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COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for the June issue of THE CORD were drawn by John Lennon, a Junior in the Franciscan Formation Program for Holy Name Province at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.

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The Voice Echoes Faintly

A few rich nations once were clothed in purple and feasted sumptuously every day. And there were many poor countries that lay at their gate, covered with sores, wishing they could be fed with the crumbs that fell from the table of the rich nations. But the scraps were seldom dropped. Dogs even came and licked the sores. As time went on, things got worse: the gap between rich and poor widened, and finally all the poor citizens died and were carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. But the wealthy also died (perhaps for lack of the poor?) and found their abode in hell.

In their suffering below, they lifted up their eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and the populace of the poor countries in his bosom. They said, with a loud cry, "Send one of the poor to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool our tongues: we are tormented in flame." But Abraham replied, "My sons, remember that you received good fortune in your lifetime; and the poor countries, ill fortune. Now they are in comfort; you in torment. Furthermore, a great gulf is fixed between them and you, so that there is no passing from our side to yours."

Whereupon, the rich said, "Father, we pray you, send someone to our brethren to warn them, so *they* may not come into this place of suffering." Abraham replied, "They have Jesus and the Apostles; let them listen to these." But, having the last word, the rich citizens chided: "Father, the voice of Christ and his disciples sometimes echoes so faintly in the Church today that no one can hear it."

If the Church in the rich nations does not speak forcefully about their responsibility for the poor nations, it well may require the resurrection of the Apostles—or, as the original gospel text has it, the prophets. For upon the succor of the third world may hinge the salvation of the "haves"—the richer nations of the world. These fortunate peoples are surrounded by countries "covered," as it were, "with sores." The former comprise less than ten percent of the human race, consume more than fifty percent of the

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world's resources, and produce ninety percent of the pollution that threatens to extinguish the biosphere. How can the Church remain silent—or even speak softly—about such an imbalance?

Like the enslaved Israelites, the poor people of God today are crying to heaven for justice. The poor nations are in bondage to latter-day Egyptians, the rich nations. The oppression is more subtle, of course—complicated and "justified" by economic policy. It is an oppression that often masks as charity, in the loans and so-called foreign aid that keep people dependent and lead them deeper into servitude.¹

The solution is not simply to give people a larger dole. It involves a conscientious, radical modification of the existing system so that all men come in fact to be treated more nearly as brothers—brothers who will *share* their wealth, as well as their misery.

The great test will doubtless be whether those in the rich nations will consider the overwhelming problem of hunger and poverty in other parts of the globe as their own. Not just "as a problem"—that sort of recognition exists already, and even where short-sighted bureaucrats have managed to lessen the amount of foreign aid, the aid still exists as a testimony to the realization that there is a problem. On the contrary, as already indicated, this problem has to appear to the people of the rich nations as ultimately their own problem.

The gap grows greater every day. While those in the rich nations struggle with the decision whether or not to buy a third car or a water bed, the poor nations get poorer, and their sores fester. It may be true that we live in an age in which those charged with civil, material, or military responsibility are no longer Christians. True or not, however, such an appraisal does not entail the transformation of essentially religious and moral questions into secular, political ones. Granted (for the sake of argument, at least) that government officials are neo-pagan. Granted again for discussion's sake, that their values and their outlook need to be Christianized anew, one need not look far to discern upon whom the burden falls.

The excuse of the "rich citizens" must be emptied of its justification:—"The voice of Christ... echoes so faintly in the Church today that no one can hear it..."

Paschal Gallagher, O.F.M.

¹ See the excellent discussion by Gary MacEoin, "Latin America: Where Foreign Aid Makes the Poor Poorer," *St. Anthony Messenger*, 4/72, pp. 23-30.

The Charismatic Aspect of the Franciscan Vocation

Richard Penaskovic, O. F. M. Conv.

The Franciscan vocation may be studied from various angles: the witness value of the Franciscan life, e.g., the eschatological sign-value, or even the notion of community may be given prominence. One may also speak of the Franciscan vocation as a special gift or charism.

Part I of this article considers the notion of charism in the writings of Saint Paul. Part II deals with Saint Francis as a charismatic individual, while Part III treats the charismatic nature of the Franciscan community.

It is difficult to speak about realities which are both complex and dear to everyone's heart. This

holds true in regard to the Franciscan vocation. Perhaps we should simply be silent together along the lines of Wittgenstein's maxim: "What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence."

And yet there is a sort of discursive speech which is inoffensive because non-argumentative. There is a speech which consists in invitation rather than in demonstration; and in the case of these realities that are so dear to our hearts, we may say that such speech aims indeed at silence. But the silence is not the vacuous sort that is indistinguishable from stubborn ignorance. It is a full and pregnant silence—that of the community united by the Spirit of Love.

Charisms in the New Testament

Saint Paul does not theorize about the reality of charisms and spiritual gifts in the various early Christian communities. Rather, he confesses and bears witness to them (2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 4:7). Paul treats charisms thematically in 1 Cor. 12-14. At the outset of this extended discussion he tries to do justice to the complex reality of

charisms by making use of four terms, all of which refer to the same phenomenon:

1. In 1 Cor. 12:1, Paul speaks of the "gifts of the Spirit." This term implies that these gifts are a manifestation of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7). Paul also speaks of a charismatic person, that is, one who has a spiritual type of understanding.

The term may include all Christians (1 Cor. 2:13), or it may refer to the Apostles and to the teachers in the community (1 Cor. 12:28).

2. In 1 Cor. 12:6, these manifestations are termed the "doings" or "workings" of God, because God is the one who brings them about. In Phil. 2:13, Paul expresses it this way: "God is the one who works in you," his power (Eph. 3:20), his Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11).

3. Paul labels such activities a "service." One finds this usage in Rom. 15:31 and in 2 Cor. 9:12. This word *service* is employed by Paul to express the fact that all these gifts serve the community.

4. Finally, Paul uses the term "gifts of grace" or "charisms" as in 1 Cor. 12:4 or in Rom. 12:6, to do justice to the complex phenomena known as charisms. In using these four terms: "gifts of the Spirit," "workings of God," "services in the community," and "gifts of grace," Paul is aware of the slight shades of difference between these terms, but he stresses that which these terms have in common. Paul perceived both a common source and a common goal implied in the use of all four terms.

The Source of Charisms

First of all, the Spirit (1 Cor. 11:4) shows himself in these gifts. The Spirit gives these gifts (1 Cor. 12:8-9) and works in and through them (12:11). These gifts are "services" for the Lord (12:5), whose body they build up (12:4-30). In the final analysis, these gifts

have their source in God (12:28) who works "all in all" (12:6), and who distributes them in the form of grace (1:7). Paul's encounter with Christ at Damascus helped him recognize the risen Lord as the source of these spiritual gifts. Two things should be kept in mind:

1. The spiritual gifts of grace were looked upon in the early Church as a "new experience" (Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:15), as something completely novel (2 Cor. 5:17), as eschatological phenomena. The primitive Church saw the eschatological action of God in the "pouring out of the Spirit." The early Christians knew that they were living in the last days (Ac. 2:17-21) because the Spirit was "poured out," and, according to Joel 3:1, he was to manifest himself in the various gifts of grace. Paul understood that this was true of the New Testament services: the Law was no longer to be written on mere stone tablets, as under the Old Covenant, but in the heart of man, with the Spirit of the Living God (2 Cor. 3:3).

2. Paul's awareness of the spiritual gifts of grace and his notion of service came from his own personal experience of God's revelation at Damascus. The Damascus experience was crucial in the life of Paul; it made him at once a believer in Christ and an Apostle (1 Cor. 9:1, Gal. 1:1; Phil. 3:7-11). The experience at Damascus was, for Paul, a "grace" (Gal. 1:9), a "gift" (Eph. 4:9), the incomparable charism (1 Cor. 12:28-29). It would seem to be true that no apostolate can exist without a prior "mission" (Rom. 10:15).

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The apostolate is not, then, so to speak any old gift of grace, but it is the quintessence of everything implied in the words **mission** and **gift** in the New Covenant. In short, Paul, because of his experience at Damascus, understood not only the extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit as "spiritual gifts of grace," but also his own apostolate and other lasting roles of "service" in the community as a manifestation of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:28-29; Rom. 12:1-13).

The Goal of Charisms

Since the "spiritual gifts of grace" in the Body of Christ are an ordered whole, Paul compares them to the functioning of a human body. The "spiritual gifts of grace" are an ordered whole, just as the Body of Christ itself is an ordered whole, precisely because of the activity of the Spirit. "Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptized, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves

The Charism of Saint Francis

It is my contention that Saint Francis of Assisi was one of the all time great charismatic figures to hit the Church in her entire two-thousand-year history. Besides establishing his "First Order" for men and "Second Order" for women, he even went so far as to initiate a Third Order for laymen.

The Holy Spirit filled Francis

as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink" (1 Cor. 12:12-13).

The love of God is poured forth into the heart of the believer through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). Love is the charism of charisms. Hence Paul remarks that every member of the Body of Christ has his own spiritual gift or charism which must be used wisely (1 Cor. 12:31). The unity of all the various charisms is a unity in multiplicity. Paul again uses the analogy of the body to illustrate this unity in diversity: "The body is not one member, but many members" (12:4). God desires this diversity—i.e., God wants each individual to be himself (1 Cor. 7:7; Rom. 12:3; Eph. 4:7). This is especially true of those who possess lesser charisms (1 Cor. 12:21-26).

To sum up, then: love is the fundamental charism, the fruit of which is unity: the unity of Christ's body with its richness of diversity among the members. And all other charisms contribute to the achievement of this fundamental goal that is the oneness of all the members in Christ.

with an extraordinary charism, one that could be institutionalized only with the greatest difficulty, as the history of the Order glaringly attests. Saint Francis did not intend to establish an Order at all, in fact, but when this occurred, the extraordinary charism of the Poverello was institutionalized. To repeat this another way, then, even



at the risk of belaboring the point, the institutionalization of Francis' extraordinary charism is known today as "the Franciscan Order."

Is it possible to pinpoint the charism of Francis with any degree of precision or accuracy? This is a difficult question. The following four points may be viewed as a succinct summary of Francis' charism:

1. The Primacy of the Word of God. There are no ideas unique to Saint Francis, ideas which one might not expect to find in the Gospels. Francis was unique by not being unique. For him the Gospel was everything. He merely took out and emphasized certain features of the Gospel which particularly appealed to him. He was an actor intent on dramatizing the Gospel message.

2. The Word of God directed the entire life of Saint Francis. He consulted the Scriptures any time he was in doubt as to the course of action he should take *hic et nunc*. He was so taken up with the Scriptures that he even spoke in biblical terms. Far from being abstract and heady, the language of Francis was

biblical—which is to say that it was concrete, plastic, alive.

3. The Imitation of Christ. Francis was taken up with the idea of imitating Christ, particularly in his humanity. For this reason Saint Francis was especially attracted to those mysteries which flow from the Incarnation—such mysteries as the Lord's birth in the manger, his death on the cross, and his sacramental presence in the Eucharist. Francis found that by imitating Christ in his humanity, one becomes, himself, more human. The Order's success in its pioneer days may be traced to the fact that its Founder was so human in his dealings with others. He knew how to treat other people.

4. Brotherhood. Chapter Six of the Second Rule says, in effect, that if a mother loves and cherishes her son in the flesh, how much more should we love our brother in the spirit! Saint Francis and the early friars took these words to heart. The early Franciscan community had a supernatural principle underlying its whole structure. That principle was **agape**. Francis loved other people out of supernatural motives and it was on that account that he could embrace even a leper.

5. Joy. The **Fioretti** of Saint Francis may not fare too well when placed under the microscope of historical criticism. But they do capture something of Francis' spirit. They are correct in singling out seraphic joy as a characteristic of the Poverello—and they deftly reveal that joy as something pro-

foundly rooted in Christian reality—something having nothing to do with silly back-slapping. For Francis joy meant rolling with the punches of misunderstanding.

Through all the very real tribulations he had to undergo, Francis always came out grinning. He was a fool, of course for the sake of Christ.

The Charismatic Nature of the Franciscan Community

It may be said that the Franciscan community is charismatic in the measure that it remains faithful to the charism of Saint Francis. One way of approaching the charismatic aspect of the Franciscan community would be to apply the aforementioned four aspects of Francis' own charism to the Order today. But another and perhaps a more interesting approach, which I would like to take now, is to shed light on the Franciscan vocation by considering the notion of "dimension."

There is no "last word" when speaking about the charismatic nature of the Franciscan vocation. A wag may retort that there is not even a "first word." The Franciscan vocation is ineffable. It cannot be expressed in coldly logical terms. To speak of the Franciscan vocation is to speak of a mystery.

The Franciscan charism seems to exist in a "dimension" of its own. That is why it is so difficult to explain our life-style to others. In this context the word *dimension* should be understood in the sense of "insight," "outlook," "blik," or "world view." "Dimension" is something a group can share in.

An example might help to clarify matters. From the outside the windows of a Gothic cathedral look

grey and drab. Once inside the cathedral, however, one sees the beautiful colors in the windows. The Franciscan charism as perceived from the outside—i.e., the order of reason or cold, rational reflection, does not perhaps "add up." It may not, for example, make any rational sense to give up any claim to wealth and riches, etc. But once "inside"—once within the order of faith, the individual is able to see how the Franciscan way of life takes on meaning.

To be understood, the Franciscan charism must be encountered in its proper "dimension"—viz., that of Saint Francis. Once inside that "dimension," the friar, or nun, or tertiary, sees the world with new eyes. It really looks "new." It takes on its proper theophanic beauty. It becomes a rung in the ladder to the Transcendent.

The Franciscan community is charismatic in the measure that the friars enter into the "dimension" of Saint Francis. This is the reason why the early friars got together and formed a community. Just as artists and philosophers who have a similar vision form a school, so did the friars who had a similar vision of Francis get together to form a community. This is also the *raison d'être* of the Franciscan community today.

And Yet So New

Romano S. Almagno, O. F. M.

Bishop Jacques de Vitry (1160?-1240), one of the keenest observers and best chroniclers of the early days of the Franciscan Fraternity, when describing the life and work of our first brothers, wrote as follows:

As for their mode of life, it is that of the primitive Church, where, as the Scripture says, the multitude of believers had but one heart and soul. During the day they are to be found in the cities and villages preaching or working. At night they return to their hermitages or retire into a solitary spot to pray.¹

"Primitive Church," "Scripture," "One heart and soul," "Preaching," "Working," "Praying," these are

descriptive words, telling us about the life of our predecessors. They are also inviting words which have been, through the more than seven hundred years of our existence, food for meditation, prayer, and research for many a friar. And they are haunting words which, especially after the Council, have urged not a few friars to action.

Today, many friars (and not all of them are youthful enthusiasts), tired of living an existence which was, in fact, more monastic than Franciscan, have opted to respond anew to the eternal challenge of Franciscanism. They have, simply, decided to live anew (and as if for the first time) the Gospel-Francis-

¹ Cf. Omer Englebert, O.F.M., *St. Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1965), p. 204.

² Eucharistic Prayer III.

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MAY WE NOT LOOK UPON THE DIFFICULTIES AND, YES, EVEN THE FAILURES AS BIRTH PANGS, RATHER THAN SIGNS OF DEATH IN THAT EVOLUTIONARY ORGANISM WHICH IS THE PILGRIM CHURCH?

can ideal. To live it in a youthful embrace. To live it in a holy radicalism, by breaking the fetters of those traditional forms which (let's be honest) have levelled the standards of religious life. And, in a word, they have opted for a return to the originality, freshness, and evangelical simplicity which are at the very heart of our Franciscan witness.²

At this very moment, within the very heart of our Fraternity, there are in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brasil, France, Germany, Italy, and the United States wonderful signs of rebirth and new life. In these and other countries, there have arisen what is now popularly known as either "experimental communities" or (as the French prefer to call them) "petites fraternités." We prefer, for reasons that we hope will be evident, to call these groups "petites fraternités" rather than "experimental communities." For the latter term not only carries with it something of the esoteric and (in the post-conciliar climate) strange, but something which seems to have only the half-hearted approval, or wait-and-see

attitude of so many. More than experimental, these small fraternities are, in my opinion, signs of that which Cardinal Newman liked to call a "second springtime" within the Church.

The December, 1971, issue of *Fraternitas*, an "inter nos" review issued from our General Curia in Rome, furnishes (on pp. 31-59) a lengthy report and, insofar as possible, given their evolutionary nature and development, an in-depth analysis of the "petites fraternités" within our Family. In general, each of these fraternities endeavors in its own way—and in conformity to places, cultures, and necessities—to live in a fundamental, radical, and twentieth-century manner, that which is the Franciscan Witness. Naturally none of this has been accomplished (or is being accomplished) without difficulties, strain, and even failure. But might we not look upon the difficulties and, yes, even the failures as birth pangs, rather than signs of death in that evolutionary organism which is the "pilgrim Church"?³

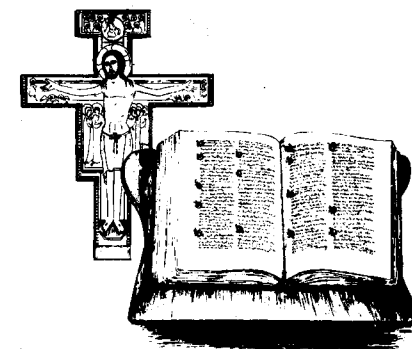
In the United States, there have been a number of attempts and a

number of failures. And not a few friars have capitalized on the failures to condemn all that which the "petites fraternités" hope to be. Last summer I assisted at a Liturgy during which the celebrant and homilist went to great lengths to warn the friars present about the dangers, futility, and even folly of the "petites fraternités." Why, I ask, all this gloom and pessimism? As Teilhard remarked at the end of *The Divine Milieu*:

Men of little faith, why then do you fear or repudiate the progress of the world? Why foolishly multiply your warnings and your prohibitions? 'Don't venture... Don't try... everything is known: the earth is empty and old: there is nothing more to be discovered.' We must try everything for Christ; we must hope everything for Christ. *Nihil intentatum*. That on the contrary is the true Christian attitude...⁴

Setting aside the failures, therefore—not because they should not be discussed, but rather, precisely because they have been discussed and battered to death—*ad nauseam* let me share with you something regarding the "Tabor Community"—the "petite fraternité" of the Immaculate Conception Province.

Early last year, four friar-priests of that Province requested and obtained permission from the Minister Provincial and his Definito-



rium to establish a small fraternity within the Province. In one of their communications with the Provincial and the Definitorium prior to starting the Tabor Fraternity, they wrote as follows:

This we affirm clearly and without hesitation: we will be a community of common life. We cherish more than simple words can convey, the values of common prayer, common meals, common recreation—a truly shared life.⁵

Today, after almost a year of existence, it is gratifying to report (at least in the opinion of this writer who has been in close contact through visits and letters with the friars of the Tabor Fraternity) that they are not only doing well, but they are truly a success in the Gospel-Franciscan understanding of that word.

Let me describe some aspects of this fraternity's life.

⁴ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu*, tr. Bernard Wall (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), p. 138.

⁵ Cf. Comment (Bulletin of the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception) for November 1971, p. 3.

² Cf. Philotheus Böhrer, O.F.M., *Conferences for Franciscan Religious* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1966), pp. 13-14.

Christian Zen and Franciscan Spirituality

Sister Lucia of the Trinity

The practice of Zen aims at fostering detachment as a preparation for an openness to Reality. The atmosphere is one of poverty, emptiness, and void—both interiorly and exteriorly. The Zen Hall is spacious and clean, while utter simplicity is stressed in regard to food and clothing. An attitude of dignity and reverence is maintained, along with a stress on good posture, mantram, koan, and obedience to a master.

In the life of Francis detachment and poverty are not only a means, but an expression of an inner experience. Thus when Francis was filled with the sweetness of God, no longer enjoying the company and diversions of his former friends and trying to hide the "feasts" prepared for him by the Lord, he could not do so. It was obvious to them that he now lived in a different world. He had reached a different level of consciousness with a whole new set of values and appreciations. This level of awareness is where Franciscan Spirituality "is." Anyone who maintains that it is on the level of

the superficial joys of the "natural man," in an identification with the natural man's values and mentality, has not begun to look at the man Francis.

What Franciscan Spirituality would hold up before the eyes of the common or "natural" man is something he would at times rather not look at: his basic poverty and simplicity before God. If the Franciscan himself runs from this poverty and simplicity, however, where is his gift to mankind—where is his service? If he is defensive in the sight of the poor and the simple, if he equates his poverty with the economy of common sense, why become a Franciscan at all? It seems to me that the Spirituality of Zen has an answer for all of these questions raised by the renewal of religious life. Without any intention of furnishing a systematic or thorough study of the matter, I would like in this short article to offer the reader some observations along these lines.

With our present openness to everything, including other reli-

Sister Lucia, a contemplative in St. Albans, W. Va., has been instrumental in the formation of a Franciscan Hermitage. This paper resulted from collaborative study with The Association of Contemplative Sisters under Fathers Johnston and Schockel.

Andre Cirino and Kevin Flaherty are working each week—one day each—in a Bronx Poverty Program.

The Fraternity is deeply involved in spiritual renewal programs such as retreats, days of recollection, and the like. Thus, each month there is a day of recollection for Sisters, a day of prayer and discussions for the friars of the Province, and (the second weekend of each month) a "Teen Encounters Christ" (TEC) retreat at the New York Archdiocesan CYO Lodge in nearby Putnam Valley, N.Y.

The response received by the Tabor Fraternity from other friars of the Province as well as from the many visitors who have spent varying lengths of time with them, is a sign that they "have something." Maybe the secret of their "something" lies in the name these men selected for this small fraternity: Tabor. Stressing the primacy of prayer as the source for Gospel-Franciscan action, they and their visitors know that it is "good to be there."

All this, then, is something one may view as another example of the second springtime of our Fraternity. New forms, new methods, new attempts—all so that we may penetrate more deeply and live more fully that which is at the heart of Franciscanism: the Gospel life. Something which is always so old—and yet, in every generation, always so new.

Prayer. They have evolved a fairly regular schedule of prayer together. In the mornings they meet at 7:30 either for Morning Prayer (Lauds) or for spontaneous prayer; and in the evenings they come together for night prayers, which as they themselves write, "usually take the form of grateful prayers for the blessings we have experienced during the day."⁶ The time for the daily Eucharist remains flexible, so that they may celebrate each day at a time when all four friar-priests are present. Generally this is either shortly after morning prayers or late in the afternoon, before dinner.

Common Life. The friars share housekeeping, cooking, washing, etc. And one has to be there for recreation to recapture the meaning of how good it is for brothers to live together in unity.

Ministries. Each of the friar-priests retains a strong commitment to the parochial apostolate. All of them take regular Sunday calls: Victor Cesario to St. James Parish in Carmel, N. Y.; Kevin Flaherty to St. Columba Parish, Hopewell Junction, N. Y.; and Charles Soto with Andre Cirino to Our Lady of Pity Parish in the Bronx. In addition Charles Soto and Victor Cesario are teaching several days each week at the Greenhaven State Prison, a maximum security institution with more than two thousand inmates, while

⁶ Ibid., p. 3.



gions, it seems that we might make good use of the values inherent in Zen, to attain a deeper renewal of our own life—in particular, to envisage and deepen our identification with the Interior Experience of our own Founder, Saint Francis. Vatican II urged us to get to the “spirit of our founder.” No doubt this facet of our renewal has taken longest of all because it is the most difficult among the tasks proposed to us by the Council. By comparison, adaptation is much easier; but how does one get at the spirit of a man who was especially gifted in prayer—a mystic? To say that the task is beyond us is merely to admit that we do not feel up to the Franciscan Message and Way of Life.

It is the poor, detached man who is in need of God and who is taken by Bonaventure on a spiritual journey to the summit of mystical love. Here, in its final stage, the “Transitus” looks very much like a maxim from a Zen Master. “Let us die, then, passing over into darkness, silencing every care, passing from this world to the next in the Spir-

it.” Hungry and restless for the Infinite, the pilgrim reaches new levels of consciousness through purification.

Bonaventure’s “Journey of the Mind to God,” John of the Cross’ Journey, and the Stages of Zen form a clear parallel; but for our purpose we can restrict our considerations to a comparison of the Three Movements in Zen and Bonaventure. They are, according to Bonaventure, outward, inward, and upward or above. The first of these may be described, in other words, as a movement toward the world in extroversion; Zen describes the person at this stage as “restless”—he does not want to “sit.” Community “sitting” is a great advantage at this point. The next, second, movement is “introversion,” and forms a striking parallel to “Zen Sickness.” Here all the person wants to do is sit! The third movement, termed “upward” or “above” by Bonaventure, is not really quite that restricted. It is not, so to speak, unidirectional at all, but is much more comprehensive than that. It is all three “movements” synthesized, as it were, and more besides. It is total liberation. For the person who has attained this stage of the spiritual life, it suffices to say that Reality simply Is (one is reminded of Francis’ “My God and My All”).

This total liberation takes place on the final “day” of Bonaventure’s “Journey,” which he parallels with the Days of Creation. Travelling in the vehicle of Zen, we undergo half the Journey and meet Bonaventure during his fifth “day” in

the gift of intelligence. The detour has allowed us to by-pass sense, imagination, reason, and understanding. For the first time there is a sense of unity. Oneness is experienced with a light so pure that it seems to be “nothing.” The Christian mystic calls his “nothing” God. This is perhaps the experience of Francis misunderstood by his boyhood friends, who understood not. Nothing but “Nothing” could satisfy him now. Bonaventure urges us onward, implying that man is not totally human until he experiences his creation on the sixth day in the image of the Trinity. The attitude here is typically Buddhist. It is one of gratitude. One has returned “Home” and now “looks with the eyes of God” on all He has made and sees that it is all good, especially his own creation in the Trinity. This gives us a clue to the perfect joy of Saint Francis both in his love for suffering and in his love for creation.

The “Let us die then” of the Transitus reminds us of the greatest Christian Koan, the Cross. Extolled by Bonaventure in his Triple Way, it is both mystery and absurdity—the highest Wisdom. Like Christ, Francis was a Koan in the Church and in the world. His life presented a very real “problem” for all. We can think of our Father as a very wise Master who put this problem before us at just the right time, not to be figured out through much reasoning, but to be looked at until we grasp its inner meaning through intuition. The life of Francis, like that of Jesus, is more

to be lived in simplicity than to be figured out. Simplicity, more than poverty, is said to be the mark of a true Franciscan. The lives of Christ and Francis are sources of inspiration which never run dry. Here we can identify, as the Buddhist does, in Spirit, with our face before we were born.

When God rested on the Seventh Day, he saw that everything he made was good, most of all man made in his image. God put into the heart of Francis, the man most like his Son, a joy which he shared with all of creation; and on his own “Seventh Day” Francis rested in mystical love where he met all creatures at their center. Identified in prayer with centering, mysticism is at the core of Francis’ love for creatures. He called everyone and everything his brothers and sisters because the same Spirit animates and unites all, just as blood does the members of one family. Thus united, the Franciscans should ideally live “inside” nature, as it were, instead of pushing nature around in the spirit of much contemporary technology. He identifies with his brothers and sisters, rather than manipulating them toward his own ends. In the Trinity he stands with all creation in the Son toward the Father. This life is dynamic yet stable; rooted in God’s own inner life, yet always reaching toward that Life.

Identifying this closely with the inner life of Francis brings us to another question: that of symbolism. All peoples doubtless choose those symbols which best express whatever meaning they would like

their life to convey. Our capacity for Koan and Symbolism, on which all religious life depends, is not in-born (though certain temperaments may arrive at it more quickly and easily than others). In Zen this awareness is born through technique, while in Christianity it is instilled and fostered in love. If we have thrown off all that we cannot figure out and explain in scientific terms, perhaps we ought to question both our technique and our capacity to love. When love is present things become highly symbolic. A natural feeling for the sensitivities of others quickly led Francis to read into the meaning hidden in nature, the scriptures, and the cross. As the man who comes to the discovery of one Koan will find meaning in many more, the Franciscan who patterns his life on the sensitivity of Francis will find himself feeling with the mystery hidden everywhere. He will want to express in symbols what he cannot express in scientific language. His exterior will have to conform to his interior "feast" with the Lord.

One of the deepest concerns, then, of every Franciscan who gives himself deeply to the life of prayer, is that all his brothers and sisters will, like Francis himself, come to know the Lord in a way they will be unable to hide. And while we pray thus, it is necessary to open ourselves to the mystery of the Cross, even as the Spirit we long for in solitude and in the slums is being formed in us. It is not enough for us to become highly intellectual, although this surely

is a part of the "good" seen on the Final Day of Creation. What Francis had that is often missing in our modern world was a sense of paradox.

Chesterton said of Francis that you could not threaten to starve a man who was ever striving to fast; you could not ruin him and reduce him to beggary, for he was already a beggar. He considered indignity his greatest dignity; to put his head in a halter was to risk putting it into a halo. Bonaventure expresses his attitude in the *Hymn to the Cross*: It was ever to seek the nails, to seek the wounds, to seek his open side, until at last the body of Francis became the external symbol of this interior attitude.

This seems to be Koan and mission in the world for Franciscans: to be a people who rejoice in their poverty and are not ashamed to find symbols to express this joy. As in the case of Francis, it is not at all the normal thing to do, except for those who share a much greater richness.

Again, Bonaventure gives us a clue as to how to achieve this kind of richness when he says that interior wisdom is achieved by consulting grace, not doctrine; desiring, not understanding; prayerful groaning, not studious reading; turning toward the Spouse, not the teacher; God, not man; darkness, not clarity; Fire that completely inflames rather than light. It is a hope and prayer that communities who have the feeling, "Now what?" will find an answer in this eloquent statement of the Seraphic Doctor.

It does express, at any rate, the whole spirituality of Zen—and surely it must contain for Franciscans the clue to real, thoroughgoing renewal.

A common enough mistake in the endeavor to renew our life is to think that one, seen as "higher" than others, rules out those others. Such is not the attitude of the Buddhist saint any more than it is the attitude of Francis or of Jesus himself. It is, rather, a sign of our own insecurity and defensiveness. As the Buddhist saint, the Bodhisattva, is totally open to his brother, Francis founded a new Order precisely because he wanted the zeal of the apostles, the virtue of the monks, and the contempla-

tion of the hermits all witnessing together in one brotherhood. In the practice of Christian Zen the desire to remain "in the cloud of unknowing" does not destroy the value of sound theology. It is a question of unity and inclusion, rather than division and exclusion. A sense of unity is what we seek—a sense that we have not achieved, but toward which the Spirit of Francis is leading us. He would surely enjoy our present emphasis on all that is truly human.

At the same time, I see Francis pointing a joyful finger at our Brother Buddhist, reminding us that we have something to learn here: that the deepest human experience is not beyond our reach.

Wedding

Jesus, bless their wedding band
That grace may ever be on hand.
Fill their souls from thy Holy Grail
That vintage love may never fail.

Mary, have their honey-moon
Shine through lifetime's afternoon.
Virgin, their love make resolute;
Mother, bring their love to fruit.

Father God, now give the bride;
Bring this Eve to Adam's side.
Join them both in hand and heart,
Till death alone draw them apart.

Robert J. Waywood, O. F. M.

The Ouch Vow

Robert J. Waywood, O. F. M.

The topic of this month's conference is the vow of chastity. For several years now I've been hankering to give "a local habitation and a name" to my position on this currently unpopular commitment. Recent best-sellers and rock musicals have brazenly propounded an amatory Christ. We are still witnessing a minor exodus from the priesthood and the religious life. A deluge of publications directed to the Sensuous Man, Woman, and Child threatens. But none of these has sufficiently piqued me into attempting this long overdue apology for the celibate life. No, it was a sentiment casually voiced last Christmas, when over the vacation I attended a reunion with some of my dearest high school chums. As we sipped coffee and nibbled Stella d'Oro cookies, my one-time girl friend—now a happily married mother of three and still devout daughter of the Church (and still a visual "knockout," I might add)—maintained it was self-evident that priests ought to marry. This was the last straw! In a flash there swam into my mind

fond images of Fr. Gifford, the cultured pastor; Fr. Cornell, the trouble-shooter; Fr. Daniels, the jolly old soul; and Fr. Wren, the priests' priest—each of whom had sweetly and indelibly nurtured the faith of four of us at that table, thanks largely to their lives of vowed celibacy. I resolved then and there sometime soon to "tell it like it is" about chastity once and for all.

And I confess that it takes considerable resolve to write sympathetically about chastity, for it is a delicate and elusive subject that few have adequately explained. The reason for the customary reticence or inevitable vagueness on the matter is twofold. On the one hand, the classical (and facile) definition of the vow of chastity is couched in negative terms exclusively, whereas the virtue is every bit as positive as charity, which is hardly summed up as a series of "Thou shalt not's." On the other hand, the positive value of chastity—though very real, rich, and rational—is as subjective, subtle, and sublime as one's reasons for choos-

ing a particular life-partner in marriage, which motives are not exactly exhausted by the formula, "He (she) doesn't drink, smoke, or run around." In short, it is almost as impossible and as embarrassing for me to put down in cold print what this vow means to me as it would be for a husband to publicly articulate all of his wife's unique charms. But I feel that the life of consecrated celibacy is under fire; and, if only for the enlightenment of my old flame, I'm impelled to present the case for chastity as best I can. This product of my lucubrations will fall into three sections: an exposition of what the vow entails (for this month's conference), and (for next month's) a review of how Jesus practiced and counselled chastity as well as a rationale of why chastity may not, like love, make the world go round but does help it spiral upwards.

Good exposition moves from the more familiar to the less familiar. Unfortunately for the apologist, what is most obvious about the vow of chastity is also what is most objectionable, most negative. The vow explicitly enjoins abstention in two precise areas and implicitly prescribes caution in two wider realms. When a person professes the vow of chastity, he makes a solemn and life-long promise to God not to marry and not to indulge in any sexual pleasure. To the end of keeping this promise, he likewise obliges himself to avoid dangerous and exclusive involvements with persons of the opposite sex as well as to maintain control over all his sensual appetites. Ad-

mittedly, this regimen, especially as expressed in such legal and latinate generalities (the last, I hope, of this conference) sounds positively gruesome. Upon closer inspection and fleshed out with illustration, it proves not so awfully inhuman. So let us examine one by one these four provisions of the vow of chastity.

Occasionally I have eavesdropped on lobbyists for a connubial clergy, and now and then played captive audience to some lovely young thing lecturing on the evils of bachelorhood. All have given me the distinct impression that (1) the priest or religious belongs to a peculiar and medieval minority and (2) the rest of the human race is advancing by leaps and bounds in wisdom, age, and grace as an un-failing consequence of matrimonial beatitude. But a little reflection will show that the unusual minority is neither very exotic nor exactly minute. Many unmonkish professionals such as Beethoven and Alec Guinness have opted for celibacy; many uncloistered career women from Jane Austen to Margaret Mead have preferred to remain unattached for life. Thousands of unprofessed brothers and sisters with all their emotional "marbles" and with their eyes wide open have foregone marriage to care for incapacitated parents. Millions of "parents without partners" are bravely making a go of it living in virtual celibacy. And perhaps a billion souls are leading normal, healthy lives minus the marital counterpart they have either lost or not yet found. Final-

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Iy, granting that the Good Book is more reliable than Bobby Burns's love lyrics, it must be conceded that the citizens of the New Jerusalem very likely are not given to celebrating wedding anniversaries (Lk. 20:35). Look at the other side of the coin. A glance at the vital statistics or a smattering of marriage-counselling experience will show that the rest of the race hardly presents an object lesson in self-fulfillment. In the United States three out of ten marriages end in divorce; and another three reach a stage, it would seem, that can literally be termed a stalemate. Regrettably, the institution is presently under such constant assault from all quarters that it ill behooves a complacent cleric to add his two cents' worth. I will simply say that, prescinding from a vocation to the state and the grace of the sacrament, Francis Bacon's witticism rings ten times truer in the reign of Elizabeth II: "He who hath a wife and children hath delivered hostages to Fortune." I little expect that these unromantic animadversions will send legions scurrying to the convent, thanks to the perennial marksmanship of Dan Cupid. But I do hope they will deter a few faint hearts from inching toward the monastery exit, drawn by the siren song of "pop" theologians.

What C. J. Martindale calls "The Difficult Commandment" ordinarily comes no easier to us mortals under vows. It is also difficult, I find, to write appreciatively about the second stipulation of the vow of chastity—abstention from all

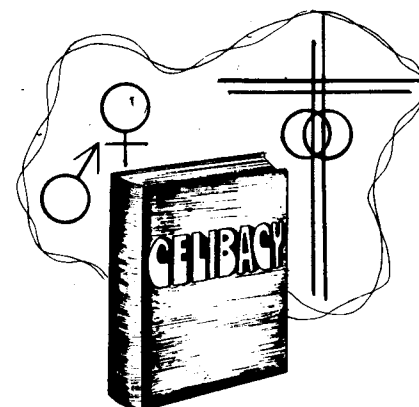
sexual pleasure. Sexuality is a mysterious and many-faceted subject, one which I barely fathom and certainly cannot adequately explore here. Yet I would like to address a few remarks to those who tend to exaggerate, minimize, or scruple over this biological iceberg (hot ice, if you will).

Admittedly, there was a time when chicken breasts and legs had to be re-christened light meat and dark meat, and when God-fearing physicians were routinely invoked to attest to the ravages attendant upon sexual experimentation. But it is equally undeniable that this period of militant prudery was closed with a vengeance and followed by three decades wherein pan-sexuality ruled the counselor's roost, psychoanalysis became a national parlor game, and psychiatry and religion plainly grew polarized. Even today, unmitigated Freudianism lingers on among noted psychiatrists such as Albert Ellis and paperback profiteers like Dr. Reubens (despite the substantial amendments of Jung, Adler, and Reike as well as the successful non-llibidinal approaches taken to psychological problems by Rogers, Bettelheim, and Lorenz). The vowed religious must still be circumspect in seeking psychiatric help, lest he be assured that sexual abstinence, unquestionably, is harmful if not immoral or impossible. These neo-Freudians are deceived not only in locating all of man's hangups somewhere below the belt but also in pinning his affections to the erogenous zones.

Do not mistake my drift. I am

not challenging the elemental importance of sex: fifty million Frenchmen—and three billion Earthmen—can't be wrong. But I do insist that there isn't a shred of evidence that the prolonged practice of abstinence (on the part of an emotionally sound religious) has ever proven fatal, that priests are not jettisoning their vows (if we may believe Andrew Greeley) because of the impossibility of continence, and that sexual appetite (despite its obvious urgency) is a "sometime thing," as sporadic and finite as the need to fill one's stomach. Chastity is not the root of all evil.

To judge from certain ascetical manuals and occasional rec-room post-mortems, there are also some lingering myths that grossly belittle the enormous sacrifice implicit in practicing sexual abstinence. Some spiritual counsellors still would have it that the less fussing over this particular vow, the better; that with the taking of the vow temptations will abate; and that "the pilot light" will unquestionably go out if one perseveres till middle-age. These offer as a solution at once to cold feet and ardent urges simply a cold shower; and they caution in vague, minor tones about the insidious man-trap of "particular friendships." In the light of this simplistic view, not-so-charitable survivors of the exodus opine that so-and-so left because he had "hot pants" or never could "keep his hands to himself" or always "wore his heart on his sleeve." All such modern-day Pelagians must be re-



apprised of the radical holocaust chastity entails and made to own up to the need of completely revolutionizing religious and clerical life-styles to render that sacrifice physically possible as well as psychologically profitable. As in all worthwhile revolutions, the revitalization will be a revival: a revival of the genuine camaraderie of the Apostles and pioneer religious groups, a revival of low-stress routine (special priority being given to spiritual recuperation), a revival of conscientious recreation in common, and a revival of down-to-earth, home-grown, unfeigned openness between subjects and superiors and among one's peers. All the help that reputable psychology and psychiatry can proffer, too, should be sought and sampled without hesitation. It takes a heap of living to keep a convent or rectory from becoming a neurotics' ward.

Then there are those for whom the vow of chastity may become temporarily or periodically a needless but serious cause for alarm.

Some of these harried souls are still nursing or have lately resurrected adolescent scrupulosity in regard to mental sins of impurity. If preoccupation with sexual fantasies borders on the compulsive or the guilt over entertaining them is out of all proportion with real culpability, the case is one for the psychiatrist. Otherwise, a little clarification should go a long way towards restoring a correctly informed conscience, and a measure of peace, to the scruple-ridden. First, the Devil is not lightly to be adduced as the inspirer of one's lascivious mental movies. Second, having "bad thoughts" is neither tantamount to entertaining them nor indicative of a condition any more serious than that of being "alive and kicking." And third, if one has not by word or act beforehand prompted or afterwards fulfilled these fantasies, he is very likely free of serious guilt. Finally, our Lord's warning about "lusting after a woman" in one's heart and thereby committing virtual adultery is to be construed as implying as strong and clear an evil intention as that of the bankrobber (of the paradigm) who is baffled in his execution only by the sudden appearance of unforeseen guards on the premises. As for those other beleaguered individuals who occasionally or for a longer stretch habitually give in to temptation and commit a sin of impurity, particularly a solitary sin, they should not be utterly shaken nor readily reach for their walking papers. On the one hand, the profession of vows does not render the sacra-

ment of Penance for all practical purposes irrelevant or make the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, dominated as it is with sin and redemption themes, personally pointless. And just as divorce is not the only logical alternative to the flawless marriage, so too partial infidelity to the vow of chastity hardly renders a vocation null and void or necessarily spells a decree of dispensation. On the other hand, constant bouts with temptations to impurity may very likely be regarded as symptomatic. They may telegraph to a priest or religious that something radical is amiss about his present apostolate or regimen of life; for such temptations arise almost inevitably from the fatigue and frustration that follow stressful irregularity and uncongenial employment, not to mention dangerous intimacy with the opposite sex. Before a monk begins monkeying with his vows, he had better calmly and coolly reason out his scruples and safely and sanely recapture his integrity.

Regarding the two implicit obligations stemming from the vow of chastity, I may be permitted to be short and sweet. For their import, though broad, is clear; and their importance, though clear, is indirect. From personal experience, I readily concede that living in an all-male community for any length of time has its psychic liabilities, and I suppose the same is true for a sister sequestered in her one-sex milieu. Men without women tend to grow shaggy of appearance and gruff of manner—ursine, in short. Women without men, I submit, are

prone to formalism, indecision, and intrigue. But it is important to realize that these are liabilities: they are not fatalities in either of the two senses of the word. That is, these handicaps are not fated necessarily to materialize; and even if they do, they should not prove fatal to one's psyche. Nowadays most people in vows, by dint of their active apostolate or at least through liberal contact with family, in all likelihood have more than sufficient dealings with the opposite sex to prevent psychological starvation, emotional imbalance, or gender-confusion. Then again, there is no lack of opportunity for intellectual and vicarious commerce with the opposite sex, thanks to the availability of literature and the mass media.

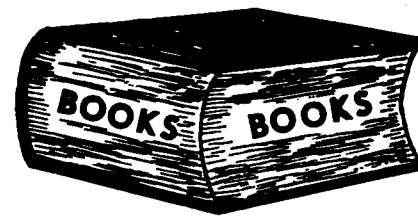
Some avant garde commentators on the religious scene, after exaggerating the aforementioned liabilities, have zealously propounded a solution they term the Third Way. This Third Way, according to them, lies somewhere between the path the married tread and the road those vowed to celibacy have traditionally traversed: to experience all the agonies and the ecstasies of deep, meaningful relationships with one (or a few) of the opposite sex to every extent short of romance and love-making. In my opinion, this middle path leads abruptly to a will-o'-the-wisp. For one thing, it seems to me that such demanding and fulfilling existential relationships, not mere biological satisfactions, are quintessentially what one sacrifices by taking the vow of celibacy. For another,

I am personally convinced—having savored the joys and the jealousies of falling in love in my pre-seminary days—that sharing soul-secrets and sighs with one's opposite number can be as mind-blowing and as lethal as a dose of uncut heroin. I, for one, would eternally hesitate to be the guinea pig that had to prove the feasibility of the Third Way. I used to claim that if Elsa Maxwell and Pope John were locked up in the same cabin for two weeks, they would end up pitching woo. Since then the case history of every defecting priest I have known has only strengthened my conviction on the matter.

Coming to the fourth and final stipulation of the vow, I have only this to remark in a general way about practicing mortification: what the world invariably applauds in the secular realm raises its darkest suspicions in the religious sphere. Call the phenomenon a paradox, if you will; I deem it a downright contradiction. What I mean is, people instinctively whistle in admiration at the sight of a gorgeous feminine physique such as that of Raquel Welch, the product, to a great extent, of spartan calisthenics by the seashore, but murmur in indignation upon learning of the rigorous schedule of the Poor Clares, whose pulchritude evokes the admiration of heavenly hosts. Moderns rankle to hear that fasting and the discipline cord have in some monasteries survived the thumb-screw and rack of the Middle Ages, but cheer to the echo the hard-won prowess of a Hank

Aaron or the calloused stamina of a Johnny Unitas. Myopic mortals despise as lick-spittle and unmanly the self-effacement and blind obedience of Trappist monks, but glow with pride over the discipline and teamwork of their Olympics representatives. In short everyone approves and admires mortification of the hand, heart, and head; but only a few are willing to endorse and commend such self-control when undertaken for supernatural motives. This double-standard outlook regarding abnegation probably arises from the fact that deep down in their hearts many nominal believers do not believe that this world and its glory are passing away, nor that eye has not seen and ear has not heard what good things God has prepared for those who love him with all their mind and heart and soul. They do not realize at gut-level, at any rate, that this earth is a training ground and that those vowed to self-denial in all its forms are merely cramming for their finals. Having ears, they do not hear that some have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven.

These, then, are my musings about what the vow of celibacy entails. My subject matter has dictated the negative approach, since the four provisos are prohibitions—forbidding legitimate marriage, sexual indulgence, exclusive attachment, and self-gratification. In the next conference I propose to explore Jesus Christ's attitude toward chastity and the positive dimensions of that virtue. For now I will close with a passage from the explanatory introduction from John Blofield's very popular paperback edition of the *I Ching*—the three-thousand-year-old "Book of Changes," which is hardly derivative from the Rule of Saint Benedict or *The Imitation of Christ*: "To the latter [a native of the Far East] extramarital sexual relations are culpable only if they cause suffering either to one of the persons concerned or to others: chastity becomes a moral duty only when a man undertakes to devote his entire energies to achieving the supreme goal—Enlightenment, Absorption in the Tao or whatever he may have learnt to call it" (p. 37).



Communes: Their Goals, Hopes, Problems. By George R. Fitzgerald. New York: Paulist Press, 1971. Pp. v-214. Paper, \$1.95.

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

The sub-title of this thorough work is most apt. Father Fitzgerald has researched extensively the contemporary movement for community, intimacy, and escape from the rat-race which has sent thousands of people all over the world into life together in communes. The author traces the history of shared lives from the time of the early Christians through the monks of the desert, the religious orders of the medieval period, to the boom in 19th-century utopian communities here in America, and the kibbutz in Israel and commune in Chicago.

The analysis of today's American communes—which like anything else today change rapidly—shows them facing problems of leadership, of domination, by youth, and of outside pressures. American communes, interestingly enough, are marked by awareness of the importance of some kind of liturgy as both bond and sign

of unity. Sex, contrary to rumor, does not appear to be the be-all and end-all of communal life. In fact the few communes which have tried to incorporate group marriage as an ideal to be striven for, have found it unrealizable.

The average life span of a commune being a year or two leaves one wondering whether they are really the wave of the future. Regardless, the author feels that the communal movement has pointed clearly to our desperate need for a "compassionate and caring society" (p. 200).

This modestly-sized and moderately priced work is well written and calmly informative. It is a book worth reading and keeping (or perhaps giving to that starry-eyed youth who needs a balanced account of what he plans to get into). For it is indeed an unbiased explanation of a lifestyle whose popularity is unquestioned but whose successes and failures revolve about the very factors that make families grow together: warmth, hard work, and a sense of fairness.

Holiness and Mental Health. Edited by Alfred R. Joyce and E. Mark Stern. New York: Paulist Press, 1972. Pp. 135. Paper, \$1.25.

Reviewed by Father Maury Smith, O.F.M., D. Min., Program Director of the Alverna Retreat House, Indianapolis, a service of the Sacred Heart Province.

Joyce and Stern have selected nine articles from the *Journal of Pastoral Counseling* which discuss issues con-

cerning holiness and mental health. For the sake of brevity, the authors and articles may simply be listed before any comment is ventured: "The Varieties of Health" by Andrew Hoekstra, "Charity Really Does Begin at Home—with Oneself" by Joan Bel Ulanov, "Conformity—Healthy or Neurotic?" by Sister Elizabeth O'Hare, "Normal Religion, Neurotic Religion" by George F. Flanagan, "The Search for Reconciliation" by Albert Sobol, "Praying to Each Other" by E. Mark Stern, "Emotional Engagement in Counseling" by Alfred R. Joyce, "Crucial Counselor Responses" by Charles A. Curran, and "The Grace to Be Well," by Gregory Baum.

This potpourri of monographs covers so many areas that one would have to write a book to respond. This fact says to me that the book is stimulating to read. There were three articles of particular interest to me: Ulanov's description of her personal journey in coming to accept, trust and love herself, Stern on Christian and counselor praying to one another, and Baum's discussion of the difficulty we North Americans have in receiving love and our consequent need to reorder our ascetical tradition concerning the sacrifices of love. As an edited work, the book lacks cohesive unity. To me this is a reflection of where we are as regards the integration of spiritual theology and psychology. Many individuals have made the integration for themselves and share that within their circles but as yet there has not been a broad sharing and dialogue of a comprehensive and cohesive theology and psychology of the spiritual life as lived by contemporary people. Hopefully, this book is one step towards such a dialogue.

Knowing the Unknown God. By William Joseph Hill, O.P. New York: Philosophical Library, 1971. Pp. iii-304. Cloth, \$12.00.

Reviewed by Margaret Monahan Hogan, M.A. (Fordham University, Philosophy), a free lance writer and mother of three who resides in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Anyone who begins a work of theological epistemology with a treatment of the process of conceptualization as elaborated by Cajetan puts a pretty large stumbling block in the path of his readers. Professor Hill's study, *Knowing the Unknown God*, starts in just that fashion. A sizable segment of potential readers will probably never get past that obstacle.

The problem Hill focuses upon is that of the value—the objective validity—of our concepts of God. No matter whether God is sought in fact (in an intellectual system) or in meaning (in experiential salvation history), a knower is involved. The encounter of the knower with the experience or the fact yields concepts. Do these concepts have any value or content when they are applied to God?

After setting up the limits of the problem Hill examines the epistemologies operating in various theological systems: conceptualist and intuitionist. The conceptualist theologies are designated either representational realism or symbolic relativism. The Thomistic tradition as dominated by Cajetan is presented as the example of representational realism. The theologies of Maimonides, Sertillanges, Modernism, Barth, Brunner, Bonhöffer, Bultmann, and Tillich serve as specimens of symbolic relativism. The spokesmen for theological intuitionism are Maréchal, Rahner, Lonergan, Schillebeeckx, and Dewart.

The treatment of representational realism describes first the intricate epistemology of Cajetan and then his development of the notion of analogy. The emphasis here is upon the dynamic nature of conceptualization, the intuition and judgment of being, and analogy. The notion of analogy of proportionality is found to be not

sufficiently cognizant of the disproportion between participated and uncreated perfection. This renders the possibility of an adequate notion of God that is not merely negative or merely relative somewhat doubtful.

Hill then moves on to symbolic relativism, which seems not to be concerned with validating the human concepts of God. Following the initial recognition of the inability of the human mind to designate God in any positive way, the emphasis is placed upon existential self-understanding. God remains undisclosed in truth but sought in authenticating experience. This somewhat brief treatment of symbolic relativism seems to disclose the intellectualist bias of the author.

The intuitionist theologies whose epistemologies were formed in the presence of the Kantian critique shift the emphasis in knowing onto the subject. This shift calls forth a reconceptualization of knowledge of God. No matter whether the cognitive act is characterized as a projecting or positing affirmation or as a dynamic receptivity or as merely a naming process, the conclusions arrived at are somewhat similar as to the possibility of the cognitive act yielding objective knowledge. The affirmation of God is necessitated as the Unconditioned or the Ground of the possibility of all being. But the objective value of the conception of God is not representational. God is signified or encountered or tended towards or pointed to or intellectually located or, at farthest remove, designated a reality beyond being.

Hill then examines the philosophy of Saint Thomas, giving particular attention to the manner in which being comes to be grasped by the intellect and to the possibility of analogy as a tool for knowing God. Hill maintains that Aquinas opted for analogy of attribution rather than analogy of proportionality. Analogy of attribution belongs to the order of naming and knowing. The naming and knowing are dependent

upon and consequent to and grounded in the real world which has a participational structure. Yet even this leaves us with an affirmation of and signification of God that is, again, non-representational—a noetic tending-towards.

There follows a treatment of the source (acute awareness of radical contingency) of our language about God and a call for a reconceptualization, that will be dynamic and developmental, of knowledge of God. The final chapter attempts just such a reconceptualization in terms of the theory of abstractive intuition and the theory of analogy both previously delineated. It begins with an examination of the being of God and then moves on to consider various attributes: immanence, transcendence, immutability, eternity, and finally a consideration of the Trinity. This attempt seems more a traditional restatement than an advance in theological epistemology.

It seems to this reviewer that even though concepts are not able to apprehend God, they have some value. It is possible, for example, to speak of both the immanence and the transcendence of God, but there comes a point where speaking further of immanence poses a threat to transcendence and vice versa. A model from mathematics, the asymptote, may be helpful here. The asymptotic curve (our concepts) always approaches the straight line (God) on both sides (e.g., immanence or transcendence), but it never touches or intersects the straight line. The curve is tangential to the straight line only at infinity which remains undefined. So too, our concepts approach but never reach God. Our concepts remain, in this life, asymptotic to a proper notion of the divine Being.

The book is a scholarly work that merits attention. Hill adds to his treatment of the various epistemologies both his own critical commentary and other significant critical

commentary. These bring some of the difficulties and inadequacies of the examined epistemologies (as they are directed to natural and supernatural ends) into sharper focus. But the work is not without its failings. The title is uninteresting, and the table of contents is inadequate. Turning to the back of the book more than five hundred times in some two hundred pages of text is, moreover, rather irksome; the explanatory notes should be incorporated into the text, and contributory notes of importance should be on the same page as the text. Finally, the difficulty of the subject matter, coupled with what seems to be intentionally difficult language, seems unnecessarily to compound the problematic.

The Jesus Myth. By Andrew M. Greeley. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1971. Pp. 215. Cloth, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Robert Gavin, O.F.M., M.S.Ed. (Iona College, Pastoral Counseling), Assistant Pastor assigned to the Franciscan Youth Apostolate, St. Francis of Assisi Church, New York City.

New Testament scholars have provided marvelous insights about Jesus, and this book is primarily the result of Andrew Greeley's enthusiasm for their findings. One of the scholars, Ernest Kasemann, in his own book, *Jesus Means Freedom* (Fortress Press), quotes Adolf Schlatter's key question which really is the theme of Greeley's book: "Do we know Jesus?"

To answer this question confidently in the affirmative is the thrust of this book; but before we can do that, we must clear away our fear of the word "myth" in connection with religion in general and Jesus in particular. So Greeley draws upon another area of current scholarship—the sociology of religion—to help clear up the typical equation of myth with "story" understood as excluding lit-

eral truth. He draws upon the writings of Clifford Geertz and Alan Watts to encourage us "to get over [our] fear of the word and appreciate how important a tool it can be for understanding the context of [our] faith" (p. 11, note). From Watts he borrows the definition of myth as a symbolic story which demonstrates the inner meaning of the universe and of human life. So when one speaks of the Resurrection as a symbol or myth, he does not mean a fable or story or legend but an event that represents a greater event. And from Paul Ricoeur Greeley borrows a distinction between first and second naiveté, first being equivalent to naive faith "no longer possible for an increasing number of us" (p. 213), and second being a more sensitive and profound understanding of the meaning of Jesus, his life and message—with the result that it has even more power for us than it did before.

Greeley's book, then, is somewhere between this first and second naiveté and is aimed for all of us wherever we are on this spectrum. It is an attempt to "explain" Jesus and a challenge: what do we do about Him? It is not a scientific biography or theological treatise, but a sharing of the author's "reflections from the religious symbolism of Jesus" (p. 13), written "to clarify and deepen my own understanding of the meaning and of the life and teaching of the Founder of our firm [this phrase captures the style of the author]... and for all those like me, who are trying to deepen their understanding of the faith to which they are committed in this disturbing era of change and confusion" (p. 25).

From this background provided by contemporary exegetes and sociologists, Greeley proceeds to explore standard areas of theological and spiritual interest such as Christology, the Kingdom of God, Hope, Eschatology, Political Theology, and the Spiritual Life. What is the picture of Jesus that emerges? Greeley thinks

that "nothing much has changed" (p. 36), that just as Jesus was irrelevant in his own day to the philosophers, cultists, and authority figures, so he is irrelevant to their counterparts today: "It was cynicism, pessimism, and despair" which defeated Jesus, and continue to defeat him (p. 51). The author points out, however, the deceptive simplicity of Jesus' message and of God's "insanely generous love for us" (p. 49). Jesus was disconcerting not only in refusing to answer questions people thought were relevant but in refusing to put a label on himself that would enable them to pigeonhole him in categories of their own religious thought; and also by introducing a completely new set of categories—startling, shocking, blasphemous-sounding—e.g., "Abba"—Daddy dear (cf. pp. 90-91).

Jesus was a man with "serene confidence in the nature of his mission and of absolutely uncompromising integrity in its execution" (p. 92), and his whole ministry was an effort to persuade men that they could find security nowhere else save in God. According to Greeley, the fundamental issue is not whether men happen in the present to deem the message relevant, but whether it is a true message. The really important thing about a Christian is that his confidence and joy transform everything he does, that he dares "to go gaily in the dark" (Chesterton—cf. p. 57), because the Christian message provides greater assurance and deeper confidence that response to the "Really Real" is not a vain one (p. 48). Greeley reminds that religious growth and personality development go hand in hand, that the fundamental ethical challenge was and is to accept the Kingdom, to choose decisively in favor of it, to become a part of it now before it is too late, and that "indecisiveness is ultimately a rejection of the message of Jesus" (p. 75).

Those who are familiar with Greeley's writings know that he hits hard. According to him, e.g., there never

have been nor are now very many real Christians: "The average Christian is every bit as gloomy and sober as his non-Christian neighbor" (p. 51). He has no pity for the considerable number of priests, religious and laity who have discovered that their commitment to the Kingdom is weak, if it exists at all. He claims that "it is not that [they] have suddenly lost their cool, rather that they never had the cool in the first place and that the collapse of the structures of external conformity simply makes the deficiency obvious" (pp. 60-61). Moreover, such people really do not know Jesus at all. In response to Jesus' challenging message, they evade by falling back on the defensive patterns of their childhood: silence, aggressiveness, manipulation and disruption (cf. p. 71).

Greeley goes on to describe many of us as having incarcerated Jesus' claims into "harmless, trite formulations which though frequently repeated have no concrete impact on our lives"; who wish that Jesus had compromised just a bit, had "pulled his punches just a bit," and had "only backed down just a bit" (pp. 91-93). Finally, he states that "the world has not yet been remade not because the Sermon on the Mount is inadequate or too lofty as an ideal, but because the commitment to faith which it presupposes has not been made completely and totally enough by very many people" (p. 118). He warns that "the decision for or against the kingdom... will be much more difficult to evade in the years ahead" (p. 135).

The Jesus Myth, then, attempts to confront the average Christian whether apathetic, troubled or fervent, with the dynamism of Jesus and his message. Greeley encourages us to try to "understand the core of [our] faith more deeply and to think about the implications of that faith for our particular segment of time and space" (p. 26). I would readily recommend this book both for those who wish to

do so and, especially, for those who (as a fine Catholic layman put it so poignantly) "find our faith has faded."

The Shape of Religious Instruction.
By James Michael Lee. Dayton: Pflaum, 1971. Pp. 330. Paper, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Father Howard Reddy, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province and a candidate for the doctorate in religious education at the Catholic University of America.

Those who are familiar with the previous writings of Dr. James Michael Lee will quickly perceive that he is presenting once more his oft-defended thesis that religious education, or more precisely, religious instruction, is a social science and not a form of theology. (Cf. the review of the earlier work he helped edit: *Towards a Future for Religious Education*, in *THE CORD* 21 [1971], 126-128.) It has long been Dr. Lee's contention that religious instruction is basically a mode of the teaching-learning process rather than an outgrowth of theology, and that the central task of religious instruction is to consciously and deliberately facilitate specific behavioral goals in the student, rather than simply to impart knowledge about religious truths. The task of the religion teacher, then is not to announce the good news or proclaim the message, but deliberately to plan, structure, and implement the learning situation so that the desired learning outcomes are induced in the student.

Lee believes that unless his thesis is understood, appreciated, and accepted by religious educators, catechetics will not survive as an effective enterprise in the Church. This is because in his judgment only a social-science approach can properly achieve adequate teacher training, insure the appointment of properly qualified religious education administrators, and in the actual instruc-

tion, go beyond a mere implanting of theoretical knowledge in the student to the point of efficaciously inducing a whole set of learned religious behaviors.

After setting forth the major contentions of his book, Lee seeks to demonstrate them by the following line of argument. The purpose of religious instruction is to induce "religious living" in the student. Religious knowledge, feelings, and practices are to be the learned outcomes of the religious instruction, with knowledge "at the lowest level of importance" (p. 13). But the whole range of Christian behaviors is best learned not by verbal communication, which has been the leading method in traditional religious instruction, but by personal, first-hand religious experience which is to take place in the religion class where it is not merely a gimmick or a motivational device, but "the very heart of the religious instruction enterprise" (p. 17). The classroom, therefore, is to be "a laboratory and a workshop for Christian living where students learn Christian living in the here and now learning situation" (p. 19). It is the teacher's task to "so structure the learning situation" that the learner is "provided with that pedagogical guidance so necessary to bring him to higher and deeper levels of Christian living" (p. 16). Since the religion class is to be a lived religious experience, religious instruction becomes relevant to the here and now and is not just a preparation for later on. Religious attitudes, values, and practices become a part of the student's present personal fulfillment and social integration. In fact, the religion class as a microcosm of society should ultimately be able to play a prophetic and reconstructionist role in the larger Christian community.

In answer to the question asked by every religion teacher, "What is the teacher to do?" Lee declares that the basic task in religious instruction is to facilitate the modification of

the learner's behavior along desired religious lines, both by "operationalizing" religious concepts, which means translating religious concepts into specific behavioral activities, and by shaping the learning environment and structuring the learning situation within the environment so as to effectively facilitate behavioral modifications in the student. Lee does not say specifically how all this is to be done, except that the structuring and shaping is to be rooted in the learner's phenomenal field.

As a consequence of these reflections, Lee observes that religious instruction is not an academic discipline or profession in its own right but incorporates the insights and activities of several disciplines. Nevertheless, he maintains that religious instruction must assume the methodology of social science, and it is the defense of this view that occupies the remaining two thirds of the book.

In several chapters that follow logically one after the other, Lee describes, first, the work of theology, then the work of social science, and then the conclusion that religious instruction obviously pertains to the latter. This leads to some thoughts on the true role of theology in religious instruction and on the relation which theology has to social science, which, he finds, parallels in many ways the relation between the supernatural and the natural.

Both friendly and hostile critics of Professor Lee's basic contentions in this book generally agree that his review of the nature and method of theology is in fact inadequate. It is not likely, however, that a better appreciation than Lee has of the existential dimensions of the theological enterprise would lead him to alter his views that religious instruction is a mode of social science. On the other hand, his chapter on the work and method of social science reads like an undergraduate textbook, as Lee himself admits. Of course there is always need for good undergraduate textbooks, and Lee's summary of the

social science method, although basic, should be informative to the beginning student.

But the important issue in the whole book comes to a head in the next two chapters where Lee takes the position that the theologian and the theological method are simply inept to achieve religious instruction, and that the religious educator must be a practitioner of the social sciences. This position is based on his belief that theology can proceed only in a speculative way from a priori affirmations about human nature based on faith or revelation or magisterium, whereas effective religion teaching must be based on empirically verified knowledge of human behavior. Only the social science method of controlled observation and empirical testing of the phenomena can properly determine such important questions as curriculum planning, pedagogical methods and strategies, theories of learning, the prediction of teaching and learning outcomes, and the like.

It is too bad that at this point Dr. Lee does not concentrate on the positive role that social science can and must play in religious education, both in its ability to challenge the many unproven assumptions regarding religion teaching that he rightly observes have been inherited from the past (when the nature and task of social science was unknown), and in its ability to shed light on the perennial problem of content vs. method in religious instruction. Dr. Lee has something important to say about the fusion of content and method in the total teaching-learning experience, but in this present book, because of his very theoretical and abstract language, he does not really move us beyond the now common dictum that "the medium is the message."

It is also too bad that Lee takes up so much time beating theology and theologians with a stick, as if the past failures to employ enlightened scientific theory and practice

in the religion classroom was the result of a giant conspiracy by theologian-imperialists. It should be admitted that much traditional educational practice in religion has been based on untested speculative assumptions and even to some extent on irrelevant religious convictions. It should be recognized that religion teachers ought to make full use of all the principles and techniques that are generally accepted by professional educators, but there is little profit and much harm in stirring up as much negative criticism of theology as Lee does in his book. In several published reviews of this book one can sense a polarization and defensiveness between theologian and social scientist reviewers. This puts the discussion in the wrong place and is clouding the truly important issues that Lee has raised. The simple fact of the matter is that most religion teachers are neither professional theologians nor social scientists and are looking to both for help.

The real issues in this book are twofold. Will the kind of teaching activity Lee recommends become so manipulative of the student as to be akin to brain washing? Lee claims not, but since he never explains what "structuring and shaping" the learning situation actually means in concrete language, the teaching methods and techniques that he has in mind cannot be fairly evaluated. Secondly, will all intellectual reflection on theological data in religious education simply get lost in the shuffle? Almost everyone today ac-

cepts the implications of the researches of Piaget that the level and degree of theoretical content in education must vary according to the student's age, and that in the earlier years there should be no abstract content at all.

Relative to this question, Lee makes the interesting suggestion that the content in religious education plays a role and has a relationship to method which very much parallels the role of grace to nature. Whether this is a valid or useful analogy deserves to be studied, and Lee is certainly correct in identifying this relationship as an important and pressing issue.

In summary, Lee's book is too wordy and somewhat repetitious, and the very technical language and discussion will distress many readers. The shabby treatment of theology is neither fair nor useful, and tends to confuse the positive contributions of the book. These are, first of all, the insistence that the tried and proven principles and methods of social science must be brought to bear in religious instruction, especially in assessing traditional catechetical premises and strategies; and secondly, that some integration of content and method must take place in a total teaching-learning enterprise. In his preface, Lee promises that this book will be followed by two more volumes on the same topic. Hopefully we will yet hear some concrete recommendations to those who are still asking: But what is the religion teacher really supposed to be doing?

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