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The Becoming of the Church

IN THIS STIMULATING, CHALLENGING BOOK, Father Bernard Lee offers us a very rich and varied, yet for the most part remarkably balanced theological adventure.¹ Fundamentally, his plea is that the Church be understood as processive—as coming into being only where and when we make it do so, and to the degree to which we make it do so.

Sometimes this sort of recommendation is made on too shallow a basis: that of science, sociology, politics, or even mere imaginative common sense. In this case, it is made with solid and profound metaphysical underpinnings. Hence *The Becoming of the Church*, excitingly practical as its conclusions and pastoral implications are, has to be taken seriously precisely as a theoretical challenge to the long-standing theological models by which we have understood the Church and the sacraments.

In his Introduction, Father Lee first sets forth his quite correct notion of theology as a discipline which ought to stay close to experience; from this it follows that we ought to expect a multiplicity of theologies because of the perspectival nature of human experience. Though the application of this principle to the Church and her doctrines in general (p. 110) may be somewhat less than perfectly nuanced, it surely is not wholly wrong. Explaining his own choice of a process perspective from among the many alternatives, the author justifies that choice on three counts: process stresses the important fact that reality is “being-on-the-move,” it emphasizes interrelatedness, and it prizes openness to the future—persuasion and lure, rather than coercion, as means of moving forward.

¹Bernard Lee, S.M., *The Becoming of the Church: A Process Theology of the Structure of Christian Experience* (Paramus, N. J.: Paulist Press, 1974), Pp. vii-304; paper, \$5.95.

THE FIRST MAIN chapter of the book concerns “Theology Today.” In my opinion it is the weakest part of the book, mainly because of the author’s tendency to condone (not to say exalt) modernism and to portray Teilhard’s theology as a faithful development of that doctrinal heresy. Modernism must be emphatically repudiated, not simply on grounds of authority, but because it is intrinsically an abdication of sound methodology. This is the first time I have seen an author outside of a select French circle proclaim publicly as well as sympathetically any such connection between Teilhard and the modernist school; and should this approach take hold, I would fear gravely for the future of Teilhardian process thought as a viable Catholic option.

There is something else wrong in this first chapter, which carries through the book. Apparently Lee hasn’t quite figured out yet whether he wants to hold a process view of God to show that God himself “grows,” “becomes,” “gains in perfection,” or to show that God is really *related* to the world (the two concerns are different and not mutually implicated). On p. 265, the author begs to be released from responsibility for the incoherence he haltingly admits may be present in Whitehead’s notion of God. But he cannot evade this responsibility. And he does say, on p. 15, that God “is engaged in becoming”—surely an ambiguous formula which may mean in quite orthodox terms that God has something to do with the becoming of the world. On pp. 87 and 162, there is more of the same implication that God grows, with less of the ambi-

guity and hesitancy; but on p. 210 there is a beautiful application of that claim to the *relation* between God and the chosen people (cf. Ex. 3:14). What Lee really wants, I think, is to stress not the absurd notion of God’s growing, but rather the quite fruitful and proper idea that God is *related* to the world (see p. 92). For this reason, it seems all the less understandable why he has not seen fit to draw on the superb work of the late Father Walter E. Stokes, S.J., who linked all that is best in Whitehead’s theology with the Augustinian tradition of relatedness and personhood in the Trinity.

Yet another difficulty I had with this first chapter has to do with Lee’s claim that Whitehead is committed to an over-all upward trend in universal history (evolution). I cannot find such a commitment anywhere in Whitehead, who often seems to say rather the opposite; the texts Lee cites on pp. 19, 61, and 125 do not bear him out.

To round out my list of objections, I find Harvey Cox understood too simplistically (p. 22) on the basis of one book, much of which has later been modified; Sartre’s ambivalent understanding of human freedom is accepted too uncritically (pp. 24-25); and there neither is, nor can be, any real defense of Lee’s claim on p. 31 that Aquinas’ teaching on grace is semi-pelagian. Finally, acute scholar and gifted writer though John B. Cobb, Jr., may be, it depresses me to see a Catholic author refer to him as an “excellent theologian” (p. 51; cf. pp. 116-17 and 182). I tried to present him as sympathetically as I could to a group of undergraduates, and their pointed and telling crit-

icisms were forthcoming almost immediately!

By contrast, the second chapter is almost incredibly good: an exposition of Whitehead's philosophy which is modestly termed "selective" but contains more wealth of detail and solid information than one finds in some putatively general, full presentations of Whitehead's thought. Lee is a good writer—he has a flair for bending language to his purposes, and his style is engagingly direct, personal, and authentic. In this chapter we find him in the best form he attains anywhere in the book: he presents clearly the historical evolution of Whitehead's thought, and he explains quite lucidly (through well chosen metaphor and example) some very difficult metaphysical concepts. The chapter's only real weakness, I think, is to be found in its last section—the application (following Cobb) of Whitehead's system to Christology.²

Chapter Three is devoted to Teilhard de Chardin, not as to one who would furnish an alternate metaphysical system, but rather as to a mystic who can add the needed "mood" (pp. 5-6) to the implementation of a Whiteheadian vision. Perhaps it is because of this incidental nature of the chapter that Lee's treatment of Teilhard is not always completely fair to his subject and rarely gives us a clear understanding of Teilhard in his own right before quickly embarking on a comparison between Teilhard and Whitehead. Lee does acknowledge (p. 122)

that Teilhard's God is *not* processive (Amen!), and he is candid enough to admit that there *may* (?) be "a finality about the Omega point, which, having been attained, means that there is no longer any process" (*ibid.*). The comparison between the two thinkers is superbly drawn to a sharp point when "prognostic extrapolation" and "validation from revelation" are said to distinguish Teilhard from Whitehead (p. 127); and the similarities between the two are likewise well limned in terms of the categories each used to express his organic vision of reality.

I have two main complaints about this third chapter. First, Lee's rejection of "supernaturalism" and the teaching of Chalcedon is simplistic and unwarranted. Given the good material that follows the negative judgment (pp. 139-40), it is hard to understand his oversimplification of the traditional view (cf. p. 149 as well as 144). Secondly, there is no seed for the sort of overkill that we find, e.g., on p. 153, in the tendentious implication that, on the traditional view, Christ comes like a "stranger" into an alien world. (This is certainly not true in the Scotistic tradition.) It is worth mentioning too, finally, that Lee is probably unfair to what he calls the "Eastern mind" in attributing to oriental spirituality the view that all individuals are absorbed into the All to the extent of losing their own individual reality (p. 151).

Chapter Four makes the application of Whiteheadian process

categories to the nature of the Church as a society. A "society" is a technically described reality in Whitehead, consisting of successive "events" marked by a dominant identifying characteristic. The categories are uncannily appropriate, and Lee exploits them masterfully. It is the Jesus-event which is singularly "important" (another basic and highly fruitful technical term in Whitehead), and the whole point of "church" is to grasp that Jesus-event where it "was" and through symbolic (sacramental) action make it present here and now. Although there may not be quite enough emphasis on the present reality of the living risen Christ, for reasons to be mentioned briefly at the end of this review, in general this is well done. We find here precisely what was so sorely lacking in Griffin's book on process Christology: the sacramental principle and the ontological reality of the Lord's sacramental presence, which Griffin, a stricter Whiteheadian than Lee, had reduced to mere cognition. The author does an exquisite job of balancing, as a Whiteheadian must do, the needed emphasis on the individual with the equally needed stress on the community. I find little to criticize in this fine exposition, except for the trifling point that there may be excessive diffidence in Lee's refusal to give a concrete characterization of the Church (p. 203).

The chapter on "Sacrament" does not have quite the ontological stress I might have liked, but it certainly does not fall far short of that; and there is no explicit statement anywhere that these symbolic actions do *not* perform their work *ex opere*

operato. Only on p. 244 does a statement of Lee's raise a bit of a question in my mind, where he says that "if a person has not learned yet how to put together a Christian way of life, the symbol is ineffective." "Ineffective" does, of course, admit of an empirical and/or psychological sense, in which case the statement is doubtless not wholly false. But we have traditionally held that the Sacraments, unless positively impeded, really *do* something, however minimal, in the recipient. I don't think that "not having learned yet how to put together a Christian way of life" can be construed as a positive obstacle. Other than that, the chapter is a delight. The Sacraments are clearly and most attractively and powerfully explained in terms of Whitehead's notion of causal efficacy and symbolism, whereby what is "there-then" is *really* grasped and made present "here-now." The technical notion of "importance" also helps clarify how sacramental efficacy should rightly be seen to admit of differences in degree. There is a short exposition of Baptism, of Confirmation, and of the Eucharist from the process viewpoint, each of which is marked by a fine coherence and helpful, practical observations.

The final chapter is entitled "Some Pastoral Implications," and it does contain some good, solid implications for "getting a Christianslife together," for taking seriously our living union with God and our noble vocation to cooperate with him in building our world—particularly for our participation in public liturgical events as the privileged points of contact which we have with God, precisely as "church."

²See my review of David R. Griffin's recent book, *A Process Christology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973), in *THE CORD* 24:5 (April-May, 1974), 150-61. Griffin too is an ardent disciple of Cobb and follows him in his interpretation of God as a "society" or temporal series of events.

In concluding this review, I want to return to what is, apart from the questionable theologizing in Chapter I, this book's main problem, at least as I see it: the uncritical use of Whitehead's metaphysics as applied to God. Lee's claim to be a "loose-constructionist" Whiteheadian (p. 265) must be disallowed as an evasion of his real responsibility. Unless something is done with the Whiteheadian system, it does not furnish a viable model for Christian theology. That Lee is aware of this difficulty is evident from his admission, already cited from the same page 265, that Whitehead may be incoherent on God. But even more telling is the fact that he shows his awareness of the very notion that causes the problem: "perishing." In what is admittedly not a very good use of the notion—an application to the distinction between Baptism and Confirmation—Lee shows at least that he knows of the notion's prevalence and meaning in Whitehead. It is because of "perishing"—the fact that to exist in relation to anything else an event must perish and be graspable only as "objective"—as knowledge—that Whitehead's system cannot furnish Christian theology with the notion of a God who encounters his people in mutual, living immediacy.

Another practical, if less serious, question seems pertinent here: Will it be possible, given the exotic

character of Whitehead's language, to express his insights in ordinary language for popular benefit while maintaining the unusual power and pregnancy of meaning the terms derive from their technical use in his system? I think that Lee has made a tentative start in that direction, and I don't blame him for not having completely accomplished something he didn't set out to do. But the question of feasibility remains, and I would like to see someone make the attempt.

The Becoming of the Church is in many ways a superb book. It seems to me to be very appropriate for academic use (I intend to use it as required reading for my course on "God in Process Thought"), although I earnestly hope that to enhance its utility the publisher would consider the use, in future editions, of (1) subtitles within the heavily laden chapters, and (2) some sort of division and/or annotation within the rather extensive bibliography, which as it stands offers a very mixed bag of undifferentiated sources that the student would find more confusing than helpful. The book is also heartily recommended to the general reader, for whom I believe it does furnish a clear, understandable account of the technical underpinnings of process theology.

Fr. Michael D. Mailand, OFM

Franciscan Encounters Ashram Life and Sannyasa

JOY PRAKASH, O.F.M.

IN THE NAME of ecumenism, dialogue, and adaptation we have today the establishment of numerous Christian ashrams. But does the mere renaming of the religious houses go in line with the fundamental theme of ashram life? We will first search into the basic theme, the basis and goal of ashram-life as it developed historically, and then discuss whether it can be a pattern for our Franciscan life in India.

When the question of ashram-life confronts the Franciscans in India, some try to give it a positive value. They do so because they have in mind the well known hermitages of Greccio, Fonte Colombo, La Foresta, and the whole chain of hermitages from La Verna to Monte Subasio and the numerous others hidden away in the Umbrian hills and most of all the retiro movement furthered in the 17th century by Saint

Leonard of Port Maurice. Together with these they recall the love of solitude, meditation, and withdrawal which Francis and his early companions expressed as certainly being in line with the ashram concepts. Is not the simple life of the ashram, lived in harmony with man, beast and nature and also marked by joy, peace, and spontaneity, typically Franciscan? Are not the ashrams and Franciscan hermitages dedicated to spiritual "exertion," search for God, and simplicity of life? Can we not compare the the "nature life" of the vana-prastha and the Franciscan love of the created world and nature? With regard to sannyasa, Swami Abhishiktananda asks: "The itinerant sannyasa, has it not been practised even as it stands in India today, by the Poverello and his first companions?"¹ G. S. Ghurye, speaking of the fourth stage, san-

¹Monachin, et al, *A Benedictine Ashram* (Douglas: Times Press, 1951), p. 3.

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tempt to see some points of convergence as well as of divergence between the two. Thus we may hope to furnish, not a simple monolithic answer, but a somewhat nuanced appreciation of the question, Can we equate the primitive Franciscan hermitages and the later retiros with the ashram way of life? Or, Are the Franciscan itinerant preachers (mendicant friars) the same as Hindu sannyasis or sadhus?

Ashram Explained

THE WORD "ASHRAM" is derived from its Sanskrit root, "shram," which means "to exert oneself" through ascetic exertion or tapas (= mental or spiritual heat, supposed to be the counterpart of the physical heat, of the altar fires during the Brahmanas). It refers usually to the residence of the rishi or the vanaprastha (forest dweller) who devotes his time to religious contemplation and austerities. In the following analysis we will see its evolution, ideological basis, the goal, and the means employed to attain the goal.

"The story of the beginning of the forest adventures can only be recovered with the help of imagination, here and there assisted by traditions recorded in the Vedas."³ As regards its origin

it is quite possible that during the period of the Brahmanas, the second part of Vedas, the elderly Aryans entrusted the burden of family to their sons and withdrew occasionally to the forest to contemplate the major issues of life, to which we may trace the origin of aranyayana (forest dwelling).⁴ But when the Vedic religion centered round the altar and sacrificial ritualism, the dissatisfied laity withdrew to the forest (vana) in search of God, Brahman, and the brethren already living in the woods showed tapas to be a psychological alternative to yajna (ritual sacrifice). Thus ashram became the place in the forest where tapas was performed.⁵ So originally ashram was merely the life in the forest, before it was distinguished as a stage in the life of an Aryan.

If we are looking for the ideological basis for ashram life we can see two themes in Indian culture: the mystique of the forest and the ideal pattern for life. One was life in the forest, a way of life; the other, an ordering of individual life in society so as to

signify one's continuous effort to achieve salvation. According to this latter ideal, moreover, every stage, while serving a social purpose, should be directed toward attaining a religious objective.

In the two great epics, Mahabharata and Ramayana, we find the existence of numerous forest hermitages where an old, holy sage, his wife, and sometimes children and a small "family" of disciples lived. In Kalidasa's Shakuntala the mystique of the forest and the "natural" life are explained in the conscious cultivation of simplicity and in the imitation of the life of the animals. The sage, or the guru, has a central place in the ashram. He is the charismatic leader and teacher of the group. He is the sole mediator of spiritual life. The others, sisya (student) imitate him, learn from him the ways to liberation and spiritual wisdom. There is almost a sort of deification of the guru and a slavish imitation of him for spiritual attainment.⁶ In the ashrams the main teaching was, and remains,

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

⁶"At the time of initiation you must surrender your body, mind and soul to the Guru . . . From that time, you are the Guru's instrument. You should give up your body in his service . . . If you want to be a true disciple you should follow the instructions of your Guru to their very letter and spirit. If you are able to act according to the wishes of your Guru even without his orders you are like a strong needle or thorn that has entered the feet of your Guru. You can never obtain his grace nor spiritual progress . . ." (Swami Sivananda Saravati, "Divine Life," *Rishikesh*, Sep. & Nov. 1948).

²G. S. Ghurye, *Indian Sadhus* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1964), p. 4.

³P. Chenchiah, *Ashramas—Past and Present* (Madras: C.L.S., 1941), p. 9.

theosophy linked to yoga. Yoga had to be learned and practised only under the fatherly care of the guru. In the ashram the guru was the impartor of spiritual life, as opposed to the teacher who merely enlightens.

The second source of the ashram ideology is the pattern of the four ashramas or life stages. This idea is found in the literature called "Dharmashastra," which means "instructions in the sacred law." The ashram which was an independent entity and primarily meant to signify the "hermitages" lost its original meaning when the Aryan society was divided into four castes (Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra) and the individual's various stages in life were determined under each ashrama: brahmacharia asrama (student life), grihastha asrama (house-holder), vanaprastha asrama (forest dweller), and Sannyasa asrama (wandering hermit). The first stage consisted of a study of the Vedas, celibacy, and obedience to the teacher. This lasted until the boy could enter grihastha. This second stage consisted of care of a home and family, having socio-economic well-being and sensual enjoyment. The third stage, vanaprastha, could only emerge out of grihastha; as Chenchiah concludes, "detachment can only come after the

attachment of grihastha life." Since this asrama will have a great role to play in the whole of our discussion, we will try to develop its various characteristics, goal and ways of attainment employed in the following section.

Vanaprastha Ashrama

IN THE "INSTITUTES of Vishnu" we read: "A house-holder when he sees his skin has become wrinkled and his hair turned grey, must go to live in the forest, or he must do so when he sees the son of his son. Let him (before going into the forest) entrust the care of his wife to his sons, or let her accompany him."⁷ This is a type of "monasticism" where the house-holder is invited to leave everything and dedicate himself as a vanaprastha, in complete renouncement and destitution, to the exclusive quest of Brahman, the fundamental note of Indian religious experience, Om Shanti, in the solitude of the forest. The basic features of ashram life consist of an outlook on life with detached interest and a conception of religion as realization.

"The cultivation of detachment of mind was the peculiar province of the vanaprastha. In the early ashramas, detachment was a physical fact; in the later, it was a mental attitude, a quality of personality, cultivated and developed at a particular age in

life."⁸ Detachment was the incentive to and the fruit of the pursuit of union with Brahman. It was placing oneself between the great magnets, God and the world. The vanaprastha was to seek emancipation and liberation from the binding forces of kama and karma, desire and action. How action was begotten of desire and how all beings are bound by karma was his concern. Kama kept karma going. Salvation in the deepest sense was escape from the eternal rounds of existence and could come only when desire and its prolific progeny—action—were conquered. Brahman beyond the creator and creation, desire and action, and union with Brahman alone can save.

Vanaprastha ashrama illustrated this life of detached interest in three significant ways: the first in its sex dimension—i.e., transcending of sexual relations by the dampatis (couples); the second, in its attitude to nature as one of fellowship (peaceful and harmonious); and the third, in facing life from the viewpoint of nishkama karma (disinterested action).

The second basic feature of ashram life is its conception of religion as realization. To attain spiritual liberation one has to

employ techniques to quiet his soul's inner cravings. This is done through austerities and yoga. Thus ashram became a place of exertion, of disciplined striving after a goal:

... Within the diversity of Indian religion this exertion can be ascetic and oriented towards the acquisition of spiritual power; it can be yogic, which is a method of self-development; or it can apply to a philosophical reflection on the deeper significance of life and the world. The sage and his fellows in the ashram follow one or another of these ways of salvation in the midst of their woodland retreat.⁹

Meditation is to be employed as a means of achieving spiritual perfection. It fills the soul with the thought of God and identifies it with the divine Being. Communion with Him (or merging into It) and liberation (mukti) from whatever hinders (maya) that realization was the unique goal. The Upanishads say: "To dwell in our true Being is liberation; the sense of ego is a fall from the truth of our being."¹⁰

In addition to the foregoing features—elements—of ashram life, we should also direct some attention to what we might call its chief characteristics, so as to impart needed additional breadth to our discussion. A fundamental

⁸Chenchiah, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

⁹G. Weckman, "The Ashram, a Different Kind of Religious Community," *The American Benedictine Review*, vol. XXIII, #1 (1972), p. 99.

¹⁰*Mahapanishad*, v. 2.

⁷Max Muller, *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. VII, p. 276.

characteristic of Vanaprastha ashram seems to be its non-authoritarian aspect. Much more than taking the sanctity of the Vedas as the final authority, the self-authenticating experience gives true authority. Vanaprastha was non-traditional in the sense that unlike Vedas which had "sakhas" (branches) and Muths (which has parampara, like an apostolic succession), the vanaprastha stood for freedom of thought. Yoga is to be seen as a technique or science but not as a tradition. Ritualism had no place, because Brahman as the real needs no ritual. The vanaprastha seekers did not create sects like the Bhakti cults of Shiva and Vishnu. It is obvious from the above analysis that the mediator-ship of a priest (sacerdotal character) is totally excluded from such life. And finally, it is non-institutional, because it does not seek any sort of continuity. The permanence of vanaprastha was that of life, not a perpetuation of tradition by inheritance of heirs.¹¹

Sannyasa Ashrama

ACCORDING TO THE pattern, when the forest dweller has achieved the necessary freedom from all attachment, even to his hermitages and associates, then he becomes

completely homeless and wanders freely. He has achieved in the meantime the final goal of release (freedom) or moksha.

There are four things which make a sannyasi: contemplation, purity, begging for alms and solitude. Sannyasa

includes renunciation of the social system, the family, comfort and conformity. It means physical departure from civilization, away from cities; wearing particular clothes or no clothes as a sign of one's liberation, long hair, unkempt beards or shaven heads; begging and eating only foods which one thinks will not weigh down meditation or hinder the flight of the migratory bird. It involves continence or sexual licence according to need, the use of drugs or yoga techniques which facilitate forgetfulness of the body and the explosion of the real self; a search for the guru who will help one to recognize the stages and pass through them.¹²

All the actions of his life emerge from the freedom he experiences. Forever freed from doubt and from spurious knowledge, he "realizes" the eternal Brahman; and he lives with the vital consciousness: "I myself am He; I am that which is ever calm, immutable, undivided, of the essence of knowledge—bliss."¹³

A Franciscan Ashram?

TAKING INTO consideration the social and religious pattern of ashram life and sannyasa and the need to update religious life in India it is worthwhile to examine the basic contrasting factors which are involved in both ways of life: in Franciscanism and ashram life. The basic question is, Can Franciscan life be realized within the framework of ashram life and sannyasa? To use ashram life for our Franciscan realization, have we to conform to the essential commitments of Indian sadhana (spirituality)? In this context we also will have to ask, What is the vocation of the Franciscan Order in India?

At the center of Franciscan life, as is testified by the writings of Francis and so many other documents of the Order, lies the experience of faith in God and in Jesus Christ.¹⁴ The whole evangelical project, from whatever aspect one starts (prayer, fraternity, poverty, presence among men, etc.) returns unceasingly to faith. The incessant recommendations of the Rule on the quest for God, his absolute and sole primacy in the life of the brothers, on the adoration and exclusive love we

owe him (1R, 23), on following the footsteps of Christ and living according to his gospel (1R, 22; 2R, 1), on being open to the sovereignly free breathing of the Spirit (1R, 2, 16), on the priority of prayer and the need to pray without ceasing (1R, 22, 2, 16), and also the evangelical motivations given for all kinds of conduct on the friars' part (with regard to fasting, prayer, clothing, poverty, work, mendicancy, nourishment, etc.), show that at the root of such a life lies a unique experience of faith.¹⁵

We interpret our faith, not in terms of individual salvation, through a process of detachment, not as pure knowledge and inaction, but as a gradual and living discovery of the *reality of God and man in the light of Jesus Christ*, who is the solid foundation on which a life of prayer, celibacy, fraternity, and poverty can be built.

Here, then, we have the first and fundamental difference between Franciscanism and ashram-life. The latter, apart from being a social system, does not call upon a personal commitment in faith. The change in one's style of living, i.e., that of detachment for the vanaprastha, is from an individual-

¹¹Chenchiah, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-17.

¹²Deleury, "A Hindu God for Technopolis," *Concilium*, vol. VI, #8 (1972), p. 137.

¹³K. Klostermaier, "Sannyasa, a Christian Way of Life in Today's India," *Indian Ecclesiastical Studies*, vol. VII (1968), pp. 25-26.

¹⁴See Francis' First Rule, ch. 22, and his Definitive (Second) Rule, ch. 5 and ch. 10. Reference to these two documents are hereinafter abbreviated in text as 1R and 2R.

¹⁵*Eastern Exchange*, No. 11, 1972, p. 3.

istic and pragmatic point of view the seeking of release from the bonds of karma and personal liberation through yoga or other ascetic practices so as to attain Brahman. It follows that the asramites' life is not a vocation in the way Christianity understands vocation, as a call from God to assist the believing community on its way to redemption. Speaking of vanaprastha ashrama, Chenchiah says: "The energies of life—physical, mental, and moral, do not mount up together or decline together. Hence men who may not be fit for active service are pre-eminently suited for spiritual effort. On this fact the vanaprastha ashrama is based."¹⁶

The religious motive of Franciscans arises (whether one experiences this from within the Christian community or from a direct intervention of God is of little concern in the present context) from the incarnational reality of God in Christ and his revelation and grace. Therefore it is a response in faith to the initiative of God, rather than the (mere) initiative of the individual, undertaken on his own power.

In the ashram the guru becomes the central figure to whom the *sysya* (disciple or student) owes a god-like veneration



and devotion. For the Franciscan, as for Christianity as a whole, there is only one Guru and that is Jesus Christ; and Christ was the pattern on which Saint Francis sought to fashion himself. The imitation of Jesus' life remained for Francis the one and only secure path to God's love. Thomas of Celano wrote: "I am convinced that the Blessed Francis was a most holy mirror of the holiness of the Lord and an image of his perfection."¹⁷ Freedom, grace, and

salvation have a more than merely human origin in the Christian and Franciscan life. A guru can serve as a means to partial liberation, but he does not bring about the totality of liberation from sinfulness.

The Franciscan call is to live the holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. What this really entails, we shall see in somewhat more detail shortly, in the context of Franciscan eremitism. That the gospel-life is to be the Franciscan manner of being in the world is quite clear from what Saint Clare said of her spiritual father: "The Son of God became for us the Way; and that Way our blessed Father Francis, his true lover and imitator has shown and taught us by word and example."¹⁸

In the ashram the guru is not entitled to create a community with his disciples. The vanaprastha who retires to the forest with his wife lives a detached life, and each searches for the Divine on his/her own. But the charism of Franciscan vocation is basically oriented towards brotherliness and fraternity: the Lord has called us to live according to the gospel, not as solitaries but in a community of brothers. Our vocation is accomplished in and through the fraternity, the privileged

place of our encounter with God. We want to live not only side by side, aiming at the same goal and helping each other to reach it, but also turning to one another in mutual love in the manner in which the Lord has given us an example and the commandment (1R, 11; Testament). We must regard all of us as equals and brothers (1R, 6), show respect for each other (1R, 7) simply manifest to each other our needs (1R, 9; 2R, 6), render each other humble service (1R, 6), love one another in deeds and not with words only (1R, 11)—and that with the tenderness of a mother for her children (1R, 9; 2R, 6).

The fraternity is not a reality closed upon itself; it extends itself by its own dynamism to all men and exists in the world so as to incarnate God's love—so as to create God's kingdom. Like the vanaprastha the Franciscan fraternity stresses the inner spirit, a life rather than the work done; but unlike the vanaprastha the fraternity is not inactive and indirectly involved in the world. Franciscan life does not enclose itself within the cloister for spiritual perfection but takes the whole world as a cloister.

Bishop John Moorman, in his *History of the Franciscan*

¹⁸Saint Clare of Assisi, Testament, §2, in Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Legend and Writings of St. Clare of Assisi* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1953), p. 82.

¹⁶Chenchiah, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

¹⁷Thomas of Celano, *The Life of St. Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press), p. 26.

Order, notes the problem, which seems to have arisen from the gift of Mount Alverna, whether Francis was to serve God in contemplative or active life.¹⁹ One of Francis' greatest struggles or points of tension was balancing the real need to preach the gospel, heal the sick and comfort the faint-hearted, with another real need to isolate himself in prayer, to practise a rigorous asceticism, and to lose himself in adoration on the heights of Alverna. And we know what the *Fioretti* say: In his humility, Saint Francis consulted Saint Clare, Brother Masseo and Brother Sylvester, and they agreed unanimously that "Christ has revealed that it is his will that you should go and preach throughout the world because he has not chosen you for yourself alone, but for the salvation of others as well."

Although Francis opted for preaching, he used at times to give himself to retirement in order to contemplate after the example of his Lord and Master. Here we are facing the characteristically different orientation of Franciscan hermitages: viz., the evangelical co-existence of Martha and Mary. Even in the rule written for the friars who wanted to go in for the eremitical life, the rule has a

communal dimension and an *evangelical concern*.

The content of the rule can be put in this way. A hermitage is *a small community*, for Francis, of three or four brothers, some living entirely in silence and contemplative solitude, with others who take care of their needs as their "mothers." The "mothers must also see that their "children" are not disturbed by outsiders.

But the contemplatives also from time to time take over the active duties and give their "mothers" rest. So the fundamental difference becomes manifest between Franciscanism and ashram life in that Francis, here, has completely reconciled the life of solitary prayer with a warm and open *fraternal love*. It is the atmosphere of *love* which is to form the ideal climate of prayer in the hermitage. Francis has utterly done away with every taint of selfishness and individualism, at least as far as his theoretical ideal is concerned. Ashram life, by contrast, has no wider framework; it is not, like the Franciscan hermitage, solidly established in the life of an Order and a Church. Franciscan eremitical life, or the contemplative tradition of the Order, emerges from the gospel life and the concrete

life of Francis, and it will be meaningful only within that larger totality of Franciscanism.

Unlike the ashrama ideal, Franciscan eremitism

is not an individualistic exploit in which the hermit by the power of his own asceticism gains a right to isolation in an elevation above others. On the contrary, the hermit is reminded above all that he is dependent on the charity and the good will of others. This is certainly another and very effective way of guaranteeing the sincerity of the hermit's life of prayer since it shows him how much he owes it to others to become the true man of God.²⁰

Another essential feature of Franciscan life in the hermitages was its openness to the world and orientation to the apostolic life. Jacob of Vitry, a contemporary of Francis, wrote: "By day they go into the cities and villages to win souls to God, dedicating themselves to the active ministry; at night, however, they return to deserted and remote places to give themselves to contemplation."²¹ The later *retiro* movement (house of retirement) which is not to be confused with hermitage (though it had some points of

convergence with the earlier eremitical ideal), can be described in the words of Saint Leonard: "By complete separation from the world to become able to give oneself to pure contemplation and then after the acquisition of greater fervor to return into the communities to apply oneself more avidly to the salvation of one's neighbor."²² Chenchiah, in his analysis of vanaprastha asrama, stresses the fact of vanaprastha's social concern, by which he means to say the studies made by the ashramites and their spirituality. Though the concern is spelled out in theory, however, it is never made concrete.

Franciscan solitude is only a means, while ashrama dharma ends in solitude and detachment as ends in themselves, for the sake of the self. Franciscan life with God is essentially a life in the world with God's people. It does not by-pass the sinful and created reality of every creature, and so Franciscan solitude is never self-sufficient. There is a marked difference between the peace which Francis sought all through his life and the shanti (inner peace) of the vanaprastha. The utterance, "My God and my all"

²⁰Thomas Merton, "Franciscan Eremitism," *THE CORD*, vol. 16 (1966) p. 361.

²¹Cajetan Esser, O.F.M., *Origins of the Franciscan Order* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1970), p. 55.

²²Cited in *Studi Francescani*, vol. XLIX (1952), pp. 154-55.

¹⁹John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 26.

is a recognition of sinfulness and the power of God, while "Aham Brahmasmi" (I am Brahman) leaves no room for the Divine as a distinct Reality or for the recognition of man's own sinfulness.

This distinctive feature of Franciscanism—the way in which its solitude opens out onto the world and bears fruit in preaching—leads us directly to the next point of comparison: Franciscan itinerant preachers and Hindu sannyasa mendicants.

Franciscan Preachers vs. Sannyasa

CAN THE FRANCISCAN itinerancy of the early friars be compared to the wandering hermits or sadhus of India? The mendicancy and lack of fixed abode, the life of penance and poverty, it must be said at the outset, which characterized the early friars are not the only features of Franciscan life. That life differs in many ways from the Hindu sannyasa. The Franciscan way of life was taken up in imitation of the gospel and its missionary ideal. "In the first decades of the Order's existence, the Friars Minor, as true religious and yet free from all ties of monastic stability, went

through the apostolic journeys and... in such a 'life according to the gospel' (Lk. 9 & 10) they followed the example of Christ and his apostles."²³ The author of the *Vita Aegidii* describes the wanderings of Blessed Giles which are seen as real preaching journeys: Giles goes about admonishing others, as Francis had bidden, *earns his living by servile work*, and lives in utter poverty. So the early companions of Francis did not give themselves up to mendicancy, but as the Testament and Rule have it: "The friars to whom God has given the grace of working should work in a spirit of faith and devotion and avoid idleness which is the enemy of the soul, without extinguishing the spirit of prayer and holy devotion, to which every temporal consideration must be subordinate." "I worked with my own hands... all other friars [ought] to be busy with some kind of work..."²⁴

Drawing his conclusion on Franciscan itinerancy from the historic evidences, Cajetan Esser says:

Because the life of the friars was completely subject to the command of highest poverty their sustenance was never certain. They had to earn it by

the labor of their hands—but always as an alms, never claiming it as their due. They also gratefully accepted what was freely offered them on their preaching journeys for the love of Christ. In case of necessity they had "recourse to the table of the Lord," begging alms from door to door.²⁵

Unlike the Hindu sannyasa the Franciscan itinerancy was not carried out alone; it had a *fraternitas* character. It was always in the company of fellow friars that the Franciscan went about in imitation of the Lord. Moreover, according to Francis' explicit instructions, his followers must, on their missionary journeys, "show one another that they are members of one family." In their fraternal love they must give one another a home. This word has its own special significance for the wandering, homeless preachers who, "like pilgrims and strangers in this world serve the Lord in poverty and humility." They are not to stand alone nor to feel lonely, but must know that they are safely domiciled in this mutual love. This fraternal love "must be to them house, home, and monastery."²⁶

The Hindu sannyasi lives as a paramatman and has no relation to this world. He has no mis-

sion, no concern for this world. "The content of sannyasa need not be 'religion' in a Christian sense. It is self-finding, self-becoming, self-development."²⁷ There is no positive content to the freedom of the sannyasi; it is freedom for its own sake. Franciscan itinerancy was, by contrast, missionary from its inception and took the world seriously; its goal was eschatological as well as the existential establishment of the Kingdom of God. A Franciscan sannyasa would therefore be not only undesirable but something very close to a contradiction in terms. It would be the ideal of a person wholly committed to the following and imitation of Christ, in quest of freedom and detachment for their own sake through a mode of life not based on Christ, on brotherhood, on love, on sharing, or on the kerygma.

The Franciscan call to penance or austerity is not the same as that of vanaprastha or the sannyasi. Though at times we have seen extreme forms of austerity in the life of the saint himself, the primary idea of penance expressed in the Rule and the Testament must be taken to be "metanoia." Penance for Francis was conversion

²³Esser, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

²⁴Rule of 1223, ch. 5, in B. Fahy, O.F.M., and P. Hermann, O.F.M., eds., *The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1963).

²⁵Esser, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 243.

²⁷Klostermaier, *loc. cit.*

of oneself from a life centered on the individual's own self to a life completely under the will and sovereign Lordship of God. It is perhaps this realization that made Francis say, "The Lord called me, the Lord showed me the way," etc. The early Franciscan witnesses speak of Friars Minor as "leaving the world" or "renouncing the world" they sought to serve and bring to Christ, no doubt precisely to indicate this dimension of selfless dedication traditionally bound up with the joining of a religious order.

It remains, now, to devote some explicit attention to the important Franciscan ideal of "minoritas." The Franciscan life is a constant appeal to obey Christ, which is the utmost self-renunciation and the basis for a true fraternitas.

In the writings of Francis, this self-renunciation appears again and again as the prerequisite of that brotherly love which is possible only if and when a man renounces all that he owns in order to let himself be guided entirely by the spirit of Christ. In his rule for the friars he expresses this most insistently: I also warn the friars to be on their guard against pride, boasting, envy, and greed, against the cares and anxieties of this world, against detraction and complaining. Those who are illiterate should not be anxious to study. They

should realize instead that the only thing they should desire is to have the spirit of God at work within them, while they pray to him unceasingly with a heart free from self-interest. Here we can see immediately the wish to control those attitudes which presuppose the "desire to have" and which consequently poison human relationships.²⁸

Nowhere did Francis more clearly lay down this fundamental law of the Franciscan life than here, in the tenth chapter of his definitive Rule, cited in the above passage by Cajetan Esser. It is a law which demands conquest of the self-centered man by the Spirit of the Lord. In his Letter to the Chapter he makes the same point from a more positive point of view:

See, brethren, the lowliness of God, and pour out your hearts before him, and make yourselves little that he may make you great. Keep back nothing for yourselves, that he may receive you wholly who has given himself wholly to you.

Humble poverty and unassuming humility are to be the way the Friar Minor, and every Franciscan, empties himself with Christ. Only thus does the Friar Minor merit the title "Minor." Only thus, at the same time, does he prove a true Friar, for such poverty and humility

are the one sure foundation and safeguard of brotherliness, since they alone conquer most speedily and thoroughly the ego of man, the "Spirit of the flesh," which is the greatest enemy of real brotherliness.²⁹

The Order's Vocation In India

IT IS QUITE obvious that the traditional ashram-life and sannyasa can, even granted the possibility of its reconciliation with some other forms of Christian spirituality, never be Francis' way of following Christ. Ashram life and sannyasa can, however, enrich and deepen the dimension of prayer and interiority in the Christian and Franciscan life and root it more firmly in the Indian soil. (The Hindu ashrams of today, especially those in line with Gandhi's and Vinoba Bhave's inspiration, do have many features of apostolic activity and community life. How closely these could be viewed as approaching [or be made to approach] Christian monasticism and the Franciscan life, would be a good subject for further investigation.)

Since the Franciscan task is to announce the Kingdom of God and to witness to that Kingdom, our life has to take that form which embodies this

essential character. It will not do, therefore, to advocate social work as the essence of the Franciscan mission; nor can we overemphasize withdrawal and contemplation. Herein we have the Franciscan challenge. As the Rule advises, the brethren are so to work "that they do not extinguish the spirit of prayer and holy devotion.

By Francis' own carefully considered decision he himself and the Order he founded were not, and are not, to engage exclusively in prayer but also in the active work of the apostolate. We are to live not primarily on Alverna but in the crowded life and poverty of the towns and villages. The Friar Minor must, on the one hand, be a man of prayer; and, on the other, he must be a man who gets involved in the world. It would be hard enough just to juxtapose the two aspects, but the ideal is still more difficult than that: it is to make involvement and prayer *mutually helpful*. Prayer is more easily seen as helpful to and capable of integration with the apostolate, than the other way around. It is most difficult of all, surely, to make the friar's work—the apostolate, study, manual labor—*contribute positively to the spirit of prayer and holy devotion*. The mixed life of the Franciscan carries

²⁸Cajetan Esser, *The Order of Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1959), p. 38

²⁸Esser, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

within its very nature this specific problem which has to be solved in a personal way by the friars individually and as a community. Perhaps that is the fulfillment of any Indian's dream: *meeting a man of God in the work he is doing.*

Can we, as Franciscans, see this unity of prayer and action in our way of life? Do others in fact see this in our way of life?

Franciscan living should be an answer to the situation, as Francis' life was. But, having so adequate an answer in Francis' own teaching and example, do we have any need to adopt the ashram way of life totally and uncritically? Does not the very living of the Franciscan inspiration to the full, the evangelical coexistence of Martha and Mary, form a happy synthesis of active and contemplative life? Does not this fact of Franciscan living give an answer to the alleged

dichotomy of the Eastern and Western mentalities?

FATHER SAMUEL RAYAN, in his study of Christian dialogue with Hinduism, takes as his working point the concrete experiment of Sadhu Ittyavirah.³⁰ After analyzing the Sadhu's personal life, he exposes the inner content of the Sadhu's threefold apostolate: prayer, presence, and word (spoken or written). I would like to put forward his conclusion as my own:

At several points Sadhu Ittyavirah's work is reminiscent of the original Franciscan Movement. I have always felt that ultimately it will be in the language of St. Francis, his language of love, freedom, and song, in the language of renunciation and of the wounds of Christ and of contemplation, in hymns to Brother Sun and Brother Death that Christianity and Hinduism can meet in real dialogue, and in truth can give themselves to each other.³¹

³⁰Sadhu (=ascetic, sage, monk) Ittyavirah realized his true vocation during his Jesuit theological training: "It was dawning upon me little by little that in my life in the Society, screened off as I was from the miseries and sufferings of ordinary men, I was not living up to the full measure of Christ who became poor and helpless for our sake." Since then he became a wandering witness to God and man, "God's vagabond." He travels from place to place, and as an itinerant witness in the name of God, he meets all sections of people. Committing himself entirely into the hands of God, he eats what he gets on the way and sleeps where he happens to be by the end of the day. He follows the tradition of the Indian Sadhu who travels round.

³¹Samuel Rayan, S.J., "Dialogue with Hinduism," in Jan Kerkhofs, ed., *Modern Mission Dialogue* (Ecclesia Press, 1969), p. 44.

Transmutation

The alchemist sat and thought and spent his days
In a dark cellar-shop alone amidst must and mold.
Beneath his crucible heart one wild dream was ablaze
To change this languid lead to gleaming gold.

The dream was false, his life a waste and lies
Shattered on some forgotten floor like a flask.
My life too used to be spent alchemist-wise:
To find some precious process once was my task.

Caverned though my days be in this temporal zone,
And gathering dust, like those of him of old.
Behold, the Will of God—the philosopher's stone:
Dawn's Good Intention lines my life with gold.

My cellared life, a tarnished, sooty kettle,
The Chemist God transmutes to nobler metal.

Robert J. Waywood, O.F.M.

Two Aspects of the Theory of The "Rationes Seminales" in the Writings of Bonaventure

JOSE DE VINCK

THE PURPOSE OF the present study is to indicate the development of the theory of the *rationes seminales* in the writings of Bonaventure of Bagnorea, and to show its importance as an anticipation of the theory of evolution and as a synthesis of the Platonic and Aristotelian theories of knowledge.

The "Rationes Seminales" In General

THE QUESTION of the *rationes seminales* (literally, "seminal reasons," but we prefer a more expressive translation, "seed-principles") is treated in several of Bonaventure's works, particularly in *II Sent.*, d. 18, q. 2. It is defined most clearly in article 6 as "the requirement (or characteristic) and power of the virtues (or virtualities, potencies)

given within creatures as such." As so often happens, a literal translation such as this is almost meaningless. What the author means is that the seed-principles are an intrinsic part, the essential aspect, of the very nature of created being. In other words, created being is characterized by the fact of being naturally quickened by means of a dynamic and logical pattern of future development. The expression "given within creatures as such" is based on a text by Augustine: "Things have nothing in their proper natures that had not been made in the first days through a causal act."¹ That is, every aspect, potential or actual, of every creature is an outcome of what it had received as a possibility in the original act of creation brought about by God's causal will.

¹Augustine, *Sup. Gen. ad Litt.* VI, cap. 11, §18.

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The potential aspects of the act of creation assume the form of seed-principles. This is elevated by Bonaventure to the level of a universal principle: "Whatever nature makes, it makes according to seed-principles."² The nature of the seed itself is explained by Aristotle as quoted by Bonaventure: "An active and intrinsic principle is called a seed,"³ or, conversely, a seed may be seen as some element which is an inner part or aspect of a created being, and is the motor, the dynamic reason, the active principle of its development in a pre-designed and logical direction. Bonaventure provides further explanations as follows: "But if some effect which is within the potency of nature (that is, within the limits of a created being's essence) is produced in such a way that it is not only *conforming* (*obediante*), but also actively *powerful* (*potente*) as a means toward the production of some act (either action or perfection), then this is said to occur according to seed principles."⁴ In other words, the two main relationships between a created being and its seed-principles are its passive dependence upon them, and its use of them as a *motive power* of act (action or perfection). No being is the maker of its own seed. No created object brings forth the rules of its own

future growth or change or decay. Every created being *receives* its seed together with existence, as an intrinsic part of itself. It has no influence on its seed: it is incapable of determining or organizing the seed's action or increasing its power. As regards the inner presence and nature of the seed, a created being is entirely passive. On the other hand, this same seed is the very principle of the dynamic action and evolution as an individual and as an element in the chain of natural progression.

Anticipation of Evolution

THE DYNAMIC VIEW proposed by Bonaventure's theory of the seed-principles is in direct contrast with the static notion of the fixity of species and the immutability of essences. Our author clearly teaches that everything a being ever *becomes* existed originally in the form of the seed-principles placed in nature by an act of the Creator's will. Nature, then, is not the slave of some Darwinian law of "survival of the fittest," of some blind "struggle for life." The seminal urge—the *Drang nach Leben*, or rather, *Drang nach Lieben*—proposed by Bonaventure is part of an over-all plan, of the intelligent placing within the core of the most primitive forms of matter the dynamic

²*II Sent.*, d. XVIII, Q. 2.

³*II Phys.*, text. 31.

⁴*II Sent.*, d. XVIII, q. concl.

tendencies and possibilities which, when the proper time and physical circumstances came about, would allow the immense variety of created beings to unfold.

The image of "unfolding" is effective as an antithesis to the notion of pure chance. A chance-development is not an unfolding, but a haphazard growth in no particular direction, the following of irrational urges along whatever way there seems to be the least resistance or the greatest pressure to go. Within the theory of the seed-principles, least resistance and maximum pressure are also at work, but they operate according to a carefully pre-set pattern, or pre-folded plan which allows the unfolding of an immense variety of surprisingly different forms of being, all of them within the logic of creating will. Many new forms are to unfold in future ages; many others will remain as mere "possibles" and all could eventually develop in other worlds than ours. But everything that ever comes to be does so on the basis of its seed.

The theory of the seed-principles taken in this sense is very close to two philosophic views much more recent than those of Bonaventure: Bergson's *élan vital* and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's "convergence towards the Omega Point." Bergson perceives an inner force, even in blind matter,

leading to life, consciousness, and eventually love. Teilhard de Chardin proposes a magnificent synthesis of the rise of nature from the hydrogen atom to fulfillment in Christ at the end—the Omega Point. This is to occur through different phases: complexification, cerebralization and hominization, and the development of the noosphere—the area of spiritual thought.

Although the notion of evolution—particularly of the human species—is completely foreign to Bonaventure's medieval mind, his theory of seed-principles does open the road to this later development by providing its philosophical and theological basis. One point Bonaventure did make, however, concerning the origin of the individual, is far ahead of his time. In the days when the popular, and even the theological and philosophical, views were that, in the sexual act man inserted into the womb a "homunculus"—a miniature but fully formed human being—which the woman only had to nurture, he writes that the propagation of offspring comes about "through the ministry (service, action) of the female sex acting as an equal co-principle."⁵

Theory of Knowledge

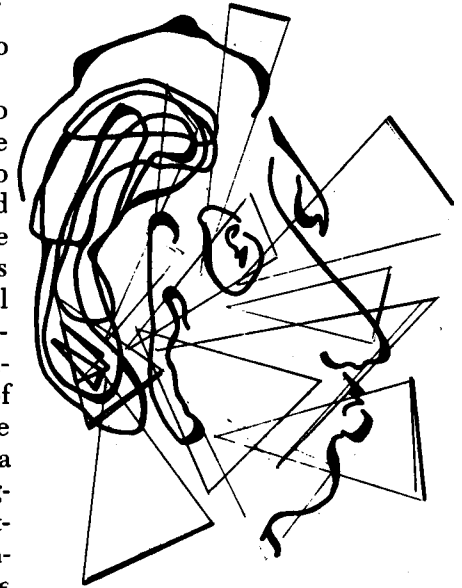
AS WE HAVE SEEN, "things have nothing in their proper natures

that had not been made in the first days through a causal act.' Let us now apply this notion to the origin of ideas.

As everyone knows, the two classical and conflicting views are those of Plato and Aristotle. Plato believes that the human mind "remembers" having seen the perfect exemplars of all realities in the "word of ideas," a spiritual kingdom where the soul is supposed to dwell before being "imprisoned" in the body by the act of generation. By contrast, Aristotle teaches that the mind at birth is a *tabula rasa*, a smooth writing-tablet upon which nothing is written. For Plato, all ideas are innate; for Aristotle all ideas are acquired. In classical Christian philosophy and theology, the ideas of Aristotle generally prevailed.

In Bonaventure's writings, a deeper and more subtle approach may be found, and it is based on the same notion of seed-principles by which he explains the origin of everything that makes up a created being. Describing the creation of man, he writes: "He [God] instilled a twofold rectitude into [human] nature itself: one for right judgment, which is rectitude of conscience, and the other for right will, which is synderesis, protesting against evil and prompting toward good."⁶

We have here the same notion of the seed implanted at the time



of creation: man is born with a moral conscience and a sense of right and wrong. His mind is not blank at birth, except in terms of actual experience. Before any moral or rational judgment has been made, there is clearly inscribed on the tablet of the mind an innate notion of the distinction between good and evil. The nature of this distinction is developed in another text:

As for sure judgment on matters open to deliberation, it is based upon some law. Now, no man can judge with certainty on the basis of a law unless he is assured that the law is correct and that he does not have to judge the law itself. Yet our mind does judge itself. Therefore, since it cannot judge

⁵*Brevil.*, II:10, 6.

⁶*Ibid.*, II:11, 6.

the law by which it is judging, it follows that this law must be superior to our mind and that our mind will judge by this law as by something *impressed* upon it. But nothing is superior to the human mind except the one who made it. Therefore, in the act of judging, our deliberative power touches upon the divine laws whenever it comes up with a final and complete solution.⁷

The point Bonaventure is making directly is that the principles by which we judge are of divine origin. Indirectly, however, he is contributing to our thesis—that the mind is not a *tabula rasa*—by indicating that these divine principles are *impressed* upon it. What this means is that before we even have a chance to exercise our power of understanding and judging, there is inscribed upon our mind a superior law by which we will be able to know and judge. This is the result of God's having instilled in us the seed-principles of rationality, so that we are not left in total darkness. From the very first experience of judgment, we "see" in the light of the di-

vine laws. The manner in which these laws function in the mind is explained later:

All of these disciplines of knowledge [i.e., metaphysical, rational and moral philosophy] are governed by certain and infallible laws which are like illuminations and beams of light shed upon our mind by the eternal law. And thus our mind, unless it is totally blind, can be led to the contemplation of eternal light by the consideration of its own self, irradiated and flooded as it is with such splendors. So this light, both as irradiating and as being contemplated, suspends the wise in admiration, while it confuses the fool who rejects faith as a way to understanding.⁸

The notion of knowledge as illumination, so dear to Bonaventure's mystical heart, is clearly related to his notion of seed-principles in the following passage: "We may understand that we are led by the hand to divine matters through the rational soul's own *naturally implanted* faculties, in their operations, dispositions, and *patterns of knowledge*."⁹

⁷*Itin.*, III, 4.

⁸Bonaventure places himself clearly in the category of mystical thinking (*credo ut intelligam*: I believe in order to understand), as opposed to the rationalist position *intelligo ut credam*: I understand in order to believe). For him, the act of faith and love, the acknowledgment of God's mystery, must always precede any intellectual analysis. Intelligence itself is but the servant of faith and love, as philosophy is a servant of theology. This is developed in full in the very short but densely rich treatise, *De reductione artium ad theologiam*.

⁹*Itin.*, III, 7.

Manductio: "guidance," literally, "the leading-by-the-hand," seems to be Bonaventure's favorite expression of the notion of divine providence, another aspect of which may be seen in his theory of the seed-principles. *Manductio* is the same as conscience and synderesis, but seen from God's viewpoint. It is what God does to the human spirit, the manner in which he proposes the free moral or intellectual choice that results in moral good and intellectual truth. Providence "implants" the basic principles of moral and intellectual choice in the mind of man. This action is totally respectful of human freedom. While the principles of choice are part of man's very nature, they have no determining power, but act only as a guiding light.

Speaking of memory in the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, Bonaventure indicates that its threefold function is to "hold the past by recollection, the present by reception, and the future by anticipation. He goes on to explain:

From the second activity, it appears that memory is informed, not only from the outside by material images, but also from above, by receiving and holding in itself simple forms, which could not possibly come in through the doors of the senses by means of sensible images.¹⁰

Once again the point is made that some notions are implanted in the mind independently from sense experience. The *tabula rasa* of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas is not in the dark nor, properly speaking, is it truly blank: it is infused with an inner light that consists in rational directives even before exposure to sense experience. The principles by which we judge are innate.

Again, God is the cause of our being, the principle of our understanding, and the norm for our living. The whole of Chapter II, paragraph 9 of the *Itinerarium* is a development of the idea that God is the principle of knowledge, and it is worth quoting in full:

Now, judgment leads us in an even more excellent and immediate fashion to a greater certainty as we consider eternal truth. Since judgment is based on something that is independent of place, time, and mutability, and thus of size, sequence, and change—on something, therefore, that is unchanging, unlimited and endless; and since nothing is wholly unchanging, unlimited and endless unless it is eternal, and since everything eternal is either God or in God: if all our certain judgments are based on this thing, it is very clear that this very thing is the Reason of all things, the infallible Rule, and the Light of Truth in which all things shine forth infallibly, indelibly, without any

¹⁰*Ibid.*, III, 2.

possibility of doubt, refutation or argument; without change or limitation in time or space; indivisibly and intellectually. Now, since the laws by which we judge with certainty all sensible things that come to our attention exclude all error and doubt in the intellect of the apprehending subject, they can never be erased from the memory of the recollecting subject, being always present to it; and since they are not susceptible to argument or judgment on the part of the judging subject—because, as Augustine says, a man does not judge them, he judges by them—therefore these laws must be unchangeable and incorruptible, being necessary; limitless, being uncontained; endless, being eternal. Consequently, they must be indivisible, being intellectual and incorporeal; not made, but uncreated; existing eternally in the Eternal Art by which, through which, and according to which all beautiful things are formed. Thus, these laws cannot be judged with certainty except in the light of the Eternal Art which is the form that not only produces but also preserves and distinguishes all things, being the support of their forms, the rule of their operations, and also *the norm by which our mind judges all things that enter it through the senses.*

The functioning of the intellectual process of knowledge is entirely dependent upon uncreated Light: "The created light cannot accomplish its operation

without some cooperation on the part of the uncreated Light, through which every man is enlightened who comes into this world."¹¹

At this point the Quarrachi editors note that there is a clear difference between Bonaventure's view of knowledge and the ontologism of Malebranche, who teaches that intellectual truths are known formally (*principium quod*) in the eternal principles. By contrast, Bonaventure teaches that the *irradiatio* (intellectual illumination by means of radiations received from uncreated light) acts as a *principium quo cognoscitur*. Instead of the eternal principles being the object of knowledge, as taught by Malebranche, they are held by Bonaventure to be merely the *means by which* knowledge is obtained.

The theory of knowledge in Saint Bonaventure, based on the seed-principles and on the theory of illumination, is neither purely Platonic nor purely Aristotelian. It is Platonic in its assertion that certain knowledge depends upon the presence in the mind of implanted principles that are *innate*, being part of human nature. These principles act, not as the source of knowledge, but as its indispensable guide. They may be seen as an advance form of knowledge, or pre-knowledge.

¹¹*III Sent.*, d. XXVIII, a. 2, q. 3.

Bonaventure's theory of knowledge is also Aristotelian in that our author realizes that actual judgment requires sense experience in order to have an object. In this sense, knowledge is *acquired*.

The genius of Bonaventure consists essentially in his integrated vision of reality, not as divided between the natural and the supernatural, but as one continuum in which the supernatural shines through the natural and leads it back to its source, the creative Word, the Omega Point of Teilhard de Chardin.

Bonaventure, as I have pointed out elsewhere,

speaks of spiritual matters with the assurance of one familiar with the highest mystical reaches, almost as if he were already living in the heavenly Jerusalem. And he does

this with such vividness and warmth, such convinced faith and burning charity, that his words exert an undefinable power over the reader. We forget this is a medieval scholar, a man who lived many hundreds of years ago; instead, we listen to the living words, the words of life, of a man himself very much alive.¹²

There are two roads to truth: the simply rational which proceeds by way of abstraction from sense experience, and the mystical which proceeds by way of intuition or inner apprehension. The first is the natural way, the second, the supernatural. If Bonaventure seems to accept both as natural, it is all to his praise: it is a sign of so deep an immersion in the supernatural that this way, special as it is, appeared to him to be open to all.¹³

¹²*The Works of Bonaventure*, translated from the Latin by José de Vinck, vol. I, "Mystical Opuscula" (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1960), Foreword, p. viii.

¹³*Ibid.*, vol. II, "The Breviloquium" (1963), Foreword, p. x.

FRANCISCAN LITERATURE NEEDED

The Franciscan Sisters of Assisi are opening a Novitiate in this country and would be grateful for any available Franciscan literature —books especially— that you can spare. Please send them to The Franciscan Sisters of Assisi, Granby, Massachusetts 01033

Record Review

Arise, Come Sing in the Morning.
By Joe Zsigray. Cincinnati: North American Liturgy resources, 1973. 12-inch stereo LP disc, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Dennis E. Tamburello, a Senior in the Franciscan Formation Program at Siena College and director of the student liturgical music apostolate.

Arise, Come Sing in the Morning is a collection of hymns, psalms, and acclamations by Joe Zsigray. Each selection on the album is designed for a particular liturgical setting, such as a baptism, wedding, or morning or evening prayer.

On first listening, this album seemed rather dull and unexciting. After a few playings, however, I realized that the intention is not to dazzle the listener with a slick production job, but to present the numbers in a simple and straightforward style which can then be elaborated upon by individual communities. The hymns themselves are composed with simple refrains which can be very easily picked up by a congregation, an important consideration since time is often a factor in rehearsals prior to liturgy.

To cite some specific selections, I was most impressed by the Acclamations (*Christ Has Died* and *Dying You Destroyed Our Death*) and the *Gloria*. The melodies here are inspiring and the arrangements refreshing. The *Gloria* is especially fine with its verse-refrain arrangement which makes it possible

for the entire congregation to join in, instead of deferring to a choir or cantor.

The regular hymns are second in line of excellence. They are relevant both musically and liturgically; however, some of the verses may be considered trite by young and middle-aged adults. They seem to lend themselves best to a high-school liturgy situation.

As for the psalms, they struck me as boring and uninspiring. I did not at all like the blues setting for Psalm 23, and in general these selections lack the enthusiasm which is evident on the rest of the album. Some of them might be good if reworked into new arrangements. In contrast, the *Introductory* and *Concluding Rites* are quiet but effective pieces.

Finally, the *Ave Maria* is a very fine hymn which could work very well as a meditation. It is melodic and delicate, and in my opinion the best selection on the disc.

In summary, this album has great potential in its presentation of inspiring new liturgical music and as a foundation for ideas for its arrangement. Incidentally, the technical quality of this recording is commendable, unlike some similar ones that I have sampled. The competence of the musicians is unquestionable, and the engineering is as professional as could be desired. Thus, having survived my analysis, it will find a place in my personal collection. Now if only the *music book* had come with it . . .

BOOKS RECEIVED

- De Rosa, Peter, *Jesus Who Became Christ*. Denville, N. J.: Dimension books, 1974. Pp. 365. Cloth, \$8.95.
- Dulles, Avery, S.J., *Models of the Church*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974. Pp. 216. Cloth, \$5.95.
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- Francois, Father, of St. Mary, O.C.D., *The Simple Steps to God*. Denville, N.J.: Dimension Books, Pp. 153. Paper, \$2.95.
- Habig, Marion A., O.F.M., ed., *The Marian Era*, vol. 11: Selections from the first ten volumes, with the 1973 Pastoral of the U.S. Bishops on the Blessed Virgin Mary. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974. Pp. xxv-154. Cloth, \$4.95.
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- Neville, Robert C., *The Cosmology of Freedom*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974. Pp. xi-385, with index. Cloth, \$17.50.
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- White, Rev. Thomas, and O'Donnell, Desmond, O.M.I., *Renewal of Faith: Adult Instruction in the Catholic Faith*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press. 1974. Pp. 239. Paper, \$2.95.