COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

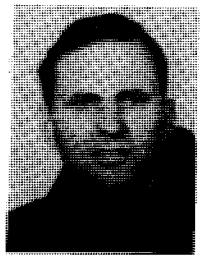
The cover and illustrations for the December issue of THE CORD were drawn by Sister Mary Regina, P.C.P.A., a contemplative at Sancta Clara Monastery, Canton, Ohio.

the CORD

December, 1972 Vol. XXII, No. 12

CONTENTS

the CORD is a monthly review devoted to Franciscan spirituality and published by the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University. Editorial Offices: Siena College Friary, Loudonville, N. Y. 12211. Editor: Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M.; Associate Editor: Julian A. Davies, O.F.M. Business and Circulation Office: The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. Business Manager: Mrs. Joseph Cucchiaro. Second class postage paid at St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778, and at additional mailing offices. Subscription rates: $3.00 a year; 30 cents a copy.



Advent

The Christmas Office used to remind us that it was in Silence that the Almighty leaped from Heaven to the womb of the Virgin. And Caryll Houselander's *Reed of God* used to be *de rigeur* for Advent because its author captured so well that time of quiet waiting for Christ which Mary first observed.

But Advent doesn't seem terribly advantageous any more, and one wonders whether it is because the theme of silence has been muted by the secularity thrust of post-Vatican II spirituality, and because the Columbus-like discovery of feeling has made constant communication, verbal and non-verbal, obligatory.

No greater patron could be found, no doubt, for our interest in our world of men than Francis of Assisi. But he, like the Master before him, spent plenty of nights on a mountain-top replenishing his spirit and listening to the voice of the Father. The emergence of television as a real factor in our lives and the communications media's virtual omnipresence make the needs and the pains of our brother most visible to us—too visible, we suggest. Viet Nam, the Middle East, Northern Ireland, the Ghetto, flood, fire, plane crash; Eagleton, McGovern, Nixon give us not a moment's peace. Even within the realm of religion we hear of debates on abortion, celibacy, ordination of women; of disputes between bishops and priests, sisters and pastors; of Pentecostalism, Peace Protests, Greeley, Cardinal Suenens, Mother Teresa. It all adds up to such a din that it just has to be very hard to hear God's voice. Very little harm would come to our service of God or man if—at least between now and Christmas—we cut in half the time we spend absorbing accounts of all that's going on everywhere, and give some thought to Whom Advent is all about.

The silencing of silence which has occurred in many religious communities is affecting far more than Advent. Talking more has not made us more loving; the need for noise which

is so much a part of our American culture has made us shut our doors to listen in solitary splendor to the Met, or Bach, or Perry Mason. Where formal meals still survive, complaining is the most common form of communication. Meetings keep us muttering, and counseling empties us even more. We need some quiet in our communities!

Granted, silence can be tense and oppressive—especially the overdoses of it that many of us "over-30's" had; but a silent community meal once or twice a week could hardly harm anyone. And a real *day* of recollection (as distinguished from four hours of conferences and devotions) might help us reestablish some equilibrium. (A spirit of prayer, unlike orange juice, cannot be concentrated.) Cutting in half meetings and parties on the part of the community, together with a bisecting of our own individual aspirations, would go a long way toward restoring not only Advent, but religious life.

We still do hear people tell of the peace and the Presence they experienced at a retreat house, or even in the waiting room of a friary or convent. May we as communities and individuals reawaken to that Value who is Prince of Peace not only because he brings peace, but because he comes in peace. "Be still and hear me, for I am God."

T. Julian Davis ofm

Snowflakes

delicate snowflake

slipping from the master's grasp

reflecting purity

into the darkness you bring

hopeful, peaceful quietness!

Sister Joyce, O.S.C.

"Perfect Joy" in the *Canticle of Brother Sun*

Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F.

Anselm W. Romb, O.F.M.C., has defined joy as "a part of that optimism which tells a man he will win the next race or the one after that." "When joy is habitually absent," he continues, "there is a real 'credibility gap' for oneself as well as for the world regarding the value of this vocation."[1] Father Romb is not looking through the proverbial rose-colored glasses, but realistically stating that to have this joy one must make a concerted effort to know why he is filled with joy, whence his joy springs, and the necessity of prayer which is the fuel of this joy.

> No one skips through life with a perpetual smile of joy; no one's heart is light when he gets out of bed onto a cold floor early on a winter morning. But St. Francis reproved the dour visage and melancholy attitude. Only sin should make a brother sad... He even legislated joy in Chapter Seven of the First Rule: "The brothers should show themselves joyful and content in the Lord, and becomingly courteous."[2]

Nowhere, in any extant account of Saint Francis' life, can we find the saint described as being in any type of saddened condition. Although he was beset with many problems—both interiorly, on a personal level; and exteriorly, as the order grew in membership—he seemed always aware of the presence of God and of God's providential care for himself as an individual. This does not imply, of course, that he was constantly smiling or that he was always pleased with what was happening around him. The point is, rather, that he had acquired the countenance of composure or self-control. Sadness is an emotion one feels in the presence of an unavoidable evil—and Francis had the self-control as well as the faith needed to realize that no evil would be permitted to vanquish him permanently.

Indeed, Francis was an example of self-control—a control made perfect through intimate union with the Master of self-control. Consider, e. g., the discipline he exhibited as he composed his *Canticle*, during a time, when his body was racked with pain. In fact, the *Canticle* is unique for several reasons: it was written by a saint, it has universal qualities which appeal to all ages and all times, it was written in the language of the people, and it explodes with joy at a time when its author should have turned off the world instead of delighting in it.[3] Love, universality, and deep communion with his brothers were all suffused with a world-penetrating joy in God's service, as Brother Body weakened and Francis's soul thrust heavenward.

Francis's *Canticle* has caused no end of distress, however, to the many experts who have labored to track down his authentic writings and (still more important) to determine the exact meaning of certain difficult expressions. The long standing arguments over the meaning of "per," e. g., must make Francis smile even today in the "perfect joy" of being misunderstood. Does the preposition mean that God should be praised *by human beings for* all other creatures, or, rather, *by* these other creatures themselves? Or, indeed, might it mean that men should praise God *through* the rest of creation? Not only does the word literally admit of all three interpretations, but as Raphael Brown points out, Francis the mystic might well have had all three senses in mind in the sense that they all fit in well with the saint's spiritual outlook.[4] The lesson to be drawn is far more important and more generally applicable than this trivial controversy from which it is drawn: it is more

[1] Anselm W. Romb, O.F.M.Conv., *The Franciscan Charism in the Church* (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild, 1969), p. 94.
[2] *Ibid.*

Sister Mary Thaddeus, O.S.F., is Chairman of the English Department at Oswego Catholic High in Oswego, New York. A member of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, Minor Conventuals (Syracuse, N. Y.), Sister Thaddeus has published poetry in several periodicals, including Poetry Parade *and* National Poetry Anthology.

[3] Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., *The Real Francis* (Pulaski, Wis.: Franciscan Publishers, 1967), pp. 19-20.
[4] Omer Englebert, *Saint Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1965), p. 445.

important to express the Truth than to be correct; and the Truth is what leads man to give greater love and glory to God.

Perfect joy, as Francis told Brother Leo, is not the great influx of important and learned men to the order; is not that all royalty and high-ranking prelates join the order; is not the conversion of the entire world; is not the gift to perform great miracles. Rather, perfect joy is arriving unannounced on a dark night, cold and wet, unrecognized, kept waiting, scolded, turned away, and finally beaten. Francis does not stop there, however; for such abuse could be damaging to the disciple of Christ unless all this ill treatment is accepted precisely as his just deserts in imitation of the Crucified. Only if we "bear all this for the love of God with patience, happiness, and convinced that [we] deserve no better treatment" is such an experience productive of perfect joy.[5]

There has been much speculation, not only about the meaning of the Canticle—as indicated above—but also about the place and season of its composition. It has been established that Francis did write it, and that he wrote it at a time when he was so physically weakened that one wonders how he could have formulated so beautiful, meaningful, and joyful a poem. Perhaps it is safe to say since his life had been lived in such complete union with God since his conversion, even physical suffering could not diminish his constant attention to his divine Lord. That there was some element of reparation, too, involved in his decision to create the Canticle, is clear from Francis's own words: "I want to compose a new hymn about the Lord's creatures of which we make daily use, without which we cannot live, and with which the human race greatly offends its Creator."[6]

In the Canticle each creature is mentioned not only by name, but also with a certain unique familiarity; a type of kinship is expressed in each case by the word "Brother" or "Sister." Francis called the sun, wind, air, and fire "brothers," and the moon, stars, water, earth, and death, "sister." In a "mixed metaphor" calculated to offend the grammatical and logical purist, "Sister Earth" turns out to be "Mother" as well: "All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our mother."[7] Sister Death, in turn, is given the quality of the inevitable "embrace" as well as the ability to distinguish between those "who die in mortal sin" and those "she finds doing your will."

As the Canticle unfolds, Francis continues to elaborate his praises and to rejoice in all of God's creation. At length he introduces (in line 13) the one obstacle to the love of God: mortal sin. He follows this line with a warning to those who "die in mortal sin," but then he quickly

[5] *Cf. ibid.*, pp. 232-33.

[6] Leo Sherley-Price, *Saint Francis of Assisi*, English trans. of the *Speculum Perfectionis* (New York, 1959), p. 100. Cf. Benen Fahy and Placid Hermann, OFM., tr. & ed., *The Writings of Saint Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1963), p. 128.

[7] All citations from the "Canticle of Brother Sun" are taken from Fahy & Hermann, pp. 130-131.

resumes his joyful strain with the words, "Happy those She finds doing your will," as if he felt this admonition was sufficient for those who would read his Canticle.

The striking contrast between Francis's physical condition and the Canticle's joy has already been emphasized. As Placid Hermann so strikingly expresses it, the Canticle is "all the more remarkable [in] that written though it was during his last illness and intense suffering, it displays a heart filled with joy and happiness and a heart filled with the deepest gratitude towards Almighty God, even for suffering and for Sister Death."[8] To cast some additional light (hopefully) on this striking contrast, I have attempted a linear exposition, in the following paragraphs, linking as accurately as possible the circumstances in Francis's life with the lines of the Canticle for which these circumstances may have been the inspiration.[9]

It has been established from Francis's own words that perfect joy meant enduring suffering willingly for the love of Christ. It is understandable, therefore that in his last moments of life his response to suffering would be joyful, at least interiorly. The Canticle is evidence that his exterior response was as joyful as the interior.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

[9] For the chronological arrangement I have used Raphael Brown's listing on pp. 395-96 of Englebert.

1225, Mar. (?): On a visit to St. Clare at San Damiano, his eye-sickness suddenly turns much worse. Almost blind, he has to stay there in a cell in or by the chaplain's house. At the insistence of Brother Elias, at last he consents to receive medical care, but weather is too cold, and treatment is postponed.	*. . . All praise be yours, my Lord, through all that you have made, and first my Lord Brother Sun, who brings the day: and light you give us through him. How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendour!*
1225, Apr.-May (?): Still at San Damiano, Francis undergoes treatment without improvement. He receives the divine promise of eternal life and composes the Canticle of Brother Sun.	*All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and Stars, in the Heavens you have made them, bright and precious and fair.*
1225, June (?): Adding to the Canticle, Francis reconciles the feuding bishop and podesta of Assisi. 1225, early July (?): Francis is welcomed in Rieti by Hugolin and the papal court.	*All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air, and Fair and Stormy, all the weather's moods by which you cherish all that you have made.*
He goes to Fonte Colombo to undergo eye treatment urged by Hugolin, but has it postponed owing to the absence of Brother Elias.	*All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water, so useful, lowly, precious, and pure.*
1225, July-Aug. (?): The doctor cauterizes Francis's temples at Fonte Colombo, without any improvement.	*All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you brighten up the night. How beautiful is he, how gay! Full of power and strength.*
1125, Sept.: Francis moves to San Fabiano near Rieti to be treated by other doctors, who pierce his ears. He restores the trampled vineyard to the poor priest.	*All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our Mother, who feeds us in her sovereignty and produces various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.*
1226, Apr.: Francis is in Siena for further treatment. 1226, July-Aug.: In the summer heat, Francis is taken to Bagnara in the hills near Nocera.	*All praise be yours, my Lord, through those who grant pardon for love of you: through those who endure sickness and trial.*
1226, late Aug. or early Sept.: His condition growing worse, Francis is taken via Nottiano to the palace of the bishop in Assisi.	*Happy those who endure in peace. By you, Most High, they will be crowned.*
1226, Sept.: Knowing that his death is imminent, Francis insists on being carried to the Portiuncula. 1226, Oct. 3: He dies there. Sunday, Oct. 4, he is buried in San Giorgio Church.	*All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Death, from whose embrace no mortal can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin! Happy those she finds doing your will! The second death can do no harm to them. Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks, and serve him with great humility.*

Whether each of the above events factually, historically inspired the corresponding verse of the Canticle is less important than the spiritual lesson to be derived from meditating on the various parallels.

Take, for instance, the visit to Clare at San Damiano and the initial burst of praise; here we find emphasized Francis's love of creatures, especially those who have entered personally into his own life and come to mean so much to him. Again, consider Francis when he was almost blind, and picture him extolling God for "Brother Sun"; here, surely, there is abundant material for reflection on Francis's grateful recall of the beauty he has seen thanks to God's gifts of sight and sun. The same rich sort of food for thought is found in the contemplation of Francis huddled in his cold, damp cell and responding with his thanks for the day, the light, and the radiance of Brother Sun. Similarly, as the saint's illness continues to worsen, we may envisage him becoming one with the darkness of the starlit night as he praises God for the moon and stars. And, finally, as Francis savors the promise of eternal life, how striking his words appear, about the "heavens" in which God has made the moon and stars—"bright and precious and fair."

Hugoline Sabatino, O.F.M.

Liberation

ultimate prison:
electro-charged air
oil slick moat denotes the guilty
to sun's eye
bulging through a defoliated jail yard
where dogs are trained to mistrust man
who manipulates cells
outmoding the death chamber
with genocides and pesticides
secured
by the infinitesimal combinations
of a computer warden

assaulted by do-goods, do-evils,
by extra-sensory saucers
and besieged by Christians
with rockets and spitballs
bestilled by democracy's leveler,
her ploughshares of war,
it stands unchinked

somewhere unheard of
in the newness of pregnancy
and the strangeness of travel
somehow Joseph gently lifts
his young wife
and the animals sense
on the crumpling of hay
a burst of crying
through the black night air

having failed in all that we've tried
we need this helpless child.

Christmas Promise

they have fought to renew urban slums
and dezone the suburbs,
not knowing the final low-income flats
or seeing their mulatto dwellers.
they died, many, agonized helpless
by deaths the world over
facing dossiers and draft files
defense budgets and penal codes.
they scrambled lifelong
for the few confetti
of justice.

now they are slammed in the grave
(a couple are adorned
in tribute to disaster)
to pester us no more.

but now?
do they live their dream of peace,
a human world
nursed on their vision?
has a brotherhood grown
which none could have guessed
on the strength
of surviving hope?
have wept-over bruises been washed away?
and what lost playmates
have awakened?

love must come on the installment plan
and its furthest ripple is never seen,
its depth ever elusive—
even Jesus first came to us
in the noncommittal form
of a baby.

Per Omnia Saecula Saeculorum

Robert J. Waywood, O.F.M.

Since even before the papacy of John XXIII, there seems to have been a gentlemen's agreement among preachers in Holy Mother Church not to say a mumbling word about Hell. Maybe—after the horrors of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, the cold-war threat of nuclear holocausts, and the cold-blooded brutalities of little Third-World wars—maybe we mortals did not need oratorical reminders of Hell's imminence just at the time. But I for one cannot ignore or minimize eternal punishment until the Holy Father directs us to tear out whole pages of the Good News as being typographical errors (ascribable, no doubt, to some clumsy printer's devil). No, the Good Shepherd did not mince words about the everlasting garbage heap (Gehenna), whence not even he could rescue the errant lamb. However, since the present generation still appears to be constantly tottering on the edge of neurosis, there is no need to focus long or closely on the features of the Inferno. I shall simply suggest that we might deduce for ourselves some of the frightful conditions of the underworld environment by considering the qualities of glorified bodies in reverse.

While studying the theology of the Resurrection as a seminarian, I learned that the resurrected body would be characterized by four glorious qualities - attributes which the risen Christ seems to have displayed during his forty-day sojourn with his disciples before ascending into Heaven: agility, or the power to transport oneself anywhere in the world instantly (to move through closed doors and to dartle between Capharnaum and Jerusalem in the twinkling of an eye); impassibility, or the incapacity of feeling pain—nail wounds, thorn pricks, spear jabs; subtilty, or independence from physical susceptibilities such as hunger, thirst, weariness; and finally, glory, or the emission of an observable radiance from the then-perfected body. Such shall be the features, theologians (used to) tell us, of physical life for those who arise to salvation. The situation for those who arise to damnation, it would seem, will prove quite the contrary. Immobility will be their lot; they cannot stir from the infernal regions; some may even have their heads, as Dante envisioned it, forever stuck in unyielding ice. Instead of an uncanny insensitivity to pain, the Hell-dweller will bear about in his body a preternatural supersensitivity to pain—probably to some appropriate traumatic stimulus. Rather than being independent from the demands of the body, each lost soul will be taunted and tantalized by unfulfilled, unfulfillable appetites—very likely in accordance with their peculiar sins of the flesh. Finally, in place of the irradiating glory associated with the saints, the damned will be bathed in the ghastly, flickering strobe lights of Hell fire. Saint Augustine, ex-sinner though he was, made short shrift with the geography of Hell, so I may be pardoned if I scant the topography of its tortures: it is as easy to overdo them as it is to burn a steak. The important question regarding the nether world is not where it is or what it is like, but, as the Bishop of Hippo was wont to point out, how to escape going there.

Just about the nicest way to escape Hell is to think long and hard enough about Heaven, as did Saint Francis of Assisi, for whom the mere whisper of the word occasioned a rapture. We have it on no less an authority than Sacred Scripture that the blessedness of Heaven transcends the powers of human imagination and beggars all description. Yet one would think that our best poets and word-mongers, not to mention the philosophers and theologians, might have more frequently and strenuously essayed the subject of Heaven, a matter so huge in importance and rich in suggestion. Of course, I am prescinding here in my strictures from utopian literature—which stretches from Plato's *Republic* and More's *Utopia* to Butler's *Erenwon* and Huxley's *Brave New World*—for these and kindred works are satiric swipes at real society rather than serious delineations of an ideal state; and besides, their authors' imaginative sights were leveled at the considerably lower target of an earthly paradise. As for the details of a celestial Paradise, off the top of my head, I can think of a mere handful of literary attempts at articulation, and these derive heavily from the two dominant images of Scripture, that is, the endless feast and the hosanna-singing chorus: Dante's *Paradiso*, parts of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Maeterlinck's *The Bluebird* (one scene of it), Shaw's *Don Juan in Hell* (the roué's version of Heaven), and Marc Connelly's *Green Pastures*. It is this last-mentioned interpretation of celestial beatitude that, for all its grotesquerie, impresses me as being the warmest, most credible, and most complete account of what Heaven will be like.

Connelly's play, you will remember, opens with a Negro Baptist minister conducting a Sunday School class down South. As the avuncular reverend proceeds to answer a young fidgeting skeptic's riddles about the supernatural, the scene gives way to a bustling fish-fry in some Dixie woodland. Ambling about and supervising the fishing and the frying and the feasting is the Lord God, a six-foot-four Nubian in stove hat and coat of tails; wherever he moves the Lord is shadowed by his right-hand man, Gabriel, a carbon copy of Jack Benny's valet Rochester, who is forever proffering his Boss a genu-wine five-cent ceegar. Whatever problems threaten in the course of the picnic, the

Father Robert J. Waywood, O.F.M., is an Assistant Professor of English at Siena College and a member of the Executive Committee of the New York State Speech Teachers Association.

Lord instantly irons out—making the catfish bite, sending the cumulonimbuses scudding off, and patching up quarrels among some pickaninnies. Everyone is on the whole full of bliss, and the greatest happiness of all is just being with and talking to the Lord. Now, to some students of eschatology, this cotton-picker's conception of Heaven may appear a little less gross than the Koran's technicolor previews of coming attractions— a Paradise of lush hanging gardens, curvaceous houris, fragrance of spikenard, and decanters of nectar. It would be forward of me, I know, to ask what is so wrong with the Mohammedan Heaven; but I *will* say that the faithful do need a concrete and stimulating image of beatitude, no matter how sublime or subtle Heaven's joys may prove, if we saints (with a small *s*) are to approach anywhere near the motivation which drove the Saints to heroic measures for the sake of the Kingdom. I contend that the foregoing black cameo version of the New Jerusalem, even if it is not to every believer's eschatological taste, can show us the way to envisage our Heavenly destiny realistically and compellingly.

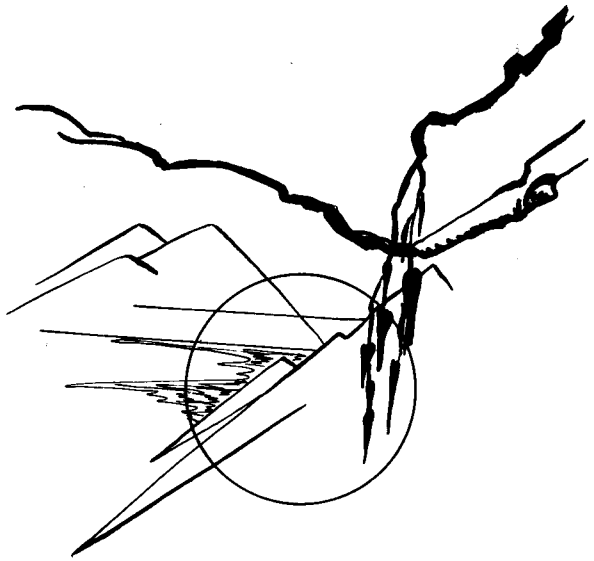
For some reasonable analysis, with some assist from revelation, it seems that the blessedness of Heaven is comprised of four distinct causes of joy—all of which are graphically adumbrated in Connelly's darky drama. Thus, we can understand that in Heaven discomfort is no more; everyone is at rest (or better, at home); all are comrades; and God unbares his goodness, truth, and beauty . . . and is infinitely nice to be near.

Freedom from want and hurt seems to me to be, logically, the first bliss of Heaven. In the New Jerusalem every tear will be wiped away, and there will be no more sighing or groaning; for all these former disagreeable things shall have passed away. As at the pickaninnies' picnic, the sun will ever shine; the glass will stand at a comfortable height; and no one will be inclined to cuss the humidity. But just think of a few more implications under the heading of this first joy of Heaven; broaden the horizon of the happiness in the offing on this one score alone. No more tears—yes, and no more heart attacks or heart aches, no more cancers or cankers, no more drudgery or ennui, no more whip-cracking or wise-cracking, no more insignificance or over-exposure, no more left-overs or hand-me-downs, no more odious comparisons or body odor, no more mortgages or leaking mufflers, no more mosquitoes or coffee grounds, no more grounds for divorce or Song My massacres, no more hangovers or hiccups, no more role-playing and being on parole, no more dwarfs and wallflowers, no more tanks and floods, no more small pox and small talk, no more pecking order and pimples, no more insomnia and drug nods, no more malnutrition and sunburn, no more elephantiasis and failing grades, no more rubber bullets and moth holes, no more pink-eye and red-eye, no more fish bones and loan sharks, no more sales taxes and emphysema, no more hi-fi flutter and prostitution, no more earthquakes and fallen cakes, no more tracheotomies and railroad strikes, no more thunder and napalm, no more skyjacking and

obesity, no more meetings and club dues, no more child-beating and cribbing, no more night court and crop-burning, no more baldness and harelip, no more overdue fines and bifocals, no more strontium 90 fallout and thalidomide babies, no more spinsterhood and black-widow spiders, no more Olympic shoot-outs and common colds, no more deadlines and bread lines, no more getting up on cold mornings and rainy vacations, no more two-star movies and colliding oilers, no more being fired and hangnails, no more money-mad pastors and phoney gurus. You can try your own hand at this litany of "former things" that shall, hopefully, have passed away. If your imagination falters, simply consult your nearest newspaper for suggestions as to what sub-lunar liabilities will be conspicuous by their absence up yonder.

The next degree of joy in Heaven is more positive. Call it finding fulfillment, coming to rest, being at peace . . . arriving home. Whatever the precise character or personal tone of this kind of beatitude, I feel certain that it will not be something utterly exotic and adventitious. I have an intuition that if this joy may be likened to the excitement of finding and getting a pearl of great price, it will be thrice as thrilling inasmuch as the discovery is made in one's own back yard as it were. To express the idea another way, I feel that we will not experience this degree of bliss by crossing over the rainbow and laying hands on a pot of celestial gold, but rather we will shed the scales from our eyes and see that we have been basking in rainbow light and sitting amidst gold. In a word, we will find the here and now apotheosized; the apocalypse, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. Words would certainly fail me if I tried to pinpoint this happiness further—that is, if I tried directly to describe it. But I do think I can convey some inkling of the nature of this joy by explaining that it shall be an amalgam of all the satisfactions novelists and playwrights and script writers have striven to inject into the denouements of their slice-of-life opuses.

For example, off hand I think of Ebenezer Scrooge's resurrected *joie de vivre* that prompted him to send the urchin off to fetch from the butcher shop a goose as big as the boy. Then there is Jody's bittersweet emergence from the rites of initiation when he returns the yearling deer to the Florida wilds; or the lighter but still heart-tugging joy of *Junior Miss* when Peggy Ann Garner sheds bobby socks and braces. Add to this fulfillment Tom Cortney's successful matriculation at a Scots med school with the help of a bequest from doughty old Charles Coburn in the film version of Cronin's *The Green Years*. Or take what appears a seamier but is really a richer, more redemptive finale: the fittingness of Burton's decision to stay on with the unmoored widow Ava Gardner in *The Night of the Iguana*. If that joy seems too dubious, balance it off with the sprightly, heart-warming denouement of Tennessee Williams's madcap matrimonial comedy *A Period of Adjustment*. To glimpse the quality and intensity of the second bliss of Heaven I am trying to illuminate, the reader must imagine these and all other fictional happy



endings piled on top of each other. But that is not all; for all these instances of fulfillment are extraneous to him—they are merely parallels or paradigms of that special, that personal apotheosis which will be his alone. Speaking for myself again, if I should achieve Heaven, there my peculiar (in both senses of the word) my peculiar dreams will take shape for me; my visions will materialize. I really believe that the positive premium to which I allude, this second bliss of Heaven, will fit like an old belt, will be a grand finale which, though indescribable and unimaginable, I should have suspected all along. Those "many mansions" will actually feel like home sweet home.

Certainly one of the least mysterious of the great expectations Heaven holds out for us is the third beatitude—that of being reunited with loved ones, of befriending one's heroes, and of making precious acquaintances. In the world of the newspaper, it is a well-known fact that the most widely read columns, the newspaper's staple selling point, are the human interest columns; the society page, the personality-parade section, the names-in-the-news box. For the paramount interest of people by and large is people at large. That is why the prospect of joining the citizenry of the New Jerusalem, it seems to me, provides the roundest, most realistic, most cogent reason for resisting evil and doing good in a pinch or over the long haul. In fact, just the other day I was explaining to a benign atheist the honest, unofficial argument I propound to prove to myself God's existence. My private apology for theism might shame a gorilla or make Saint Thomas turn over in his grave, but it certainly prods me into refusing to accept

ancestry from the apes, even as it convinces me utterly and irrevocably of life beyond the grave. You see, Uncle Jack was a good, fun-loving, fun-making man who came nowhere near being fulfilled in this life. Slight of build, he was a classic specimen of the childless, hen-pecked husband. This good little guy, who never ceased to bring us nephews the bits of small treasures fallen out of anonymous pockets at the dry-cleaning plant where he toiled for twenty years—jacknives, hankies, watch-fobs—this little guy who occasionally took a wee drop too much and got clobbered by my mother's sister, this guy who joked rain or shine about how his company was cleaning up in the dyeing business but dying in the cleaning business, this little guy had to be imperishable—had to be living on and on in perpetual jollity, richly rewarded for all the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune he had borne in his mortal flesh. Granting an Uncle Jack, I knew in my heart of hearts there had to be a Great Washing Day and a Dry-Cleaning Plant in the Sky.

Yes, we should all think often and seriously about the hope of rejoining good and faithful kith and kin in the Hereafter. Unquestionably, I expect to meet my ten top heroes in Heaven: Jesus, Chesterton, Saint Francis, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Cardinal Newman, Danny Kaye, Nelson Eddy, Victor Herbert, Franz Lehar, and Basil Rathbone. I do look forward to comparing notes with the Twelve Apostles, Houdini, Saint Thérèse, and Jane Austen. But my knowledge of these folks is purely professional or intellectual. The people I viscerally miss here below and yearn to revisit with eternally up above are my departed relatives and friends—Grampa, my Irish grandfather who took his tomatoes with sugar on them; Aunt Mollie, who used to deal the cards when the family played penny-ante into the wee, small hours; Buddy Taylor, who used to live upstairs and was lost in a submarine during World War II; Ben and Bill, for thirty-five years the proprietors of our little red-brick candy store; Norman Van Ness, the wonderful artist and clarinetist who graduated from high school with me and died a year later while serving in the Air Corps Band . . . . These are just a few typical souls that I hope and expect to be reunited with if I lead a good life here on earth, stay humble, and lean on God's arm a lot.

At last we come to the fourth beatitude of Heaven, seeing God face to face. So difficult is it to put into words just what joys the Beatific Vision involves, that some intellectual snobs such as G. B. Shaw and Mark Twain have rashly concluded that the whole idea is so much bilgewater, and they have lampooned the Heavenly hosts that gaze unblinkingly on the Divine Graybeard. Shaw, for example, has his Don Juan liken the activity of intuiting God to attending an endless, insufferably boring Sunday afternoon concert or theosophy lecture. Quite at home in Hell, the witty rogue claims that he would find the pleasures of Heaven so starchy and stifling that life down below was infinitely preferable. If he was being serious, Shaw should have known better.

I will wager Shaw did not find his adorable Wagnerian operas te-

dious or intolerable. Well, gazing on God, I like to think, will be better and more exciting than watching a never-ending, never-palling three-dimension, stereophonic, technicolor, panavision, star-studded, five-star, budget-unlimited, shot-on-location, drama-musical extravaganza. It will be so absorbing, no one will leave for popcorn or coke, and aeons will slip by without notice. "Lord, it is good for us to be here," will be our unvarying response. And, oddly enough, we will not be mere idle spectators; somehow, we will be swept up into the production and get into the act. It will be a cosmic happening more than a spectacle: happiness will be happening, now and ever after. The beauty behind every beauty—Gershwin's syncopation, Nicklaus's follow-through, Shakespeare's high bombast, Bjoerling's high C, Rubens's burnt gold; the truth behind all truth— the Periodic Table, the Library of Congress, Grimm's Law, the Theory of Relativity, Topology, Etymology, Endocrinology; the goodness behind all goodness—martyrdom, patience, generosity, altruism, diligence, forbearance, solicitude, innocence, loyalty: all these but darkly intimate the kaleidoscopic riches that lie within the unplummetable vortex of Divine Being.

When all is said and done, my efforts at suggesting what the joys of Heaven may be like must prove utterly unequal to the task. Saint Paul has said the last, most pregnant (if most laconic) thing about the last of the Four Last Things: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered the heart of man what good things God has prepared for those who love Him." Nevertheless, in the light of this faltering conference, I hope and pray that a few more of the faithful are dying to get to Heaven.

A Woman Shall Compass a Man

First Christmas Sermon of
Saint Lawrence of Brindisi

It is a new, unheard of, unusual and very great miracle: the Lord himself will give you a sign, that is, a miracle: Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel (Is. 7:14). Before she was in labor, she brought forth; before her time came to be delivered, she brought forth a man child. Who has ever heard such a thing? And who has seen the like to this (Is. 66:7)? His name shall be called Wonderful, a miracle which seems impossible (Is. 9:6). It does seem impossible that God the Eternal, the Infinite, the Almighty, of infinite Majesty should be a little infant recently born. God knows that man, by his very nature, is a lover of novelty, that all new things delight him. So today he wished to do something new and wonderful, something spectacular, so spectacular as to entice the whole world. An angel from heaven summoned the shepherds to this spectacle: Behold I bring you news of great joy which shall be to all the people: today a Savior has been born for you .... You shall find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger (Lk. 2:10). Once summoned, the shepherds ran thither: Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this word that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us. And coming they found Mary and Joseph and the Babe lying in a manger. And all who had heard wondered, they wondered at so great and so peculiar a novelty (Lk. 2:18). Not only did the shepherds wonder, but they also preached the wonderful thing of God and drew many to admire it: and all who heard wondered at the things which the shepherds told them. The shepherds are preaching the glory of Christ and are

making known the revelations of God; for today even the new and wonderful work of God is to be seen.

Men are easily drawn to novel and unusual spectacles since they are lovers of novelty. A woman who wishes to attract the eyes of all men to consider her beauty, looks for new fashions in clothes and ornaments, in cosmetics and hairdressing; she ruminates on the new world of womankind. So too God, wishing to be known by men, uses new styles and new spectacles.

God sees that the devil, using some new-fangled means, deceives the world, averts it from God, converts it to himself, and leads the world to idolatry and impiety; for in order to deceive man in paradise, he assumed the form of a snake, and in that shape spoke and conversed with Eve. Clearly it was a novelty for a snake to talk and discourse intelligently like a wise man; also it was a new thing that Baalam's jackass should speak. The devil deceived Eve by the novelty, and so afterwards led the whole world into idolatry and impiety, and detains it there. And he makes men abandon the True and Living God to worship idols, golden statues, silver, wooden, stone—to adore images; and sometimes he himself inhabits these statues to speak by answering questions and giving oracles. To see and hear a statue speak is indeed marvellous; in fact by such a prodigy whole societies in many ages were led into and detained in error. The devil also enters into the art of black magic and false miracles, which are worked through his magicians, and since these prodigies appear to men to be supernatural, men are easily deluded, hallucinated, and kept in the error of impiety. The devil, moreover, predicts the future through magicians and astrologers and by these diabolic works converts the whole earth from God to himself.

God then, desiring the salvation of all men, began to use these works himself. He used the prophets, who gave prophecies and worked miracles in the name of the Lord. He employed apparitions, for the devil too appeared to men often under various forms and figures, just as he appeared in the form of

a serpent to our first parents. So God appeared in a certain new form to Jacob on the height of the heavenly ladder. He appeared to Moses in the burning and unconsumed bush. He appeared to the whole nation when he gave the Law amidst the fire and fumes with a great noise of horns and the boom of thunder and the brilliance of terrible lightning. Again, when Solomon's Temple was dedicated, he appeared in fire and clouds. Most often he appeared that way to the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Daniel, and others. He used oracles, for in the Holy of Holies, from the midst of cherubim, he utters oracles and divine responses.

But finally he wished to use this new and most wonderful prodigy of all: that he should become a man and by such a novelty to draw men to himself. God created a new thing upon earth: humanity in God. In God mortality, passibility, poverty, humility, slavery, suffering. The new thing is a stable in place of heavenly paradise; a manger in place of a high throne, a throne elevated according to Isaiah, a sapphire throne above the firmament according to Ezekiel. The new thing is animals, ox and ass, in place of innumerable angels and ministering spirits according to Daniel. The new thing is for the creator and father of all things to have a mother; the nourisher of all the earth to have a nurse; for him who feeds all the angels in heaven and the animals on earth to need milk. To mankind God's divinity, his eternity, his greatness, glory, majesty, power, creation, providence and rule of the universe: all this was an old thing, an old story. Today all that has come to pass in new. God becomes man; the Creator a creature; the eternal temporal; the infinite finite; the immense small. Make his works known among the people (Is. 21:4): his new and wonderful works. Come and see the works of the Lord, the prodigies which he effected upon the earth (Ps. 45:9).

Everyone marvelled: today all the angels of heaven convene to see this new spectacle, this new work of God. All the heavenly spirits leave paradise to feast their eyes upon so new, so unusual, so wonderful and stupendous a sight in a manger.

The Liturgy of the Hours

Charles V. Finnegan, O.F.M.

The publication in Rome of the *Liturgy of the Hours* and the interim breviaries appearing in many parts of the world provide us with an important aid to renewal in prayer. It goes without saying that the revision of liturgical books in itself is no guarantee of genuine renewal in our prayer life; there is always the danger of merely exchanging an old breviary for a new one. But such a revision can be an occasion of genuine progress and even sincere conversion: adopting a *new attitude* towards the Divine Office. That would seem to be the grace of the present hour.

By word and by example Saint Francis teaches his followers a special love for the Divine Office. He speaks of the Office in his Testament and many other writings; the final Rule for his friars directs simply: "The brothers shall recite the Divine Office according to the order of the Holy Roman Church, with the exception of the psalter." And as for his example: who ever preached a more powerful sermon on the importance of the Office than Francis, when gravely ill and almost totally blind he requested the aid of a cleric so that he might continue to pray the Office? "The Divine Office according to the order of the Holy Roman Church" has been revised, but the renewal in the spirit of prayer that such a revision intends to aid calls for study, effort, and a personally prayerful approach on our part. By his words and principally by his example Saint Francis invites us to this genuine renewal.

Father Charles V. Finnegan, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province and former missionary in Latin America, is an Assistant at Holy Cross Parish, Bronx, New York.

Renewed Interest in Prayer

The media are reminding us of a truth that religious and indeed all Christians can never afford to forget: prayer is "in." *Time*'s feature article (June 21, 1971), devoted to the "Jesus people," describes young people whose lives "revolve around the necessity for an intense personal relationship with that Jesus, and the belief that such a relationship should condition every human life." The New York *Times* (June 28, 1971) says of Brooklyn's priests what can hopefully be said of many priests and religious the world over: they "are showing a renewed interest in prayer— especially group prayer in rectories."

Much of the media's interest is in informal or spontaneous prayer meetings, such as characterize the Charismatic Renewal Movement The advantage and real beauty of this prayer should not, however, blind us to the need for some formal, structured prayers. Not everything formal is to be equated with formalism. As Father Constantine Koser writes in *Our Life With God*,

> To be sure, creative spontaneity can be a marvelous part of life with God. However, let us note that not all spontaneity is creative. Some is banal, mediocre, primitive, *un*creative. Furthermore, everyone knows from personal experience that there is no such thing as an inexhaustible fountain of spontaneity. Time and again we have all felt the wellsprings of spontaneity dry up momentarily or even for extended periods. Sometimes too the mud and sand of tiredness, apathy, aridity, depression, etc., block the flow. Life with God does not come to a halt at such times. At least it should not. This is where sane and balanced forms and prepared formulas can be lifesavers for the soul.

The new name "Liturgy of the Hours" replaces the customary "Breviary" or "Divine Office." The term "Divine Office" was considered too generic; it could apply to any and every liturgical prayer, especially the Eucharistic celebration. And the term "Breviary" referred to an abbreviation of the Divine Office worked out in the thirteenth century for itinerants. The term referred more to a book than to a prayer and created the impression (a correct one in the thirteenth century) that the complete Office was to be found elsewhere.

The new title—*Liturgy of the Hours*—qualifies the Divine Office more precisely. It is first of all liturgy: that is, the prayer of the "whole Christ" offered to the Father by the power of the Spirit; it is

a real sharing in Christ's paschal mystery and saving work. It is, moreover, liturgy *of the hours* because its specific purpose is to "sanctify the whole course of the day and the night by the praises of God" (Constitution on the Liturgy, ¶ 84).

Consecration of Time

Even before the coming of Christ, by intervening in human history, God made of purely cosmic time a "time of salvation." History itself became a "history of salvation." It was in the fullness of time that God sent his only Word to "pitch his tent" among us—to pass through and consecrate time by going about doing good. But above all else Saint Luke and Saint John reveal Jesus' life as one of constant and loving communion with his Father. Jesus is the example and Master of prayer; indeed, "he *often* retired to deserted places and prayed" (Lk. 5:16). The General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours cites 47 scriptural texts that speak of Jesus' prayer. Nor was his prayer always informal; it was his custom to participate in the structured sabbath liturgy in the synagogue (cf. Lk. 4:16).

The saving work of Christ continues, because "all things in the heavens and on earth" must be brought "into one under Christ's headship" (Eph. 1:10). It is only when the end comes, "when finally all has been subjected to the Son . . . that God may be all in all," that Christ can "hand over the kingdom to God the Father" (cf. 1 Cor. 15: 24-28), his saving work completed. In the meantime he continues to distribute his riches in time; we unite the hours of our lives to the life of Christ and his saving action. Divine power manifested in our Lord's life is brought into the present, and shared in by the liturgical community. Every day the Christian exclaims: *Haec dies quam fecit Dominus!*

Time, therefore, is sanctified by the saving presence of Christ in the liturgy. The Liturgical Year makes present the power of the saving mysteries of Christ's life; the weekly celebration of the Paschal Mystery is realized by the Sunday Eucharist; the hours of the day are consecrated by the Liturgy of the Hours. Time becomes the "matter" of a sacramental encounter bringing us into contact with the saving work of Christ. Yeats wrote: "I spit in the face of time that has transfigured me." The Christian view of time is quite different. Time is not only responsible for our human mortality that Yeats so dreaded; it is an instrument of salvation because Christ is present and operates in time, transforming us and granting us ever more fully a share in his immortal life. The Liturgy of the Hours makes every day "an acceptable time" and a "day of salvation."

The General Instruction

The new Liturgy of the Hours is introduced by an extremely important document: the *Instructio Generalis de Liturgia Horarum.* (An English translation and a commentary by A. M. Roguet, O.P., has been published by the Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn.) It is a biblical, theological, pastoral, and rubrical introduction to the Office. Careful study and reflection on this document are

really required to understand the value and enter into the spirit of the Liturgy of the Hours.

The spirit is new. Those of us accustomed to the treatment of the Office found in the manuals of canon law and moral theology will find in this document an almost totally different outlook. Without in any way wishing to caricature the canonists' study of the Office, it can honestly be said that if one did only what they required one could hardly be said to be praying. Indeed, many of them denied that internal attention was necessary to fulfill the obligation of the Office. Thus, one who was deliberately and totally distracted mentally during the entire Office substantially fulfilled his obligation provided only that he avoided external activity that could not be reconciled with praying the Office. Genicot-Salsmans (II, ¶756) calls this a "magna autem et intricata quaestio."

Then again, the manuals gave great importance to such questions as the necessity of vocal recitation of the Office (" . . . oportet ut motu linguae et labiorum vox aliqua saltem tenuis formetur," says Genicot-Salsmans, ¶754). They discussed the mutilation of the syllables during recitation, how much of the Office could be omitted without grave sin, how small omissions could coalesce into "grave matter," etc. In the canonical treatment the Divine Office was, to use their own expression, an "onus diei."

None of these questions even come up in the General Instruction. Its spirit, its set of values, its priorities are of another order. The canonists had their own reasons for treating the Office the way they did, and surely not all they had to say is worthless today. But by and large their treatment belongs to a past age in the history of the church's prayer. This is not to deny, of course, that there were other approaches to the Office in the past which brought out its spiritual values. One has only to think of the papal encyclicals on the priesthood and the liturgy, as well as books by masters of ascetical theology. But by and large th manuals of canon law and moral theology had a considerable influence on our understanding of the Office.

Points of Emphasis in the Instruction

1. *The Liturgy of the Hours is the prayer of Christ to his Father.*

> When he came to offer men God's life, the Word which proceeds from the Father as the splendor of his glory, "the High Priest of the New and Eternal Covenant, Christ Jesus, taking on our human nature brought to this earthly exile that hymn which is sung in the heavenly mansions from all eternity" (Constitution on the Liturgy, ¶83). From that time on the praise of God resounds in the heart of Christ in a human expression of adoration, propitiation and intercession. The Head of the new humanity and Mediator between God and men offered all of this to the Father in the name of and for the good of all men (¶3).

Before the coming of Christ, no human being ever offered a prayer or a sacrifice that was really worthy of God. Even when every human effort had been made, God always deserved something better. Infinity separates man from God: "As high as the heavens are above the earth

so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts' (Is. 55:9). This situation changed with the coming of Christ to earth: "This Son is the reflection of the Father's glory, the exact representation of the Father's being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word" (Heb. 1:3). The Word *is*, from all eternity, the Father's glory, so perfect that God has no need of any other. From all eternity he sings a perfect canticle of praise to the Father; indeed, he *is* this canticle of perfect praise. When the Word was made flesh he brought that canticle to earth with him. For the first time, through the humanity of Jesus, mankind offered a prayer that was really worthy of God. Christ's one great concern is to offer his Father, through his sacred humanity, the praise that is due him. On the night preceding his death, Jesus summed up the purpose of all his human activity: "Father, . . . I have given you glory on earth" (Jn. 17:4).

The divine canticle of praise that the Word brought to earth was confided by Jesus to his church. Christ willed "that the life begun in his mortal body with his prayers and his sacrifice should continue throughout the centuries in his Mystical Body which is the Chruch" (*Mediator Dei*, ¶2). The Liturgy of the Hours is one privileged vehicle and expression of that divine canticle of praise. Pope Paul said it simply and precisely: "Through you Christ will continue to praise the Father" (*Osservatore Romano*, June 24, 1971, p. 4).

2. *The Local Church at Prayer.* The local church (a diocese) is not merely an administrative post of the universal church. Created by the preaching of the gospel and the celebration of the Eucharist, the local church is a mysterious reality in which the "one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of Christ is truly present and operative" (Decree on the Bishop's Pastoral Office in the Church, ¶11). The smaller communities of the local church are, in their turn, not merely administrative posts of the diocese, but living cells, communities of faith, of love, of worship. They are communities of prayer, just as was the first Christian community: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' instruction and the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and the prayers" (Ac. 2:42).

History shows that the Divine Office was not created by a central authority and then imposed on the local churches. It was rather the creation of the local churches, and for centuries there were many different forms of Divine Office. It was only in 1568 that the Roman Breviary, by order of Pope Saint Pius V, became obligatory for the entire Latin Rite. The Liturgy of the Hours is certainly the prayer of the universal church as the Mystical Body of Christ, but it is also the prayer of the local churches and their smaller communities.

The Liturgy of the Hours is therefore not only the prayer of priests and religions: it belongs to the entire community. The very first words of the General Instruction read: "The public and common prayer *of the people of God* is rightly considered to be one of the principal duties of the church." It will not always be possible for the community to fulfill this function, however, and so the church deputes bishops, priests, and some religious, as representatives of the larger community, to pray the Liturgy of the Hours.

Parishes are especially encouraged (¶21) to pray the principal Hours of Lauds and Vespers, and the psalms chosen for these Hours were selected on the basis of their suitability for public celebration (¶ 27). This will require some effort on the part of the community's spiritual leaders; people will have to be inspired to take part in the Liturgy of the Hours and through catechesis learn of the value of this prayer.

3. *The Obligation of the Office.* In very discreet but clear terms the General Instruction speaks of the mandate to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. This mandate is given first of all to the bishop and the presbyters of each local church (¶28). In speaking of this mandate, the Instruction never uses such terms as "grave matter" or "mortal sin"—an omission which is surely deliberate. Actually, the first drafts of the General Instruction were considerably more severe, speaking explicitly of "grave obligation." All such references were omitted from the final text. Insistence on serious obligation and grave matter tend to make the Office an *onus;* it is meant rather to be a joy. Those who have received the mandate to pray the Office are instructed not to omit the principal Hours, Lauds and Vespers, except for a grave cause, and the positive value of praying the other Hours is stressed (¶29).

The obligation to pray the Office is thus seen not as one imposed from without, but rather as a reminder of the intrinsic necessity of priestly and religious prayer. A mandate to pray is not a contradiction in terms, just as the commandment to love is not a contradiction in terms. Both are commanded by inner necessity. It is the nature of the church to be a community of prayer. In Saint Paul's first recorded words he tells the Thessalonians that he is "constantly mentioning you in our prayers" (1 Thess. 1:2). The same theme recurs throughout many of his epistles. An activist priesthood or religious life, with no time for prayer, would not be faithful to the New Testament notion of ministry.

Conclusion

All who made an effort to study Pope John's talks will recall how frequently the Pope of renewal quoted from his breviary. He himself revealed to the commission that was preparing the Liturgical Constitution for Vatican II how he made it a daily practice to recite the major part of his Office early in the day, so he could think about it during the day and quote from it in his talks to those who came to visit him. The Office was a powerful instrument in his hands to help him acquire the holiness that the whole world came to admire. The same could be said of many other saintly bishops, priests, and religious—many of them canonized saints. The new Liturgy of the Hours is awaiting its saints, including laymen, to inspire them, and help them in their growth to spiritual maturity.

Advent Summons

Come forth from the holy place,
Sweet Child,
Come from the quiet dark
Where virginal heartbeats
Tick your moments.

Come away from the red music
Of Mary's veins.
Come out from the Tower of David,
Sweet Child,
From your House of Gold.

Leave your lily-cloister,
Leave your holy mansion,
Quit your covenant ark.
O Child, be born!

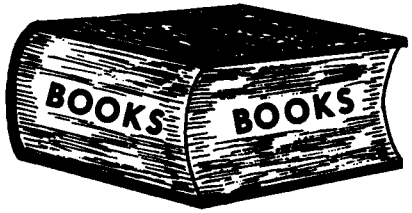
Be born, sweet Child,
In our unholy hearts.

Come to our trembling,
Helpless Child.
Come to our littleness,
Little Child,
Be born unto us
Who have kept the faltering vigil.
Be given, be born,
Be ours again.

Come forth from your holy haven,
Come away from your perfect shrine,
Come to our wind-racked souls
From your flawless tent,
Sweet Child.

Be born, little Child,
In our unholy hearts.

Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C.



The Church under Tension: Practical Life and Law in the Changing Church. By Alcuin Coyle, O.F.M., and Dismas Bonner, O.F.M. New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1972. Pp. 143. Paper $3.25.

Reviewed by Father Zachary Hayes, O.F.M., Dr. Theol. (Bonn., 1964). Father Zachary, a contributor to various scholarly and pastoral publications, is a member of the faculty of St. Bonaventure University's Sacred Science Program and of the Catholic Theological Union at Chicago.

In view of the bewildering changes in theological positions and pastoral practices that have marked recent years, a volume such as the present one is a most welcome addition to any theological library; for the authors have covered a significant range of topics in a pre-eminently practical way, making use of the most current materials from ecclesiastical documents, the work of the Canon Law Society, and the practice of chanceries and tribunals.

The opening chapters provide valuable insights into the nature of law and authority, treating the problem of legalism, especially in view of the diverse official principles of responsible interpretation of law, and the principles of coolegiality. After providing this solid base, the authors take up a number of specific areas of conflict. We would single out the threatment of liturgies for special situations and the communal penance service in its varied forms. Of particular significance is the balanced treatment of the interal-forum solution to problematic marriage cases, acceptance of such solutions. Under ecumenism, the authors present a sensitive treatment of the growing practise of intercommunion outside the limits of current canonical norms. In each of these areas, the authors take cognizance of disturbing practises and attempt to give a responsible evaluation. Well worked out but less wide in its appeal is the final chapter on religious formation and evaluation.

It is unusual to find a book so honest in speaking of current practises and so courageous in the positions taken. Clearly the book will be abrasive to many; but if it does nothing more than incite those whom it offends to take a more critical look at their own pastoral practise, it will have accomplished much.

The book, however, is not for priests alone. It may serve the laity as an aid in learning to live with new situations in the life of the Church, and in learning more about themselves as mature and conscientious Christians.

In short, this book deserves the highest recommendation for undertaking a very difficult task and for carrying it out sensitively and responsibly.

The New Sexuality: Myths, Fables, and Hangups. By Eugene C. Kennedy. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1972. Pp. 212. Cloth, . . $5.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Siena College and Associate Editor of this Review.

The theme of Eugene Kennedy's latest book is, as its title implies, that there is still current in American society at least the same old confusion about sex, and the same failure to integrate sexuality into personality. His argument is based on examination of current literature in sexology—he draws heavily on Masters and Johnson's **Human Sexual Response** (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966)—and the reflections of a Christian well aware of man's present dignity and future destiny. After examining the notion of myth in general, Kennedy proceeds to demolish the central myth that "genital sex equals sexuality" and then other, related, myths —e. g., that sex was just discovered, that it is everything, that we are sure of ourselves about sex, and that America is a depraved nation. Considerable space —too much, in this reviewer's judgment— is devoted to combatting the myth that simultaneous orgasm is the be-all and end-all of sexuality.

Father Kennedy builds a strong psychological and sociological case for chastity and reveals a real awareness of the human capacity for rationalization in matters of sex. I found his view of self-oriented sex simplistic in that it denies the moral dimension, and his stance on the "gay" view of sex timid. More data will help us understand such a personality orientation, but will not change our judgment as to its moral aberrance.

As usual, Father Kennedy writes clearly, vividly, and from today's culture. I found his few swipes at the Church offensive, and I think he neglects the Transcendent in his approach to man. Human growth is just part, not the whole, of religion, even from the viewpoint of the individual.

Nevertheless, there is a great deal of truth there, and I would recommend the book to those with the care of souls as their chief apostolate.

America Is Hard to Find. By Daniel Berrigan, S.J. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972. Pp. 191. Cloth, $5.95.

Reviewed by Father Vianney M. Devlin, O.F.M., Ph. D. (English, University of London), Assistant Professor of English at Siena College.

This collection of essays, poems, and letters will be cherished by Father Berrigan's many admirers and supporters. Beginning with his decision not to surrender to Federal authorities following his conviction for destroying draft records, they follow through his four months underground and include letters written during his eighteen months in Danbury prison. Perhaps the most moving—and most painful for those of us who do now know Berrigan or his family personally—are the family letters: written to his mother, to his brother Jerome and sister-in-law Carol, and other members of his family. These reveal the depth and breadth of Father Berrigan's commitment to a radical re-shaping of America; they reveal the deep thought and sincere prayer that precedes what Father Berrigan does, his sensitivity to the mental and physical cruelty which even the most mild prison system seems to impose. These letters ought to move even non-admirers of Father Berrigan to reflect upon the genuine need for effective prison rehabilitation. I say these letters are painful because they reveal the loneliness of a committed Christian who knows how few in America will know what he does and why he does it.

Many of the pieces included in this book may be familiar to Father Berrigan's followers; many have already proven to be controversial and inflammatory: the open letter to the Weathermen, counselling non-violent militance: "When madness is the acceptable public state of mind, we're all in danger, all in danger; for madness is an infection in the air. And I submit that we all breathe the infection and that the movement has at times been sickened by it too" (p. 96); the letter to Judge Rozel Thomsen, the federal judge who sentenced the Catonsville Nine, urging more humane methods of imprisonment and rehabilitation: "We need to believe that prisoners can form their own communities, be responsible for one another, be fiercely sensitive, decent, and generous toward one another. . . . We need to begin treating others as though they were our brothers and sisters, since brotherhood is at least as much our need as theirs" (p. 119); his remarks to the actors at the opening of his play, **The Trial of the Catonsville Nine:** ". . . to be on stage is to be a rather special person these days, to be human in a unique way, to be saying something unique to others. So the connection between resistance and the theatre ought to be pondered not merely by actors but by the relationship they strive to establish with their audience as well as by the kind of audience they attract" (p. 89). It is unfortunate, however, that Father Berrigan's poetry is becoming more strident and prosaic; that his fine lyrical gift is lost amidst rhetoric.

What disturbs me about the collection gathered here is the repeated implication that those who do not *totally* agree with Father Berrigan are in bad faith and lack the commitment he has to peace and non-violence. There are indications of a need for public attention not only to the issues and concerns to which he is passionately committed but, unfortunately, also to himself as individual.

The book is worth reading and pondering. And certainly with all of his faults, readers should "go slow in judging" Father Berrigan or rejecting him from our prayers.

Buddhism, Christianity, and the Future of Man. By Douglas A. Fox. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972. Pp. 130. Cloth, $6.95.

Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Siena College and Editor of this Review.

Writing as a member of both the academic and the liberal Protestant communities, Douglas A. Fox has furnished an eminently readable book which addresses stimulating challenges to the pastoral as well as the theoretical concerns in contemporary religious circles.

The concerns are set forth in the single chapter going to make up Part One: "Prospects and Questions." They include the very meaning of being a human individual (a question now sharpened by such phenomena as genetic engineering, brain transplants, and psychological conditioning), technology (which demands a revaluation of the Puritan work-ethic and new efforts to establish *human* criteria for its direction), the significance of the individual vis-à-vis the body politic (where the author highlights brilliantly several difficult issues, such as the paradox besetting the individual who needs both to transcend classification and to belong to the group); and finally but probably of greatest importance, the loss of the experience of God (due largely to scientism and existentialism, which render really acute the question of an intangible God in relation to an ambivalent world).

The Buddhist answer to these concerns are elaborated in Part Two, which comprises four chapters shifting gradually in emphasis from the theoretical to the concretely practical. It has up till now been extremely difficult for me to find anything I considered promising for classroom use explaining the basic Buddhist philosophy. True, I haven't combed the field exhaustively, but I have looked with some effort, and nothing I have seen has come close to this in either clarity or systematic scope. This seems all the more remarkable in that the author disclaims all pretensions to completeness or definitive exposition. What makes most of the treatments so opaque, it seems, is that deliberate rationality is literally, to the Buddhist, fruitless and illusory. The Master just "points" and hopes that the student will get that all-important flash of intuition. But as Fox mercifully observes, one can at least try to build a rational springboard for this intuition. In fact, if one is writing for the Western reader, I would say one has to do this; and it does seem to be done quite well here. First a metaphysics of the Absolute is set forth, in which this Absolute is seen to be all in all—its finite, "conditioned" manifestations need to be transcended in the enlightenment experience. And then an ethic of loving concern for every sen-

tient reality is explained, which motivates all Buddhist activity as long as there is redemption to be effected (enlightenment to be shared) in the world. Worthy of special mention here is the exploration in Chapter IV of Buddhist thought vis-à-vis various political systems, with specific attention to the problems of pluralism and dissent in a society ideally ruled by the "enlightened." The concluding observation is also wirth noting: it is impertinent to ask whether, in light of Buddhism's solutions, it can be called "the Truth." If you've "seen," you know it is; if not, you can't possibly see how it would be.

There is a parallel presentation of Christianity in Chapters VI through X—parallel in the sense that there is the same excellent endeavor to get at the essential nature of the faith involved and only then a shift toward the practical implications for contemporary problems. Perhaps because of the fruitful contrast with what has preceded on Buddhism, this short analysis of the fundamental significance of Christianity seems to me to be extraordinarily successful in getting at what really counts: the "lostness" of the human situation and the spontaneous initiative of the divine Other who gives Himself to save man. There are many more specific successes here, such as the exploration of the transcendence-immanence paradox, done in heavy reliance on the theologians of hope, and the emphasis on the importance of each man's psychological individuality as free creator of meaning. Descending further into the concrete particulars of moral and political life, the author offers some challenging appraisals of the present social order. Neither humanism nor revolution suffices as an answer, he maintains, but we need people who combine the qualities of the saint and the revolutionary.

The brief "Inconclusive Conclusion" (Part IV) draws some highly tentative and diffident comparisons between the Buddhist and the Christian answers. It would be absurd either to deny the obvious differences between the two faiths, or to attempt a simplistic reduction of one to the other. The main differences are (1) the Buddhist radical, metaphysical unity of all things vs. the Christian stress on Community, retaining individuality; (2) Buddhism's impersonal Absolute vs. Christianity's superpersonal God; and (3) the Buddhist ideal of escape from the evil of finitude vs. the Christian ideal of redeeming a basically good finite existence. Irreducible as the differences will remain, there is much good to be gained from discusssion marked by mutual respect and cooperation. But I have the feeling that the value of this dual analysis goes beyond the indulging in comparisons or even the call for dialogue *between* members of the two faiths. So competent and so sympathetic is the analysis of *each* outlook, that this essay could well be recommended to both Buddhists and Christians—and perhaps less confidently, to people of other (or no) religions—as furnishing grounds for hope and love and confident human endeavor in "building our world."

The book is, as already observed, quite well written, with abundant touches of humor and with a literary zest for irony and paradox. If I may be allowed the usual bit of carping at details, I would complain about the, acceptance of panentheism as an orthodox Christian position, which it is not; about excessive generosity to a quite silly statement of Cardinal Daniélou about Western theistic positions; about the interchanging of the forms "Christ" and "The Christ" in Chapters IX and X; and, finally, about the misleading because undeveloped assertion that Jesus never claimed to be God. Still, these are trifling criticisms of a book which contains so much superb psychology, theology, history, and philosophy, that I can only welcome it as filling a real need and recommend it with all possible enthusiasm both for academic use and for the enjoyment and enlightenment of the discriminating reader.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Beck, C. M., Crittenden, B.S., and Sullivan, E. V., eds., *Moral Education: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Paramus, N.J.: Newman Press, 1972. Pp. x-402. Paper, $4.95.

Clark, Mary T., ed. & introd., *An Aquinas Reader: Selections from the Writings of Thomas Aquinas*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Image Books, 1972. Pp. 597. Paper, $2.45.

Corbishley, Thomas, S.J., *The Spirituality of Teilhard de Chardin*. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1972. Pp. 126. Paper, $1.45.

Evely, Louis, *If the Church Is to Survive....* Trans. J. F. Bernard; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972. Pp. 144. Cloth, $4.95.

Fox, Douglas A., *Buddhism, Christianity, and the Future of Man*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972. Pp. 190. Cloth, $6.95.

Gardner, Helen, ed., *A Book of Religious Verse*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972. Pp. 377. Cloth, $12.50.

Greeley, Andrew M., *The Sinai Myth: A. New Interpretation of the Ten Commandments*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972. Pp. 216. Cloth, $5.95.

Hardon, John A., *Christianity in the Twentieth Century*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972. Pp. 596. Paper, $2.45.

Mascall, Eric L., *The Openness of Being: Natural Theology Today*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972. Pp. xiii-278. Cloth, $9.75.

Meagher, John C., *The Gathering of the Ungifted: Toward a Dialogue on Christian Identity*. New York: Herder & Herder, 1972. Pp. 176. Cloth, $5.95.

Mierzwinski, Theophil T., ed., *What Do You Think of the Priest? A Bibliography on the Catholic Priesthood*. Jericho, N.Y.: Exposition Press, 1972. Pp. 95. Cloth, $5.00.

Nouwen, Henri J. M., *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1972. Pp. xiv-104. Cloth, $5.95.

Shamon, Albert J., *Catching Up on Catechetics*. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1972. Pp. 79. Paper, $0.95.

Von Galli, Mario, S.J., *Living Our Future: Francis of Assisi and the Church of Tomorrow*. Trans. Maureen Sullivan and John Drury; Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1972. Pp. 239. Cloth, $6.95.