# FRANCISCAN BRIEFS

LES SIX AILES DU SERAPHIM . . . PAR SAINT BONAVENTURE. Translated by Adrien-M. Malo, O. F. M. Montreal; Les Editions Franciscaines, 1951. Pp. 156.

This translation of Saint Bonaventure's DE SEX ALIS SERAPHIM is the latest publication of Canada's Franciscan-sponsored La Vie des Communautes Religieuses. Their choice of this treatise for publication is singularly happy for it is one of the most realistic and practical and profound guides for religious superiors ever written. Although it is thoroughly Franciscan in spirit, it is nevertheless broad and general enough to be used by religious following any rule. The Jesuits, in fact, have used it since the fifteenth century.

Father Malo's edition is practical rather than scholarly since it is intended for the practical purpose of bringing the wisdom of Saint Bonaventure to French speaking religious who have difficulty with Latin. He has, however, included the Latin text (Quaracchi) in smaller type for those who may wish to consult the original, and provided an introduction, notes, and a table of contents that is practically an index.

For those who read French, Father Malo's work will be most welcome.



THE LIFE OF MARY AS SEEN BY THE MYSTICS. Compiled by Raphael Brown. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1951. Pp. 292. \$3.50.

Something quite different in "biographies" of Our Lady is this compilation: THE LIFE OF MARY AS SEEN BY THE MYSTICS. The author has combined in a continuous narrative relevant selections from the mystical writings of Saint Elizabeth of Schoenau, Saint Brigid of Sweden, Venerable Mother Mary of Agreda, and Sister Anna Catherine Emmerich. The result is a detailed account of the life of Our Lady, beginning with the lives of Saint Ann and Saint Joachim and ending with the Assumption.

Because the Church has always private revelations with caution and rathe author has seen fit to write an ative introduction stating (among things) not only the attitude of theologians toward the four mystic whose writings he has borrowed, by the attitude the reader should take them. He urges that his book be reareligious novel, not as a fifth Gospa

According to the author, every state IN THE LIFE OF MARY AS SEEN B MYSTICS has been borrowed directly one of the four sources, and combined densed, and adapted to form a whole. Mary of Agreda and Catherin merich have provided approximately thirds of the total text. Of these twi former contributed most of the m concerning the interior life of Mary the latter contributed most of the events. Brigid of Sweden supplied th uable light on major occurrences. Elizabeth of Schoenau described the in the Temple and something of the nunciation. To those who relish infl colorful, and unauthenticated details cerning Our Lady, THE LIFE OF MAR SEEN BY THE MYSTICS can be he recommended. But by all means Edward Ryan's foreword and the com introduction should be read before the is delved into.

To some readers the book will presource of interest and edification spiritual uplift; to others it may be reprised in any case: Inistoricity of the events related is questionable, there is nothing questionabout their adherence to Catholic do (in spite of the early Dominican oppoto Mary of Agreda's Scotistic leanings is there any fundamental discrepance tween Mary as she appears in the Gand as she appears in the revelation these mystics. The book is entirely but it will appeal largely to those who a taste for this very specialized kin spiritual reading.

Besides the excellent foreword and troduction, the book also offers a selected bibliography.

#### HUMILITY

Through dark, through tears, My heart has waited, yearning like a candle; But she has passed like a low, unbearable singing Through my wisdom.

I have given my lips to the earth, But I have never found her kisses. And in my comely prostrations, Her laughter was small bells ringing.

She has informed all my words with hallowness And she has invested my resolutions with bright rags She has attended the obsequies of her unhallowed hours And she has been a dissonance in the encomiums of recall.

(I grew weary of her seraphic mockery Until, at last, I won her shadow With loud and restless wooing.)

But now dust has become my dignity
And shame my nobility
Because I have bartered my proud shoulders
For the whips of forgiveness
And I have bent my head
To the blows of mercy.
I have suffered my loud wounds to be healed
And I have given my heart to be bruised
In the ignominy of pardon.

Then let no loneliness intrude
On this companionable grief,
For her footprints are freshly-dug in my sorrow
And I have caught her veil, lightly, for a moment
In my hands.

My pride has lost its innocence To her charms.

Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Roswell, New Mexico

Sr. Mary Francis, P. C.

### **OUR MONTHLY CONFERENCE**

#### Our Blessed Mother

Shortly before his joyful meeting with Sister Death, Saint Francis ex his followers never to leave the little chapel of Saint Mary of the Angel he expressed the desire to have his heart buried there as a token of his lo Mary. From that time down to our own day, when the Church has gran a special feast in honor of Mary, Queen of the Franciscan Order, every ciscan has considered it a high privilege and a sacred duty to honor the B Virgin Mary. The beautiful prayer of the liturgy, "Vouchsafe to let me thee, O holy Virgin," voices this traditional Franciscan attitude toward glorious Mother of God. Hence, it is only proper that our conference of this month of May treat of her for whom the month is named—Mary. We consider her under the appealing aspect of our Blessed Mother.

It is not hard to prove that Mary is our mother. This vital fact is base her two Annunciations, the one at Nazareth, the other on Calvary. When Archangel Gabriel announced to Mary in her little home at Nazareth tha was chosen to become the Mother of God, he indicated unmistakably the s character of her Son by calling Him Jesus, a name which signified one who save his people from their sins (Mt. 1, 21). Her son, therefore, as the Savi the world, was to possess the unique distinction of having two bodies, His personal, physical body composed of flesh and blood and bones, and a My Body composed of all those to be saved through His merits. Now one of prime functions of a mother is to form, fashion, and nourish the body of child. Consequently, when Mary gave her consent to become the mother Christ, she agreed to mother Him whole and entire, that is, His physical and His Mystical Body, because the two cannot be separated in the plat God. She would mother His physical body in the tender way natural to mothers. She would mother His Mystical Body by co-operating with Jesu His redemptive work for souls. And since this co-operation means participal in the actual birth, nourishment, and protection of our supernatural life, Mai as truly our mother in the supernatural sense as she is the mother of Jesu the natural. She is our mother, therefore, not in some vague, metaphorical much as we would call a woman devoted to an adopted child a veritable mo to this child, but in all truth and reality because, in union with Jesus, she re brings us into supernatural being. That is why Mary is called the Second E the mother of all who live the supernatural life. That is why it is said that istmas morn she brought forth her firstborn son (Lk. 2, 7). Christ is only her child; all the redeemed are her other children.

This breath-taking truth was publicly affirmed on Calvary. It was the oment of Mary's second Annunciation. In a way, this Annunciation was more lemn than the one which took place at Nazareth, both because of the dramatic tring in which it occurred and because the one who spoke to Mary was not erely an angel of God but the very Son of God Himself. An eerie darkness and spread over the hill of Calvary and many of the people who had thronged round the cross of Christ were struck with terror and fled back to Jerusalem. This gave Mary and her faithful companions a chance to draw near to the dying Savior. When Jesus, therefore, saw his mother and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he said to his mother, Woman, behold thy son. Then he said to the disciple, Behold thy mother (Jo. 19, 26-27).

These words of Christ implied more, much more, than a mere provision for His mother's safekeeping after His death. They were a formal declaration of Mary's essential role in the divine plan of redemption. They proclaimed her the true spiritual mother of all mankind represented by the person of Saint John. This is evident from the fact that the last words of Christ on the cross were not simply chance utterances occasioned by the passing mood or suffering that He happened to be experiencing at the moment. Christ was in perfect control of His faculties and sentiments as is clear from the whole manner of His death. These words, therefore, were fraught with deep Messianic significance, and had been determined upon from all eternity. They were reserved for this solemn occasion to console Mary and to impress us. Coming as they did at the height of Mary's grief, they reassured her regarding the value of her sufferings which were, in very truth, the pangs of spiritual childbirth. Her hour of sorrow was brightened by the reminder that she was bringing forth children unto God. And as for us, Christ's statement of Mary's motherhood was made at this tragic moment so that we should never forget the very dear price which Mary paid in becoming our mother. Thereby we would be moved to love her all the more tenderly and go to her with all the greater confidence.

From what has been said thus far it is clear that Mary is actually our mother in the supernatural order. This is the basic reason for our devotion to her and we must never lose sight of it. In the spiritual life we are all just children triving to attain to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4, 13). And as long as we are on this earth we shall remain

children in this sense. Hence, our great need of a mother to help us it spiritual development. Here I should like to quote a passage from Father B dot's excellent book, Our Lady in Our Life: "All life tends to grow and ex the child's law is to become a man. So of the supernatural life; it must de God might have decided that like the angels, we were to settle our etern one single act of the will; instead He willed that we were to have the por growing, and He gave us the time and the means . . . Our Lady helps us to in Christ. She is a mother. A mother is not satisfied with giving birth child: she watches over its growth, desires to bring it to perfection. supernatural growth requires at every moment some fresh exercise of but this demands actual graces, without which we should at once come to a still. Through Our Lady come these graces, all the graces that we need, f the details of our life, for all our difficulties, for every step in our progres No doubt the distribution of grace belongs by His own right to the sole Med Christ. God alone can give divine life, says Saint Thomas. But God has that because of their intimate union in the Redemption Christ and His M should also be united in this distribution of grace. God might have given alone: He pleases to distribute it through Mary" (pp. 19-21).

Because of its importance, allow me to repeat one sentence of the quotation. "All the graces that we need, for all the details of our life, for a difficulties, for every step in our progress" come to us through Mary. No universality of those words—all the grace, for all the details, for all our diffic for every step. Yes, just everything in our supernatural life comes under influence of Mary. As our mother, she is charged with our entire spiritual gr Our present Holy Father confirms this view in his encyclical on the sacred li called *Mediator Dei*. In this document he quotes with approval the statement of Saint Bernard that God "wished us to have everything the Mary". In the light of this teaching, therefore, we can truthfully say the were granted the grace of baptism because of Mary; that we were confirmed receive all the blessings of each confession, Holy Communion, and Holy through her intercession; that every grace we need to practice virtue, to come temptation, to fulfill our daily tasks—in a word, to live and die in the God, comes to us through the hands of Mary. What an all-important part Blessed Mother plays in our life! Once more, however, let us stress the this role of Mary is not a role of necessity but a role of choice. God ch give Mary this essential part in the plan of Redemption. But we can safely to this choice the words of Holy Scripture: The gifts of God are without

ce (Rom. 11, 29). In other words, God will never go back on His choice, will always bring about our salvation through our Blessed Mother.

It is indeed a great consolation to realize that our eternal welfare is in the ends of such a mother. For she is at one and the same time God's mother and are mother. As God's mother she can obtain for us all that we need. In fact, hary is called the "praying omnipotence." What God can do by His power, hary can obtain by her intercession. While on earth her constant refrain was, he it done to me according to Thy word. And now that she is in heaven God deigns to make those words His own regarding all the petitions of His mother. The "Memorare," used so universally by the faithful, attests to the efficacy of Mary's intercession. Hence, we need never hesitate to go to our Blessed Mother with all our problems, even those which seem quite hopeless. The Church applies these words of Holy Scripture to her: I was with Him forming all things . . . playing in the world (Prov. 8, 30-31). Taking care of the world is easy for Mary; it is just play for her. Yes, nothing is too difficult for the great Mother of God. If anyone, therefore, can obtain our requests it is she.

Moreover, since Mary is our mother she will help us. We were born to her on Calvary, and the very excess of anguish which we caused her then awakened in her heart a maternal affection for us without compare. She is determined that the children of such sorrow should never perish. If the Little Flower promised to spend her heaven in doing good on earth, what can we expect of Mary, the most loving of mothers? Like her Divine Son, she is always living to make intercession for us (Heb. 7, 25). It is said that a mother's day is never ended. How true that is of our heavenly mother! She will allow no rest as long as there is one soul to be saved, one sinner to be converted, one sorrowing heart to be consoled, one tear to be dried. She is not so occupied with being the Queen of Heaven as to have no time for her needy children on earth. To be convinced of that, all we have to do is to run through the invocations in her litany and see the endearing titles conferred upon her by grateful hearts:—"Mother of good counsel," "Virgin, most merciful," "Virgin, most faithful," "Cause of our joy," Health of the sick," "Refuge of sinners," "Comforter of the afflicted," "Help Christians." What a world of devoted love is implied in each of those titles! hat assurance they give us that the first to help us and the last to abandon us always be our Blessed Mother!

Having reflected on the important place of Mary in our spiritual life, and her ability and willingness to help us, there is but one conclusion which we draw, namely, that we should have a strong and consistent devotion to her.

The Saints are our models in this as in so many other things. No matter much they may differ among themselves in other respects—temperament emphasis on a particular virtue or practice—they are all in perfect agree when it comes to devotion to the Blessed Virgin. We shall look in vain Saint who did not have a great devotion to Mary. This is particularly true own Franciscan Saints. When reading their lives in the breviary, referent their love for the Blessed Mother occur with monotonous regularity. And writings, setting forth her glory and defending her prerogatives, would con a veritable library in itself. In addition to the testimony of the Saints, theolitell us that if we neglect to have a devotion to Mary it is a sign of cuindifference to our eternal salvation. And the Church herself, in her co Canon Law, exhorts all the faithful to foster a childlike piety toward Blessed Virgin (Can. 1276).

But what form should devotion to our Blessed Mother take? Apare the prescriptions of the liturgy, there is freedom on this score. So much do on one's training, on one's personal preferences, and on the attractions of However, considering the matter objectively, we must admit that the most p form of devotion to Mary is that of total consecration. Briefly, it const placing at her disposal everything which we are permitted to give her, dedi ourselves entirely to her service, becoming, as it were, her slaves. Since the of Marian devotion is receiving at present a great deal of publicity, it worthwhile to make a few observations regarding it.

If we consider the general run of the faithful, this type of devote to say the least, a bit out of the ordinary. And it has widespread implice which, as a rule, are not fully grasped at first glance, and which, when the become apparent later on, may cause disturbance and anxiety to souls. He would certainly seem advisable not to make this act of consecration we thorough instruction from, and the advice of, one's spiritual director. Further more, it is unfair and incorrect to say that, because a person doesn't make act of consecration, he does not love the Blessed Virgin tenderly. First this is only one kind, not the only kind, of devotion to Mary. Then, too, consecration does not prove one's devotion automatically, by the very act being made. Rather, a person has to work at it, live up to it fervently an sistently in his daily round of duties, to have it mean something. Consequit may well be that one who has not made this consecration has a much devotion to Mary than another who has so consecrated himself. Granted ever, that one thoroughly understands the total consecration, that he is a

make it, and that he strives, earnestly yet sanely, to carry it out in practicethere can be no doubt that such a consecration does offer to the Blessed fingin an extraordinary honor. Moreover, given the conditions mentioned, it is and to produce great spiritual profit for the person concerned. For it is simply case of taking the direction and the disposal of one's spiritual life out of one's hands, a mere tyro, and placing them in the hands of Mary, a consummate ecialist. If perfection consists in becoming counterparts of Christ, then who hald be more expert in forming Christ in souls than the Blessed Mother whose evenly-appointed task is precisely that of giving birth to Christ, both physically and mystically, as we have seen? Mary is called by Saint Augustine the "Mold God" and by Father Faber the "Short Cut to Christ." By complete surrender her a person casts himself into this divine mold and quickly and securely takes on the features of Chirst. And should the spirituality of a particular Order or Congregation call for special tints and shades in the image of Christ sought for in its members, we can hardly conceive that Mary, a master artist, would fail to bring about the desired effect.

However, when all is said and done, we must return to our original proposition—the total consecration is not required, it is something entirely voluntary. The main thing to remember is that, no matter what form our devotion to Mary takes, it should be wholeheartedly generous. Father Fulgence Meyer, O. F. M., in his charming book on Mary, Who is She? tells about an old Brother who was deeply in love with the Blessed Mother. One day a compulsive desire sprang up in his heart to see the object of his love. It was revealed to him that this privilege would be granted him on condition that forever after he should be blind. For the eyes that had beheld the fairest of God's creatures were never to be used again to gaze on the common things of this world. The old Brother greed. But when Mary appeared to him, he became quite panicky and quickly covered one eye with his hand so as not to be totally blind for the rest of his life. ater, however, he regretted very much his lack of generosity, and begged for econd chance so that he might sacrifice his total eyesight in honor of Mary. gain his request was granted. And he gazed at the glorious Virgin with his one eye, eager to forego his sight in return for the rapturous vision vouchsafed him. But when Mary had disappeared, he was amazed to discover that he now see perfectly with both eyes . . . We may say this story is a mere and, we may even brand it fantastic, but we can never deny the lesson it arts, namely, that it is impossible to be generous with our Blessed Mother lose thereby.

tmont, Illinois.

Fr. Herman Doerr, O. F. M.

# THE BOOK OF THE CROSS

Wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me (Wis. 7, 21)
The Franciscan habit is cruciform. The seal of the Franciscan Order
the pierced hands of Christ and of Francis enshrined within the cord. The
of the Cross was given the world by the disciples of our stigmatized F
All these and countless other reminders serve always to emblazon the la
thought of the Crucified upon the true Franciscan's heart.

Without violence to truth, does it not seem that poverty's claim to a harole in our spirituality rests ultimately upon this: Lady Poverty—togeth the other women—was near when the soldiers cast lots for His garment now one can not seek to pierce the gloom of Calvary's hill but one dethere the stark beauty of holy poverty.

We Franciscans must be poor, not that we may be poor but that become Christ-like; that we may become rich in Christ beyond the dreams of any avaricious heart. Is it surprising then that for Saint Bont the Christ Whom we must imitate is Jesus upon the Cross, stripped ut all possessions? "Christ the High Priest taught the perfection of pow word, but especially by His example, when entering the holy of holies H poor and naked upon the Cross." (Apologia Pauperum). Hence it is that poverty inevitably carries with it some share in the Crucifixion.

Frequently, the suffering that poverty brings us rests in the humility to ask permission of our superior for personal needs. Sometimes again it awareness that it is not the material possessions we have in fact forswo best proves our renouncement, but rather it is the irrevocable repudiation of the possibility of ever owning anything in our own name. But more piercing still than the pains these barbs inflict, is the anguish we experi coming face to face with our failure to extirpate the spirit of compromisiour hearts. Caught between the ambivalence of a stern ideal and our plives as we in reality lead them, we are ever being abruptly and preminded how un-Christlike, how un-Francislike we are indeed.

We soon come to know how little we can do without God's strong sugrace; we receive consoling intimations within the core of our soul that a must needs be, in some degree, the common destiny of each idealist. An we push on, often half-stumbling and dismayed, towards horizons the escape us, yet without despair hoping against hope that tomorrow we better, is it not perhaps then that we are most akin to the Christ who

dreadful struggle in the Garden? The spirit and the flesh are frequent lers and we are more than seconds to their parries. What religious, vowed poverty that would aspire to imitate the Crucified and the Poverello, does sometimes hear the echo in his heart: Father, if thou wilt, remove this chalice me: but yet not my will, but thine be done?

By whatever means God deigns to allow us to be in some measure configured His Son, through the agony of the flesh and spirit, the inescapable truth is that must accept the Cross. "This is the consummation of one's discipleship of rist: to carry the Cross because on it Christ chose to end His life. In that toss is supreme humility—the highest poverty—and from it Christ could tuly say: Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return hither . . ." (Comm. in Luc.). Herein hides the secret of all secrets; the truth that Francis caught and taught; the truth that radiates throughout the vast synthesis of Bonaventure's thought; a truth we know so well that we know it not: "If we wish to learn spiritual things, we must take up the Cross as a book, for in it is written the entire wisdom of Christ." (Sermo. de temp., Fer. sexta in Paras.).

We catch here more than a whisper of the sources of the living waters from which Francis drank so deeply. *Idiota* though he was, his wisdom indeed surpassed that of the most erudite men. Francis understood that from the pages of the book of the Cross he might look through the lattices, through the windows, into the room of his beloved Bridegroom. And might also learn, not only to it beside the plentiful streams of divine knowledge, but to prefer that knowledge before kingdoms and thrones, esteeming riches as nothing in comparison with it.

Our sublime vocation as Franciscans summons us above all to a conformity in the suffering humanity of Christ. We must become assimilated to Him if would prove faithful to that calling. And this earnest attempt to conform His humanity is, ultimately, merely an expression of our effort to reach unto divine nature of the Word through our similarity to His assumed human ure. "God enlivens us according to Christ, and by His example God directs through life's way, as in the Psalm (15, 11): Thou hast made known to me way of life. God makes known to us the ways of life when He distributes to with and hope and charity . . . in which consists the way of life through the Christ taught us to walk. God therefore enlivens us according to Christ, use He directs to life His imitators." (III Sent., Procemium). For us as

Christians, to be perfect is synonymous with the unending growth in grace as religious, to be perfect consists in our never deliberately halting the a and upward movement of the soul Godwards.

"How", you ask, "can the human life of Christ be the immediate for our life of grace?" Of course His human life can not be the exemp our life of grace, if one considers only His natural human life. In realitare two lives in Christ because there are two natures. Life is nothing othe the ensemble of activities by which a nature realizes its ultimate perfection divine life of grace is simply pre-eminent. The natural activity of His hum has natural objects, and while that life is perfect in its order, yet that necessarily remains ever inferior to the order of grace.

Herein then lies the profoundest reason why Our Lord's life is the on which Francis and all saints must build their human lives of grac human nature of Christ is anointed by the grace of the hypostatic union human nature belongs substantially to the divine Person of the Word, the grace of union His human nature has received the same sanctifying which the just themselves receive. The Christ-life is a divine life liperfection in human nature. "He is the exemplar and mirror of all virtues and merits. For the imitation of this exemplar has been erected the of the Church militant." (Apologia Pauperum).

Christ crucified is the source, ideal, support and the reason for Franciscan lives. It is in terms of the suffering humanity of Christ the must really understand the Franciscan spirit if we are to understand it. By our incorporation to Christ we are elevated to God, and this is the explanation of grace: the life of God communicating itself to us. By union the Word each man becomes in the Word a son of God and then can true Abba, Father! Our way must be through the perfected knowledge of through Faith, and the imitation of Him through the Cross. The crucific be the center of our devotion, as Christ is the center of all things.

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Sin is cast out with the help of God and not just by free will, without free will.

Saint Bonar

# AN EXPLANATION OF THE RULE OF THE THIRD ORDER REGULAR (V )

The Fourth Article

EXT: The year of novitiate must, under the discipline of a Master, have as suppose to train the mind of the novice in the study of the Rule and the Constitutions, in pious meditation and the love of prayer, in mastering all that pertains to the vows and the virtues, in suitable exercises calculated to root out the germs of vice, to curb the passions and to acquire virtues. Lay novices should moreover be carefully instructed in Christian doctrine, a special conference being given to them at least once a week.

As this article is taken bodily from the Code of Canon Law (C. 565, par. 1-2), it is to the canonists that we should turn for an explanation.

The year of the novitiate

The year of novitiate is distinct from the postulancy which is now required by Canon Law for all sisterhoods and, in institutes of men, for the brothers who are not clerics. This postulancy, however, is not required for the validity of either the novitiate or subsequent profession, but only for it licitness. A kind of pre-novitiate, the postulancy was first introduced for practical reasons and its regulations varied from institute to institute. Especially in former times when it might be prolonged for several years, it served as a safeguard for vocations by permitting the aspirant to leave the world and live within the shelter of the convent before reaching the canonical age for entrance to the novitiate. The fact that perpetual vows were customarily taken immediately after the novitiate made such an additional period of trial of the religious life and the character of the aspirant an eminently practical measure. According to the new Code, however, which prescribes that at least a period of three years temporal vows precede perpetual profession, the necessity for a prolonged postulancy has ceased. Its main purpose now is to give the aspirant a taste of the religious life on the one hand and the religious superiors an opportunity to evaluate the andidate's character fitness on the other. Thus it permits the aspirant to leave to be dismissed with less inconvenience to all parties concerned than if they been formally clothed with the habit and entered the novitiate.

For that reason Canon 540 wisely suggests that the postulant wear some odest attire but different from that of the novices. Since the postulancy is not cended as a substitute for the novitiate, the time required has been shortened.

The Code prescribes at least six months period for institutes with per vows. While this can be prolonged at the discretion of the major super should not be beyond another six months (Can. 539). Though the postuneed not be made at the house of the novitiate, it is obvious that if it is to its purpose, it must be made in some house where the religious discipline a ing to the constitutions is faithfully observed (Can. 540).

The novitiate year begins officially with the reception of the habit, or this is primarily intended for institutes that have no special habit—in manner as prescribed by the constitutions (Can. 553).

In addition to the requirements for valid and licit admission mention connection with the third article of the rule, Canon 555 requires for the v of the novitiate: (1) that the candidate must have completed at least his fiff year at the time of reception; (2) that the novice must make the novitia one continuous and complete year; (3) that he spend that year in the house novitiate.

If the constitutions prescribe a longer period for the novitiate, this required for the validity of the profession, unless the constitutions expendement it under pain of invalidity.

In connection with the licitness of the novitiate, we might call attent the fact that Canon 544 requires not only certificates of the baptism confirmation of the candidate, but also certain testimonials of good char and the like. Since the documents demanded for entrance into institutes of and women differ substantially and are customarily listed in the constit of the respective institute, we can omit discussing them here.

# Under the discipline of a master

Even though the novices have not taken vows, Canon 561 obliges the obey the novice master (or mistress) as well as the local superior. In agree become a member of the religious institute, they come under the domestics of those charged with its governance. The master of novices exclusively charge of the internal affairs of the novitiate. Hence, Canon 561 forbide superiors from interfering with the formation of the novices or the direct the novitiate with the exception, of course, of the Visitors and the cases profor in the constitutions.

Since the novice master or mistress is not a superior in the canonical of the term, nor is it in accord with the mind of the Church that they hold

ition, this same canon declares that so far as the general discipline of the is concerned, the master of novices, his assistant and the novices are ject to the local superior. This general discipline would include, for instance, general order of the day for the community as a whole, such as the time of meals, recreation, and the like. The special order of the day for the ices, however, such as the time for class, religious instruction, additional itual exercises, etc. remains within the province of the master. For visiting parlor, leaving the house for walks, or vacation, and so on, the permission the local superior would be required. On the other hand, the local superior y not interfere with the local government of the novitiate, nor assign duties to vices without the consent of the master.

As Saint Francis wisely realized, any instruction will have a deep and lasting fect only if it springs from inner conviction and has borne visible fruit in the He of the teacher himself. That is why Canon Law requires that only such religious be assigned to the novitiate or study houses as will give a good example of religious discipline (Can. 554) and demands moreover that the novice master be conspicious for prudence, charity, piety and religious observance. In addition, he shall be at least thirty-five years old and at least ten years professed (Can. 559). Commentators point out that since the ten years of profession is to be reckoned from "their first profession", it is not required that an individual who for weighty reasons has legitimately transferred from one religious institute to another be a member of the second institute ten years before he becomes eligible for mastership. The same canon also provides for the appointment of an assistant master, who hould be at least thirty years old, five years professed, and endowed with the wher qualifications necessary and proper for this office. To stress the importance the task of educating future members of the institute, this canon adds the rejoinder that both master and assistant be relieved from any other tasks hat would interfere with the guidance and training of the novices.

ust have as its purpose to train the mind of the novice

It is unfair to any child that it be called too soon to live the life of an adult, religious novice also must gradually grow to intellectual and emotional turity before facing the stimulating challenge of religious life. Hence, the wisely forbids that novices be employed in external charges of the institute any type of work or study that would make their spiritual education or nation a secondary matter (Can. 565, par. 3). In the same spirit, it prohibits indiscriminate association of the novices with the other members of the

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community until their period of probation and initial training is over (Can. In the study of the Rule and the Constitutions

It is the mind of the Church that each novice be given a copy of entire constitution, or at least that the complete text of the same be available for their studious perusal, during their novitiate year. Since the issuance of new Code, this provision is now inserted in all constitutions approved be Holy See.

In pious meditation, etc.

Since the natural God-given means of developing and perfecting the has personality is through the married state, it is supremely important that soul who has "espoused Christ", should find the supernatural complement or her personality that God intended in establishing the religious state. If the importance of teaching novices at the outset the obligation and the sof "putting on Christ". Since the lay novices, unlike the clerics, are not extended to take up ex professo the study of theology, they should be instructed in Christine to an extent that befits their state, that they may know better the acter and the ideals of their divine Model. They must be taught how to erap vices, subdue their passions, and acquire something of His virtues, so someday they may be able to say with Saint Paul: It is now no longer I that but Christ lives in me (Gal. 2, 20).

Since the personal and intimate union of the soul with Christ will or achieved by one who has learned to love prayer, the novices are to be instring the practice of meditation that they may appreciate its almost in possibilities as a source of spiritual enlightment, consolation and strength through it to taste something of the sweetness of the Lord.

(to be continued)

St. Bonaventure University

Fr. Allan Wolter, O.

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Nothing in life should cause us sadness. Our clear duty is to co ourselves in all things to the Will of God and to prepare to die well. To what counts; nothing else matters. If this is secured, it matters little if we all the rest; without this all else is useless.

Junipero Serra, O.

## THE LAUDES DE CREATURIS

Contradicting the generally accepted interpretation of Saint Francis's Leades de Creaturis, as presented in various anthologies and World Literature ets, the late Fr. Michael Bihl, O.F.M., criticized the English version of Matthew Arnold as misinterpreting and mistranslating this Franciscan praise of God by and through His creatures. Nor is Arnold the only translator who is deserving of such censure, since the dozen or more other translations that have appeared in English bear the same defect, an unconscious distortion of the pure Franciscan view of God's creation.

The true meaning of the "Song" is simply a praise of God by and through His creatures, and not, as Jorgensen would lead us to believe, a song about creation, nor, as various other versions have pictured it, a praise for creatures. This misdirection of Saint Francis's praises in the Canticle of the Creatures arises solely from the faulty rendition of the Italian words per and cum. Arnold and later translators have read into the word per the meaning of "for", whereas in reality per is equal to the Latin a or ab, the English "by" or "through". The Italian cum (also con or cun) has the meaning of "through the medium of". The whole point of the Song is that Saint Francis is praising God through His creatures, for the peculiarly Franciscan approach to creatures is that we are led to God by contemplating His works.

The following literal translation is an attempt to show more clearly the attitude of Francis towards creation, that is, his love for creatures because by them and in them he saw God, and was thereby better able to love Him. This translation has been made from the recent critical edition of the *Laudes de Creaturis* of Vittore Branca.<sup>2</sup>

Most High, Omnipotent, good Lord, To You praise, glory, honor and all benediction.

To You alone, O God Most High, do they belong, And there is no one worthy to mention Thee.

Praised be, my Lord, by means of all Your creatures, And most especially through Sir Brother Sun, Who makes the day, and illumines us by his light.

P. Michael Bihl, O. F. M., Book Review of "Greyfriars. The Story of Saint Francis and His Followers", by Harold Goad. Archivum Franciscanum Historicum, XLI, 1948. p. 299.

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For he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor: And is a symbol of Thee, O God Most High.

Praised be, my Lord, through sister Moon and all the Stars: For in heaven You have formed them, clear, precious and fair.

Praised be, my Lord, by brother Wind,
And by the air, the clouds and the clear sky and every kind
of weather,
Through whom You give to Your creatures nourishment.

Praised be, my Lord, by sister Water, For she is most useful, humble, precious and chaste.

Praised be, my Lord, by brother Fire, Through whom You illumine the night: For he is gay and mighty and strong.

Praised be, my Lord, by our sister Mother Earth, Who keeps and sustains us, And brings forth various fruits with colored flowers and leaves.

Praised be, my Lord, by those who give pardon through Your love And suffer infirmity and tribulation.

Blessed are they who endure all in peace, For they, O God Most High, will be crowned by You.

Praised be, my Lord, through our sister Bodily Death, From whom no living person can escape.

Woe to those who die in mortal sin! But blessed are those found in Your most holy Will, For the second death will do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord, And thank Him and serve Him with great humility.

Duns Scotus College, Detroit, Mich.

Fr. Marian Douglas, O.

# THE FRANCISCAN BOOK SHELF

In response to numerous requests for a list of books on Franciscan Spirity, the following bibliography has been prepared for readers of the CORD Rev. Irenaeus Herscher, O. F. M., librarian of the Friedsam Library, Saint eventure University. In addition to recent books, a few out-of-print items mentioned, since it may still be possible to obtain some of them from second-look dealers. This bibliography is divided into three parts: the first part list of biographies of the Poverello, the second includes classics on the ciscan Spiritual Life, and the third is devoted to books of Conferences, lings, Meditations, and like material presented in the spirit of our Holy or Saint Francis.

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## **EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE**

According to Saint Bonaventure

The twin roots of all sin are pride and sensuality. From these ste the imperfections and evil tendencies that throw our soul into disorder hinder our going to God. But, just as sensuality in its grosser forms enters the life of a religious, so pride in the form of satanic rebellion ; God could hardly exist in a soul consecrated to God. Pride is extrem assertion, total self-worship. The proud man is his own god, and in his per heart echoes the defiant non serviam of the fallen angels. Obviously, pr this kind and the vows of religion are mutually exclusive. For religious, tr arise not from pride but from one of its lesser offshoots, vanity. Pride vice diametrically opposed to Christian humility, the virtue upon which sanctification depends. Humility is truth; it is the acceptance of reality; it man to acknowledge not only his absolute dependence upon God but al utter sinfulness and unworthiness in the sight of his all-holy Creator. V however, is a kind of childish egotism and self-delusion. The vain man no violence to the Divine Majesty, as the proud man does; but he is gui injustice to God in that he retains for his own enjoyment, for the satisfact his own ego, that which should be given to God. Opposed to vanity is Ch modesty, the virtue which enables a man to see himself as he really is, to himself in the proper relationships, to think and act according to right order right measure. Modesty is the virtue of the children of God. It was the especially beloved by our Seraphic Father Francis, who called his be Friars Minor-men who would be devoid of vanity because modesty make them realize the modicum of value they possessed in the sight of Go of men. It is the virtue of Franciscan realism. Since Christian modesty important in the work of our sanctification, and since vanity is opposed Saint Bonaventure advises us to ask ourselves:

Do I Give in to Vanity by Seeking the Favor of Men; by Work for Human Praise and Recognition; by Aspiring to Worldly Hong

In regard to the first point, we must understand that seeking the famen is by no means synonymous with being liked, respected, and esteemed by As Franciscans we should make every reasonable effort to live in peace others, to make ourselves agreeable, and to be respected as good religious. The enters in only when we are inordinately concerned about the attitude of toward us. We can best discover to what extent vanity influences us by examour reactions when confronted with positive disfavor. For example:

I have lost the love or respect of another, am I unduly troubled? Do I eve simply because my vain little ego cannot endure having anyone turn against or rather do I grieve because the law of Christian charity is being violated? ow do I react in the face of a broken friendship or a growing aversion? Do I to put the blame on the other person, perhaps even to the point of injuring reputation? Do I grow bitter and venomous? give way to childish sulking and iveling? Or do I, on the contrary, make every effort compatible with both If-respect and humility to heal the breach? When others treat me coldly or how genuine dislike or hostility, am I sufficiently humble to look into my own and try in all sincerity to find out if I myself may not be at fault? How do I act when superiors seem, or actually are, ill-disposed toward me? Do I become unhappy, sink into despondency and self-pity, or even give way to desperation? Am I known as one who cannot be corrected, who must be treated like a little child-petted, coddled, caressed? In my desire for affection do I make myself a nuisance to others, perhaps even disgust them with cloying caresses and mawkish attentiveness, then feel injured when they withdraw from me? Am I so much in love with myself, so convinced of my own excellence, that when others fail to love and admire me I accuse them of stupidity or blindness or malicious injustice? Do I realize the tragic incongruity of such conduct with the state of perfection to which I am vowed?

Sensitiveness is another manifestation of vanity. It is one of the most common causes of disharmony and unhappiness in religious communities, and one of the thief obstacles to growth in holiness. It is a spiritual disease which results from our allowing our ego to assume an importance out of all proportion with reality. Some of the following questions may help us detect its presence in our own soul: Am I quick to take offense? Do I resent teasing, ridicule, criticism, even when there is no malice intended? Am I suspicious? Do I interpret as overt or insidious enmity whatever is not wholehearted approval? Do I spend time weighing and pondering and analysing the conduct of others in an effort to discover their real attitude toward me? Do I give way to melancholy at the least th, feel martyred at a cold glance, persecuted at a sharp word? When primanded, how do I react? Am I willing to believe that the reprimand was iven in justice and charity, or do I insist that dislike, vindictiveness, jealousy, some other unworthy motive was the cause of it? Do I allow myself to come so childish that I even question others about their feelings for me, asking they like me, or why they do not like me, or what they have against me, or they did this, or what they meant by saying that? Do I ever pause in my oding analyses of human relations to find out to what extent—if any—God

occupies my consciousness and to what extent my precious little e occupies it? Sensitiveness poisons the soul, and if left unchecked it m to psychic aberrations and neuroses of the worst kind. At best, the religious is always a cross to his community.

Vanity is responsible also for the "street-angel, house-devil" religious. It is a disheartening fact that the very religious who are most some to their community are sometimes the ones who are best loved and by seculars. Let us examine ourselves on some of the following points friendly and gracious to people outside the community but rude and to my fellow-religious? Do I seek popularity at any cost, even at the violating justice or charity or my vows? For example, do I violate my poverty in order to appear generous, or to literally buy the affection of si Do I support projects which make me popular with outsiders but wh detrimental to the interests of my community? Do I try to build attractive front for myself by bragging of my accomplishments and tall my importance and value to my community, of my popularity? When presence of persons I want to impress, do I assume poses and attitudes f benefit? Is my conduct toward others governed by genuine respect, or de to ingratiate myself by fawning submissiveness or exaggerated solicit flattery? Is my desire for the esteem of the world so perverse that it de even to tear down or undermine the good opinion seculars may have of a co Am I jealous, possessive, domineering? It is only natural that our human should desire to be loved, and in itself this desire for love is good; but breaks the bonds of right measure and rational control it becomes destructive of our natural and supernatural happiness.

Those who hold positions of authority should be especially watch they strive to win the applause and affection of their subjects at the violating their duties. For persons in authority some of the following q may be pertinent: Do I fulfill my obligations in justice and charity love of God, or do I perhaps show partiality, side-step unpopular reg or grant unlawful petitions simply to win the favor of those subject to I tend to ignore the demands of Franciscan poverty, for example, permissions that are contrary to the common life, or tamper with the prorder of the day, in order to be called a "good" superior? Let us keep that a superior who yields to every whimsical request, who closes his irregularities, who fails to enforce the less pleasant prescriptions, can

as a good superior in the eyes of God. The same holds for teachers and ervisors and all who hold positions of authority over others.

The third point of our examen, the vain aspiring after worldly honors, also been touched upon in previous discussions. It will suffice to mention re that the mere possession of worldly honors is not incompatible with sanctity. Spes and kings, scholars and statesmen, have been canonized by the Church. It vanity, the desire of an inflated ego for adulation, is utterly evil and terly inimical to holiness. A soul infected with this disease loses its sense perspective; its vision becomes so distorted that its wretchedness appears be excellence; its poverty, super-abundance; and the satisfaction of self-love riumphs over the rights of God. Such a soul will not scruple to use any and every means to achieve its ends, and failure generally results in hysteria.

By way of conclusion, it may be well to add here a few comments on hysteria, since it is by no means uncommon among religious of both sexes. Hysteria is a disease of the affective life, and should be treated as such by a competent psychiatrist in cooperation with an understanding and experienced priest. The hysterical character is victim of a grossly overgrown ego. He is desperately in want of attention and sympathy, and since he is too vain or too weak-or both-to bear the burdens of community life, he seeks satisfaction where personal sacrifices are not required, where more satisfying rewards can be obtained. The craving for recognition and praise, even for passing mention, may become so violent that his entire personality is thrown off balance. The bysterical religious can be extraordinarily charitable—in fact, usually is so-but if his charity is not recognized and rewarded by love it quickly turns into bitter hatred. To get attention he may resort to adulation and flattery or to lies and talse accusations. He may make himself appear wholly depraved, even to the ettemity of confessing sins he never committed; or he may make himself appear physically ill and pretend to be suffering great agony. It would take us too far wheld to go deeper into a description of the hysterical character; it will suffice emphasize that the religious who is abnormally self-centered is well on the to hysteria.

It is important, especially for superiors and those in authority, to undernd the psychology of the hysterical personality. Such persons are not liars
the strict sense, nor are they wholly responsible for the harm they do. They
maladjusted and confused, and, as a rule, the vow of chastity is the cause
their sickness. Deprived of the love and sympathy that would normally be

theirs in the married state, they seek to satisfy their love-hunger wi substitutes and compensations in the religious state. Such person treated with the right kind of understanding, just as a person who ill must be treated with the right kind of medicine. In the last analy seem that persons with a tendency toward the psychoses of hyst qualified for the religious life, and those who have charge of po novices should watch for the symptoms. Total surrender to the cru together with the steadfast will to be nailed with Him to the cross way to prevent hysteria, and, from the spiritual point of view, the of it. Some of the following points may help us discover traces of hy own spiritual life: Do I try to center all my love on God alone, and cerned only with winning and retaining His favor? Do I expect nothing at all from any human being? Do I watch my motives? my natural urge to attract attention? Do I resist any tendencies ordinary, spectacular, or outstanding? On the other hand, do I even my real or imaginary "inner experiences"? Do I talk about my exterior and interior sufferings, my problems and difficulties? Do because I enjoy being regarded as the community's problem child? be the center of every recreation or every conversation, do I pout or red into silence? Do I really feel in my heart a craving for human love ciation and do I really feel I cannot be happy without it? If so, recourse to fervent and humble prayer?

We shall close this examen by calling attention to a little promay prove helpful. How often during the day do we express the we form or another, that the Lord be with us. The Dominus tecum of Mary; the Dominus vobiscum of the priest during Mass; the pray Breviary—all should remind us that if the Lord is with us, it is a Christ, and through Christ, and because of Christ, let us give our men; but let us keep our heart free from any desire to be loved by men

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Fr. Philotheus Boehner

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A sinner may fast, pray, weep, macerate his body, but what he so long as he is a sinner, is to be faithful to his God.

Candide Chalippe,