COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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the CORD

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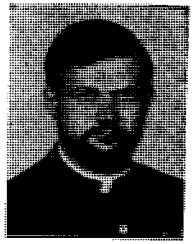


GUEST EDITORIAL

What Was Will Be Again

Earlier last year, Oxford University Press announced that, in October, 1971, it would publish the *Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*—all thirteen volumes and all 16,400 pages—in a special micrographically reproduced edition comprising two volumes. The surprise and joy with which this announcement was received (by those of us who, while happy with the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, nevertheless always dreamed about having all thirteen volumes of the *O.E.D.*, but knew that we could never afford it) together with subsequent sales, is certainly a sign that aspirations toward a better knowledge, appreciation and use of the English language "ain't" a thing of the past... yearly additions to the grammatical chamber of horrors nothwithstanding. And all this is, of course, very heartening.

A recent review of our Fraternity's new *General Constitutions* (1967), together with a series of lectures and a lot of sharing on Franciscan themes at Holy Name College, Washington, D.C., this past January has sent me thinking along the same lines. I mean, I have been thinking about (shall we call it, for want of a better title?) "Franciscan Vocabulary." And this especially regarding fraternity.

When Francis was first joined by men who were desirous of imitating his manner of living the Gospel, he called them "Friars Minor" (cf. the non-confirmed Rule, ch. 26). And as Kajetan Esser has especially remarked in many of his writings, but especially in *Love's Reply*, these two words, Friar Minor, more than any others sum up the inner nature, the very spirit and the whole vocation of our Fraternity.

Romano Stephen Almagno, O.F.M., is Research Scholar and Librarian at the Collegio S. Bonaventura, International Franciscan Research Centre, Rome.

Francis meant us to be "Frati," "Friars," that is "Brothers." And we were to be "Brothers" who lived our life in a "Forma Minori," a "Lesser Manner" or "Humble Way." We were and are to be **Friars Minor.**

In direct contrast to the medieval (and contemporary) consciousness and desire for rank and order and power, Francis proclaimed that his followers (or, more exactly, Christ's followers) had a common Father in God and that they were all Brothers. They were to spend their days in the light of this fact and therefore be humble (i.e., truthful) about the origin and nature of their witness.

Again, Kajetan Esser has stated (and he repeated it just the other evening at recreation) that at least until the Reformation, the Friars Minor always used the word "Friar" as their only title. Or better as a reminder of what they were in fact. Then, with the Reformation and in imitation of newer religious congregations and societies, the fraternity started to use the words "Father," "Lay-brother," "Superior" and all the rest of the words which have little place in a Franciscan vocabulary. The adoption of these terms and their common usage was another step in the further clericalization of our fraternity; and, I am convinced, a loss of something very special and precious in our very individual witness to the world and the Church.

Francis called all those who came to him "Brothers." And, in fact, he regarded every man as his brother. There were in the fraternity no "Fathers," no "Lay-brothers," and no "Superiors." When Francis does use the word "praelatus," he means it in a very different sense from that which we currently give to the word. As Francis uses and understands it, in fact, it is very difficult to find an adequate English translation for the word. For by "praelatus" Francis does not mean "prelate" in the sense of a superior. Rather, he means someone who is lifted up from among the friars to shoulder the burdens of the fraternity... to tend to the needs (both material and spiritual) of all the friars. And so, this "praelatus" is (for a time) lifted up from the rest of the brothers to serve them in their every need.

Today we are fortunate enough to have a mass of literature which can help us in gaining a better understanding into the origins of our fraternity and the very intentions of Francis. Our new General Constitutions, also, allow that elasticity and freedom needed for experimentation. Consider, for example, article 47, which reads as follows:

> All members of the Order are in fact and in name, brothers. This, however, does not exclude (in accord with the diversity of languages and customs) using words whereby is distinguished the work and/or office [of a friar]. And all this is as already established by the Rule and custom.

Obviously, then, we can continue with the use of words like "cleric," "lay brother," "superior," and so forth. Or, mindful of the fact that we are all brothers and therefore all equal, we can do away with these titles and distinctions. To be sure, one needs clear and unequivocal appelations for official documents and records. For such purposes, perhaps we might consider newer forms for the express sake of casting aside the honorific element so prized in an earlier age. Instead of "Father John Doe, O.F.M.," e.g., one might use "John Doe, friar-priest." But more important here is our day-to-day life where, at least in our own conversations, correspondence, and general dealings **with one another** we might once for all consider dropping all titles. In reality, membership in the Fraternity means that we are all friars, some of whom happen to be priests, and some of whom happen to be for a time "lifted up" for service of the others.

This concept is usually rather difficult to get across, for most of us entered the Fraternity because we wanted to be priests. We came from parishes or attended schools where there were friar-priests and when we felt called to the priesthood we entered the Fraternity. In reality—and this is the source of some of our identity-crisis—we should enter the Fraternity first with the desire of being **friars** and assume the added office and duties of the priesthood within the larger context of our fundamental identity as friars.

Some may object that the dropping of certain titles and the adoption of others will not really change anything; for after all, a rose by any other name is still a rose. This writer feels that contention to be untrue. First, the application of the term "friar" to all members of the Fraternity will serve to remind us again and again of our special vocation and witness. It will lead us to the point, slowly but surely, where we will think no longer in terms of "the clerics," or "the brothers," or "the priests," but rather simply of "the friars," some of whom happen to be priests, or college presidents, or pastors, teachers, guardians, missionaries, provincials, or even Ministers General. It is interesting to note in this context that when the present Minister General of our Fraternity had cards printed in remembrance of his election they read "Fra Constantino Koser" —Friar Constantine Koser.

In the second place, as has been mentioned above, we would have no titles at all in private conversation and friary life. That is as it should be. The use of titles, even that of "friar" itself, for official registers, publications etc., may be seen as merely a concession to the fact that we need continually to remind ourselves and the world that we are brothers and that all

men are—that every man is—my brother. The titles will drop automatically and happily on that day when we no longer need to be reminded that we are brothers in fact as well as in name.

All this, somehow, brings me back to the **O.E.D.** The **O.E.D** is important not simply because with it one can easily check again (for the thousandth time) whether to spell **Virgil** with one or two i's and whether **receive** is to be spelled with an **ei** or an **ie**—but rather, the **Oxford English Dictionary** helps us to attain a deeper knowledge, appreciation, and use of our language.

So it is with Franciscan literature and in particular with the Rule and Constitutions. These are not simply reference books—against which to check our lives. Oh, yes, they are that too—but they are far more than that. Rather the Rule, the Constitutions, the writings of Francis and his first followers, and the mass of high-quality Franciscan literature that is readily available should help us to attain a deeper knowledge and appreciation of our life. A knowledge which, quite in line with our Franciscan traditions in theology and philosophy, will be carried into action.

We don't need titles, for we are brothers. And maybe more than anything else we need to tell ourselves and the world something about brotherhood. As American friars we can do something in this regard, especially in view of our special democratic heritage and especially in the light of that which still is the American Dream.

This author likes to think that soon this deeper insight into our life as friars will become a common understanding and all of us will simply be called "brothers." So it was in Francis' day and so it should be today. For as we read in Coheleth: "What was will be again; what has been done will be done again; and there is nothing new under the sun."

R. J. Almagno
Rome 5/16. 72

Refreshment

soft, gentle breezes
cooling this clay, moistening
reminding me
of Him
who when fashioning you
thought of forming me!

Sister Joyce, O. S. C.

Discovering Someone . . .
. . . Discovering Everyone

Sister Mary Seraphim, P.C.P.A.

Marvelous are the discoveries of our technological age! Glorious are the revelations science daily offers us! Most wonderful of all, however, is the at-last disclosed wonder that we are all persons, each and everyone of us! Who would have thought of it! God did, of course, way back in the beginning, but we have done a grand job of glossing over the original scheme of things until we came to believe that we were merely rational animals (which seldom displayed their rationality).

Consequent on this "it" mentality was the reduction of personal religion to ritual. Happily Vatican II reminded us of our dignity and destiny, stressing at the same time that Christianity is not a thing but a Person. One of the most eloquent instruments the Church has chosen to train us up in our new awareness of personhood in religion is the renewed liturgical celebrations. Gone are the days when we were "present" at Mass, "made" so many Holy Communions, "went" to Confession once a month. Now we are urged to celebrate the Liturgy of Worship, share in the Sacred Meal of Love and seek reconciliation with the People of God. Although the language has changed, one wonders a bit sadly whether attitudes have really been affected at all. We witness more dissaffection with the revisions than renewed affection in too many instances.

Discouraging as this may be we are bound to continue the struggle (begun in the synagogue of Capharnaum) of somehow bringing people to a realization of the staggering realities we celebrate daily in the Church's liturgy. We must try to instruct the dismayed and doubtful, while curbing the iconoclasts who would push genuine theological principles to ridiculous extremes. Do you realize that the middle of the road is a favorite place for four-footed animals but seldom favored by the rational ones? The purpose of this paper-discussion is to explore the riches to be mined in a deep and genuine Eucharistic piety. These reflections are based in practice on the community experience of a vital Eucharistic life, as our Order dedicated to Perpetual Adoration has discovered it to be.

Sister Mary Seraphim, P.C.P.A., whose perceptive discussions of religious life and spirituality have appeared in various Catholic periodicals, is a contemplative nun at Sancta Clara Monastery, Canton, Ohio.

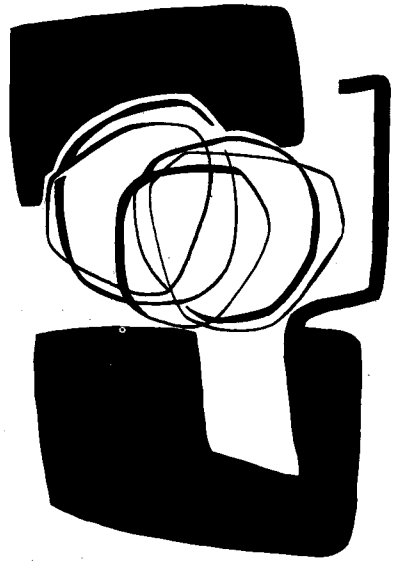
Discovering "Him"

Discovering that the Blessed Sacrament is a "him" and not an "it" forms the ground from which all future Eucharistic devotion can spring. Living waters do not flow from a dead sea, nor does living love gush up from a static "thing." If Catholics are to escape the accusation of idolatry or stupidity, they must demonstrate that the center around which their religious life revolves is dynamic, is alive with love, is a Person transcending all limitations of time and space, yet marvelously inserted into the finite dimensions of here and now. We poor creatures have only the present fleeting moments in which to act and be alive. We can only personally meet someone who shares this same dimension with us in some real way. Therefore worship of the Transcendant Godhead must have some tangible share in our world, must actually take up room in our world so that we may be cognizant of its reality. This does not mean that the mystery of the Deity is to be boxed into the framework of finite space but only that it be here among us in a sufficiently touchable way that we can satisfy our sensible nature to some extent.

The Blessed Sacrament constitutes the most touchable and at the same time the most inexplicable answer to our needs. Only a God could have devised it! Throughout the history of the Church, piety has oscillated between knee-shaking awe and over-sweet pity for the "Prisoner of the Tabernacle." Although the official teachings of the Church have ever clearly set forth the genuine attitude that her children should foster with regard to the Holy Eucharist, we rarely witness the achievement of a long-lasting balance between reverence and familiarity. We seem to be no closer today to attaining this happy state than we were during the Middle Ages when the Communion table was lamentably empty. We seem to have corrected to some extent the excess of awe which dominated the piety of those times—only to run an open risk, now, of complete desacralization.

Many well-meaning teachers and preachers on this mystery have pounced on Saint Thomas Aquinas' exposition of the purpose of the Blessed Sacrament as being confected in order "to be received" to minimize or completely discourage any sacramental piety outside of Mass time. They argue that Christ is present among us, not to dwell in a Tabernacle but to be received into human hearts. So he is. But is it justifiable to draw from this truth the conclusion that his sacramental Presence outside of Mass is irrelevant to Christian piety and so should be ignored?

If we actualize our belief that the Blessed Sacrament is a Person and not an "it," we may arrive at the thought that Jesus may be "received" in more than one manner. We are said to receive a person by welcoming him into our home and into our lives. This reception is not just a spatial one. It involves the openness of our minds and hearts to this person who knocks at our door. In fact, we could scarcely be



said to receive the person at all if the most we did were to give him a key to a room in the house and ignore any other manifestation of his presence. The application of this consideration to the Holy Eucharist is easily seen.

The physical reception of the Sacrament is only one dimension of the reality of Christ's communicating Presence. It is a fleeting one and one that is directed towards a more lasting reality. We receive the Sacramental Body of the Lord as a fresh spark of the divine fire which should enkindle still more the perpetual flame of love which lights our days and nights. We can also simply walk into the abiding sacramental Presence with a heart open to receive the spiritual communications of the Person who is there. This form of "reception" of the Sacrament in entirely valid and highly efficacious in forming a well developed Christian piety. The unfathomable riches of love which the Holy Eucharist contains surpass all the limitations our finite intelligence imposes on it. It is a "many-splendored thing" which continually displays new facets alive with light and fire.

In a community which centers its life around the abiding sacramental Presence of the Lord, it is absolutely vital to maintain a correct attitude towards the Blessed Sacrament. We may not forget that the purpose of Christ's presence among us under the apperances of bread and wine is that he may be consumed. Yet we may not overlook the truth that, as a Person, he is always spiritually communicating himself to us through the radiant center of the Sacrament in order to live and abide with us.

This living of Christ in our persons is not an end in itself but reaches out to a higher and more ultimate fulfillment, that of the glory of the Father. Christ rejoices in the additional humanities through which he can extend himself and his influence into the world of men. Through these conjoined personalities he offers a homage to the Father which he could not offer in his single humanity, sinless and perfect as it was. In us Jesus can offer the Father the weaknesses of sin and selfishness, the waverings of faith and hope and love which afflict us on our pilgrimage through the valley. He can also extend a human voice deep with compassion to the erring ones and a human face alight with love to the discouraged.

The cultivation of his own attitudes of mind and heart within us is a work which Christ carries on, not only during the moments of his physical presence in our bodies but through all the times we open our minds and wills to his personal communications offered in the Spirit.

Discovering "Them"

In discovering the Someone present in the consecrated Species, we discover everyone. We meet and communicate with every other member of Christ, especially with those who have gathered with us at this particular liturgical assembly. Genuine Christian fellowship derives from a shared sacramental celebration. Friendship within the community of the People of God acquires a different coloration from that which is formed on a purely natural basis. Reverence and unreserved acceptance of the other as a unique and precious individual distinguish this sacramental friendship.

The present preoccupation to establish an atmosphere in which this Christian fellowship can be expressed and flourished has need of some restricting influences. We may not think of the liturgical celebration on the same level as a convention or a party. In our eagerness to allow full human expression to our joy in the Lord, we have sometimes forgotten that the Mass is essentially a transcendent mystery which requires intense concentration as well as joyous affirmation. Let us beware that we do not make void the Sacrifice through the use of gimmicks more appropriate to a purely secular celebration.

For a few moments let us leave the surface level of the liturgical event and plunge deply into the heart of the sacramental mystery. Only when each participant in the Mass brings a wealth of personal knowledge of the Lord to the altar, will the finest effects of the Sacrifice be realized among us. We must recognize that we are created to know the Lord. This supreme knowledge is a gift vouchsafed to us only if we have humbly sought to prepare ourselves for it. It is a gift which touches the deepest recesses of our consciousness and cannot be acquired at will. One of the purposes of Christ's abiding sacramental Presence is to render the reception of this knowledge more easy.

One cannot remain long before the Tabernacle where our faith tells us that the Person of Christ is, without beginning to fathom to what lengths God's love for us has gone. The thoughts which are generated spontaneously in these faith-filled moments constitute the beginning of a more than rhetorical appreciation of the Person and mystery of Christ. Automatically one recognizes the need for silence in the face of this unspeakable mystery. Into the very heart of Christ one is plunged until every thought and movement of one's own heart comes into contact with those of his. With terrible clarity we perceive how different our love is from that of the Lord's In him we find such overwhelming com-

passion and understanding for our failings that we are crushed by it. Never again can we consciously stand in judgment on our fellows whom Christ, our Brother, refuses to judge, even as he has refused to condemn us.

Genuine sacramental piety tends outwards towards others. We come to associate ourselves with Christ in the privacy of our own hearts and discover that he is ever going out from himself into others all around us. The individual reception of the Sacrament exalts our personal dignity but at the same time reminds us that every other person at the Banquet Table has been similarly gifted. We discover not only plenitude but also a multitude within the Sacramental Mystery. And for this multitude we conceive an inexpressible reverence and companionship which reaches far deeper than the level of words or gestures. It lies at the basis of the community gathered around the altar like a gentle upgraded plain which lifts us, individually and collectively, into a higher atmosphere of Christian love and friendship.

When we plan liturgical celebrations we should keep this necessity for intense spiritual perception in mind. The hymns, gestures and arrangements of the Sacrificial setting should be such that they do not so distract our sense from the real meaning of the celebration that it is impossible to penetrate beyond the surface appearances. Saint Paul, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, declared that he deliberately refrained from employing rhetorical arts in his presentation of the Gospel message so as not to obscure the divine power of the Cross. He recognized that the "Word" has a power of its own which renders our human devices unnecessary except to the extent that they serve as an unnoticeable vehicle drawing the "Word" into closer contact with the faithful.

Discovering Christianity

Exploring the relationships which exist in a group where the "Word" is operative reveals that they can differ markedly from the type of friendships engendered by an analogous situation in the secular sphere. When a group of persons gather for a festive occasion each one is intent on his own enjoyment, and only secondarily, on sharing that joy with others present. In the Christian assembly, where Christ is the Center Figure sharing his entire Person with each member of the group, mentalities are inversed. Each one present is intent on sharing the joy of His giving and only retroactively in procuring his own measure of private pleasure.

Friendships spring into being among the most diverse individuals who, under ordinary circumstances, would find that they had nothing in common to share. But within the sacramental context the riches which they possess together unites them far more deeply than the differences can separate. A strange and wondrous phenomenon is born. We call it "love" although it differs radically from the usual understanding of the term. Love ordinarily connotes strong affection or liking for another. Within the Christian ambit it means such utter reverence and care for the other that complete self-donation to the joy and well-being of the friend springs up spontaneously. Be the friend likable or not, he is recognized as wholly lovable. We would never consider using the other for our own self-aggrandizement, not even to the extent of seeking self-satisfaction in one's total dedication to the welfare of the other. An attitude of such love is beyond us, humanly speaking. We can never do it even in our desires. Only the Word of God, operative in our midst in Sacrament and Sacrifice, can begin to accomplish this complete reorientation of our normal patterns of thought and behavior.

Such a revamping of our fundamental attitudes demands a real death. This death is made possible by the renewal of the death of Christ in our midst. Glorious though he is at this moment, Christ really and truly makes his passage through death actual in our midst at Mass. To obscure this mystery is to rob the Christian people of the possibility of sharing in the joy of the Resurrection. How can we expect to be overflowing with the Easter light if our inner darkness has not been pierced through and irradiated by the salvific death of the Saviour? Love, love, love. We sing of it constantly; but where can we find the power to accomplish it within us if not on Calvary? Christ made of weakness the supreme moment of his triumph, the triumph of his love for the Father and for all men in the Father's way.

The Someone we discover in the Eucharistic celebration is a crucified Lord—to the Jews indeed a stumbling-block and to the Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24). The "everyone" we discover is the community of the redeemed who come to wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb and to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. Full and actual participation in the Sacrament demands that with greater and greater freedom we put our self-centered tendencies behind us and strive to put on the Heart of Christ—a heart of mercy, kindness, compassion, and ever-caring love. We shall one day discover that we have not only found that great One around whom the universe revolves, but have become one with him to the extent that we have become one with all those who are in him.

A Time

A time—
Sometime there is a time
When Someone's soul has grown too big
To stay within the bounded cell
Of bone and Flesh
And spills upon the world
To burn and eat
But to retreat and then
to smoulder and to glow.

A time—
Sometime there is a time
When Someone's Life becomes a Cross
That bears upon its wooden shaft
and bark
The burdens of all earth
And bends and creaks
And then lays down to rest
—and wait.

A time—
Sometime there is a time
When Someone's Hand will stop the gun
And one by one
The cold steel will lie
Upon the ground
Guns do not fight alone
Nor weapons beat their wrath
When hands of man no longer
grasp the killer's tool
When hand clasps hand in peace!

A time—
Sometime there is a time
When Someone's Love will light the way
And hearts of men will warm again
And bone and flesh
And wooden shaft
will grow and grow
And will expand
And will contain
The tempered souls
of men!

Sister Mary Thaddine, O. S. F.

Amazing Communication

Robert J. Waywood, O.F.M.

Our subject for this month's conference is a real bag of worms. But worms are indispensable for cultivation—even of the seeds of faith. Yes, from every angle, prayer is paradoxical. As fragile and precarious as a calla lily, prayer is universally conceded to be the bedrock of the spiritual life. It is constantly recommended and generally avoided. What is delightful and attractive to begin with proves repulsive and excruciating to persevere in. And for the spiritual writer, prayer poses an unavoidable but almost elusive topic of analysis and exhortation. In any age it would be difficult but necessary to fathom prayer or advocate its practice. To do so nowadays is especially urgent and at the same time uniquely problematic. Before directly grappling with the subject, I would like to touch upon three peculiar attitudes that militate against understanding or appreciating prayer in the twentieth century: disenchantment, insensibility, and self-consciousness.

Glancing over my jottings, I confess that I could fill a whole book documenting today's disenchantment. Our society is notoriously bankrupt in mystery, miracle, and majesty. Ellis (Albert) and Reubens have plucked Cupid's wings; Masters and Johnson have sterilized his arrow. Disneyland makes Fatima look bourgeois. Moonwalks have grown pedestrian. Jesus Christ now appears at best a befuddled radical, at worst the product of an LSD bummer. Lincoln seems to have been some admen's mosaic, not another Moses. Hollywood technicians can reproduce and divide a Red Sea, given a good location and a limitless budget. Little girls thwack electronic dolls. Little boys manhandle exquisite walkie-talkies. Drive-ins provide a production-line smorgasbord of exotic viands. Religious services here and there have taken on the look of fun and games. Elaborate happenings are mounted for the titillation of the well-to-do. Sports events and Broadway musicals are systematically manufactured, packaged, and sold like sausages for the less well-to-do. The old men's dreams are probably dirty dreams, and the young men's visions could easily be video-taped. Every person

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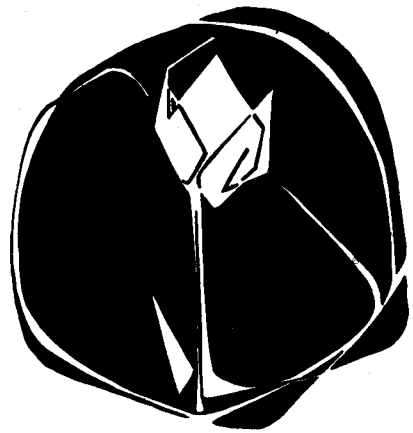
has a price; every product has a price-tag. We have grown mellow toward marvels; we wolf down wonders. The yawn and belch have replaced the gasp and sigh. This ennui, I contend, is not without its baneful effects on our understanding and evaluation of prayer. For prayer is a mysterious, miraculous form of communication with a Person of unspeakable majesty. If the telephone presents no cause for astonishment and admiration, putting in a direct call to God, which is what prayer essentially is, cannot be adequately estimated or properly esteemed. In due time, then, I will try to highlight the wonderful nature of prayer so as to countervail the disenchantment of the day.

Oddly enough, contemporaneous with this ho-hum attitude is a ceaseless hub-bub that drives us to distraction ... and, ultimately, to insensibility. Subjected long enough to communication overkill in the shape, say, of aid-appeals, confrontation-politics, and assault-advertising, our ears begin to snap, crackle, and pop; and subliminally conditioned, we scream, "Will somebody turn off the bubble machine!" We grow sick of hearing about sickle-cells. Sibilant slogans in behalf of muscular dystrophy and systic fibrosis victims hiss through our dreams. Multi-colored hands of Biafrans and Bengalis, of Florentines and Peruvians, outstretch and engulf us like an octopus. Save a child. Hire the handicapped. Give a damn. Girl Scout Cookies. Peter's Pence. Fair Share. Have a heart. From our own hearts we eventually cry out, "Get off my back!" Then there are the spotlight-grabbers who in uninterrupted procession interrupt our lives: the yapping Yippies, the growling Panthers, the bellowing Birchites, the ad-libbing Women's Libbers, the palavering Playboys—and the whole boisterous of Neo-Nazi, Flower Children, Jesus Freaks, Serra Club, PYE, SNIC, SNAC, MOBE, GROPE, FLAB, FERN ... kerplop!

But the grossest drubbing inflicted upon our sensibility has to come from the advertisement industry. They have turned our brains to jelly with an endless spate of nonsense words, like fixitives, additives, calmatives, whiteners, brighteners, free optionals, and beef by-products. They have reduced us to quivering hypochondriacs cautioning us about halitosis, houseitosis, pyorrhea, diarrhea, seborrhea, staph infection, and dental plaque. They have made soft drinks like Coke and Pepsi sound as important as sanctifying grace and pain-killers like Bayer's and Anacin as consoling as a good conscience. The upshot of all such communication overkill is that we are subtly conditioned to turn off exterior reality for sheer psychological survival. And this schizophrenic response to communication, I am sure, spills over into the communication called prayer. Our mental antennas become bent and corroded; we are rendered poor listeners for the Holy Spirit and impatient petitioners of the Divine Bounty. The very vocabulary, oral or mental, of our prayers is insidiously sapped of meaning and honesty. When words

are a glut on the market, inflation sets in even in the realm of supernatural commerce. Hence I intend to spell out the prerequisite conditions and the details of the process whereby we pray, for these involve tuning out and turning up.

The third prevailing attitude that vitiates our appreciation of prayer is self-consciousness, that is, contemporary man's preoccupation with man and the things of man. Naturally, we are all men and, in the words of Plautus, nothing human should be alien to us. But today even religion is shot through with anthropocentricity. The so-called horizontal approach to the Divine has all but ousted the traditional vertical access to God. As an oft-quoted adage of the day has it: "I sought my soul; my soul I could not see. I sought my God; my God eluded me. I sought my neighbor, and I found all three." So far, so good: the times are out of joint, and perhaps the ABC's of communication must be consciously mastered before we can communicate with God. But my question is, Where do we go from there, after we have "found all three"? Do we still squander time and energy that should be spent sequestering ourselves with God on T-groups, sensitivity sessions, and parapsychology communes? Do we go on substituting group discussion for meditation? Not on bread or brotherhood alone does man live. Rollo May is not an adequate substitute for Saint Paul. The **I Ching** is not the inspired Word of God. And losing yourself, not finding yourself, is the ultimate gcal of



Christian asceticism. Many horizontal Christians would virtually have us reverse the order of the two Great Commandments. As long as self-knowledge and inter-personal experiments hold top priority in one's life, prayer will remain an irrelevant oddity of ambiguous value. Therefore I will have to stress, in the third part of the body of this conference, the unique importance of the transcendent communication that is prayer.

To recapitulate and project, I maintain that three present-day conditions prejudice our understanding and appreciation of prayer: namely, disenchantment, insensitivity, and self-consciousness. Furthermore, I believe that a careful consideration of the what, the how, and the why of prayer can dissipate these prejudices and contribute to our grasp and esteem of prayer. In my concludnig paragraphs, I hope to delineate the milestones and obstacles in the life of prayer—to outline not only the

introduction to, but the plot and denouement of, the devout life.

To explain the wonderful nature of prayer, I would first illustrate and analyze communication in general and then spiritual communication in particular. Almost every form of communication is mysterious and miraculous when you stop to think about it. The point is, you must wonder about it a while to see how wonderful it is. Some years ago I witnessed a television show on which Dunninger, perhaps the most famous mind-reader of recent memory, from a studio in New York had Senator Taft, a man of probity if ever there was one, withdraw a book from an enormous bookshelf, turn to a random page, and mentally scan any paragraph. Dunninger immediately recited, almost verbatim, the passage Taft had chosen. The Senator stood in a studio located in Washington, D.C.! But is it any the less marvelous that the thoughts and words the Senator meditated had been mentally telegraphed **to him** across the Atlantic Ocean and four centuries from the mind of Sir Francis Bacon through the medium of the printed page? Even in 1972 it would, doubtless, evoke more than a whistle of admiration to behold a forty-year-old corpse sit up and start crooning "**O sole mio.**" But is it much less awesome to resurrect just (!) the voice of Enrico Caruso by means of the phonograph? In the environs of every large city a Babel of disembodied voices divulge all the major events of the world not rarely, as in a seance, but every hour on the hour. To divine these radio newscasts sometimes requires no more paraphernalia than a filled tooth.

Essentially, the process of communication consists of three elements: a sender, a medium, and a receiver. (There are other factors, obviously: for example, the message, that which is communicated, whether a verbalized fact, coded prognostication, gestured command, or indicated emotion.) The functions of the sender and receiver are self-evident; the medium renders the former **present** to the latter.

If you can perceive that the natural communication which brings **General Hospital** into a million particular parlors is astonishing, then you may be prepared to grant that any instance of supernatural communication is stupifying. Prayer struck me as being a stark prodigy one humdrum day when I was in my first year of Theology. The time was a wee, small hour in a lazy spring afternoon; the place, a dismal church attached to our monastery - parish - kindergarten complex in the dreary town of Butler, New Jersey. Some odd errand had brought me to the sacristy, whence I overheard the inconceivable communication. There in the unlit church knelt forty assorted kindergarten children piping the Our Father with one unfaltering voice, and I knew by faith that the Lord God of Hosts was captive in the playpen of the sanctuary. I saw in a flash that every pious ejaculation was a celestial postcard, every meditation was an audience with the Almighty, every holy ambition was a coded cable to the Creator, every Rosary was a hot-line to Heaven.

Under analysis prayer proves to be one kind of communication that uses no medium, whether the message be the gesture of a good deed, the murmur of a formula, a cry of the heart, or a resolution of the mind. For God is ubiquitous; and if he is present to all of us at all times, then we are similarly present to him: "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father... God is spirit and they who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4:21, 24). To send God a message, we need only advert to him, only switch on our awareness of his proximity. So let us move on to consider the sender and receiver in supernatural communication.

The sender, of course, is a human being—or, as the yokel has it, a human bean. In the grand scheme of things, the yokel's designation seems the more accurate description. For any conglomerate of individuals doesn't amount to a hill of beans. Man is but a flyspeck on a city map, an atom in the cosmos. The most important of the species are just a few syllables in history's **Who's Who**, some milliseconds on a carbon-clock. Man is a fluctuating five-dollars' worth of chemicals, a sixteenth-note on a flute in a symphony concert, a little stir in the mud. And so the Psalmist asked, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, the son of man that thou visitest him?" Still, he is made to the image and likeness of the Creator. The hairs on his head are divinely calculated; the contents within it constitute an inimitable galaxy of memories. His finger- and voice-prints are nonpareil. He is somebody's baby. And so Hamlet exclaimed, "What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties!"

In prayer this "paragon of animals" makes contact with the Pure Spirit that puffed him to life. Unfortunately, the anthropomorphisms of the Iron Age and the electronic images of the Cybernetic Era have conditioned us to envision the receiver of our prayer as some fuss-budgety old man or a chrome-covered computer purring away out there. Hence the ooh and the ah have disappeared from our devotions. But a careful rereading of the yellowed Testaments can galvanize our conception of the Divine Majesty. The voice in the whirlwind confided to Job that the Leviathan was God's rubber ducky. In a vision Isaiah winced before a terrible Wizard of Oz. For the Psalmist the glob was God's footstool. And Christ is the King Kong of the Apocalypse. It is no small thing, then, to pray and thus bend the ear of God to earth. A few weeks ago I read an interview in the **New York Times Sunday Supplement** granted by exiled Ezra Pound. One would think that the writer had been given an audience by Shakespeare reincarnated, so agog was he over and after the interview. Is it any less awe-inspiring to visit God in his study by the prayer of faith? Pound him-

self conceded that his communications were so much baby's babble; but even God's throat-clearing carries the sound of many waters.

Both within and outside the hour of prayer, the wonderful receiver of our communication may turn sender. We communicate with God by prayer; he communicates with us by inspiration, that is, by actual graces. Never have I met a person who would deny that he has experienced interiorly some uncanny lucid interval or been surprised by some sudden surge of resolution to behave better. As torrents in summer, half dried in their courses, suddenly rise, so the illumination of old spiritual truths and the energizing of latent good intentions strike us, as it were, from out of the blue. This is God, the Holy Spirit, reciprocating our prayer.

Cultural Forces and Franciscan Life Today

Louis A. Vitale, O. F. M.

Emile Durkheim, the father of sociology, has given social science its basic premise that man constructs his world. Durkheim spoke of the social facts of which our world is composed. Culture is defined as the social traditions, customs and institutions expressing the ideas, beliefs, values, and sentiments of groups. Sociology, particularly the sociology of knowledge, today emphasizes the causal role of man in projecting and constructing his culture, his social world. Thomas Luckmann, Peter Berger, and other sociologists of knowledge note that man alone of living creatures has to construct his own world of meaning. He does not have innate programming as do other living creatures. Man projects a world that makes sense to him, that satisfies his needs. He develops a system of economy and various social forms by which he can live and find fulfillment, and a system of meaning. These are based on the conditions in which man finds himself and his awareness of the circumstances surrounding his life. Even if his model comes from revelation, it is man who is the actuator. Thus he builds a world much as a Shakespeare would develop a play, with setting, roles, and meaning. Some of the circumstances of man's life and his awarenesses will change, and thus his ideas, beliefs, values, and institutions change. Others are more fixed by the created conditions of his life. Thus we find relativity of culture—culture changing as conditions—e.g., economic conditions—change, and other aspects that seem consistent to every time and experience of human living.

Berger, particularly, has highlighted the peculiar behavior of man whereby once he has projected his social world, he forgets that he is the creator. He then lives in what Sartre called "bad faith" and feels constrained and controlled by his own creation. Even though conditions may change, he feels powerless to make any changes in his world.

If man is aware of his role—as Berger calls upon man to be—then he can adjust his world as conditions and his awareness demand. Conditions will change. We may not accept the total determinism implied in the classic theory of Marx; but certainly there is great insight in his portrayal of the many social changes resulting from

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change in economic conditions. Hopefully man will be aware enough to initiate the changes in social forms, ideas, values, and sentiments that are necessary. If he is not, the changed conditions will force some adjustment, but most of all will leave him confused, powerless, anomic—that is, lost to a sense of meaning in his life.

These considerations are extremely meaningful to our contemporary situation. Technology, particularly, has drastically changed the conditions of man's existence. Man's awareness and resulting initiative in making adaptations in his social world have lagged terribly. The incredible rate of change alone would make it extremely difficult for man to "keep up." But this coupled with a lack of awareness of his vital role and ability to update his world leaves man terribly alienated from the very world that is his own product. Just to show a graphic case, man caught himself in a form called war—to address himself to the scarcity of goods and space; he thus set himself on a course that has resulted in the possibility of a nuclear holocaust that will destroy his own existence. And he seems to know no way out. He has become a frightened slave to his own creation.

All areas of man's life are affected by this social-making process; every area of his life will therefore need constant revising and revitalizing. Peter Berger, Robert Bellah and other sociologists of religion have emphasized the projective role of man even in the area of man's search for ultimate meaning, which is the sociologist's conception of religion. Again revelation may be the guiding light, but man incarnates it in his construction of his social world. Therefore, as his insights change through new experiences and new, or renewed, revelation, even his religious ideas and behavior will change. Theology and forms of worship have to adjust. What might have been the forms and emphases of Christianity in an agrarian culture no longer fit in a highly industrialized society. We note the new emphasis on community in both worship and even our reading of scripture that respond to the alienation of man today. The inductive and experiential mode introduced by science has its counterpart in the anthropomorphic starting point that Rahner and other contemporary theologians base their theologies on today. Even our own efforts to weed out customs from a monastic culture in our Franciscan life-style and forms of prayer testify to this process of cultural updating.

The process of updating a culture is a dialectic. Man runs a dialog between his traditional insights—the wisdom of the ages, long experiences, and revelation—and contemporary conditions. We shall consider drastic changes in man's living conditions, and realize that perhaps never before has man been as severely challenged to enter this dialog between his traditional life and the world in which he finds himself, and openly and fearlessly to revive and revitalize

the ideas, beliefs, values, and institutions—in a word, the culture—of his society.

Dr. Robert Oppenheimer has characterized our times thus: "The world alters as we walk in it, so that the years of man's life measure not some small growth or rearrangement or moderation of what was learned in childhood, but a great upheaval."[1] Sociologist Warren Bennis notes that "the only constant is change" has become cliché and considers change the "godhead" term for our age as it has been for no other.[2] The Industrial Age, or the Age of Technology has been the dominant culture of our times. Man's ingenuity in inventing and producing has been the basic value of this culture. But man's success at development has turned into a whirlwind for him. The pace of change has been catastrophic, and now we are beginning to see that both this rate of change and much of the product are devastating. Alvin Toffler has struck a most responsive chord in American lives with his best-seller **Future Shock**.[3] He points to such "progress" as the fact that our cities double every 10 or 15 years, and we can't even plan for what already exists; in the past few years we have developed the ability to travel 18,000 m.p.h. through space, the distance and speed we see in astronaut travels seem to symbolize the whirling we feel inside our heads. Not only is man inventing much faster than ever before, but the new inventions are diffused through society at a startling rate—it took a century for the harvester to be in widespread use, but only three years for the transistor to take over. Knowledge also increases at a staggering rate, over a thousand new book titles appear throughout the world each day, scientific literature expands at the rate of sixty million pages a year. Last night's certainties become today's ludicrous nonsense. Less than a hundred years ago the British Parliament considered closing the Royal Patent Office as it seemed that everything had already been invented, and then . . . Is it any wonder that people feel "future shock"? Our whole society feels a sort of vertigo, a loss of equilibrium in a maelstrom of change. Modern man is always in motion: eating on the run, rushing to and from work or school or appointments, grabbing a phone to carry on the "art" of communication—and the whirl of the world is constantly before his eyes in a maze of newspapers, magazines, and TV. Modern man has to make more decisions per day than ever in the history of mankind. Obviously this has a psychic toll. Contemporary man cannot seem to cope with this overload. To do so he might try to "block it out," act as if there is no change.

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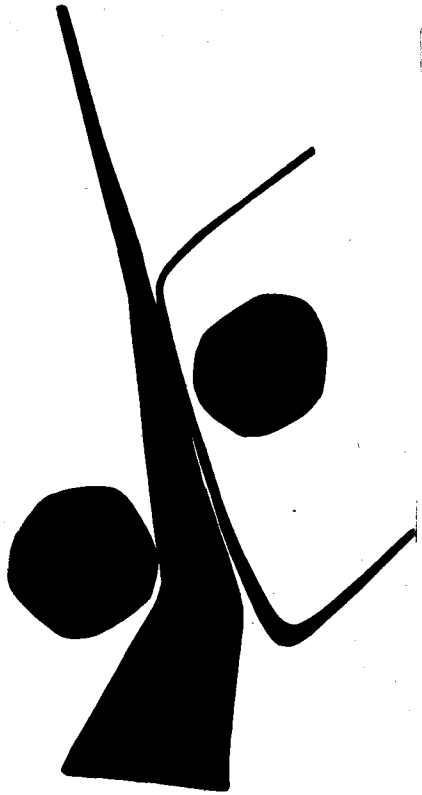
[1] J. R. Oppenheimer, "Prospects in the Arts and Sciences," **Perspectives, U.S.A.**, 1965, pp. 10-11.

[2] Warren G. Bennis and Philip Slater, **The Temporary Society** (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 99.

[3] New York: Random House, 1970.

Or he tends to lose himself in his own special field or hobby. Some try to revert to old patterns that worked once. But nothing can get man through this cataclysmic pressure except to face the question of change squarely. To make matters even more difficult not only must man adjust to the change, but he has to initiate some additional change to correct for change, such as the crisis in the cities, highways, atmosphere.

In addition to the whirlwind pace, there are some values of the technological culture that need to be considered. Since product is the goal, materialism is the god. We live in a basically consumptive society, and some of the best minds of the day are busy attempting to increase in man a sense of need for new products. No longer is industry designed to meet felt needs, but to create needs. Accompanying materialism is a sentiment of scarcity. Man acts as if his needs are scarce and he must fight, even kill, in order to fulfill them. This leads to violence and war, the never-ending spectre lurking over our lives.



In his recent work, **The Pursuit of Loneliness**,[4] the noted sociologist Philip Slater contends that this myth of scarcity accounts for most of the evils of American life today —the violence, myopic nationalism, destruction of community, and stifling of human growth.

Secularism is the guiding philosophy of the scientific-technological age. Man believes he has the potential to solve all his problems, and he organizes to do so. Max Weber developed the brilliant thesis that every advance in human history has come through a charismatic intervention, but that this charisma becomes routinized or bureaucratized, stifling that initiating spirit. The bureaucratization that accompanies our life today stifles human spirit, the creative ideas that have led to human and spiritual growth and development. Everyone has his assigned role to play and outlined procedures through which to play it. He senses he is in a role-prison. He feels powerless to make any changes. He is alienated from his work, often not even knowing or wanting what he is creating, while feeling himself oppressed by the system of which he is a part. The "new industrial state" described by John Kenneth Galbraith seems to control everyone.[5] All feel powerless. Some feel oppressed because they do not receive a real share of the product, living in poverty under the promise of affluence. But all feel that they are really incapable of making change. There is a sense of a loss of transcendence. Man cannot even transcend the machine, let alone this world. And so the feeling of being a product, a robot or an IBM card leads to spiritual death. The Church Historian Martin Marty reflects the attitude of his University of Chicago students—and so many others today—when he observes that "the world is intolerable, many rebel in search of human existence."[6]

Youth particularly are searching for new values—for a new culture. As Charles Reich in his popular **The Greening of America** points out,[7] the push towards change is the product of two interacting forces: the promise of life made to young Americans by affluence, technology, education, and ideals; and the threat to that promise by everything from neon ugliness and boring jobs to the Vietnam war and the threat of nuclear holocaust. The popularity of Reich's somewhat unsophisticated book as it appeared in the **New Yorker** and the $8.00 hardback indicates that he is correct in assuming that many older Americans also feel the pinch of modern society and are anxious for a more human world.

What are these advocates of change looking for? "Life Affirmation," they say. A new set of values that places man over the machine and human values over material ones. There is no scarcity of the real human needs. Alienated, people desperately reach out for interpersonal relationships, brotherhood, love, fellowship with their fellow man whatever his color or national origin. As Thomas O'Dea notes, social change and social disorganization result in a loss of cultural consensus and group solidarity, and set men upon a "quest for community," that is, for new values to which they can adhere and new groups to which they can belong.[8] They want to explore and come to understand their own personalities. Creativity has become the new asceticism. They call for liberation, the freedom to choose

[4] Boston: Beacon Press, 1970.

[5] John Kenneth Galbraith, **The New Industrial State** (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967).

[6] Martin Marty, "The City of the Future," lecture given at Canon City, Colo., September, 1968.

[7] Charles A. Reich, **The Greening of America** (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 218.

[8] Thomas O'Dea, **Sociology of Religion** (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1966), p. 60.

their own life-style, values, and to be able to celebrate. Theirs is a quest for naturalness in life in opposition to the artificiality they find in their culture. They want to identify with and enjoy nature, themselves, and one another. They want autonomy, self-whirling, and a break from the binding forces of artificial tradition and of dogmatisms imposed in authoritarian fashion. They seek meaningful work and involvement in the issues that concern them. They yearn to transcend the material culture, and perhaps one of the strongest contemporary waves is the urge to transcend the world. They seek mysticism, ecstasy, spiritual awareness (two days in a row, recently, I was given the writings of spiritual writers to read from young men I met casually in an unrelated context). And they are beginning to believe that such transcendence is possible. They see the "soul" of the blacks and the free ways of some of their peers. Much of their search, it must be admitted, is hedonistic, but perhaps it says something about a loss of pleasure in living. Much is "ego-tripping," an almost narcissistic concern with self and a tendency to see the individual as absolute. Much of it reflects a search for a genuine human existence, however; and certainly this concern with human issues, whether for fulfilling lives for themselves or for improved conditions for disadvantaged persons, is commendable.

Paul Goodman, in an excellent article entitled "The New Reformation," points out much of the myopic vision and narcissism of today's youth.[9] But the noted educator and social critic contends that their disturbance may be a turning point in history. He does not find great fruit in their unsophisticated politics, crude philosophy, morality, or vaunted common sense (as he once contended), but he does see great strength in the religious significance of this movement. He likens it to the Reformation. Everywhere there is protest, revolution, and attack upon the Establishment. The thrust is toward purging, humanizing, and changing the priorities of the scientific, technological, and civil institutions. Goodman claims that the young have finally made this protest religious, for they feel threatened by meaninglessness in their lives. He notes that this is resulting in a new proliferation of sects (and his article was written before the rise of the "Jesus freaks" and the surge of the Pentecostal movement). He points out that the young are "hotly metaphysical." He notes that even college chaplains of traditional churches find these new waves, but points to their tendency to relate the movement with social and secular concerns and their reticence to explore the new dimensions where God may be found very much alive. The noted sociologist Robert Bellah concurs that religion is not being replaced

[9] Paul Goodman, "The New Reformation," **The New York Times Magazine**, September 19, 1969, 1969, p. 58.

but is moving to the center of man's life.[10] He particularly notes this in his students at Berkeley, some of the leaders of the "new generation."

Surely there is ferment in today's world. There is much ripe seed. Man may stand on the threshold of self-destruction, but perhaps never before have fields been so ripe for the harvest. There is much chaff, but the human and spiritual strivings felt in today's society provide much grain for human growth.

How does one, or a society, meet this new wave? Charismatic movement is one of the classical forms of social change. Max Weber wrote that charisma rises when "hardened institutional fabrics disintegrate and routine forms of life prove insufficient for maintaining a growing state of tension, stress or suffering."[11] There is much of charisma in the contemporary movements: youth, peace, welfare recipients, women's lib, and in the search of blacks, Chicanos, and Indians for self-identity and self-determination. The Church, too, from the spirit of John, is straining to revive its charismatic origin. The frantic change and the growing movements pound against bureaucratic walls. Those of us interested in progress toward a more deeply human, spiritual society must join this motion. Naturally, not all change is good; we should avoid faddism, but we must avoid all the more the paralyzing effect of a rigid, frozen response to change. We hesitate, for we do not know where to go. We do not want to lose what we have. We know that there is much in our traditions that is of value. Still, the call seems to be to openness: we must enter this vital dialog between traditional culture and contemporary conditions and movements.

The Church is in a double culture-lag. It was barely straining to catch up with the industrial-technological society (note the call to the "secular city" on the part of the "new breed" of a few years ago), when it is now called to meet the post-industrial age. And many other institutions of our society share this plight. Alfred North Whitehead wrote: "The art of the free society consists first in the maintaining of the symbolic code and secondly in the fearlessness of revision. Those societies which cannot combine reverence to their symbols with freedom of revision must decay."[12]

Warren Bennis and Philip Slater highlight the importance of the democratic spirit for the survival of modern society.[13] Overwhelming change in the environment creates an experiential gap between generations and between groups. Full openness of communication, gen-

[10] Robert Bellah, **Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Industrial World** (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 246.

[11] Hans Gerth and C. W. Mills, **From Max Weber** (New York: Oxford University Press—Galaxy Books, 1958).

[12] Alfred North Whitehead, quoted in Bennis and Slater, **op. cit.**, p. 70.

[13] **Ibid.**, ch. I.

uine collaboration, a willingness to deal with conflict and tensions, a leader that is a coordinator (Bennis calls for an "agricultural model of leadership," one that cultivates growth), and a striving toward genuine consensus is necessary. Each group or organization must allow for the full array of initiative and imagination of its members, drawing on their perceptive contact with aspects of the evolving culture. At the same time a search must go on to revitalize the group's traditional sense of identity. This double process—reaffirming traditional symbols, and revitalizing through full openness to contemporary motion—must be fused together through real collaboration for genuine renewal. This is perhaps an organization's greatest challenge, to integrate individual needs and insights with organizational goals. The group must then with a self-conscious collective sense of identity move to plan its own evolution, or it will not meet its potential.

To achieve this, members of the group (and the group itself) must learn how to learn. They must learn to process the data presented and analyze feedback. Learn to act on contingent matters. Build a tolerance for ambiguity. Above all, individuals and groups must learn to take responsibility for their own destinies, to self-direct their lives, accept the futuristic concept of "self-whirl." A greater amount of autonomy of the individual is necessary to be creative—to respond to one's insights, to the Spirit. But the individual cannot go out totally alone. Collective action is called for. Furthermore the individual must have a base. Bennis and Slater have stressed the need for fidelity to someone or something, a group, family, church. All agree that there must be solidarity in the individual's life, the more so if he is to be self-initiating in the world. Man has a need for dependence. Contemporary man s a marginal man, caught between two cultures. He feels all the discontinuity, rootlessness, and insecurity of the classic marginal people. Therefore he desperately needs the security of significant others.

The group, organization, or institution, that will be relevant to a changing world will have this double-aspect character—a solid base built around a sense of identity rooted in its common values (and it may have to search its tradition to have clear consensus on its revitalized identity), and a freedom for its individuals to be responsive to the world as they encounter it. In this manner they can be genuinely creative in providing new vision, new alternatives for a dated and decadent society.

The relevance of all this to Franciscan life is obvious. We too are an organization caught in the maelstrom of change. We are going to be affected by that change. Those we recruit are products of the technological age. They were, for the most part, "born under the bomb." They suffer the effect of the forces described in the preceding pages. And we ourselves feel the effects of cataclysmic change and the stultification of our technological culture. Furthermore, we are meant to lead. We cannot be content simply to adjust sufficiently to survive, but we must be part of the charismatic leadership that works towards man's temporal and eternal salvation. We must provide a vision and models for the new society.

Fortunately, we have a model most appropriate for our time. Martin Marty has noted that young people—potential world-builders—search the past for heroes and creatively use them as models, for models are essential for building.[14] One hero of the past with particular appeal to the new generation is Francis of Assisi. Francis had in a genuine sense so many of the qualities sought by the "now generation." He was fully human: a unique individual, uninhibited, freely expressive, creative even in his very life-style. He was "authentic," genuine and honest in his relationship to the entire creation. Francis was egalitarian: no one was excluded from his concern be he far-away heathen or close-at-hand oddity. Francis lived the simple life. His eye was on the poor—those left-outs who arouse much concern today. Francis gave himself totally; his was a full involvement, engagement, commitment. The little brother was a model of non-violence, the patron of peace, the leader of one of the few really pacifistic movements. His biographer Celano tells us that "peace was so loved by Francis and his brethren that his order might be called a delegation of peace."[15]

Francis was the charismatic man. Above all—and perhaps this is the basic source of his appeal—he transcended the world in which he lived, he was a mystic. Francis was the new man of a new age. He came at a turning point in culture, the end of Feudalism, often pointed to as the last time there was as significant a cultural transformation as we are experiencing today). Francis responded to this transition. He moved the Church from the monastery to the new urban society. In doing so he opened the gates of the Church, and thus of society, to a whole new class—the merchants of the day. What a model for a society that has a new underclass hammering at its door! An interesting account of the appeal of Francis was given to me recently by a college teacher of medieval philosophy. She said that she, an ex-nun, maybe atheist or agnostic, was floored by the desire of her young students to become Franciscans after studying Francis in class. They implored her to teach them more and to pray and meditate with them.

In our presentation earlier of an organizational model relevant to a changing society we noted that there must first be a revitalization of that society's tradition. Certainly we must get in touch with the charism of Francis. That charism is so vital today. It is perhaps a sad commentary that while Francis is held up so often by contemporary writers as an ideal they fail

14 Martin Marty, loc. cit.
15 I Celano 23-24.

to see his charism in the organization that survived him. Max Weber would explain the inevitability of that for any organization that continues after its founder, but he would be quick to hope for a breakthrough anew of that underlying charisma. Once we can renew our roots, bring to life through study, meditation and reflection the spirit of the Poverello, then we must be fearless in our openness to revision. We must carry on open dialog between our tradition and cultural trends, and much of this will mean listening to our youth who are part and product of the changing society. We will have to tolerate a great deal of autonomy, of individual initiative, encouraging diversity of response to the many challenges and insights of the day. We must encourage our people to be creative, reaching out to the movement rippling through our society. But to enable our members to reach out we must provide solidarity at home. We must strengthen the base that gives an individual security as he ventures forth into a whirlpool of change. Francis gave us a model for that "home" that meets, almost incredibly, our highly mobile society. He said that the home of the friar must be the love of the brothers. We need to pull together. We must, as any movement, develop our **esprit de corps**—that feeling of close association based on common values and symbolized through ceremony—and our collective morale, the belief in the sacredness of our mission and its promise of success.

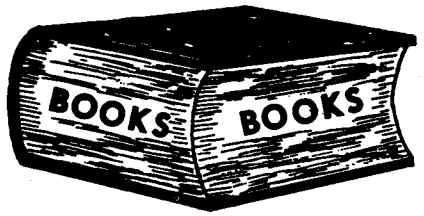
We have a special call to serve. Our participation in the struggles of men, particularly those who are disadvantaged and poor and in the struggle for peace must lead us even beyond the sense of concern in the present culture if we are to be true to our founding charism. There is an even greater obligation for us to revitalize ourselves and to involve ourselves in the societal effort.

Above all if we are to be relevant to a world that is trying to transcend its technology, we must be men of the spirit, attuned to the transcendent. Perhaps if anything is needed today it is a new Franciscan spirituality, a new mysticism. Men are anxious to soar.

The prophets had a vision of the way God meant the world to be and went all out to bring this vision to reality. The world today is in search of vision. Our heritage, the gospel values and the spirit handed to us by Francis is, I suggest, a vision most saleable to contemporary seekers. Francis again needs to be a live man of the "new age."

I would conclude with an observation made by the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council: "We can justly consider that the future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping."[16]

[16] Vatican II, Constitution on The Church in the Modern World, ¶32.



Psychological Dynamics in Religious Living. By Charles A. Curran. New York: Herder and Herder, 1971. Pp. 228. Cloth, $6.95.

Reviewed by Father Maury Smith, O.F.M., D. Min., Program Director at Alverna Retreat House, Indianapolis.

Charles Curran writes in his introduction that the aim of his book is "to set forth the basic conditions that would seem necessary for man to redeem himself in some measure from his alienated state" (pp. 9-10). From his book I would gather that the conditions are creative community, authentic communication, convalidating community, creative listeners, prayer, faith in oneself and others and God, and being a friend to oneself.

There are several themes in the book which I think are very important, and so I am very happy that Curran discusses them. His emphasis throughout is on person, community, communication, and valuing oneself. One constant theme is that Christian community and friendship are where we have the opportunity to convalidate one another. That is to say, it is in community that we are supported, encouraged, and given the acceptance that helps us to grow. A very important basic condition is the creative listener. Most today have some familiarity with Carl Rogers, so that they already understand the importance of listening. Another theme I thought well developed was that of "loving first," to which the author devotes two sections. The redemptive community is to love first. The person of faith is called to love others and God first. Finally, the constant theme of valuing oneself and seeing one's worth is very important for many people, who come out of a background of being taught to mistrust themselves.

I personally found the book to be a mixture of Saint Thomas, Freud, and Carl Rogers. I usually ask myself two questions when reviewing a book: "What does the book do for me?" and "How can I use the book?" In this case, I feel that I have found a colleague who has many thoughts and beliefs the same as mine. But even more interesting, he has many thoughts and beliefs that I have not reflected on. His constant reference to the death-instinct, for example, seemed to me to be overemphasized. I think that I would enjoy a dialogue with Charles Curran. As I thought about what use I might make of this book, I thought primarily of those of us who were brought up in the pre-Vatican II days. Curran has in many ways, in this book, closed the gap between older and modern spiritual theology—between Freud and Rogers—by choosing the best in both. Some liberals may frown on the book because of the many references to Saint Thomas and to Freud. I find more in the book that I like than that I dislike, and would recommend it to your reading.

In the Spirit, in the Flesh. By Eugene C. Kennedy. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1971. Pp. 168. Cloth, $4.95.

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

Eugene Kennedy, priest, psychology professor, and author, sees the real import of the Gospels in an acceptance of the Incarnational principle. Human growth, growth in Christ, comes about through the ex-

periencing of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ in one's own personal experience, in relating to oneself and to others. Internalized faith—as opposed to external faith which merely conforms to rules and beliefs—is authentic humanness. The crumbling of ecclesiastical structures such as celibacy and Mass attendance reveals the birth pangs of the Spirit opening the way for a fully human Church. Too long has the Church separated divine and human, and viewed the human as "merely human" and apart from the divine. Where God is at, where Jesus is at, is in the depths of man.

We get to the divine in the human by loving and forgiving, by being faithful, genuine, open, unafraid of our humanity. And none of this is easy. Loving is far from a moment of feeling at a week-end sensitivity session, forgiving means forgetting, and genuiness and openness are not the pathological honesty and sick aggressiveness of the humans who have just found out that they have feelings. Pain and suffering are essential to growth and it is illusory to think growth will happen without them.

I have mixed thoughts (and feelings too) about this excellently written book. I think most of what the author says about man is true, but most of what he says about the Church is nonsense. When he writes about the Church as losing an understanding of her acceptance of man as man (only to rediscover it in the early 1960's!) or the Church letting go of man for him to be himself, he sounds like a panegyrist of the present. His central thesis appears to be an original extending of psychological theory to the Gospels analogous to the efforts of Bishop Robinson and the Harvey Cox of **The Secular City**; but his extension suffers from the same failure to acknowledge transcendence, to perceive the peculiar modality of Christian experience: that through faith one is able to enter into a deeply personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

In my own experience—an experience of whose psychological dimensions Father Kennedy is well aware—the really key issue is the sustenance and growth of personal commitment to, and awareness of, the Person of Jesus. I don't think that I—or any aspiring Christian—need to be so reflective, to beat through so much psychological underbrush to get to Christ. Rather I think and feel it is only through the experience of Jesus that I can get anything like an honest appraisal of myself and my relations to others.

The Church and the Secular Order in Reformation Thought. By John Tonkin. New York: Columbia University Press, 1971. Pp. 219. Cloth, $8.00.

Reviewed by Peter F. Macaluso, Assistant Professor of History at Montclair State College and Adjunct Professor of History, St. Peter's College, Jersey City.

John Tonkin has made a contributive study on one of the most critical issues in Reformation controversy: the doctrine of the Church or ecclesiology. This work has analogous significance for our own time of crisis theology in which institutional religion is subjected to searching and radical criticism.

The author's thesis is that this Reformation problem was a struggle between two opposing understandings of the Church. The dialectic was between Augustine's "eschatological" definition of the Church which became the common inheritance of the Protestant Reformers, and an "immanental" understanding of the Church which was the heart of the central tradition of medieval ecclesiology.

The medieval Papacy regarded itself and its institutional structures as the immanent embodiment and perfect earthly image of a supernatural reality. This tendency to absolutize the institution was supported by Thomas Aquinas who based his understanding of the Church on Aristotelian ontological categories—the timeless and fixed essentialism of corporeality and structure.

The Reformers, however (and Tonkin examines and compares the ecclesiology of Luther, Calvin, and Menno Simons), rejected medieval ecclesiology, not so much by a step forward as by a large stride backward with a reappropriation of Pauline and Augustinian ecclesiology.

Rather than the essentialistic mode of thought of the Church as visible and complete, something which is, the eschatological perspective of the Reformers clearly marked the existentialistic nature of the invisible, incomplete, and transcendent Church as something which is coming to be as the pattern of history unfolds.

Tonkin examines five dominant themes and tendencies in the Reformation heritage: (1) Personal: no longer is the Church understood primarily as an impersonal organization, an hierarchical structure dispensing divine substance to man through the sacramental system, but it is seen rather as a personal community. (2) Historical: the Church is not the perfect, earthly image of a heavenly reality, but is seen instead as an historical reality within the realm of ambiguity and imperfection. (3) Secular: while not espousing secularism the work of the Reformers implied a new and positive understanding of the secular order that broke sharply with the medieval sacral conception of the world. In their acknowledgment of the transcendence of God, the Reformers freed secular life from an immanental framework and at the same time from naked secularism. (4) Iconoclastic: the Reformers took an iconoclastic posture the equivalent of what the author calls "radical monotheism" in which there was opposition to all divinization of symbolic events and institutions as well as of man himself. (5) Transcendent: in contrast to the medieval position that the holy was immanent in the visible institution as a possession, the Reformers held that the holy is not a possession but a transcendent norm over against the institution, holding it up to judgment. Tonkin suggests that the theme of transcendence was seen not as preoccupation with the world beyond or encountering man as an abstraction but as an understanding in historical terms of an event and relationship in which man found himself.

All of this is expounded by the author in a very lucid style. He mistakenly ranks Luther as an iconoclast, however; and he unfortunately misuses the word **idolatry** to mean any immanent reference, including even the Protestant use of the Bible. This work suffers from a remarkable oversimplification of the development of ecclesiology, the antecedent influences on Protestant ecclesiology, and the very nature of eschatology itself.

First, Tonkin does not explain that ecclesiology as a formal theological discipline was born in the sixteenth century as a direct result of the Reformation, though all the tracts had the common defect of being polemical. The Fathers of the Church may have written on the idea of the Church and supplied insights, but they never presented a systematic or formal ecclesiology. Surprisingly neither d'd Aquinas, who did not include a treatise on the Church in his classical division of theology and dealt with the Church only briefly in his **Summa Theologica** as an appendage to his Christology. Clearly, ecclesiology itself was and is in the making.

Secondly, the author's presentation of medieval ecclesiology is so sparse that it provides little in the way of causal antecedents for the Reformation development. The fact is that medieval ecclesiology drew its strength from an underlying metaphysical premise and priority of the One over the Many. Moreover, the general be-

lief that the ultimate unity, the Ganzheit of the universe was informed by the divine contemplation and the exemplars or patterns which God followed was also held by Augustine (**De Ideis**, 2).

From the metaphysic of Ideas the objectivist medieval mentality made the Church the one metaphysical bond necessarily linking man to God. Papacy and episcopacy were the main structural elements of authenticity. Tonkin does not mention that episcopacy was acceptable to Luther, Calvin, and even John Knox—there were historical, not doctrinal, reasons that accounted for its absence with the early Reformers.

The challenge to this metaphysical premise behind medieval ecclesiology came from the voluntarist-nominalist thought of William of Ockham and Gabriel Biel. (Tonkin mentions Ockham but once on conciliarism, and Biel not at all).

It was the nominalist-voluntarist school which undercut the idea that creation was informed with a metaphysical unity and bond between things which was deduced a priori. To vindicate and protect the freedom and omnipotence of God, this school denied the Aristotelian identification of reality, intelligibility and necessity, not only in things, but first and above all in God. If the Scholastic rationalism restricted God to metaphysical necessitarianism and the Church to a timeless ideality, the free and omnipotent God of Ockham now confronted the world without any necessary intermediaries, his creation being a multiplicity of singular exsistents isolated in the absoluteness of their existence. In banishing the metaphysic of essences, the nominalists set God in somber contradistinction to his creatures, and they stripped the world of its ultimate intelligibility.

This theoretical development had a corresponding influence on the way in which men conceived of the Church. With the restoration of God to his transcendent role, the sacrality of the institutional Church's immanent and participatory role in salvation is de-emphasized and secularized by the Reformers. It was the denial of ontological essentialism and the affirmation of empirical existentialism which cleared the way for a relativistic and pluralistic conception of the Church.

In no way questioning the immense importance of the consequence of Reformation thought, I do not think it unreasonable to suggest that Tonkin have viewed the ecclesiological upheaval of the Reformers a little more in terms of late medieval antecedents. Even beyond this theoretical premise, the author does not suggest Reformation ecclesiology as a practical necessity since all the religious groups now failed to command a universal allegiance.

Lastly, Tonkin fails to explain that Paul's and Augustine's eschatological understanding of the Church was due to their historical perspective within which the parousia was imminent. Contrariwise, the conception of the Church as complete did not have to await scholastic rationalism which Tonkin treats as an aberration. For both Origen and Eusebius viewed the Incarnation as a nodal point in history wtihin the Greek idea of perfection. Eusebius combined this with his historical view that the unification of the world was already achieved, the pax romana being identified with the pax messianica.

Tonkin's deductions are relevant because few today identify Church history as the history of salvation, and an eschatological ecclesiology fits nicely into existential and evolutionary perspectives. The very great depths inherent in eschatological thought escape the author, however, for the mystery of the eschaton is that it is both initiated and realized, existential and yet complete. In this sense the preaching of the Church has always been eschatological.

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