sister-nurse and the lay nurse are far from convincing to the discerning reader. To state that "The lay nurse can be satisfied with being a technician and it may be preferable for her to concentrate upon her technique" (p. 14), seems to indicate that the sister has a priority on spiritual goods. To further say that "...for most laymen, the question of serving the Lord does not present any great problem. They are simply not much concerned about it ... " (p. 70), is to contradict the real spirituality of the Christian layman as defined by Vatican II.

The vocation of the sister is not built up by placing the laity in second place. One senses a certain unrealistic and perhaps threatened attitude in this approach. If Father Leclercq's words are true; i.e., that "A community of hospital sisters is the Church loving the sick with the love of Christ" (p. 25), then this vocation stands on its own merits, and a comparison between lay and religious life is unnecessary.

The Catholic hospital exists within the framework of big business where health services are the commodity, bought and sold according to supply and demand principles. The American Hospital Sister, conscious of her mission and of the unique purpose of her congregation, is taking a hard look at the contemporary situation. The question is whether this book will prove useful to those engaged in serious evaluation of the hospital apostolate in America.

- Sister M. Angele Mills, O.S.F.

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