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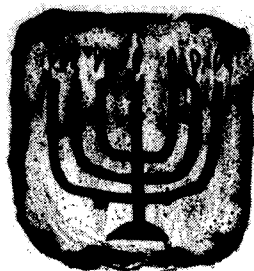
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Burning and Bright

BONAVENTURE, born John Fidanza of Bagnorea in Italy some seven centuries ago, continues to call us to be enkindled and enlightened through his vision, writings, and life of total commitment to the gospel message of Christ Jesus. During recent months, there have been several significant conferences, seminars, publications, and papal documents whose central theme has been our renewed awakening to Bonaventurian thought and the importance of Bonaventure for those problems of our modern world challenged to reaffirm and restructure a vibrant Christian commitment following the guidelines detailed in the discussions and documents of Vatican II. Much has changed through these seven centuries of faith and history; and much has remained surprisingly the same. In an early edition of Bonelli's *Prodromus ad opera omnia S. Bonaventurae*, the frontispiece shows Bonaventure at his desk, writing. Two verses below surround a small medallion centered with the words *Lucens et Ardens*—Blazing and Bright. The last line of the first stanza is *Ardet lux, ardor lucet, utrumque manet*—His light enkindles, his fire enlightens, and both continue.

It is this same dual unity of glowing, shining intensity that Pope Paul VI stresses in an Apostolic Letter written on 15 July, 1974, to the Ministers General of the three-branched Order of Friars Minor throughout our world. The opening phrase of the letter (whence its "title") is *Scientia et virtute praeclarissimus*—i.e., "most outstanding both in knowledge and Christian commitment." The text continues with the assertion that "Saint Bonaventure shines with a steady and continuing brightness still today." Frequently in this letter Pope Paul supports his statements with references both to specific writings of Bonaventure and to documents from Vatican II, especially *Lumen Gentium* and *Dei Verbum*. He proclaims Bonaventure as the "herald, teacher, and facilitator (*effector*)" for all faithful Christians to respond actively and eagerly to that needed "conversion" and "renewal" that bring us to being re-built in faith, truly re-committed to Christ Jesus. Paul VI urges us all to realize that Bonaventure, "through his thought and his encouragement still speaks as a teacher of knowledge and of life-style even though he died seven centuries ago." He adds his own

exhortation, moreover, citing Philippians 3:17: that we should "take as our model the way that Bonaventure walked" and pray earnestly that "we may make progress with the help of his great learning and also strive to become enkindled with the fire of his love."

In September of 1974, Pope Paul VI came to the Seraphicum (the Conventual Franciscans' University in Rome) to address the participants in the International Congress held there to honor "Bonaventure, Master of the Franciscan life and of Christian spirituality." As one of those privileged to take part in that Congress, I especially want to share with you some of the Holy Father's words to us and to our world. After preliminary greetings, his pastoral concern became evident as he said:

... we feel obliged to express the wish that these centenary commemorations of his death will result in greater honor for the life that Saint Bonaventure, by his example and his teaching, is certainly able to transfuse into the Church of our times.

Speaking in greatest admiration of Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* (since "journey" implies "a movement of the questing spirit, in conformity with the restless and advancing taste of present day culture), Paul VI emphasized that, in this little text, we have "the joyful impression of having him, the master, near us as guide and interpreter of contemporary needs."

After succinctly summarizing the main directions of the *Itinerarium*, the Holy Father continued: "This journey ... leads to the rediscovery of grace ... of faith ... of hope ... of love." And in conclusion, he said, before imparting his Apostolic Blessing:

What is Saint Bonaventure's message, after all, but an invitation to mankind to recover his authenticity entirely and reach his fullness?

We entrust this message to you who, because of your common religious profession or harmony of ideas, are more directly the heirs of the Seraphic Doctor, so that you may study its riches and make it widely accepted. But we also recommend it to all the people of the Church, exposed today, perhaps more than at any other time, to a process of interior decomposition, so that serious consideration of this message will help everyone to make his life a valid and effective testimony in the Church and in the world.

Amen: Bonaventure, blazing and bright, still today!

—Marigwen Schumacher



Sight into Insight—II

Bonaventure, Hopkins, cummings

MARIGWEN SCHUMACHER

IN AN ADDRESS given recently at my own undergraduate Alma Mater, the University of Toronto, Dr. Beatrice Corrigan started with a poem by the Canadian poet, Walter Bauer, entitled "In the Reading Room"—in which he describes the birth of an idea:

I saw a student, a young girl,
Surrounded by books like honeycombs;
She gazed into space, unseeing, over the heads of the others,
Then stared at her left hand, slightly raised,
As if something were coming
To settle upon it.

It came.
The idea came.
A rare brilliant bird,
A tiny phoenix, it flew across the room
Through the stillness, straight to her finger; it
Settled there, singing a tiny phoenix song, only for her.

Her face brightened. Now
The brilliant tiny phoenix sat
On her shoulder and sang in her ear.
She wrote.

Miss Marigwen Schumacher is Head of the Classical Languages Department at the Emma Willard School, Troy, N.Y. This is the second half of the paper delivered at Siena College's Septicentennial Tribute to Saint Bonaventure. See last month's issue for the first half and further credit information.

For Walter Bauer [continues Dr. Corrigan] the phoenix is the bearer of the creative idea: not the result of consideration of a problem, or of a process of logical reasoning, but the illuminating perception of a new aspect of the truth, an explanation of the inexplicable, a relation between two apparently unrelatable things. The visitation of the phoenix comes as a joyful surprise...¹

And her conclusion was a "wish for each one of you that throughout your life the extended hand, the eagerly receptive ear, will never cease to invite the unique joy of creative thought." I would, of course, expand her list to insert—prominently—the "wide-open eye" for the poem does mention that "she gazed into space, unseeing, over the heads of the others"—i.e., rapt into vision, unaware of the distractions and disruptions of those around her—and in this "insightful" mood does the phoenix come! The enigma of the creative moment never lessens.²

Creative metaphor, by which the mind is pulled into the imagination, expresses that

insight into the mystical which is of the essence of poetic-artist experience. The "tiny, brilliant phoenix" makes visual (for us) the oftentimes blinding, searing, incandescent light that is the "gift of perception" of which Ciardi spoke. The insight—"the relation between two things apparently unrelatable"—reflected and disciplined into words; for without words, thought—even insight—remains inchoate and amorphous—comes through: "as the phoenix sat on her shoulder/ she wrote." We, then, can only touch the experienced insight of others through their verbal/visual expression in word, painting, pottery, sculpture, sacrament. As we became more and more sensitive of and responsive to the present moment—that God IS—and we are—Verb and not Noun—we begin to grasp something of the meaning in e.e. cummings' statement that

poetry is being, not doing....
You've got to come out of the measurable doing universe into the immeasurable house of being.... Nobody else can be alive for you; nor can you be alive for anybody else.³

¹Dr. Beatrice Corrigan's 1973 address at Toronto is documented in the *University of Toronto Graduate Newsletter*, vol. 1 (n.s.), n. 1 (1973).

²Cf. *supra*, THE CORD 25 (1975), pp. 5-6

³e.e. cummings, "six nonlectures" (Harvard University, 1952-53), cited by Horace Gregory in the introduction to e.e. cummings, *a selection of poems* (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1965), p. 3.

and his dedication: "With you I leave a remembrance of miracles: they are by somebody who can love and who shall be continually reborn."⁴

And in poem:

once White and Gold

daisy in the Dust
(trite now and old)

lie so we must

most lily brief

(rose here & gone)
flesh all is If

all blood And When

Visually and directly, in his use of a special "typographical code"—e.g., irregular spacing of lines, unexpected capitalization, parentheses to separate and subdue certain words and phrases as almost halftones, *sotto voce*, little or no punctuation in the conventional sense (e.g., no period at the end of the poem)—in all these ways, e.e. cummings deals with that "interplay between patterns of surface-perceptions and the pressures of depth-perceptions"⁵ which is the particular provenance of poet and mystic, of preacher and artist. In the small poem just quoted, I am overwhelmed by the simplicity of seeing in that "daisy once white and gold," which is now

withered and lying on the ground, the whole brief encounter which is our life and its necessary meeting with death, with Dust (and unto dust thou shalt return). But the sheer power and greatness that opens unendingly in the small, little words, "flesh all is If"—the capitalization of "If" suddenly catapults upon me the uncertain fragility of human life—and "all blood And When" which again through the capitals and the lack of a period seems to spin into eternity, into the Parousia—AND WHEN??!

BONAVENTURE USES a similar directness and unfathomable depth of perception to stress the interplay, the inner relation, of surface and depth vision when he speaks of "contuitio" or preaches "ad contuitum contemplantis"—that "seeing through creation, directly into God, in and with His creation." This is the highest "gift" granted to us while yet in this human form, but it is a foretaste of the Parousia, when we shall see God as we are now seen by him. "One's spirit holds as much of Loveliness as it holds of the clear light and radiance of divine Wisdom. I say," continues Bonaventure in a homily for the feast of Saint Agnes.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵Wylie Sypher, "The Meaning of Comedy," in R.W. Corrigan, ed., *Comedy: Meaning and form* (Scranton: Chandler Publishing Co., 1965), p. 23.

that one's spirit becomes beautiful through attentive perception, joyfully, of the visual world so that by examining [introspecting into visual field] the experienced reality with a certain clear insight, one's spirit leaps up through these into its Creator.⁶

God's Grandeur

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil

Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;

And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

And through the last lights off the black West went

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

In his attempts to articulate from his own experience that "interplay between the patterns of surface-perceptions and the pressures of depth-perceptions"—or the introspection of visual world into visual field—Gerard Manley Hopkins coined the words "inscape" and "in-stress" and used them separately and together in many of his *Journal* entries. Scholars have written reams in analyzing these terms and their importance in

Hopkins' poetry; I wish only to look at a few excerpts from his *Journal* in order to abstract some of the essence of the experience from which he created these words. First, however, it is important to keep in mind the comment of Austin Warren, in speaking of "inscape," that "the prefix *in* seems to imply a contrary, an outerscape, i.e., an 'inscape' is not mechanically or inertly present but requires personal action, attention, a seeing and a

⁶Bonaventure, *Sermo 2 in festo S. Agnetis—Opera Omnia*, t. IX, 505-10.

seeing into.”⁷

For May 14, 1870, Hopkins wrote: “The chestnuts down at St. Joseph’s were a beautiful sight . . . when the wind tossed them they plunged and crossed one another without losing their inscape.” On December 12, 1872:

Hard frost, bright sun, a sky of blue “water” . . . grounded sheeted with taut, tattered streaks of crisp gritty snow . . . I saw the inscape though freshly, as if my eye were still growing—though with a companion the eye and the ear are, for the most part, shut and instress cannot come.

[In July of 1872:] I thought how sadly beauty of inscape was unknown and buried away from simple people and yet how near at hand it was if they had eyes to see it and it could be called out everywhere again . . .

[On February 4, 1875:] The day was bright, the sun sparkling through a frostfog which made the distance dim and the stack of Denbigh hill, as we came near, dead mealy grey against the light: the castle ruins, which crown the hill, were punched out in arches and half arches by bright breaks and eyelets of daylight. We went up to the castle but not in: standing before the gateway I had an instress which only the true old

work gives from the strong and noble inscape of the pointed arch.⁸

From these few selections, it seems possible to infer that for Hopkins, “inscape” involves or includes every object in creation; that one must somehow become aware of this quality; that once this awareness is actual, both pain and pleasure intensify in the appreciation of, or reaction to, experiences; that it is possible for even “simple people” to develop this quality.

“Instress” seems to follow upon inscape and should seem to be—or to include—one’s response to the unique inscape of each object in creation—since it is blocked when we are with others who demand or prevail upon our attention. It requires a deep, interior, subjective, individual response at, and to, the moment—e.g., the arch at Denbigh Castle in that strange light demanded a unique response to that momentary vision.

It is in this connection that I understand Hopkins’ *Journal* entry in August of 1872, when he had recently begun to read Duns Scotus: “It may come to nothing or it may be a mercy from God. But just then when I took in any inscape of the sky or sea I thought

of Scotus.” For convinced as I am that Hopkins is really a Bonaventurian in his vision, I am equally certain that Duns Scotus’ stress on the quality of “quidditas” and even more of “haecceitas”—that untranslatable quality of “thisness” in every thing and every person—would have deeply touched a responsive chord within the young philosopher-poet-student and have helped to confirm his own growing perception of God.

Again from the *Journal*, we see Hopkins moving from sight into insight: from “attentive perception, joyfully, of the visual world so that by examining the experienced reality with a certain clear insight, one’s spirit leaps up through these into its Creator.”⁹

Bluebells in Hodder wood, all hanging their heads one way. I caught, as well as I could while my companions talked, the Greek rightness of their beauty . . . the level or stage of color they make hanging in the air a foot above the grass . . . It was a lovely sight. The bluebells in your hand baffle you with their inscape made to every sense: if you draw your fingers through them, they . . . struggle . . . it is the eye they baffle . . . then the knot of buds, some shut, some just gaping . . . the inscape of the flower . . . is finished in these clustered buds . . . One day when the blue-



bells were in bloom, I wrote the following: I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of Our Lord by it.¹⁰

So too, Bonaventure, in the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, exclaims:

Whoever is not enlightened by such great splendors of creation is, indeed, blind. Whoever is not awakened by such great voices is, indeed, deaf. Whoever does not praise God in all these gifts is, indeed, mute. Whoever does not consider God, the First Principle, from such great evidence is, in-

⁷Austin Warren, “Instress of Inscape,” in John Hollander, ed., *G.M. Hopkins: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 171.

⁸G. M. Hopkins, *Journal*, in W. H. Gardner, ed., *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), *in hoc loco*.

⁹Cf. *supra*, note 6.

¹⁰Hopkins, *Notebooks and Journals*, *passim*.

deed a fool. Open your eyes, concentrate your spiritual ears, open your lips, and arouse your heart to see God in all of creation and thus to hear and praise and love and cherish him, making known his glory and honor. Otherwise all of his creation may rise up to condemn you.¹¹

i thank You God for most this amazing day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees and a blue true dream of skyland: and for everything which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today, and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing breathing any—lifted from the no of all nothing—human merely being doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

e. e. cummings

A SIMILAR ECSTASY in the new-seen wonders of nature can be felt in the text of Annie Dillard's recent article about "seeing" and awareness:

Unfortunately, nature is very much a now-you-see-it, now-you-don't affair. A fish flashes, then dissolves in the water before my eyes like so much salt... the brightest oriole fades into the leaves. These disappearances stun me into stillness and concentra-

tion; they say of nature that it conceals with a grand nonchalance, and they say of vision that it is a deliberate gift.... It's all a matter of keeping my eyes open.... Darkness appalls and light dazzles; the scrap of visible light that doesn't hurt my eyes hurts my brain. What I see sets me swaying. Size and distance and the sudden swelling of meanings confuse me, bowl me over....

Seeing is, of course, very much a matter of verbalization. Unless I

call my attention to what passes before my eyes, I simply won't see it. If Tinker Mountain erupted, I'd be likely to notice. But if I want to notice the lesser cataclysms of valley life, I have to maintain in my head a running description of the present.... [There is a way of seeing where] I analyze and pry... but there is another kind of seeing that involves a letting go. When I see this way I sway transfixed and emptied... Something broke and something opened. I filled up like a new wineskin. I breathed an air like light; I saw a light like water.... I was flesh-flake, feather, bone. When I see this way I see truly.¹²

There is a sequence here, as there is in Bonaventure, Hopkins, and Cummings, of stillness, concentration, gift, seeing, verbalization, letting go, transfixed and emptied, flesh-flake, feather, bone. The mystic insight—or experience of transcendence—can be verbalized only through metaphor. Ms. Dillard continues:

The secret of seeing, then, is the pearl of great price... although it comes to those who wait for it, it is always, even to the most practiced and adept, a gift and a total surprise.... I cannot cause light; the most I can do is try to put myself in the path of its beam.

It is possible, in deep space, to sail on solar wind. Light, be it particle or wave, has force: you rig a giant sail and go. The secret of seeing is to sail on solar wind. Hone and spread your spirit till you yourself are a sail, whetted, translucent, broadside to the merest puff.¹³

The imagery is forceful: "the secret of seeing is to sail on solar wind: spread your spirit till you yourself are a sail, whetted, translucent...." This does not happen easily nor quickly but reminds us of the scriptural statements that the Holy Spirit blows where and when he wishes and it needs our readiness to respond to his "merest puff" so that, like Elisha, we hear the voice of God on the mountain of our being.

There is a third element or ingredient in moving from "sight into insight" or "introspecting our visual sensations and concentrating upon the actual nature of the information that falls upon our retinas."¹⁴ The question is, What then? What response, what use do we make of this? If our "seeing" is with the "eyes of faith" (the "eyes of my eyes are opened"); if our insight-filled spirit declares "All things... He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change"; if "these lights of the

¹²Annie Dillard, "Sight into Insight: What You See Is What You Get," *Harper's* 248, n. 1485 (1974), pp. 39-46, *passim*.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴Bonaventure, *Itinerarium*, *loc. cit.*, col. 303a.

¹¹Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, I, 15—*Opera Omnia*, t. V, col. 299b.

created world" reflect the Lord who has brought us out of darkness into his own marvellous Light,"¹⁵ then, what is our response? What can it be but "Praise him"!

only whose vision can create the whole

(being forever a foolishwise
proudhumble citizen of ecstasies
more steep than climb can time with all his years)

he's free into the beauty of the truth.

Bonaventure, in a homily preached in Paris on March 12, 1251, for the Second Sunday of Lent when the Gospel reading is the account of Jesus taking Peter, James, and John up onto a high mountain—apart—concluded with these words:

He led the "contemplativi" [i.e., the "insight-full" who have moved from sight into insight] onto the mountain of open sharing or the ability to give freely through a love-filled spreading-out of voluntary witness. Mountains are of such sharing and giving that everything that they receive they immediately pour forth and, emptying themselves, send it forth onto the level plain. Rain, for example, as soon as it pours upon them is immediately poured forth stantly share with the valleys. Even the rocks and other materials which are tumbled forth are

poured onto the plains. In just this way, the "insight-full" ought to be beacons of rain-fresh reflections, or irrigation ditches for showers or, even, dew-drops of charismatic gifts as on Mount Zion to give to others through the word of witness and the model of dialogue. Then will be fulfilled the prophecy of Joel: "On that day the mountains will drip with sweetness and the hills will flow with milk and the waters will fill all the rivers of Juda" (Joel 4:18).

The "insight-full" ought to "drip with the sweetness" of tender compassion to console the desolate; be "hills flowing with the milk" of conscientious witness to nourish the weak; and then "the rivers" of tears "of Juda," the repentant, the "waters" of grace "will fill" to multiply deeds of justice and compassion: "Mountains of Israel, spread out your branch-

es, put forth leaves, blossom and bear fruit for my people Israel who will soon return" (Ezech. 36:8).

Bonaventure explains this text from Ezechiel:

"Israel seeing God" indicated the "insight-full" who ought to see God in their own inner selves. Therefore, "mountains of Israel" — i.e., the "insight-full"—"spread your branches" to gather together the wandering peoples; "put forth leaves" through the witness of Sacred Scripture; "blossom" in your visible, fragrant example;

"and bear fruit" in attaining your own salvation and furthering that of your neighbors; because you will be, then: "a mountain of God, a fertile mountain, a mountain where God has chosen to live forever" (Ps. 67:16, 7).

"But I can't go out and try to see this way," exclaims Ms. Dillard, half protesting, half imploring. "I'll fail, I'll go mad. All I can do is try The effort is really a discipline requiring a lifetime of dedicated struggle The vision comes and goes, mostly goes, but I live for it."¹⁶

i am a little church (no great cathedral)
far from the splendor and squalor of hurrying cities
—i do not worry if briefer days grow briefest,
i am not sorry when sun and rain make april

my life is the life of the reaper and the sower;
my prayers are prayers of earth's own clumsily striving
(finding and losing and laughing and crying) children
whose any sadness or joy is my grief or my gladness

around me surges a miracle of unceasing
birth and glory and death and resurrection:
over my sleeping self float flaming symbols
of hope, and i wake to a perfect patience of mountains

i am a little church (far from the frantic
world with its rapture and anguish) at peace with nature
—i do not worry if longer nights grow longest;
i am not sorry when silence becomes singing

winter by spring, i lift my diminutive spire to
merciful Him Whose only now is forever:
standing erect in the deathless truth of His presence
(welcoming humbly His light and proudly His darkness)

e.e. cummings

¹⁵Bonaventure, *Sermo 1 in Dom. II Quad.—Opera Omnia*, t. IX, col. 217b.

¹⁶A. Dillard, *loc. cit.*, p. 46.

At the end of the *Vitis Mystica*, Bonaventure prays:

O most sweet good Lord! Look with compassion on those who humbly trust in you and truly know that without you we can do

nothing. You who gave yourself in payment for us, give us—although we are not worthy of it—to be so totally merged into your perfect grace that we are re-made, through your presence, into the image of your divinity.¹⁷

¹⁷Bonaventure, *Vitis Mystica*, XXIV, 4, concl. —*Opera Omnia*, t. VIII, P. 189.

we crawl
ahead
on unsteady ground
leaving
behind
the past,
some of which
still
hangs on
like a ball
and chain

something up
ahead
is beckoning
to dare
step out
of the darkness
of our selfishness
into the glow of reality
a step
outside
ourselves

afraid
to live
and die
alone
in the dark
we crawl on
till darkness
overcomes us
again

DAVID BENZSHAWELL

Mother Marianne— A Sister of Saint Francis

SISTER M. THADDEUS, O.S.F.

I. Tolerance Level of Frustration on the Way to God

NOT TOO LONG AGO, I was present at a lecture in which constant reference was made to a person's tolerance level of frustration. At first I was amused because we all have days when we'd like to just "forget it all" or send everybody far, far away. But something—rather someone—is always in our consciousness Who brings us back to reality and encourages us by His own victory over frustrations. One instance where Jesus seems to have reached a very high level of frustration is that memorable passage where Philip had asked him to show them the Father. Recall the Lord's answer: "Have I been such a long time with you without your really knowing me, Philip? The man who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, Show us the Father?" (Jn. 14:9). It was almost as if his three years of teaching them had been in vain. Christ may as well have said: "How can

you be so dense! I've spent my whole public life teaching you about the Father. What more can I do?" But he did not in fact give up there; instead, he remained faithful to them through his anxiety, persecution, suffering, death, and resurrection—even until now!

And so, through the centuries men and women have followed that heroic example of tolerance amid frustrations in order to reach real union with Him to whom frustration was a necessary step to holiness. All of us have the potential—all of us have frustrations—so we can identify with these holy people to make our lives pure offerings of patient endurance.

An example close to our time, of a woman of patient endurance in the midst of extreme frustrations is Mother Marianne, the second Superior General of the Sisters of the Third Order of Saint

Sister M. Thaddeus Thom, O.S.F., is Chairman of the English Department at Assumption Catholic Academy, Syracuse, N.Y. Her recent account of the establishment of a hermitage for her community—an account co-authored with Sister Marjorie Schoeler and published in our pages last Fall, has sparked some enthusiastic response from our readers.



Francis of Syracuse, New York. Her frustrations resulted from her distinct call to leave the security of Syracuse and go to a foreign country to care for strange people afflicted with such a terrible disease that the citizens of that country would not care for them. This woman, whose cause for beatification has been introduced, entered the community in 1862, was engaged in teaching for a few years, became administrator of St. Joseph's Hospital in Syracuse, New York, was elected Superior General in 1877 and re-elected in 1881.

In 1883, when Father Leonor, commissioned by the King and

Queen of Hawaii to seek out a Sisterhood from America to help with their poor, afflicted members, arrived at the Motherhouse on Court Street, it was Mother Marianne who gave him hope. It was she who volunteered, along with six others, to pioneer this strange journey thousands of miles away. The story of Mother Marianne is adequately written by L.V. Jacks in *Mother Marianne of Molokai* and by Eva K. Betz' children's version, *The Quiet Flame*, and it is not the intention of this series of reflections to recount her life but to highlight some of the problems she encountered, relate them to

today, and learn how the saintly but human woman handled her frustrations.

One interesting and oft told scene from the life of Mother Marianne is the episode when Sister Leopoldina speaks to Mother very confidentially about her fear of contracting leprosy.

"Mother, what will you do with me if I become a leper?"

(What could be more frustrating than to know that you have traveled thousands of miles to help people with a dread disease and then find out that you may have contracted it—which would mean isolation from community, pain, deterioration, and all the horrors that go with it!)

"You will never become a leper. I know we are all exposed and I know, too, that God has called us for this work. If we are prudent and do our duty, he will protect us. Do not allow it to trouble you, and when the thought comes to you, drive it from your mind, and remember, you will never be a leper; nor will any Sister of our Order."

The answer of Mother Marianne to such a real danger has always impressed me for several reasons. First, the great confidence with which she answers

this disturbed Sister seems to show that she has fully considered this consequence and has come to a real confrontation with God, his holy will, and his justice. In the second place, she asks the Sister to dismiss the thought — in fact, to drive it away— because the result of dwelling on such a possibility would be to lessen the praise given to God by utter confidence in his care of her. And finally, it is a fact that since 1889, when the Sisters were finally permitted actual entrance to Molokai, not one Sister of our Order has ever contracted the disease.

Since frustrations are a result of the human condition and saints are only human beings who live a saintly human life, I would like to point out a few of the frustrations exhibited by the people involved in the decision to ask a Sisterhood to go to Molokai.

The first persons almost totally frustrated by the conditions present on the leper colony were the King and Queen of Hawaii who were very interested in the welfare of their people. They knew they needed help, but none of the island people would offer it because they feared contracting the disease. Father Damien, a young Sacred Hearts priest was

already there, but he, too, needed help. Most government officials were content to banish those afflicted with the disease and then forget about them. Lack of personnel, uncertainty of aid, and indifference plagued the royal pair.

Next, Father Damien, a zealous young priest who had volunteered for the task and was to remain there sixteen brief years until the disease would claim his life. He was one priest among approximately 800 diseased people. 800 diseased in soul and body, with no incentive to lead good lives. What could he accomplish? Yet he continued to pray and work, and to plead for help from a Sisterhood.

Father Leonor, commissioned by the King and Queen and given the blessing of his Bishop, crossed the continent visiting at least fifty Sisterhoods who listened attentively to him, but to no avail. All were overworked, fearful of distance and disease, or not equipped for such a task.

Finally, one Sisterhood gives Father Leonor an element of hope. A small cobblestone house in the country setting of Court Street on the edge of the city of Syracuse, New York, housed a small group of Sisters who were to relieve the frustrations of the King and Queen, of the people of Hawaii, of Father Damien, and of Father Leonor. But to relieve a person's frustration means to take it upon oneself.

That is what Mother Marianne joyfully did.

Now the Syracuse community had to come to grips with its frustrations brought about by a willingness to go to care for these poor, unfortunate people. Their ranks would be depleted at home, in fact which would increase the work load for the others; separation from beloved members of the community would be hard to bear; and especially would the absence of Mother Marianne be felt, even if only for a while. In the spirit of the Order of Saint Francis, the generosity of their foundress, Mother Bernardine, and the zeal of Mother Marianne, the Community overcame its projected difficulties and voted to send members to the Islands.

Mother Marianne, in the same confident spirit which was evidenced in her reply to Sister Leopoldina, overcame many un-called for, undeserved, and unexpected frustrations, of which I will mention only a few. Personally, Mother Marianne was never physically strong, and she suffered almost constant migraine headaches. To add to her suffering, from the first ride by ship to Hawaii on which she was deathly seasick, almost all of her traveling to visit her Sisters from island to island was by boat—and every trip was a bout with seasickness!

Public recognition by the in-

habitants of the islands in the form of cheering, lining the streets in greeting, and presenting the Sisters with leis, and publicly hailing them in the Cathedral, was short lived. Before the Sisters were even permitted to set foot on Molokai (which was some six years after their arrival), they were asked to operate two hospitals and begin a school. There was constant lack of personnel, and many who worked for them were questionable in character. Working conditions were poor, food was inadequate, many patients resented them. Environmental conditions were bad, there was a lack of governmental co-operation. Food deliveries were seldom on time, there were plots against Mother Marianne's life as well as other physical dangers, and there was the sickness and death of some of the Sisters with no forthcoming replacements.

Although the government had promised better conditions and better food, the Sisters were still managing, in 1908, on scanty funds and with inadequate help. That year, in July, Mother Marianne wrote this letter to Mother Johanna who was then Superior General.

You are aware that we out here are all growing old and consequently are not able to go on with the heavy work we have been doing in the past. In Honolulu at the Kapiolani Home there are

three Sisters, all three worn out and more than half sick. They have fifty-six children to care for, many of them infants who require care night and day. Every week letters from there tell me of their hardships and need for help. I am helpless. Is there any hope for more help in the near future? Here at Molokai there are five Sisters and we have our hands full. I am over seventy years old. You may judge from that.

We are told that Mother "was not complaining, that was not her way; she was simply stating her usual forthright honesty about the situation." And what did she do about it? All the Sisters in the States were working beyond reason, and none could be released at this time. So Mother Marianne "pushed herself a little harder."

You may very well ask: Was it worth it? Certainly she had reached a very high level of frustration at many points in her journey to God. At her death Mother Marianne, from her heavenly perch was probably not too impressed with the grand monument erected in her honor; but to see the lepers she had loved and cared for, with their mangled limbs and devastated expressions, gather up their scant funds to raise twelve hundred dollars so the good Sisters of Saint Francis might stay among them in a new convent in Honolulu, must have warmed her heart and dispelled all frustration.

Blessed Are You—II

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

IF WE LOOK for a fifth characteristic of the poor in spirit, we shall surely note: creativity. Pre-requisites for the contemplative life have been set down by Andrée Emery as (1) a high degree of creativity, and (2) a capacity for the humdrum.¹ This seems to me very insightful, but I would hesitate at the "and." Surely there can be and ought to be a great degree of creativity in the humdrum of every day. This is what the poor in spirit discover and manifest. Those who cannot make creative the so-called humdrum things of daily living are scarcely creative persons. They are not poor in spirit, not possessed of that flexibility and elected vulnerability which are essential to creativity, not established in that freedom and that state of being without holdings which give creativity full scope.

We have a telling example in the life of Saint Jane Frances de Chantal. Aristocrat that she was, it is likely that she had her first experience with sweeping up dust after she entered the convent. One day Jane Frances was gathering in the dust with utmost care, and another sister was watching her. "It is only dust," commented the watcher who seems to have been not very notable for a sense of wonder. "You act as though you were sweeping up pearls."

This was altogether too much care and creativity for dust. But Saint Jane Frances smiled: "Pearls? Oh, better than pearls. It is the dust of the house of God." This was a woman of insight and creativity rather beyond that of her observer.

For the truly creative persons, there is no humdrum. The kind of

creativity of heart that the saint was able to manifest when sweeping up dust belongs to the poor in spirit. Loving to beautify the little that we have is a deep part of poverty of spirit. It is not that we want dinginess. It is not that we are satisfied with dreariness. It is that we are creative enough to wrest beauty out of places and things where it may not seem to exist. We can be glad that we live here in a desert land, not just settled down in lush countryside to be enjoyed, but obliged to be always busy about trying to work with God in wresting beauty out of places where beauty has not of itself appeared. And so it is in all works. The truly poor ones add to their situation always the high creativity of trying to beautify what they have, however little it may seem to be.

Lightness and gaiety belong to attitudinal poverty, not merely imposed poverty. Bleakness must never be confused with poverty, nor should dinginess or even starkness be identified with it. Saint Francis did not talk of poverty, but of holy poverty, and especially of his Lady Poverty. She was to him a beautiful ideal, and he sought out his little hermitages in places of beauty which he beautified all the more. He adorned his own austerity, just as Saint Clare beautified

hers. The poor work with what is given them. And this does not by any means exclude the gifts of the rich.

If a gift is poor and lowly *per se*, the creative poor in spirit receive it with humility. But they do not set aside with hauteur what is *per se* less poor and less lowly. The rich, too, must be allowed to love and to give. And their gifts are to be shared and diffused.

Flexible to the whole life situation, bending to God and to fellowmen, loving devotedly on and on in the vulnerability of the poor Christ, free and spiritually nomadic, pitching what tents God indicates and where He points out, the poor in spirit exercise always that creativity which is their heritage from the Father. And out of all these qualities is formed that capacity for enjoyment, delight, wonder, which is so eminently characteristic of the poor in spirit. Il Poverello found two sticks by the roadside. "A violin!" Madman or little poor one of the Lord according to one's perspective, insight, and frame of reference, Saint Francis played his "violin" in praise of the Most High God. "I am the herald of the Great King," he announced, though there were undoubtedly some who thought he was not dressed for the part.

¹Andrée Emery, Ph.D., member of the Secular Institute of Our Lady of the Way, staff member Hacker Psychiatric Clinic, Los Angeles, California.

Mother Mary Francis is Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico. Her writings include many contributions of poetry and prose to periodicals, the immensely popular books Spaces for Silence and A Right to Be Merry, as well as the recently published series of conferences reprinted from our pages: But I have called You Friends.

It is definitely not a property of austerity to be closed to delight. This would be to revert to what we reflected on earlier: They are called to be open to the Lord, responsive to whatever he gives. If he gives lightness of spirit, if he gives an emotional upsurge—thanks be to him. If he gives a headache or a heartache—thanks be to him. Poor in spirit, receiving with open hands and open heart whatever God gives directly or through others, we become little enough to understand that this receiving whatever is given is part of that attitudinal poorness which is poverty of spirit. On the material plane, if it is the gift of fish so full of bones, we can exercise delicate artistry in removing them. On the spiritual plane, we exercise the same grace in accepting God's ways of sanctifying us in the situations of the day. And that brings us right back to our initial characteristic of the poor in spirit: flexibility.

If we are loaded up like a safety deposit box with the blueprints for our own sanctification, the deeds for our holdings, the folio of our austerity, the armor against hurt, there is scarcely going to be room in us for the Holy Spirit and his gifts. For they are not few. It would be altogether too bad to have stocked our own receptivity when the Giver of all good gifts is looking for the poor in spirit to enrich



them. If we are overflowing with our own ideas, we cannot be open to his. Neither can he give us his light ("Veni, Lumen cordium!") if our hearts are shaded with our own plans, our own decisions, judgments, verdicts. Certainly we use our own powers of decision-making, evaluating, concluding. But in the employment of them, we remain so flexible, teachable, open to the Lord, that we do not confuse our own voice with God's.

We all have turning points in our lives, those we presently recognize as major and those which we perhaps see only in retrospect as determinative. Each day is, in fact, a turning point. However, there come great turning points when we make particular choices

which may revolve about what seems of itself a very little thing. And by these choices the calibre of our lives is substantiated. You know John Bunker's poem in which he describes his friend who made the wrong small choice, took the wrong slight turning. "A different path, one way instead of another—merely took what seemed to him the way of easier treading." And the poet goes on to detail how "by the strange irony of the unforeseen, the path he chose became for him indeed the difficult way of pain and loneliness that leads to God knows whither."² This day, too, will be replete with choices for us to make, choices for coming closer to God as the little poor

ones intent upon expressing his Will, eager to give him delight with the dancing of their flexible spirits before his face. John Bunker's friend merely took what seemed to him a better choice for self. As such choices often enough do, that one led him in the end down a difficult path indeed.

For the poor in spirit, the vulnerable, the receptive, the free, the creative, the way of their flexible choices leads, in an entirely different sense, to God knows whither. Yes, God knows whither. And it is not necessary that we should know where. It is only necessary that we be poor enough to respond readily and follow eagerly.

Blessed Are the Meek, for They Shall Inherit the Land.

CHRIST WENT ON to tell his doubtless spellbound listeners about a large legacy and who was to receive it. Some people were to inherit the land, to possess the earth. Their identification must certainly have been startling to that large congregation on the hillside. Meekness then, even as now, was not generally considered to be the outstanding mark of large landowners. Yet that was what he said. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the land" (Mt. 5:4).

Our chaplain, Father Burcard

Fisher, O.F.M., once remarked in a homily and with quite some acuity that the first land the meek possess is the land they are standing on. They are whole persons. They take that firm stance which only the gentle can really assume. The domineering, the aggressive, the blustering are not so much taking a stance as posturing. What we shall want first to consider, then, in the meek is their strength.

The meek are the self-possessed, which is to say that they are God-possessed since God has been allowed to possess their

²John Bunker, "Dark Fields and Shining Towers."

"selves." The arrogant and aggressive have leased their "selves" out to their acquisitiveness, their ambition, their desire to domineer. And while it is a poor enough bargain, they seem to go on renewing the lease for the meager return, the even self-destructive return. They never really possess the land on which they stand; they merely wage war over it.

If meekness is not exactly the worldly ideal, neither is it universally correlated with strength. Contrariwise, is not the first connotation of meekness in many minds that of supineness, spiritlessness, weakness? It is strange that this should be so, when Jesus set forth meekness as the expression of his own divine-human heart. It is interesting that Christ asked us to master only one lesson plan in life. "Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart" (Mt. 11:20). It is certainly not without significance that he never specifically asked us to learn anything else. He knew the hearts of men and what was in them then, what is in them now. He understood that excellence in humility and meekness required the practised ease possible only to a whole lifetime of striving. A doctorate in meekness requires a studious dedication that not too many are prepared to make.

We remember that our blessed Lord also spoke of taking on a

yoke. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart" (*Ibid.*). Meekness is the very opposite of irresponsibility. Rather, in opting for emulation of the meek Christ, we are agreeing to take on a highly demanding responsibility. But there is this about the heaviest responsibilities: they are never oppressive. It can be, after all, highly exhilarating to lift something heavy and carry it. It requires much practice and dogged determination, but among the rewards are the experience of spiritual élan in oneself and the presentation of example-beautiful to others.

When the danseur lifts the ballerina high into the air and seems to float her about over his head, it is not because obscure gravitational statistics of the dance reveal that one hundred and ten pounds become ten pounds when delivered from earthly moorings. No, rather the danseur has learned how to lift a one hundred pounds-plus burden which is sweet to him. The weight has become a part of the beauty he is creatively expressing. He is for us a model of bearing heavy responsibility, quite literally, with ease and grace. He has had to learn how to do this. The danseur has been obliged to try and to experience failure and then to try again and again and again. The weight of responsibility borne with practised grace has

been transformed into the lightness of achievement. But one has to bear the burden, to carry it, to lift it, to sweep it up. It will always be nothing but oppressive when pulled or dragged along.

Jesus again invites us to respond to his initiative with our own. It is *his* yoke, this humility, this meekness. But *we* are to take it up. He does not yoke it upon us but suggests that we yoke it upon ourselves. His yoke becomes our elected own. Take *my* yoke upon *you*. There must be the labor of learning to lift the burden before we can discover the burden light. Excellence in meekness is not for the lethargic, the apathetic, the ungenerous. But it is more than élan that our blessed Savior promises us for becoming practised in his meekness. He talks of rest: "And you shall find rest for your souls."

Reposefulness is an outstanding characteristic of the meek. And it is more the magnificent reposefulness of the mountain, firm and strong and equal to the blast of adverse winds, than of the sleeper. One could agree that the meek possess the land they are standing on and go on to add that they possess themselves. The Beatitudes were not departmentalized

by Christ. One flows into another. The next is possible because of the others. One expression leads to another. Each in a sense explains all the others. And so that quality (and not only state) of being without holdings, the characteristic of the poor in spirit, is clearly illustrated by the meek.

Because they are without holdings, the meek actually hold everything. We see this patently in the life of Saint Francis. The poet's fancy of "swinging the earth a trinket at my wrist"³ became spiritual reality in the little Poor Man of Assisi. That all the earth was his is apparent in the way Francis dealt with the earth. He communed with it, eulogized its singing expressions of its Creator, was literally familial with it. There was never a man more at home in creation than meek Francis of Assisi. To the pilgrim alone belongs the land, for the pilgrim is only happily passing through. He is not about to declare wars of colonization. He does not in fact need colonies. He has it all.

Thus there is this reposefulness about the meek. Without aggressiveness (he suffers no grinding to possess), without arrogance (for he is a son and heir of a Master whose infinite holdings are never in jeopardy and

³Francis Thompson, "The Hound of Heaven," Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1941.

who assigns meekness as birth-right to his progeny), he is at rest.

The world is so torn with aggression, so swollen with arrogance. For this acute restiveness and for this diseasedness there is no repose. Rather than submit to this prognosis, we often enough pretend to despise reposefulness. Life is for action, protest, apprehension! But we shall want to reflect a bit later that the hunger and thirst for justice which signals yet another Beatitude calls for an action, a protest, and an apprehension possible only to the meek.

Flailing one's arms about becomes in the end merely exhausting, and that kind of exhaustion makes repose impossible. Insisting on one's rights, suing for them with merciless dominativeness fills the air with noise but never with music. Music belongs to the meek who have the strength to suffer all things, patiently for the love of Christ, and in the end to "count them all as rubbish that one may have Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

"You shall find rest for your soul" (Mt. 11:20). The strength of the meek, the strength which is able to suffer and to suffer gladly, is identified in reposefulness. And in this reposefulness one can experience what it is to possess the land. Only those who do not stake out particular holdings are free enough to possess all of the

earth. The meek have learned to possess their own souls in peace. Therefore they stand without fear upon the land become theirs not by acquisition but by gift and reward. And they become free to roam the whole territory of their inheritance: the earth.

So it was that Jesus said: Blessed are the meek; they shall own everything. They shall possess the whole land. They indeed possess everything who do not stake out any holdings. We need, however, to ask how often and how obstinately we deliver ourselves up to acquisitiveness. We want to own some ideas and judgments and to stake out claims on them. This is my sovereign opinion which no one shall alter! Certainly we have basic convictions, but this does not entail succumbing to the aggressiveness of "This is my charge, this is my work; keep out, keep off the grass of my holdings." This idea that is my "holding" is often enough the mistaken idea on which no one is going to correct me. I put up signs and observe squatters' rights. What a dreary business, when we can run and own the land and possess the earth if we are meek and humble of heart!

It is the unending drone of the squatter and his rights that "This is mine. And anyone who wants to liberate me doesn't understand."

There rises the age-old cry:

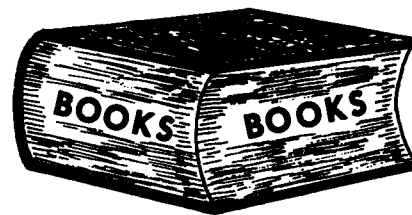
"You don't understand me" "This is *my* truth." Or, perhaps more accurately, my verisimilitude. And no one shall intrude here. No one shall bring in the truth here. No one shall point to a vision of something far greater. And so I can sit there and squat there on my holdings, proud, determined on this ownership, and, of course, forced to defend it. As our Father Saint Francis said, "If we own property, my brothers, then we shall have to have weapons to defend it."⁴ And he went on to say that this gets more and more complicated. That is just what happens to us when we stake out a holding. We must have weapons to defend it. Somebody is coming to say that I am wrong, but

I have weapons to defend my error. And when we are busily defending this little plot with weapons of pride, weapons of blindness, weapons of arrogance, we refuse to possess the land promised to the meek.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has advised us that this is a very meager way of living. In the end, it is to render life wasted, squandered, lost. He points the direction away from such tragedy. Come to possession of the earth! Possess yourselves in reposefulness of soul. Take up my yoke and stand responsible, yoked, upon firm land. Learn of me; I am meek and humble of heart. And here is your diploma: the earth.

(To be continued)

⁴The Legend of the Three Companions, ch. IX, 33 (*Omnibus*, p. 921; *Words*, p. 59).



Chapel, at the Northway Mall, Albany, N.Y., and translator of many books on theology and spirituality, the latest of which is *Jesus in Devotion and Contemplation* (Abbey Press, 1974).

This is a book that every Christian should read and re-read, because it cannot be digested in one reading.

The book is divided into four parts: "The Healing Ministry" (its underlying meaning and importance), "Faith, Hope, and Charity as they Touch upon the Healing Ministry," "The Four Basic Kinds of Healing

Healing. By Francis MacNutt, O.P. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1974. Pp. 333. Paper, \$3.50.

Reviewed by Father Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M., an assistant at St. Francis

and How to Pray for each," and "Specific Considerations."

In the preface (p. 14), Father MacNutt makes this astounding statement: "I would make a rough estimate that about half those we pray for are healed (or are notably improved) of physical sickness and about three fourths of those we pray for are healed of emotional or spiritual problems." Only much further on in the book (chapter 18), does the author go into a detailed explanation of eleven reasons why people are not healed. Some of these are redemptive suffering, not getting to the root cause of the emotional suffering, resentment, faulty diagnosis (for example, praying for *physical* healing, when *inner* healing was the basic need), refusal to see medicine as a way God heals, and "now is not the time."

Father MacNutt is rightly aware that his book will meet sceptical eyes. So he has an excellent chapter (the second) entitled "Our Prejudices against Healing." When the subject of praying for healing comes up, what immediately comes to many minds is *faith healers*. His answer is: "To disparage the healing ministry because of certain excesses of snake-handling sects in Tennessee makes no more sense than to criticize the very concept of the Eucharist because of the excesses of some of the hunting Masses of the Middle Ages . . . The fault lies in the minister or in the way the ministry is carried out, and not in the validity of the act itself" (pp. 40-41).

Let me quote a few sentences that topple all these prejudices. "Nowhere in the gospel do we see Christ encouraging the sick to live with

their illness." A common objection to the healing ministry is: "It takes a saint to work a miracle, and I'm no saint." By way of refuting this objection, Father MacNutt simply quotes Christ's words: "These are the signs that will be associated with *believers*"; Christ did not say, with *saints*."

Every Christian believes that "Jesus saves us from personal sin and from the effects of original sin which include ignorance, weakness of will, disoriented emotions, physical illness, and death" (p. 49). But the basic question is: has Jesus "come to free us *even in this life* from disease and disordered emotions which, since the creation of man, have traditionally been considered the effects of evil—of 'original sin'?" (pp. 50-51).

The name "Jesus" means "Yahweh is Salvation." "This is precisely how Jesus conceived his mission; the time of the Messiah would be a time of healing, of liberation, of salvation." Because the Hebrews did not think of man as divided into body and soul, but as a whole person, when they spoke of healing they thought not only of *saving souls* but of *healing persons*. And man's person includes his body and his feelings.

And so Jesus went about healing people. He did so not just to prove that his message was true, but because he had come to set man free. Jesus himself did not refer to his healings as "miracles," but as "works"—the normal thing for him to do.

The author makes a very important distinction. There are two kinds of suffering: the kind of suffering that comes *from outside* of man because

of the wickedness of other men who are evil. And secondly, there is suffering "of *sickness*, the suffering that tears man apart from within, whether it be physical, emotional, or moral" (p. 78).

It is this second kind of suffering that Jesus came to heal. We will search the Gospels in vain to find Jesus counselling a sick man to rejoice, or to be patient because disease is helpful or redemptive. Rather, he "cured them all" (e.g., Mt. 12:16).

Father Francis believes, and the reviewer concurs in that belief, that we have tended to emphasize doctrine rather than experience, as if right knowledge coupled with will-power were enough to produce Christians.

The main thing that God seems to want to show people by the healings taking place in our day is that he is real, that he loves ordinary people, and that he wants them to draw near to him.

"Christianity," the author concludes, "is more than doctrine; it is power. It is power to transform our lives, to destroy the evil that prevents us from loving God and our neighbor. Jesus came to bring us a new life, a share in God's own life. We have always believed these things, but where is the reality of it? Where is the power truly to change lives?" (p. 95).

This is a book written by a son of St. Dominic, a priest who for years felt that something was missing in his ministry. What kind of spiritual direction could he give to those who were depressed, alcoholic, homosexual, who felt worthless and unlovable? He eventually found out that the

healing ministry was the answer.

In *Healing* Father MacNutt shares with us the fruit of his study and involvement in the healing ministry. The style is simple, clear, uncomplicated, direct, and theologically sound.

It is a text book that will clear the atmosphere of unsound teachings about healing. If read with an open mind, it will clear the way for Jesus to show people that he loves them, even in this life, and that he wants them to experience his love and heal their hurts! And who hasn't been hurt?

Even if a person has studied religion for eight years in a Catholic grade school, four years in a Catholic high school, another four years of theology in a Catholic college, and even has a graduate degree in theology, he or she has not exhausted the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Our Idea of God (Vol. 3 of *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*). By Juan Luis Segundo, S.J. Trans. John Drury. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1974. Pp. vi-206. Cloth, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Raphael D. Bonanno, O.F.M., member of the team ministry in the Brazilian parish of Pires do Rio, State of Goiás. A frequent contributor to our pages, Father Raphael has served in the parish apostolate for eleven years.

I was very happy to be asked to review this book by Father Segundo because I believe this new theology coming out of Latin America is perhaps a major blessing for the universal Church. I had heard good things about Father Segundo per-

sonally, and so my curiosity was piqued to see what such a man would write. Moreover, he is a professional theologian in contact with the Holy Spirit speaking through the lay apostles he trains in the Peter Faber Center of Montevideo. For all these reasons, I approached this book with a good deal of happy anticipation, and for the most part I came away satisfied.

Segundo's subject is God—no one less. He touches on the questions: "Does God interest us"; God and History; God and Society; God and Liberty; God and the World. He ranges from Medellin and the living God to demythologizing, to the early Church invoking the Trinity, to the nonviolent God. Segundo believes that Latin America may be called by God to change the Occidental image of God. What will be the new image? Will it be truer than the last? Throughout, he insists on the trinitarian or societal God. In our days of increasing social awareness, he affirms that God's social, three-personal aspect merits more attention. For many years the focus was on the one divine nature in God, rather than on the three divine Persons. Secularization, the death-of-God movement, and atheism have helped us all to destroy false idols and reach out again for the tremendous reality that is God. Father Segundo's personalist accent is notable, as he seeks personal relations with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. His approach is more biblical and patristic than metaphysical or philosophical. His concrete examples are the Cuban Church and God, Medellin (a constant reference), poli-

tical awareness and faith, and conscientization and evangelization. I fully expected his examples to be taken from the everyday religiosity of his lay apostles, but even so they are striking for their peculiarly Latin American character.

What we find in this book is not a collection of laymen's theological utterings in the Spirit plus a professional theologian's commentary on them. What Segundo offers is rather a professional theologian's reflections on the eternal truths of revelation and endeavor to link them to modern times and situations such as Medellin, the death-of-God movement, Marcuse's thought, the theology of Henri de Lubac, etc., but most particularly to his own Latin-American situation.

The name of the series of which this book is the third volume is *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*—a rather high-sounding title for a simple, modest attempt to write living, down-to-earth theology. Segundo makes his theology living all right, but at times it is not so down-to-earth, as when he gets into Modalism, Subordinationism, and Arianism. Still, the orthodox Christian faith does have something precise and definite to say about God, and as abstruse as this sort of speculation may seem to some, it has its necessary place in understanding the underlying mystery. In spite of some shortcomings, *Our Idea of God* is a worthwhile book that will reward any reader interested in theology of Latin-American vintage.

Theological Investigations, vol. X. Writings of 1965-1967. By Karl

Rahner, S.J. Trans. David Bourke. New York: Herder & Herder, 1973. Pp. IV-409. Cloth, \$9.75.

Reviewed by the Reverend Dr. Leland J. White, Chairman, Department of Religion, Nazareth College, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Occasional essays appearing so long after their original composition suggest enduring value and their author's reputation. Yet serious questions about theology and renewal in the Church today arise from such a fact. Are both theology and Church reform inevitably victims of future shock? Can books be circulated before the issues that they raise seem to become passé? Can reforms be implemented before the felt needs of the Church change? Is the reader who turns to yet another Rahner volume on Church, sacraments, eschatology, and the Church-world relationship doing more than returning to concerns characteristic of the immediate aftermath of Vatican II?

Seven of these four hundred pages provide an important clue to the answers for these questions. The brief chapter is entitled "A Fragmentary Aspect of a Theological Evaluation of the Concept of the Future." There Rahner reminds us that "the future is that to which we ourselves cannot reach out, but which comes to us of itself" (p. 237). If this notion appears elementary, in fact Rahner is only doing what he has so often before done so extraordinarily well when he draws our attention to it. He is taking a basic human phenomenon, stating its most elementary meaning, then using that as the basis for a

rather penetrating theological investigation. His elementary description of the future is designed to call attention to the contradiction, inherent in both Western theorists and Marxists, who confuse the future with the "tomorrow which is already here today" (p. 236). Far from respecting the future, those who plan and project, he argues, may limit it to its present possibilities. The future is a to-be-given, beyond the fashioning of its recipients, in the realm of grace.

It is, then, the recipients who are to be fashioned rather than the future itself. Men and the Church with them are called to that care in shaping their provisional structures that will most clearly equip them to use the structures, whether of meaning or action, and then to discard them for the reality that is to be given. This reality will break in upon them unexpectedly, though not without their being expectant.

Rahner's work must be seen as so many exercises to instruct us in that expectancy. Even in his discussion of seemingly dated issues, where indeed he is trying to clear up historical problems, he sounds a note to contribute towards that awakening. For example, when he argues the case of indulgences, now so remote from the concern of most of us, he draws attention to the power of the Church, yet all the while insisting that it need not be considered jurisdictionally. That power becomes clarified as simply the power of Christ in whatsoever way it might affect the life of man.

His discussion of the Church itself probes two traits characteristically new in Vatican II: its localized existence and its reality as a sacrament

of salvation. But more than being items for consideration in a final reform program, these notions are taken as disposing the Church for realities beyond its imagination. Rahner is here attentive to the concrete possibilities. To assess the Church primarily in terms of its actual local realization of the presence of Christ and his grace serves to deny the Christian the false security of a universal and ideal community nowhere and never realized. To know the Church as the sacrament of a salvation being worked out by God's grace in the world as a whole enables the Church to assume the posture of a servant. But these concrete possibilities have their significance against the background of the incalculable opportunities towards which they are but an opening.

Concrete cases can be multiplied. Indeed, they must. The author turns to the social work of the Church, the work for peace, in fact the work for a new Earth. An earlier reader's response to the war in Vietnam can be imagined, and one may even project forwards in concern for nuclear weapons limitation and for the problem posed by the Third World. It is not that the suggestions lack concreteness, but rather that they insist on concreteness in a way that makes us sensitive to the fact that all such responses are provisional, and more that what they would provide is the man or human community more open not merely to the next challenge but to the challenge of living in its full range. It is the challenge of living in hope, in expectancy of God's own self-giving.

Hope is driven to its ultimate as a theological virtue. Rahner clarifies the relationship of faith and love to hope as this is expressed biblically and scholastically. He makes clear that hope is not merely the vessel bearing a vision and a communion not yet attained. It is rather finally the ongoing life of that vision and communion in itself. That is, man does not abandon hope by attaining the consummation of faith and love in eternity. Rather what he attains, being in fact God himself, being beyond any exhaustion, gives him a final ground for hoping.

It is rare enough that occasional essays, directed to one historical situation, will have lasting significance. It is probably still more unusual for a theologian to describe the final hope of man as such a realization of human life that we actually feel led to begin the adventure. How often it is that the more ecstatic descriptions of everlasting life, at least for those who do enjoy the human adventure, have about them an aura of a finale devoutly to be wished and all the more anxiously to be delayed. Rahner has given us an interest in our future because he brings a unique vision to our past and our present, while fully aware that nostalgia is a sickness that blinds vision even as life is a present that must continually be presented. To ask whether we needed volume ten in Rahner's investigations is to ask whether we as a Church need to know after one, nine, or an infinite number of volumes anything new—whether we are still hearing anything new about our future.

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