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Now, the tremendous increase in the cost of both labor and material, about which our readers know only too well, has forced us, once again, to raise our subscription rate. We do hope that the increase will not prove an excessive burden upon our subscribers, and we look forward to continuing to provide you with enlightening and inspiring Franciscan reading material in the future.

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On "Things That Never Existed" (!)

RECENTLY, ON THE TELEVISION GAME-SHOW "$25,000 Pyramid," a contestant was asked to name several "things that never existed." Included among the items in this category were angels, who were thus classified with elves, gremlins, and the like. The episode was a depressing one to me. Far better, I reflected, to see a serious animated discussion on the existence, nature, and function of angels, than to have them dismissed in this cheap, gratuitous manner.

The truth is, however, that such a discussion is impossible: there is simply no case that can be made for the non-existence of angels. The line of argumentation usually adopted is a proof that other cultural groups of ancient times had similar beliefs in supernatural beings—that this is just one more such cultural phenomenon to be cast off onto the dust heap of outmoded superstitions.

But as scholars continue to explore the fascinating subject of myth, they see with increasing clarity that the mythological status of most religious doctrines, far from implying falsity, is indicative of real truth: truth much deeper and more important than the highly touted dogmas of modern science. No, it is not rational argument or proof that has done away with the traditional belief in angels; it is an out-and-out capitulation to the forces of naturalism and atheism. What can't be seen, touched, tasted, weighed, according to these forces, doesn't exist.

This is not an innocuous, purely theoretical issue. If it were a purely theoretical issue, if it were a purely speculative matter, perhaps it might, in the interest of ecumenism and accommodation with today's

world, be better forgotten. But the case is quite otherwise: it makes a real, practical difference to our faith and to our concrete lives as Christians and religious, that there are angels concerned for our welfare, able to help us, and destined to celebrate forever with us the wedding feast of the Lamb.

The complex questions as to the nature, kinds, and functions of angels obviously cannot be explored here. The reader may, nonetheless, be interested in pursuing this important subject by reading one of the fine treatments still available today. Father Pascal Parente's book, *Beyond Space*, is such a treatment. Originally published by Alba House, the book is now available in a 1973 paperback edition from Tan Books and Publishers, Rockford, Ill. 61105. Reading this book and pondering its exalted message would surely be a fitting way to prepare for the great feast on September 29.

Fr. Michael D. Maillard, ofm

Blessed Are You—VIII

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

WE ARRIVE AT THE final Beatitude to find ourselves again confronted with immediacy. As in the first of His proclamations of those who are blessed in God's sight and among men, so also in the last, Christ makes his declaration an already present glad urgency. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:3). And now: "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:10).

It requires no great mind-wrenching to understand that our blessed Savior is establishing a special relationship between the poor in spirit and those suffering for their God-given convictions. One really has to be poor in spirit to be equipped for salvific suffering. Jesus himself had to renounce the holdings of his own human will and to disengage his decision-making from the revolt of his human intellect in the Garden of Gethsemane before he was humanly poor enough to suffer for the divine redemption of all men. There is a very definite follow-through from the first Beatitude to the last in which those suffering persecution are joined with the poor as having the kingdom of heaven even now, in time. "The kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17:21). When you are poor. When you are suffering persecution for the principles of life and holiness. In saying that there is a follow-through from the first to the eighth Beatitudes, we are already defining the eighth.

The etymology of the word "persecution" seems rather startling at first consideration. And this is probably because the exposed core of truth is bound to be stunning in a soporific company of half-truths and popular delusions. *Per* and *sequere* (*secutus*) are the Latin words from which devolve our "persecution." Quite literally, "to follow through." To attain to that fullness of moral purity which justice is, one has to suffer the follow-through of everything Christ has set forth in the other Beatitudes, beginning at the first.

We reflected in chapter one that to be poor in spirit and possess the kingdom of heaven, one must agree to be vulnerable. We recognized that the poor in spirit must deliver over to others the power to hurt them, since without this there is no loving. Could we say it again?—one has to let oneself be exploited and misunderstood, for this belongs to loving. The completely poor in spirit are the utterly hurtable. Christ had no defenses against ingratitude, misunderstanding, denial, desertion, treachery. He was poor enough to love on.

We have also considered at what painful effort the strength specific to the meek of the second Beatitude is gained, and with what taxing practice their reposefulness is achieved. And in reflecting on the mourners whose blessedness is proclaimed in the third beatitude, we saw that mourning is a right response to penancing truth, a response made possible only by suffering freely. But it was in our meditative study of the fourth Beatitude when we investigated justice as actually being what even the dictionary purports it to be: moral purity and uprightness before God; and the just man being the one whose conduct conforms to the principles of right, that it became very clear that we shall not be prepared for the stark blessedness of the eighth Beatitude unless we have fathomed something of the fourth.

That inner rectitude which is the first and basic justice for which Jesus declares it a blessed thing to hunger, is not achieved without perduring suffering. Manifestly unholy while sincerely aching for holiness, we discover that we are hungry for justice. We can prove it. A deduction we make from being hungry is that we are not full. The body testifies to its hunger for food by producing in us a stomach ache. In the very midst of our inglorious failures to be holy, we still have the testimony of the Spirit that we hunger for justice, for holiness. Who has not suffered a spirit-ache?

Then, for those merciful ones who are declared blessed by the Lord and promised mercy for themselves, there is again the vocation to suffer. Each Beatitude is proclaiming along with the blessedness specific to its own focus of concern, the absolute necessity of suffering in order to achieve any of the goals God ambitions for us: poverty of spirit, meekness, right responding, yearning for justice, mercifulness. There is a "persecution," a follow-through of suffering in all of them as they unfold their mysteries of the spirit and simultaneously invite us to the ultimate discovery of the final Beatitude. One is not truly merciful at no cost to himself.

Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., well known author of spiritual and dramatic works, is Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Roswell, New Mexico.

Nor does anyone dispense real mercy after the manner of an enthroned monarch distributing alms to the poor. Mercy is given to the poor only by the likewise poor. Interacting, overlapping, repeating, revealing: this is the way the eight Beatitudes proceed. There is the follow-through of each to the other and on to the culmination of the eighth in its triumphant climax of suffering.

Just so, it is the same for the clean of heart who are made clean only at the price of painful self-un-cluttering. And with the peacemakers who must painfully labor to build and to make. But the full meaning of crowned suffering is revealed at the end. "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." We might do well to alert ourselves with the very literal etymological translation: "Blessed are they who suffer the follow-through. Theirs is, right now, the kingdom of heaven."

We see this possession of the kingdom shine out very brilliantly in the martyrs who went singing to their martyrdoms. We remember St. Thomas More making jests with his executioner on the very scaffold. We recall St. Perpetua arranging her hair becomingly in preparation for being gored by a wild cow. There is Bl. Margaret Clitherow who spent her last days in an Elizabethan prison making herself a new white dress to wear for her martyrdom. For the lesser lights of sanctity we are, there is also a certain notification given of the possession of the kingdom in the small follow-throughs of daily living in aspiration of sanctity.

We tend to think of persecution as something striking us from without. Often enough it is just that. There is the real persecution suffered by the martyr submitted to torture or sentenced to death for his faith or some doctrine of faith. There are the lesser in vital effect (or maybe we should say vital termination) but not necessarily lesser in intensity persecutions suffered by those who for the sake of their convictions and principles are condemned by the press and other forms of the media. The patient are persecuted by the naggers, the gentle by the aggressive, the weak by the bullies. And then there is the imaginary persecution from without, the technical or amateur paranoid whose imagination creates persecutions out of the blandest normalcies. But there is another persecution. And it comes from within. Everyone aspiring to holiness has got to suffer this follow-through. Let's take a few examples.

"Of courtesy," observes Hilaire Belloc, "It is much less/ than courage of heart or holiness;/ Yet in my walks it seems to me/ that the grace of God is in courtesy."[1] The flowering of this delicate and so endearing natural virtue is not realized without suffering nature's persecution. It does not "come natural" to be courteous with the bore, the curious, the dull. It is a great fallacy to suppose that the exquisite courtesy of Christ toward just those categories of persons so conspicuous in the Gospels never suffered persecution. That our blessed Lord was like us in all things save sin includes his being like us temptable. It does no honor to the perfect humanity of Christ to suppose that he never felt frustrated, bored, annoyed. The Gospels show him weary in body. "He sat down by the well, weary" (Jn. 4:6). They also show him weary in soul. "So long a time have I been with you, and you have not known me?" (Jn. 14:9). His courtesy suffered the persecution of contradiction, stupidity, coarseness and crudeness, insensitivity and ingratitude.

Then, there is patience. St. Paul, who had a bit of trouble in this area, has some observations to make in his second letter to the Corinthians, chapters 11-12. An unpersecuted patience is less patience than a kind of psychological bovineness. The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that patience is a victory won out of suffering and endurance. Victory. Yes, it seems, then, that the patient man was on the battlefield. One opts for patience, but one has to suffer the follow-through if the option is to be secured. There must be the persecution of anger, annoyance, disappointment, aggravation.

For the vowed religious, too, there is a very definite follow-through on each vow in order to attain the holiness to which the vow is a specific means. There is the vocation, the call which can come only from God. And there is the human response which can come only from the person called. We are always at liberty to say "No!" to God, but it is a sorry sort of liberty to exercise. The realest liberty is to be so free in God that one can no longer be constrained to refuse any of his summons.

We see the rich young man in the Gospel about whose vocation there is no possible doubt. Christ in his physical human presence stood before the boy, loved him, called him. "If you will be perfect, go and sell all that you have, and come, follow me" (Mt. 19:21). The wealthy young fellow chose not to respond. He measur-

[1]Hilaire Belloc, "Courtesy," in *Stories, Essays and Poems* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons), p. 397.

ed what Jesus asked on his own worldly scales, and the needle pointed to: "Too much." But even for the many who do respond and leave whatever is the equivalent of their fishing nets and boats or their own gold to follow Jesus, there remains a lifelong follow-through.

One who makes a vow of virginal chastity has to suffer in some measure or other persecution by the legitimate demands of nature if she is to realize the fullness of her surrender to Christ. The nun who rises every midnight to pray is not trying to find the most difficult possible time to pray and then set that up as a kind of torturing hazard. No, she breaks her sleep to worship God because this choral worship must be offered by day and by night. So supreme in her life is the call to communal worship of God that the call to sunder her sleep is a clear and obvious one. So, it is a spiritual call to which she responds, not some kind of hazards-course training. Still, she will have to suffer persecution from nature to achieve this fullness of response. Weariness and heaviness are the follow-through to be suffered by one who is pledged to offer worship to God by day and by night.

Again, it would be a strange kind of fasting where legitimate desires never suffered anything at all. Our blessed Lord in his perfect human nature had even so to suffer persecution from his humanness. We see him at the very beginning of his public life suffering the persecution of his own body which would have liked him to work a miracle to satisfy its very legitimate needs. What the devil suggested, "Command that these stones become bread" (Mt. 4:3) could not have been a temptation if it were not inviting. "He was hungry" (Mt. 4:2). Christ's hungering body said, "I want to be satisfied." The suggestion of using his miraculous powers to satisfy this legitimate need had to be suffered as a persecution.

Back, then, to the vow of religious chastity to whose perfection the curtailment of sleep and fasting have something to contribute. The body has to be gently persuaded by a given heart and a virginal mind to what it is not of itself inclined to do. It has to be lovingly educated by the mind and heart to suffer having its quite legitimate demands go unhonored. Unless the mind is virginal, unless the heart is fully pledged, how shall the body ever be persuaded to consecrated virginity? The mind and heart must lead the body to a height beyond its own comprehension, and they achieve this only in the follow-through of suffering.

So, too, one must suffer persecution for obedience's sake. We may want to recall here once again that "justice" in the scriptural sense is holiness. We suffer for holiness's sake. We see Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane suffering the persecution of his own human will which did not want to submit to the Passion, which agonized in its human demand that this should not be, and whose anguish could be superseded only by a greater willing—submission to the Will of the Father. If Christ in his perfect human nature had to suffer persecution from his own perfect will so that it be brought into alignment with the Will of his Father, it is altogether right and fitting that one vowing obedience should suffer persecution for the alignment of her will with God's. One must suffer the demands of one's own will which often enough militate against the will of God. One has to agonize sometimes under the persecution of one's own willfulness. If we lovingly dismember that word, willfulness, it becomes rather clear that one cannot become full of the Will of God without having suffered the persecution of one's own willfulness. And the stronger the will, and even the willfulness, so much the greater the capacity to be filled with the Will of God once one has suffered the follow-through of pledging oneself forever to God in obedience. No one arrives at the perfect liberty which a vow of obedience is meant to make possible and to equip us to experience without having suffered much from many thraldoms. In fact, it is only by suffering the persecution of one's own demanding will, demands which can be put down only by love, that one can be free.

Again, in the vow of poverty, there is a persecution to be

undergone, a long follow-through. We need to suffer the persecuting demands of our own acquisitiveness not only on the material plane but more especially as regards those far more pressing demands for proprietorship which lie within ourselves. There is the acquisitiveness for excuses, for one thing. There are the demands of our nature for holdings of its own. To surrender all interior acquisitiveness, to give up the last little parcel of land on which our own name is written so that we have nothing at all to stand on except God, and to have no holdings at all except the Beloved, requires the strength achieved only in suffering the follow-through of the vow.

The heart makes demands; the body makes demands; mediocrity makes demands; wandering thoughts make demands. What is needed is to suffer all this persecution gladly. One could make example or take example from any virtue or any vow. Each has its follow-through of suffering to arrive us at holiness.

And so Christ looked at his audience on that hillside, some enthralled, some doubtless puzzled; the comprehending and half-comprehending and non-comprehending. He was giving the shortest and completest of spiritual seminars, offering a blueprint for living whose accuracy is as astonishingly fresh today in the secret chamber or on the six-lane highway as it was on the Mount of the Beatitudes.

We want to be happy. We ache for blessedness, despite all our unblessed behavior. And still the call at once imperious and free goes out: Be poor, be meek, mourn in a true response to penancing truth, hunger and thirst for the justice which begins with your own inner rectitude, be merciful, be pure of heart, make peace. And suffer willingly persecutions without which none of those states of blessedness can be realized. In the end, learn to suffer them gladly. For this is the culmination of blessedness: to suffer the vital follow-through for justice's sake. And you are established, even now, in the kingdom of Heaven.

Obedience/Authority in Francis's Writings

DUANE LAPSANSKI, O.F.M.

THE METHODOLOGY which the author employs in this article is excellent and praiseworthy:

1. The Author shows understanding for the problems of trying to reach the "mind of Francis," buried as it is under seven hundred years of interpretations, controversies, and differing historical milieux. He therefore rightly concentrates only on the Writings of St. Francis. It is in these Writings that the author discovers the criterion for judging what is truly the "mind of Francis."

2. The author uses the best available texts of the *Writings:* namely, the forthcoming critical edition. On the basis of these texts he draws some fascinating insights.

3. The author places the entire discussion within the context of faith. This is fundamental. Any other basis would be inadequate.

Being faithful to his chosen methodology, the author, I believe, succeeds in uncovering the authentic "mind of Francis" in regard to the issues of obedience and authority. This primal vision of Francis which the author unearths proves to be very dramatic and, surprisingly enough, relevant to us of the 20th century.

Father Duane Lapsanski, O.F.M., a member of the Assumption Province, received his doctorate in theology from the University of Munich. During his studies he was in close contact with Fr. Kajetan Esser. At present, Father Duane is on the staff of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure, New York. *The references to "Omnibus" in the text of Father Duane's summary are to* St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies—English Omnibus of the Sources for the life of St. Francis, *ed. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973). The summary is of a study done by Kajetan Esser and presented at the Plenary Council in Rome last Fall.*

The consequences of Francis's vision are quite stunning. The superior, for example, is viewed not as an authority-figure but as a *facilitator*: i.e., one who by his service aids the individual brother and the community as a whole to listen to and respond to the Word of God which is active in each life-situation.

–DUANE V. LAPSANSKI, O.F.M.

EACH GENERATION of Franciscans has appealed to the "mind of St. Francis" in its interpretation of obedience and authority. What seems to have happened in fact, however, is that each generation has repeatedly borrowed thematic notions for the interpretation of obedience and authority from the ecclesiastical and political life of the contemporary age and then politely labelled it with the slogan "the mind of St. Francis." To avoid this pitfall it is necessary to examine the writings of the saint himself and simply disregard all later interpretations.

It is questionable whether the notion of authority as such even occurs in the writings of St. Francis. What Francis emphasizes is Christ's demand that among his disciples there should exist neither *domination* nor *power*, but rather the fundamental attitude of serving one another. What constitutes Francis's new community, emphatically called a *brotherhood*, is the law of mutual washing of feet according to the mandate of the Lord in John 13:14-17. In this community no one at all has any special privileges or claims of dominating. Even the terms used to describe offices within the fraternity (*minister et servus*, *custos et servus*, *custos*, *guardianus*) express the idea of serving the brothers.

But neither does Francis want a fatherless or leaderless society, for he clearly states in his Testament: "I want to be a captive in his hands . . . because he is my Master . . . . And all other brothers, too, are bound to obey their guardians in the same way . . ." (*Omnibus*, 69).

St. Francis thus seems to view the superior simultaneously as servant and master of the brothers. Is this not a contradiction? Francis's solution is radically Christian. It is Christ the Lord, he says, who is the center of the community of Lesser Brothers. It

is in Christ that all are united as brothers and through him with the Father, who *alone* possesses *authority* in the community! "All you are brothers. And call no one on earth your father; for one is your Father, who is in heaven. Neither be called masters; for one only is your Master, the Christ who is in heaven" (*Reg. non bul.*, 22; *Omnibus*, 49). What Francis wants his brothers to do above all else is to "serve, love, honor, and adore our Lord God" and make for him a "dwelling-place within ourselves where he can stay . . ." (*Omnibus*, 48-49). Everyone, says Francis, should unclutter himself of egoism (*the* impurity), which hinders the coming of God into man's life. And not only must the individual do this, but the whole *fraternity* as well, so that the Lord and he alone can be the center, the only *auctoritas*, which animates the community. This vibrant consciousness of God as Father

leads Francis to say that every good in the brothers' lives is accomplished by God. The brothers' very living together is formed and springs from this fact that they receive all from God (cf. Admonitions 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, etc.).

"All the friars without exception are forbidden to wield power or authority, particularly over one another," says Francis, so that the Lord God can be before all, so that the coming of his kingdom may become visible in the *fraternity*. This authority of God, however, is capable of being experienced only by the *man of faith*, who hears the Word of God in the Sacred Scriptures here and now. Thus the life of the Friars minor consists in a lasting, ready dialogue of obedience with God, who speaks to us in his word. But God speaks to Francis also through the Church; the "Lordship" of God, his *auctoritas*, met Francis concretely in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. For Francis, therefore, obedience to God flowed over into obedience to the Church.

Furthermore, the Lord God demands the obedience of the Lesser Brothers also through their fellow men (Salutation of the Virtues; *Omnibus*, 36). This obedience is, in the final analysis, sensitivity to the will of God and a readiness to recognize this will in all situations of life. From this attitude of sensitivity to God flows the brothers' readiness to serve each other and indeed all men ("propter Deum"). In this mutual obedience and service the love of the Spirit becomes real.

The specific obedience of the Friar Minor is not an isolated aspect of life, but must be seen within the wider framework: namely, obedience to God's Word, obedience to the Church, and the readiness to serve the brothers "propter Deum."

Within the Brotherhood Francis presumed obedience to the superiors, but he apparently did not reflect on this aspect very intensely. In the "Letter to the Faithful" (*Omnibus*, 95), the execution of obedience is entrusted to the superior. He has to be alert "propter Deum" that obedience is rightly demanded and rightly fulfilled. Here again the superior has no domineering function but rather one of service: that of seeing himself in the context of God's will and facilitating the accomplishment of this will. This burden of the superior becomes especially evident when Francis speaks of the limits of obedience which naturally flow from fidelity to the will of God:

The first limit: "A friar is not bound to obey if a minister commands anything that is contrary to our life or his own conscience, because there can be no obligation to obey if it means committing sin" (*Reg. non bul.*, 5; *Omnibus*, 35). The correct exercise of *obedience* must always deal with the saving will and the saving action of God.

The second limit: The exercise of obedience can take place only within the promise by the brother and the community to obey the Church.

The third limit: The *Brotherhood* as such is responsible for seeing that the superior lives "according to the spirit and not according to the flesh." Obedience means that the Lord God and the brothers seek to create the right manner of living together with the superior.

Conclusion: The question we are dealing with here is, in the final analysis, always a matter of the authority of God and the obedience which is given to him, the Lord. Consequently, this question of obedience and authority is not primarily a sociological or a pedagogical problem, but is first and foremost a question of Christian faith.

The fact that St. Francis lived more than 100 years before the first jubilee in 1300 and five centuries before American independence might suggest a relevancy gap of monumental proportions to modern man. Yet among people familiar with his aspirations and his life-style there is a strong and widespread feeling that the "Poverello" is as relevant today as he was in the 13th century when he helped renew the Church. His uncompromising idealism and spirit of universal love have led many to regard him as a saint for the seventies.

—DANIEL M. MADDEN
Columbia, June 1975

Transitus

The dark wounds, wrapped in dusk, are passing aw
I see the moon and sun with different eyes, they
No longer are my brother and sister, they have
Become themselves, they have become me.
I am all creation and creation is my cowl.

Friends, loosen this brown-grey habit and lay me on irt.
I want to feel again the ground tremble in the wind,
I want to smell the orange in the air.
Do not remember best my late blindness;
One blind poet wrote dawn for all days—Rosy-finger

I am not a poet, I love the earth too much,
The real warmth of seasoned wood and sparks
As much as the fire and light in my soul.
I love to watch real swallows hold crosses in the sky
Without my words limiting their flight.

The world does not need poets to be lovely.
Listen, and a million angels sing the night.
Wait, and the rain will rhyme purple from color into q
Through the evening and the still hours of morning,
The passing to day, like the drift of seasons,

Like the liturgy of years, like the lives of saints.
I am not a saint, I am only the ground I lie on.
Now, I must change, like the years, like the seaso
Like night into day. Look, soon death, dawn
Will break over that mountain. Rejoice with me!

I finger a new life, a rose for October.

John Malo

An Augustinian Approach:

Christ in the Psalms

SISTER GABRIEL ZWIENER, O.S.C.

THE BIBLE is an intensely human document. Not only is the Word of God the work of man in composition and style; more important, it is a record of the lives of men, of flesh and blood. One of the greatest paradoxes of the Bible is the fact that it is soaked in humanity. But not only is the Hebrew Bible centered on man; it is also referred to as the pre-Incarnation of the Word Incarnate. The full impact of this statement will be developed through the course of this article (mainly on images of *Jesus*) and a subsequent treatment to appear in November (concentrating on images of *the Church*).

For many the Bible is a closed book, for the depths of God's message are clothed in imagery familiar only to the Semitic mind. The Semite mentality is much different from that of 20th-century occidental man. The Semite does not try to express what is in his mind, a good deal of the time, but instead tries to evoke it. He transmits by suggestion. His aim is not to compel but to give feeling to life and reality. He refuses to analyze or abstract. He throws "cold water" on the conclusions of logic and forces the mind to penetrate the intuitive. His thought proceeds in concentric circles. Every repetition adds another stroke to the picture. What is said in the very beginning is constantly enriched. The progression of thought is ever more compelling.[1]

St. Augustine was so steeped in Scripture that he expressed himself in the fashion of a Semite. His commentaries on the psalms very quickly give one the basic tenets of the Christian faith, but as one continues to read, masterful strokes of insight are added to give the reader ever enriching insights into the truth hidden in God's word. Augustine clarifies through imagery his vision of God, of Christ, and of the Church. The fullness of revelation is too vast to be taken in at a glance. At every turn Augustine leads his hearers to the sublime truths of Christianity.

The Bishop of Hippo had a real intuition of the truth contained in Scripture, as well as a passion for Truth itself. The great truth, the over-all message of Augustine's *Expositions on the Psalms*, is that the Psalter is the prayer of the Mystical Christ, Head and Body. Sometimes we hear the outpourings of the Head, at other times those of the Body, and sometimes within the Psalms we find a dialogue between the two. To grasp this fundamental principle is to grasp the key to the Psalms.

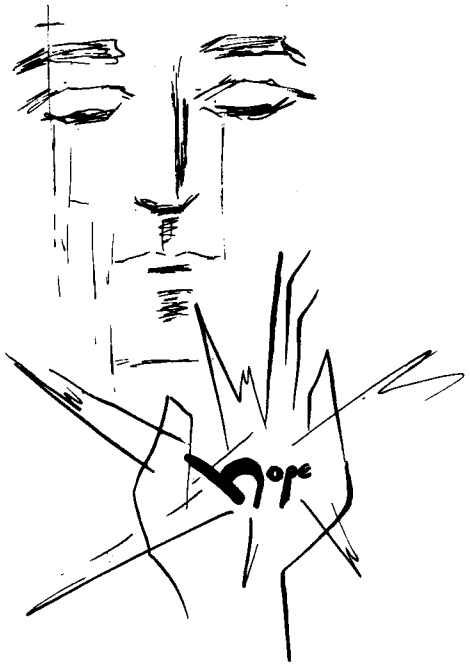
The temporal meaning of the Psalms is insignificant. Every reference is to salvation and is thus a disclosure of the Christ. If we wish to catch the living Spirit that animates the Psalms, let us learn from Augustine that a greater than David, a "greater than Solomon is here." One must call Augustine's *Expositions on the Psalms* a commentary on the New Testament as well, so closely has he interwoven the two. Augustine hangs gospel associations on every stem and twig that come from the Root of Jesse.[2]

We must keep in mind that St. Augustine based his commentary on the old African Psalter, which was a very poor and inaccurate translation of the Psalms. Another organizational point is that the expositions fall into four classes: brief exegetical notes, more detailed commentaries, dictations in sermon form, and sermons proper. The commentaries were composed at different times and places, and later compiled.. The sermons bear the stamp of free improvisation and are thought to allude to Psalms and scriptural readings used in the divine service. Freedom, forcefulness, and penetrating simplicity characterize these sermons. Augustine's concern for those confided to his care reveals his humanness and down-to-earth manner of speaking. He seems almost to be in agony trying to give spiritual birth to his listeners. "Sing like reasonable beings and not like birds," he tells them. "To sing with intelligence is a God-given endowment of human nature . . . to know jubilation, grasp the message . . . therefore, dearly beloved, we ought to study and examine with calm of

[1]Dom Celestine Charlier, "The Human Element," *The Christian Approach to the Bible* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1973), pp. 129-59.

Sister Gabriel Zwiener, O.S.C., is a contemplative nun at the Monastery of St. Clare in Omaha, Nebraska.

[2]Philip Schaff, ed., *St. Augustine: Expositions on the book of Psalms*, from the series *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), p. vi.



heart what we have been singing with unison of voice."[3] Elswhere he mourns that the Psalms sometimes fall upon deaf ears. He cries out: "Are they made of stone that they cannot hear? What could be said more clearly even to the deaf?"[4]

Augustine's forthright approach with his congregations sometimes sparkles with wit and sometimes strikes notes of pathos in our hearts as we read; in his commentary on Psalm 21, e.g., we read: "You were chatting with your neighbor while it was being read. Wake up and listen . . . ." And about heretics: "I am so agitated, so shocked, that I marvel at this astonishing deafness and hardness of their hearts."

In a discourse on Psalm 36 Augustine apologizes for the length of the sermon and for tiring his congregation, but justifies so doing lest the message be left incomplete. He tells them, "I owe you another sermon tomorrow again; pray for me that I may be able to provide it, and come with burning thirst and fervent hearts."[5] Scholars note that Augustine passed over easy passages and spoke on the more obscure ones. At times he invited his listeners to assist him in interpreting by thought and prayer. These difficult passages have yet to find a better interpretation than Augustine gave them so many centuries ago.

St. Augustine's defense of the Church in his sermons is not a defense of the institution, but of the very heart of Church dogma concerning God and his Christ.[6] For Augustine theology centered on the Incarnation and the Mystical Body. Neither he nor other Fathers of the Church recognize a human being in isolation. For Augustine the Psalms were a revelation of Christ—of the whole Christ. He wrote: "If the mystical Christ has really been living since the beginning of the human race, then the Old Testament and the Psalms in particular can be nothing else but the first phase of his Revelation, still veiled under carnal types which point forward to the future."[7]

Augustine leads his audience to the deepest insights of allegorical interpretation of Scripture. His allegorical methods serve as an indispensable balancing factor in modern historical and literal exegesis. Pope Pius XII pointed out in *Divino Afflante Spiritu* that the Fathers of the Church, though they did not have present-day methods of studying Scripture, still excelled in perception of the divine mysteries with marvelous understanding.[8] The Pope pointed out that the Fathers penetrated the depths of God's Word to explain Christ's teachings and the sanctity of life, both of which are major reasons for us to study their writings today.

Augustine, himself deeply steeped in the Scriptures, encouraged the faithful to do the same in a simple yet moving exhortation:

> When life moves serenely it is time for a man to harvest God's word and store it away in his inmost heart, just as the ant buries in the furthest recesses the produce of her summer toil. There is clearly time to do this throughout the summer, but when winter draws near: tribulation, in other words, supervenes, and unless he can find something within himself to live on, the man must die of hunger.[9]

The Christian who prays the Psalms must not only make the

[3]Dame Scholastica Hebgin and Dame Felicitas Corrigan, trans., *St. Augustine on the Psalms*, vol. 1, from the series *Ancient Christian Writers*, vol. 29 (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1960), p. 182.

[4]Ibid., p. 209.

[5]Hebgin and Corrigan, vol. 2 (series vol. 30), p. 248.

[6]Ibid., vol. 1, p. 9.

[7]Ibid., vol. 1, p. 11.

[8]Ibid., vol. 1, p. 12.

[9]Ibid., vol. 2, p. 278.

prayer his own but also realize that Christ is praying through him. On this point Augustine had this to say:

> Thus each statement is true, both that the words are ours, and that they are not ours, that they are and are not the words of God's Spirit. They are the words of God's Spirit because they fall from our lips solely by his inspiration. They are not his in that he feels neither misery nor fatigue, whereas these are cries of sorrow and toil. Again they are ours because they reveal our misery, and yet not ours, since it is through his grace that we are able to lament.[10]

Augustine penetrates, as few after him have been able to do, the riches of imagery found in Scripture. He reaches to mystic heights, and yet he knew only too well the limits of finite man and humbly tells him in a discourse on Psalm 17: "Let no one imagine that a deep understanding of the Scriptures will put him in possession here and now of that light which will be ours when faith passes into vision."

IN PSALM 1, Augustine ponders the meaning of the images in the verse "And he shall be like a tree which is planted near the running waters." The faithful are the tree planted near the life-giving water, that is Wisdom in Person. Another possible interpretation Augustine sees is that the running stream represents fallen man running to his ruin and Christ is the tree absorbing the water into his very self. While this particular image is not repeated, every other image explaining Christ carries the same beautiful message. Here is a forerunner of all to follow.

A favorite theme recurring again and again is the image of Christ as the divine Physician.[11] Christ is the one who comes to heal sick and sinful man, for sin is a disease. Christ is a majestic Physician who does not hesitate to purge and cause suffering but only in order to heal. The sinner's hope is in this compassionate Physician who does not hesitate to bear insult or even blasphemy if necessary to help his flock. it is not the strong and innocent man who needs the divine Physician but the sinner. In one of his sermons, Augustine gives us this beautiful passage:

> Who shall boast that he is clear of sin? He had sins then, but in his perversity he forgot where he was standing; he was so to speak, in the doctor's consulting room for treatment—and he exhibited his sound members but hid his wound! Let God, not yourself, cover your sores. For if you insist on hiding them for shame, the physician will not cure them. Let the physician cover them and cure them; for he will cover them with a dressing. Under the physician's covering the wound heals; under the patient's covering it is merely hidden. From whom are you hiding it? From one who knows all things.[12]

Similarly, in another place Augustine advises, "If you want to flee from God, run to Christ." The Bishop of Hippo brings home in so many instances the place of suffering in the life of a Christian. In reality, suffering is not an evil but causes the anguish that leads one to the divine Physician. Commenting on "O my God I shall cry to thee by day and thou wilt not hear: and by night and it shall not be reputed as folly in me," he wrote, "He [Christ] was speaking of me, of you, of the other man; for he was bearing with him his Body the Church; . . . When Paul cried for relief God answered, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' " St. Augustine explains: "So he went unheard, not to manifest his folly but to increase his wisdom, that man may understand that God is a physician, and trouble a saving remedy, not a doom and a penalty."[13]

In many places Christ is identified with his attributes. Augustine preached on one occasion: "Christ himself we find to be both mercy and truth; mercy in suffering with us, and truth in requiting us."[14] The Saint had a horror of error, or illusion as the Psalmist calls it. Augustine pleads with his listeners not to seek Christ among heretics but to seek him in truth. Psalm 37 contains this verse: "For my soul is filled with illusions and there is no health in my flesh." Commenting, Augustine says:

> The Psalmist, then, has been punished with illusions; he has lost sight of the truth. Just as illusion is the soul's punishment, so is truth its reward. But while we were plunged in a world of unrealities, Truth came to us, and finding us wrapped up in empty illusions, took upon himself our flesh, or rather took it from us, that is to say, from the human race. He appeared to our eyes of flesh to heal through faith those to whom he intended to set forth the truth, so that our eye once restored to health might see his resplendent truth. For he himself is that truth which he promised us when he was seen in the flesh, in order to initiate us into the faith whose reward is truth. It was not his essence, but only his flesh, that Christ manifested on earth.[15]

[10]Ibid., vol. 1, p. 261.

[11]In the first sixty Psalms, references to the divine Physician are found in the commentaries on Psalms 9, 30, 31, 34, 36, 37, 40, 48, 50, 51, 54, and 59.

[12]Hebgin and Corrigan, vol. 2, p. 80.

[13]Ibid., vol. 1, p. 211.

[14]Schaff, p. 227.

[15]Hebgin and Corrigan, vol. 2, p. 341.

The majesty and greatness of Christ, man united with the second Person of the Trinity, is shown forth in this passage:

> For God hath not limbs like ours to delineate his stature, since he is wholly everywhere and contained in no place. Thus what he made by his Word, he made by his Wisdom, and what he made by his hand he made by his power. But Christ is the power of God and the Wisdom; all things were made by him, and without him nothing was made. The heavens have shown forth, do show forth and will show forth the glory of God.[16]

The humanness of Christ is focused on in many places. The passage, "Thou hast granted him his soul's desire" is interpreted to be Jesus desiring to eat the Passover and to lay down his life. In another passage of direct prayer to God, Augustine points out that Christ in his human nature had every right to pray. As man, Christ was weak; and as weak, he prayed. If we think of Christ only as God, it is no wonder we are puzzled over God praying. Christ's great prayer is that of a mediator.[17] Speaking of the humanness of Christ, Augustine offers this imagery:

> What did Christ hunger and thirst for but our good works? And because he had found no good works among the persecutors who crucified him, he was hungry, since they repaid his soul with barrenness. How rigorous must have been his fast when he found barely one thief to refresh him upon the cross![18]

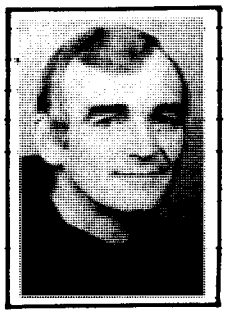
Augustine sees with a faith perspective rather than viewing all with his natural eyes. He tells his congregation that it was those physically near to Christ that crucified him, while those who stood afar off were closest to him.

The images of Christ in the Psalms are far too numerous to comment on at length here, but an overview is helpful. Christ is the just man slandered in the Psalms. He is our helper when we strive after him, our protector in the face of the foe. Christ is the angel of counsel encamping around those who fear the Lord. He is the judge, all the more for having himself submitted to judgment with great humility. Christ is the Second Adam bringing the life-giving Spirit, the fountain of life itself, the hope of the abandoned, image of the Father, crown in which the Apostles are set as precious stones. Christ is seen to be our keeper, or the Good Samaritan as seen in New Testament imagery. A Samaritan is interpreted to mean a watchman. Christ is the Samaritan who takes pity on the human race. He is the leader, the provider of nourishment, the exemplar in handling temptation. David is seen to be a prototype of Christ. When David flees from the face of his son Absalom, it is Christ who flees. Christ is our rock, the foundation stone upon whom our building of faith is raised. Augustine pleads, "Never let this foundation vanish from your hearts." The humanity of Christ conceals the majesty of God and is imaged by the cloud concealing the divine presence. Christ is our light: "... apart from him, then, we are simply darkness and weakness.... In him we possess a hope that is sure, fixed, and true."[19]

[16]Ibid., vol. 1, P. 185.
[17]Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 292-93.
[18]Ibid., vol. 2, p. 212.
[19]Ibid., vol. 1, p. 263.

Prayer for a Dead Friar:

In Memoriam: Noel A. Fitzpatrick, O.F.M.



I kiss a flower in your honor
A Rose
The color of your heart

And with its bright petals
I crown my torn heart

With your ineffable memory

You shall live in my heart
that vessel of SPIRIT
Earthenware of ETERNITY

With it I bless you
And carry your name
For all posterity.

Live!
Holy Futurity!
Resurrection from Death!

Where is heaven to be found?
When will my restless heart
come to rest?

Will it ever?
for ever?

The loneliness of Golgotha
The blood of Gethsemane
Curse the path of my
restlessness

strident fears
of no infinity

Tell me!
Where is consolation
in such pure desolation?
What is the heart to do?

The touch of Death
Erodes my young heart
Eating my flesh away.

So, I come to YOU
My Most Holy Mystery
Intimate Center of my life
POWER OVER ALL
YOU who give breath
To my life
Tell me . . . Fill me
With your heavenly life

Come to my aid!

Where is heaven to be found?

Teach the meaning
Of this pain

Puddles of tears
Stain my pillow
At night
As I think of YOU
And you,
and you . . .

O Nameless One
Gentle Kindness
Origin of Compassion

You who took his dear life
With one Swiftburning Kiss
From YOUR dark eternity

Place them in the hands
Of his heavenly life

Give him NEW LIFE!
This dearest friend
Flood him
With YOUR harmony

Then return him to us
In our own frail red cups
Washing our sorrows away

EXALT HIM IN YOUR GLORY!
A BRIGHT RED STAR!
IN YOUR HAPPY ETERNITY!

O Purest Passion!
YOU charged Noel!

Moving Green Mountain
Tree of Life
Root of Noel

Time and Eternity
beatific concurrence!
of the best moments
of our visionary lives

History of our bones
Mystery of our hearts

YOU filled up his RED CUP
Too quickly!
Fill us now
With his burning Truth
Drink our cups away

May HE live on in us
His laughter—pure and wild
His mercy—full of gut
His love—YOUR gentle touch

Remember not his failures, LORD,
But remember this his faith.

CHRIST . . . lived
In his heart
HE lives in ALL
Human Hearts

To light up the night
And to have us bite
Of HIS life in ETERNITY

So let us raise up!
Our soft red cups
Shaking mortality
And drink from HIS CUP
The burning blood
Sweet wine of Gethsemane

Given
Shared
Broken

I tell you, most solemnly, unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life (John 12:24-25).

In his resurrection!
From death!
Forever and ever . . .

ALLELUIA

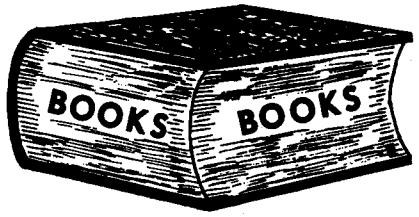
I kiss a flower in your honor
A Rose
The color of your heart

And with its bright petals
I crown my torn heart
With your eternal memory
May we meet in eternity
Come, ... , Come

bless and touch
put to still
rest our hearts

IN YOU

Roberto O. Gonzalez, O.F.M.



Inner Healing: Ministering to the Human Spirit through the Power of Prayer. By Michael Scanlan. Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1974. Pp. vi-85. Paper, $2.25.

Reviewed by Father Thomas J. Burns, O.F.M., Assistant Chaplain at Siena College, Loudonville, New York.

The Pentecostal movement in the United States, though barely a decade old, has spawned a number of liturgical practices arising from the charismatic fervor of the local prayer communities. Although the phenomenon of *glossalalia* (speaking in tongues) has attracted the most outside attention, the most fruitful contribution of this movement in terms of universal Church renewal may very well be the ministry of healing, a process described and explained by Father Michael Scanlan in his book, *Inner Healing.*

The title itself sets the parameters of what a believer may and may not expect from this experience of Pentecostal ministry. Healing involves a restoration to health or equilibrium, the correction of a physical or emotional disorder. Scanlon does not close the door to the possibility of a community's possessing such power in prayer and ministry that it can liturgically restore a sick person to full physical health, but he prefers to stress the process of emotional healing. By this he means that in a time span of prayer meetings and intense communal support, a person may eventually come to a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as an immanent personal Lord and Savior. Once having made this decision, the subject is fred from the excessive burdens of guilt, selfishness, loneliness and pain. In the case of physical disease, he is in a better frame of mind to cope with the infirmity.

It is clear that Scanlan is aware of both the abuses of this power that exist within the Pentecostal movement and the theological criticisms leveled at this understanding of the power of prayer. For he warns that

the ministers themselves (i.e., the praying/supporting community) must be healed from all possible self-seeking and regard themselves as trusted servants of the Lord, fulfilling *his* mission. Moreover, he anchors this ministry to New Testament sources in a way that does not seem overly fundamentalist, avoiding a perennial pitfall of this movement.

The ultimate judgment upon this work will rest in part upon one's judgment of the Pentecostalist movement itself. The above mentioned danger of fundamentalism is not dispelled by *Inner Healing*. Scanlan's theological perspective is not shared by the majority of the grassroots believers, who still attempt healings, prophesying, and tongues as if they can effect the Holy Spirit's presence at will. The jargon of healing, being in some respects "other-worldly," implies a short-cutting of the professional, time-tested, and disciplined processes of scientific medicine and therapy. Whether one believes in supernatural intervention or not, it is highly questionable whether the occasional miracle should be permitted to vindicate the existence of a ritual which may not be able to effect for believers what it sets out to do. It is the pastoral experience of this reviewer that thousands of people come to the Pentecostalist communities in a state of loneliness, despair, or boredom, in need of a long-range sense of belonging, support, and hope. To discuss healing as a liturgical drama, without a developed notion of community support, smacks of some of the more regrettable pastoral attitudes towards sacramants, which conceives them as isolated acts of divine intervention without corresponding community responsibilities. It would be very interesting to see Scanlan's assessment of healing in ten years, to judge whether the mainstream of Pentecostal communities have the emotional stamina to provide a long-range therapeutic atmosphere for its believers.

Together in Peace. By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1975. **Penitent's Edition:** Pp. 102; paper, $1.35. **Priest's Edition:** Pp. 270; paper, $3.95.

Reviewed by Father Vincent B. Grogan, O.F.M., J.C.D. (Catholic University of America), a member of the faculty at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, New York.

These are two separate booklets, one for the use of the penitent, the other for the confessor, based on the revised Rite of Penance.

In the penitent's edition, the author describes the sacrament of Penance briefly as a meeting, in faith, with the Lord who forgives. Peace is seen as the gift accompanying this forgiveness and reconciliation. Five elements or steps are then indicated as preparatory to and accompanying this fruitful encounter with the merciful Christ.

The first stage is a calling on God for enlightenment; here the author offers as aids to personal prayer three appropriate psalms. The second phase, entitled "God's Good Words about Forgiveness," contains scriptural passages, from both Testaments, on the forgiveness of sin. The third element is the examination of conscience. Father Champlin stresses the value of confessing lesser sins or faults, balancing this with an exhortation to avoid an excessive amount of time on self-examination. He then lists the major areas of man's life and conduct in which sin may be found. This technique of the author should be most helpful, because with each area, an appropriate scriptural passage is also given, along with a brief application by Father Champlin. This represents an improvement over the previous examinations of conscience which simply asked direct questions of the penitent, without any scriptural or theological background. This third segment concludes with the examination of conscience found in the revised Rite of Penance, divided according to man's three-fold relationship: to God, to neighbor, and to himself.

The fourth element is the actual confession of sin. The chief aspects of sin—what, why, how can I improve? —are highlighted, as is the importance of the penitent's sorrow and change of heart, rather than adherence to any one set formula of contrition. Properly, the author advises the penitent of his liberty to choose the manner of confessing with which he feels most comfortable: anonymously or face-to-face. At this point, the author includes the rite of confessing as revised in 1974, with its dialogic components between confessor and penitent.

The penitent's guide concludes with the fifth stage: the penance to be performed. A brief rationale behind confessional penance is offered, and some scriptural readings are again given as possible penances which a confessor might impose.

The priest's edition includes the entire contents of the penitent's guide, as well as the complete text of the revised Rite of Penance. The initial section outlines briefly the manner in which the confessor will administer the sacrament in the new rite, with both priest and penitent utilizing this ritual aid.

Then the author proceeds to discuss at some length three factors most significant in the administration of Penance. First, there is the question of the physical setting for the sacrament. As with the celebration of all other rites, the environment in which this sacrament is administered can go a long way either to reveal or to obfuscate the meaning of penance/reconciliation. Here, Father Champlin treats the so-called confession room as a viable alternative to the confessional box. He offers options drawn from his own personal experience, illustrated by photographs: a room converted into an attractive setting for confession with three choices for the penitent —kneeling behind a large screen, sitting behind the screen, or a face-to-face confession across a table on which a crucifix stands.

The question of providing suitable penances is treated next. Since the new rite places emphasis on the conversion or renewal of the penitent (in addition to the traditional notion of reparation), penances should be, in a sense, highly personalized; i.e., adapted to the penitent's failings and his spiritual condition. Whatever

form the penance assumes, it should be, according to the author, clear, concrete, and of short term duration. This segment ends with suggested penances for particular sins (e.g., for uncharitable speech about a person: speaking positively to him or praying for him). Such penances seek to go to the root of the fault to counteract it by the practice of its opposite virtue, a traditional element of Christian spirituality.

Father Champlin then directs his attention to the pivotal issue of an effective confessor, drawing a comparison with the key role of the celebrant and his effect on the overall celebration of any liturgical rite. Some twenty characteristics of a good confessor are delineated, all of them centering on the unique role of the priest as one to whom other men reveal their innermost selves. Under the title "A Man of Faith," the author stresses a point that perhaps needs to be made today: faith in Christ's presence in and through the sacrament of Penance should prompt priests themselves frequently to receive this sacrament as well as administer it. Champlin quotes Karl Rahner to the effect that monthly reception of Penance could constitute the suitable norm for a person seriously interested in following Christ. That a confessor should be prayerful is another principle reiterated by Father Cahmplin, suggesting that a priest spend some moments in prayer to the Lord before hearing confessions.

In these two booklets, Father Champlin has once again provided effective and helpful guides to the celebration of the Liturgy, for which American Catholics should be grateful. If intelligently used (and not allowed to become too stylized or mechanical), these should prevent the sacrament of Penance from further deterioration as a "Saturday night quickie" sacramental encounter, and should provide a deeper understanding of this sacrament, rendering it a genuine celebration of God's mercy and forgiveness. Hopefully, copies of the penitent's guide will be made available in parish churches in much the same way as missalettes or other Mass participation aids are provided. Both booklets are adaptable for use at communal celebrations of penance and at penance services without sacramental absolution.

One might, however, have preferred that the penitent's booklet contain a lengthier treatment of the contemporary theological meaning of of the sacrament (e.g., its relationship to Baptism, its significance in the continuous conversion to God, the ecclesial dimension of sin and forgiveness); perhaps, this could have been adequately supplied by inserting the introduction to the new Rite of Penance.

In brief, these recent publications should assist both confessor and penitent in fulfilling the wish of the Second Vatican Council, expressed in its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, that the sacrament of Penance be revised so as to give clearer expression to the nature and effect of the sacrament, which Father Champlin in the titles to his booklets so aptly refers to as the sacrament of peace.

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