

FRANCISCAN GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND IN NEW SPIRITUAL DIRECTION PROGRAM

CALENDAR

Registration	Monday, June 26
Classes Begin	Tuesday, June 27
Modern Language Exam	Friday, July 14
Final Exams	Saturday, August 5

ACADEMIC YEAR OFFERINGS

THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES M.A. Program may be pursued during the Summer, Autumn, and Spring Semesters. The required number of course credits can be obtained in two Summer sessions and the intervening academic year, or in six Summer sessions.

COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1978**FI 500 Bibliography**

1 cr. hr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: MW 10:20-11:25, Library Seminar Room. This course is required of all new degree candidates. It must be taken in the first summer session attended.

FI 501 Sources for Franciscan Studies I

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 303
This course is a prerequisite for 503 and 504

FI 503 Early Franciscan Texts

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 308
Prerequisite: 501

FI 504 Life of St. Francis

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 9:10-10:15, Room 302
Prerequisite: 501

FI 506 Survey of Franciscan History

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D.Phil.Oxon.: 10:20-11:25, Room 303

FI 508 History of Franciscan Thought

3 cr. hrs., Fr. George Marcell, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 302
Required for students in tracks one and two.

FI 511 Medieval Latin: Franciscan Texts

2 cr. hrs., Dr. Malcolm Wallace, Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 308

FI 522 Franciscan Values

2 cr. hrs., Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., S.T.L.: 8:00-9:05, Room 302

FI 541 Psychodynamics and the Franciscan Tradition

2 cr. hrs., Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D.Min.: MWF 7:00-9:00 P.M., Room 302

FI 550 History of Franciscan Spirituality

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M., M.A.: 11:30-12:35, Room 302
Required for students in track three.

FI 553 Contemporary Franciscan Documents

2 cr. hrs., Fr. Joachim Giermek, O.F.M. Conv., S.T.L., M.A.: 11:30-12:35, Room 308

FI 563 Introductory Techniques of Spiritual Direction

2 cr. hrs., Fr. Peter Damian Wilcox, O.F.M. Cap., S.T.L., S.T.D. Cand.: 8:00-9:05, Room 308

FI 599 Independent Research

1-2 cr. hr., for advanced students by special arrangement.

FI 699 Master's Thesis

6 cr. hrs., for advanced students by special arrangement.

Students planning to pursue the program through the year should begin their studies in Summer session.

Pre-registration forms are available from the Office of Graduate Studies, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, New York 14778.

the CORD

May, 1978

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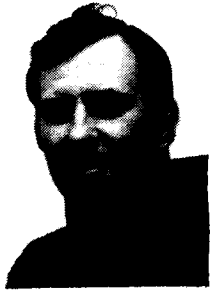
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THE CORD is a review devoted to Franciscan spirituality and published monthly with the July and August issues combined, by The Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. Subscription rates: \$5.00 a year; 50 cents a copy. Second class postage paid at St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778, and at additional mailing offices. U.S.P.S. publication number 563640. Please address all subscriptions and business correspondence to our Business Manager Father Bernard R. Creighton, O.F.M., at the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. Manuscripts, Books for Review, and Editorial Correspondence should be sent to the Editors, Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., or Associate Editor, Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., at our Editorial Office, Siena College Priory, Loudonville, N.Y. 12211.



Tokenism

IT IS A PARADOX that the word *token* can stand for two very different kinds of things: a very meaningful symbol of one's affection, loyalty, and commitment, on the one hand; and empty going through the motions, on the other. To the former class belong the small gifts that we who are pledged to poverty can give to those important in our lives, whether it is a card, a banner, or an object that we have made with our hands, or a small box of candy for a hostess. To the latter class, unfortunately, belong poorly attended community exercises, whether these be prayers at non-prime times, or meetings where everyone watches the clock and only the professional talkers speak up. It is to the latter kind of tokenism that I wish to address myself this month.

In January we called attention to the dis-ease in religion we styled *nomophobia*, fear of laws. Tokenism, the fulfillment of the letter of the law without entering into its spirit, is perhaps another strain of this dis-ease. Many of the religious who were not "liberated" right out of religion by the wave of permissiveness that swept many of our friaries and convents, did get used to a lot fewer formal demands being put on them by the community. They now seem to resent claims on their time, and person-claims which the newer perspectives on community have rediscovered must be made. Grudging participation in community affairs and cynicism about those in authority are symptoms of this tokenism. Many religious, moreover, have through dint of both apostolate and greater freedom built themselves empires (or at least kingdoms or duchies), interest in which so consumes them that their appearance in community on selected occasions hardly comes through as meaningful giving. Superiors, too, sometimes encourage tokenism by selective enforcement of community demands and by not really giving the community an *effective* say in matters which newer constitutions say should be shared decision. Again, some constitutions are themselves at fault, for talking a lot about shared decision making and not specifying the areas where such responsibility can be shared.

What is to be our response to the dis-ease of tokenism? First, note that tokenism, like its opposite, formalism, is a characteristic of the giver, not the gift. With Saint Francis, we must seek healing within ourselves, recall our motivation for being religious—to serve God—and go about our community responsibilities with as much of ourselves as we can muster. And with Saint Francis, we must not be too quick in judging others; what we regard as a "token" may be all that our brother or sister can now give. On a community scale, we need to have honest evaluations of community dis-eases, evaluations in which all participate, both on the diagnostic and on the therapeutic level. Like the common cold, tokenism will probably be with us from time to time; but a genuine sharing of the good will and dedication we bring to and develop in religious life can certainly help to make us basically healthy communities.

J. Julian Davis OFM

Immaculate Conception and the Holy Spirit

H. M. Manteau-Bonamy, O.P.

This book grew out of a life experience. It is a book of witness that presents and explains the role of Mary in God's plan of salvation as it was experienced, contemplated, and acted upon by Blessed Maximilian Kolbe, the internationally known apostle who voluntarily chose death as a victim to save a fellow prisoner at Auschwitz. It will open the way to a practical Marian mysticism leading to tremendous apostolic fruitfulness, and it will bring together persons very diverse in their spiritual attitudes and expectations.

172 pages, paperback

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The Poverello

I look at the frost-filled grass
 so humble in its verdant splendour,
 I look at the towering trees
 so simple in their wonderful strength,
 I look at the sky above
 so pure and clear in its vast expanse,
 the silhouette of the poverello
 comes alive in loving canticle.

This little man in his humility,
 poverty
 and simplicity—
 Francis of Assisi captured
 the beauty
 the goodness
 the meaning
 of all that have come to be;
 Praises of God he burst into song
 the Beauty
 the Goodness
 the Wisdom
 that
 only faith can see
 only poverty can possess
 only love can fathom
 the sole object of the soul
 conquered by divine Love,
 marked by the seal
 of covenant with the Son of Man
 in the solitude of La Verna.

ARTEMIO T. RAYMUNDO, O.F.M. CAP.

The Mystic Francis and his Vision of Creation

SISTER JO THERESE SANFELIPPO, O.S.F.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI is acclaimed as one of the great mystics of the Church. He is identified as the poor man of Assisi, the man of peace and the one who truly followed Jesus. Francis is often identified with the love he held for all of creation. In paintings and sculptures throughout the ages, his image has been portrayed as one who was in harmony with the entire world.

But Francis's vision of creation was greater than what many of us understand it to be. St. Bonaventure tells us this about it:

[Francis] sought occasion to love God in everything. He delighted in all the works of God's hands and from the vision of joy on earth his mind soared aloft to the life-giving source and cause of all. In everything beautiful, he saw Him who is beauty itself, and he followed his Beloved everywhere by his likeness imprinted on crea-

tion; of all creation he made a ladder by which he might mount up and embrace Him who is all desirable. By the power of his extraordinary faith he tasted the goodness which is the source of all in each and every created thing, as in so many rivulets. He seemed to perceive a divine harmony in the interplay of powers and faculties given by God to all his creatures and like the prophet David he exhorted them all to praise God [*Leg. maj.*, IX, 1].

This passage is perhaps the most explicit testimony we have, to Francis's mystical experience of God in all of creation. It also contains an account of the itinerary Francis followed toward his Creator. The vision, moreover, permeated the total person of Francis as he grew in his relationship with the Godhead. The following pages are an attempt to show that creation, through the eyes of Saint Francis, played

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an important role in his journey to the Father, and that his spiritual awareness and growth were in constant relation to the total creation of which he saw himself as a part.

Who is the mystic, and what are some of his characteristics? The mystic is a person inflamed with a love of God; he hears and sees a call different from those of other people. He is open to receive new messages of wonder. The mystic has come to see the love of

God and so refuses all things contrary to that love. He realizes a new vitality that urges him to search for Truth. He retreats from the ordinary daily life in order to let happen the operations of the Holy Spirit, and he sees new power pouring into his person—power that is not of himself. The powers of love and the powers of pain are exploited to their fullest, and there is an unmistakable call from the Godhead to let the old self die and the new emerge. There is a joy that is carried in the heart of the mystic that expressed itself in song and praise. The mystic also uses symbols to share the divine reality with others. He exists, not solely for himself, but rather as a witness to God's presence in all things. His aim is wholeness.

Society has seldom looked kindly on the needs and experiences of the mystic. Consequently the mystic leads an adventurous life—one raised to a

level beyond that of the ordinary and so marked by a higher degree of tension. Life is intense, and perception is keen. The mystic needs to retreat, if only for a short time, in order to allow the greater Reality of the Godhead time to manifest Himself. It is natural to find the mystic leaving the turmoil and constant changes of daily life and entering into communion with the special Treasure he has found. It is necessary for him to go away and be alone with It. This gives the relationship the time and presence it needs to develop; and during this precious period of time the mystic attains a new consciousness of the intimacy, beauty, and love present in his communion with the Spirit.

Francis of Assisi possessed many of these characteristics. We know from the biographies that he burned with a passionate desire for Jesus, his Beloved. St. Bonaventure tells us that he "seemed to be completely absorbed by the fire of divine love like a glowing coal." The moment he heard the love of God being mentioned, "he was aroused so immediately and so deeply moved and inflamed that it seemed as if the deepest chord in his heart had been plucked by the words" (*Leg. maj.*, IX, 1).

This desire for Jesus did not awaken fully developed, as it were, overnight. It was not a

simple or easy experience for the young man who had been the envy of all the youth of Assisi. We know from the writings of Francis's biographers that he loved the Umbrian countryside and often took time to enjoy its beauty. Thomas of Celano describes the youth as one who "squandered and wasted his time . . . in strange doings . . . in songs . . . [and] all kinds of foolishness" (1 Cel. 2). It is quite obvious that the world was no stranger to Francis, nor Francis a stranger to the world.

But then God intervened—and the story changes. Francis suffered an illness that gave him time to ponder things he had never taken time to think about. He stubbornly got up one day with the help of a cane, and "he began to look about at the surrounding landscape with great interest. But the beauty of the fields, the pleasantness of the vineyards, and whatever else was beautiful to look upon, could stir in him no delight" (1 Cel. 3). The young man who once loved the created gifts now could only despise them and think them foolish.

It is this turn of events in the life of Francis that urged him to think about what should be of real importance to him. Through the visions and dreams of glory he meets the Lord and somehow suspects that if he asks for direction from Him, it will be given to

him. He has found a precious treasure and a sacred truth. Now he longs to know what he should do in order to seek his Lord. Where shall he go to meet Him?

The Albigensians were present in Assisi and their teachings widely known. They believed that the world with all its visible signs was evil, ruled by the devil himself. They saw all material objects as detrimental to mankind.

Francis, however, was not greatly influenced by this teaching. He followed the traditional trend of thought regarding wooded areas and mountainsides, believing as did his compatriots that God was to be found in out of the way places. We see in the early Franciscan writings that Francis left the city repeatedly because he was in search of a Reality he knew would be present to him in his own solitude. He went directly to the fields and vineyards to seek the Lord who was calling him. In fact,

Francis left the town one day to meditate out-of-doors and as he was passing by the church of San Damiano which was threatening to collapse with age, he felt urged to go in and pray. There as he knelt in prayer before an image of the Crucified, he felt greatly comforted in spirit and his eyes were full of tears as he gazed at the cross. Then, all of a sudden, he heard a voice coming from the cross and telling him three times, 'Francis, go and repair my house. You see it is all falling down.' Francis was

alone in the church and he was terrified at the sound of the voice, but the power of its message penetrated his heart and he went into ecstasy [*Leg. maj.*, II, 11].

It is important to look at the prayer that Francis is said to have uttered before the image of the Crucified Lord. Francis knows this is a time of darkness of mind for himself. He knows, too, that he has been touched by the fire of God's love. He is confident that Love promises to reveal Himself. He longs to know what to do. The mystical experience that sends Francis into ecstasy happens out of town in an old abandoned church. The prayer is one of a pilgrim beginning the spiritual journey. There is a call to enter the caves of the heart and see what is hidden there. The Lord calls Francis to walk into the tomb toward the Light of Truth who is Jesus Himself. The holes within the earth and the crevices begin to take on a different meaning for Francis as he begins to see them as reminders of the action of Love that redeemed him centuries ago. In his prayer for guidance, a prayer uttered many times during his lifetime, Francis begs for the right kind of faith, for firm hope in the Lord, and for perfect charity. He asks for the ability to know the things of God and the courage to live in accordance with His will. He asks for the grace to see the spirit of the Lord moving in his

life. Francis finds himself invited to enter into the Paschal Mystery which makes him one with the Father and fills his heart with joy and his eyes with new vision.

The realization that God lived in his created world and that all things were a mirror of the Love of the Beloved moved Francis to seek the Lord in remote places. "Francis learned in his prayer that the presence of the Holy Spirit for which he longed was granted more intimately, when he was far from the rush of worldly affairs. Therefore, he used to seek out lonely places in the wilderness and go into abandoned churches to pray at night" (*Leg. maj.*, X, 3). It was obvious to Francis that if he were to meet the Godhead, he would have to do it away from the daily routine of his life and in moments of quiet prayer. Because of this,

he would frequent hidden places as more suitable to prayer and he often would withdraw from public to solitary places where he was often admonished by a visitation of the Holy Spirit. For he was carried away and enticed by that perfect sweetness which poured over him with such abundance from the very beginning that it never departed from him as long as he lived [2 *Cel.*, 5, 9].

But the mystic doesn't exist for his own sake. Rather, he acts as an intermediary between God and the world. Francis experienced the purification of his

own will and inmost soul so as to be made into the instrument of harmony and peace that God wanted him to be. Part of the experience in the caves and grottoes was that Francis, son of Pietro Bernadone, was to die and become Francis, son of the Father. Thomas of Celano tells us that Francis "was afire within himself with a divine fire and he was not able to hide outwardly the ardor of his mind...when he came out again to his companion, he was so exhausted with the strain, that one person seemed to have entered [the cave] and another to have come out" (1 *Cel.* 3, 6). The biographies tell us that Francis entered the caves many times and each time he returned a different man stretched open to the operation of the Holy Spirit in his life and with a clearer vision of the unity possible between God and man.

The man who entered the earth searching for Truth came upon Truth and the desire to share his illumined heart and soul with the world grew great. As we examine the sources, we can see that Francis longed to see the unity between the Creator and His creatures. His love for God was so great and his joy so overwhelming that he desired to share what he was learning.

The rule or form of life that Francis wrote for the brothers was a sharing of the vital dimensions of his personal experience



with the Godhead. Recalled very simply in his Testament, his experience was this: "After the Lord gave me some brothers, no one showed me what I ought to do; but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the pattern of the Holy Gospel." This implied that he and his brothers were to listen to the Word of God, live in utter simplicity and declare themselves poor for the love of Christ who became poor for them. The tone of the Testament is one of trust in God's providence—the same trust evinced by the lilies of the field that neither sow nor reap yet enjoy His favor.

Chapter 23 of the First Rule is an exhortation to praise and give thanks to the Father for his abundant gifts, especially for the creation of all things spiritual and material. The core experience of the Godhead was for Francis a bathing in the goodness of God. It seems he could never find

enough words to express his gratitude to one who loved him so much.

The secrets of the holy life that Francis received from the Father were given to the Brotherhood in symbolic fashion. Francis's desire to share his mystical experience moved him to look for avenues of exhortation and explanation. The writer of the *Speculum Perfectionis* tells us that "blessed Francis clearly perceived the goodness of God both within his own soul...and in all created things; so, he therefore had an especial and profound love for God's creatures, and especially for those which he thought of as representing some truth about God or religion" (113).

If we look to the form of life that Francis handed down to his brothers, we can see that he truly valued the Word of God. He exhorted all his brothers to listen carefully to it when it was being spoken or preached upon. In the same manner, he took the opportunity to speak to a noisy bunch of birds who were interfering with his preaching. "My sisters, swallows," he explained to them, "it is now time for me to speak, for you have already spoken enough. Listen to the word of the Lord and be silent and quiet until the word of the Lord is finished." The birds, Celano goes on to relate, "to the astonishment and wonder of the people standing by, immediately

fell silent, and they did not move from that place until the sermon was finished" (I Cel., 5, 9). Francis spoke to the birds; but in a deeper way, he was really speaking to the people. He gave witness to a value he held close to his heart. The Word of God had revealed a sense of direction for his life, and it was to be revered because the words of scripture were "spirit and life" (Testament).

Another secret revealed to the simple man of Assisi was that he would experience true happiness when he embraced a life of simplicity. He turned to the little hooded lark and extracted from its place in creation the following symbolism for his brothers:

'Our Sister Lark wears a capuche like a religious. It is a humble bird that goes freely along the roads in search of a little grain. Even if she finds some in horse-dung, she pecks at them and eats them. As she flies, she praised the Lord, like those good religious who despise earthly things and whose life is in heaven. In addition, her raiment, that is, her plumage, is earth colored. In this way she gives good example to religious who ought not to wear garish and choice garments, but dark colored like the ground.' For all these reasons, blessed Francis dearly loved and freely contemplated our sisters, the larks [*Spec. Perf.*, 113].

In this symbolic language, Francis spoke to the brothers and rein-

forced what he had written in the Rule concerning simplicity. His love for the larks was so deep that he is known to have said, "If I could speak to the emperor, I would beg him, for the love of God, to grant my prayer and to publish an edict forbidding anyone from trapping our sisters the larks or from inflicting any harm on them" (*Spec. perf.*, 110).

Utter simplicity is a definite theme that runs through the writings of Saint Francis. To live the life of the gospel was to live "sine proprio," that is, without having anything that is proper to oneself. The inner poverty that Francis exhorts his followers to live is one that is radical and difficult. He cuts deep into the heart of things and touches upon the challenge that Jesus places before all his disciples: Jesus became poor for us, and we must become poor for him (Phil. 2).

Francis is aware that God is good. In Chapter 17 of the Rule of 1221, he instructs his brothers to refer every good to the Most High Supreme God, acknowledging that all good things belong to Him. Again in his fifth Admonition Francis says, "Yet every creature under heaven serves and acknowledges and obeys its Creator in its own way better than you do." The call to be humble and give all credit to God is evident. Francis sees in creation a willingness to praise the Lord by simply being what it is.

He can hear the symphony of praise that resounds from all of the Artist's handiwork. Consequently, he draws upon these creatures to help him explain the loving concern of the Father for all of mankind.

There are many stories recorded in the biographies by Celano and Saint Bonaventure that illustrate the special love Francis held in his heart for the birds. All the texts seem to point to the message of divine Providence. Francis admired the simplicity of the birds and saw in them a symbol of the soul of man that longs to take flight into the everlasting embrace of the Beloved. Francis found joy in preaching to these small creatures; and as he preached to them he preached to those about him. One of his approaches to reaching the hearts of men was to remind them of the good things the Father had given them. One day he gave this reminder to the brothers by speaking to a flock of birds:

My brothers, birds, you should praise your Creator very much and always love him; he gave you feathers to clothe you, wings so that you can fly, and whatever else was necessary for you. God made you noble among his creatures, and he gave you a home in the purity of the air; though you neither sow nor reap, he nevertheless protects and governs you without any solicitude on your part [I Cel. 58].

Everything that a friar needed was provided by the Father lovingly and freely.

Flowing from the reality of God's providence, Francis also preached about the danger of greed. In telling a story about the red-breasted brothers who had become so tame that that they lived with the friars, Francis pointed out to the community how one greedy little bird was disturbing the peace and tranquillity of the household. Even though he had eaten his fill, the bird continued to drive the rest away from the food and hoard it for himself. Francis says: "He will come to a bad end yet" (2 Cel. 47). With that the bird drinks some water and suffocates to death. It is recorded that there wasn't a cat around who would bother to eat him. His death was of no advantage to anyone, and consequently he has died in vain. The lesson Francis taught was that any form of greed will destroy the brotherhood and be a cause of tension. He thus held up to his brothers the value of living "sine proprio" and depending entirely on God for what is needed to journey towards Him.

Francis continued to grow in the spirit of universal charity which is characteristic of the mystic. He was filled with compassion not only toward men in need, but "even toward dumb animals, reptiles, birds, and other creatures about him both sensible

and insensible" (1 Cel. 97). He continued to see relationships between the creatures around him and the Creator, and he was always making associations with the love of God that had completely filled his heart.

His journey back into creation after a period of despising it marked the beginning of his search for God. In a world that he could no longer relate to, he was as a sheep looking for a shepherd. Francis found his Shepherd in Christ Jesus. His devotion for the Lamb of God upon the cross grew intensely, and as a result "he loved little lambs with a special predilection and more ready affection because in the sacred Scriptures the humility of our Lord Jesus Christ is more frequently likened to that of the lamb and best illustrated by the simile of a lamb" (1 Cel. 77).

Francis's respect for the lamb went beyond lip service and into action. Whenever a lamb was hurt, he paid special care to it. If a lamb being sent to market, he would plead for its life and exchange his cloak for it (1 Cel. 79). The bishop himself was concerned about Francis's overly affectionate mannerisms with the lambs, but Francis explained how he saw the face of his Beloved, the Lamb of God, in each and every lamb and how he was reminded of His innocent death. His words moved the bishop to tears. Francis's move-

ment among the senseless animals was graceful and he would always greet them kindly "as was his custom" (2 Cel. 31). Those who followed along behind him noticed the tenderness he showed towards them and the response of the animals amazed them. They were moved to see that although the animals lacked reason, they "recognized him as a friend of their Creator" (Ibid.).

Francis had become the intermediary between God and creation. His appreciation of creation is beautifully recorded in a number of sources. In the Legend of Perugia, we find that Francis loved Brother Fire because of its beauty and usefulness. In addressing Brother Fire, he speaks of his respect for its noble nature and service to mankind. Francis proclaims that he loves Brother Fire and "will always do so for the love of Him who created you" (*Leg. Perug.*, 48). But his love for the elements did not stop there. Francis had begun to see symbols in all of creation and to use the gifts of the created world as signs of the divine Love. He walked reverently over rocks because of the scriptural reference to Christ the Rock (*Leg. Perug.*, 51). He asked for plots of land to be left free for flowers to be planted. In this way all those who would see the herbs and flowers would be moved to praise God. For every creature proclaims, "God has created me for

your sake, O man!" (Ibid.)

God had indeed made all things for man, and as Francis grew in his relationship to the God who is "perfect good, all good, every good, the true and supreme good and who alone is good" (1 Rule, 23), he firmly believed that "nothing, then, must keep us back, nothing separate us from him, nothing come between us and him" (Ibid.). Francis had come to see the Godhead in a new way. Not only was he to know the Lord and the operation of His Spirit in his life, but he was to become united to this same Love whom he loved so deeply. His soul had become betrothed to his Beloved. Jesus was now his sole Love, and the oneness that he experienced with Him was just as indescribable as was his relationship with the world. Francis now saw creation as a haven for God's presence and an instrument with which and through which God could be praised. Creation was now an intimate entity that bound him to heaven and acted as a constant reminder of his Beloved.

In his intimate moments with God, Francis began to write both for the glory of God and the instruction of men. The most famous of his compositions is the Canticle of the Creatures. It overflows with a love of God as well as of creation. "Written in the Umbrian Dialect it is thought to

be the oldest extant poem in any modern language" (*Omnibus*, p. 128). The English translation of the Canticum does not do it justice. It is meant to be read or heard in the dialect in which it is written. The melodious flow of joy and praise is lost in the harshness of our language. In its Umbrian simplicity it pours out as a love song similar to those that troubadours sang in the medieval period.

The Canticum was written at a time when Francis was in great suffering. He had already had the mystical experience of La Verna where he received the Stigmata. Brother Body had suffered greatly and was no longer at his peak. Francis's eyes were causing him a great deal of pain, and his vision was practically gone. He could hardly tolerate the least bit of sunlight, and the friend he had made in Brother Sun was now the source of discomfort. Although his physical eyes had lost their vision, however, his spiritual vision grew still more keen. He saw images of God and creation as One. He continued to perceive the wonderful deeds of the Lord and became acutely aware of the continuing operation of the Lord's Spirit in the events of his life. In these thoughts and reflections he found joy. It was as a witness to the harmony of praise that he saw happening within all of creation that he put into writing his discoveries about creation. It was for

mankind, especially those who were mistreating and abusing the created world, that he said, "To His praise, for our own comfort, and to edify our neighbors, I want to compose a new Praise of the Lord in His creatures; for we daily make use of them, and cannot live without them, and through them the human race greatly offends their Creator" (*Leg. Perug.*, 43).

At first glance, the Canticum seems to be addressed as a hymn of praise to the Father. This, however, is not true. The Canticum is addressed neither to the Creator nor to the creatures. I believe it is addressed to those living in the world. It is a statement of what Francis perceives as reality. It is his commentary on what he sees as the possibility of harmony between Creator and the created. He shares what he sees in process.

Francis begins by speaking to his God as "Altissimu, onnipotente Bon Signore." This is a truth he has come to realize experientially: God is the Almighty, the High One, the Good Lord. It almost expresses a lack of ability to express the vision of God that Francis enjoyed. He had seen the goodness of God, and there were no words able to express the beauty he had found. There follows a recognition of man's unworthiness even to mention the name of the Godhead. Francis has stated who God is

and who man is. This is the key question that every mystic must ask during his spiritual journey.

The poem then breaks out into a litany of sounds beautifully expressed by the flowing melody of "Laudato sie, mi Signore, cum tucte le creature" (Be praised, my Lord, through, by, with all of Your Creation). Creation is the instrument for the making of the song. It is a universal hymn of praise that each creature and element of nature plays a part in. Each who has had a special significance in Francis's sharing of the mystical experience of God is called to the stage. Brother Sun who made each day a holiday for him is exhorted to continue to lighten the day and brighten the path to the Father. Francis has seen in the sun the very image of the Godhead. The evening peace with Sister Moon and Stars is recognized as being precious made by God's loving Hands.

Water, the symbol of baptism, and fire, so strong and mighty, are remembered for their usefulness to all mankind. Mother Earth that cared for the necessities of Francis and his brothers is mentioned with all her natural beauties that reflect the constant care and providence of God.

Then Francis turns his attention towards man, and he sees that man, for all his mystery, is one of the most fascinating of all creatures. He chants that those who forgive for the love of the

Creator (quelli ke perdonano per lo tuo amore) and those who endure sickness and trial with patience will be crowned by the Most High. In his own way he sings an anthem that reconciles not only the world to God but creature to creature (*Leg. Perug.*, 44).

In the midst of this symphony and the sharing of the secrets of the mountain top, Francis turns his eyes to his body and speaks of the joy of Sister Death. Realizing what he has done to his own physical condition, he states the starkness of death (*nullo homo vivente po skappare*); but then, he goes on to speak of a greater reality (*la morte secunda nol farra male*). If the gospel of Jesus has been lived, then mortal death does nothing evil but rather serves the soul by uniting it with God. If the gospel of Jesus has been lived, then one has already entered into the Paschal mystery and has experienced both death and a taste of the resurrection. Francis loved Sister Death, for she was the portal through which he was to enter the banquet hall where his Beloved awaited his homecoming.

The Canticum ends with Francis reiterating his philosophy of life and his multi-faceted vision of the created world: "Laudate et benedicite mi Signore, et reingratiate et serviateli cum grande humilitate." This is the stance Francis has come to take, and this

is the stance he recommends to his brothers. This is the attitude all those journeying to the Father should have. In his experience of God, Francis has come to see that he is called to let God be God. He understands that to serve God humbly and gratefully is to follow in the footprints of Jesus. From the beginning to the end, Francis has sung the hymn of praise which proclaims God as "the Lord Almighty, in Trinity and Unity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator of all" (1 Rule, 21). Francis knew that in all created things there is a path leading men back to their God. The Canticle is perhaps the greatest invitation offered to man to stop and reflect



on the lessons to be learned from simple creation.

Francis learned his lesson well. The height of the mystical experience came, for him, at Mount La Verna where he went often to pray. Celano tells us that one day he went up the mountain with another brother to pray. This event happened after Francis experienced the unification of his flesh with the crucified Christ, and he held in his soul the intimacy of being one with Jesus. During this period of prayer, the brother experienced some temptation and longed for some words written by Francis, but he was afraid to ask for them. Francis, sensitive and in tune with the unspoken word, called to the brother and said, "Bring me some paper and ink, for I want to write down the words of the Lord and His Praises which I have meditated upon in my heart" (2 Cel., 49). With that request, paper and pen were brought to him, and the Praises of God were written.

It is important to consider where Francis was when he wrote those Praises. Mount La Verna, a densely wooded area, overlooks miles of farmland. The mountain has many large and small crevices and jagged rock formations. Francis finds his home here and is filled with thoughts of the crucified Lord. La Verna is holy ground for Francis because it was here that the six-winged seraph appeared and be-

stowed upon him the imprints of the Lord's sufferings. The solitude of La Verna leads the soul easily into prayer, and the discipline of contemplation is further aided by the immensity of beauty. Surrounded by the beautiful, Francis discovers truth. He is moved to exalt God as the only God and praise Him for His glory. He calls God his strength and acknowledges him again as the Holy Father, Creator of heaven and earth. In a Trinitarian mode, he proclaims the Goodness of God and the place God has in his life. He announces that God is for man and longs for man to be for Him. He lists numerous virtues in an attempt to capture the awesomeness of God's Reality. At length, almost in exhaustion from trying to verbalize, Francis concludes: "And you suffice for us" (Praises of God).

Life has taught Francis that God is Provider; He has been generous in the past and will continue to care for all his needs. There is nothing that will take the place of the constant love God has bestowed on Francis. In that framework of poverty of spirit—better stated, *sine proprio*—Francis surrenders all that he has. But he does not forsake Beauty; rather, he says to God, "You are Beauty" (Praises of God). The unity of spirit that Francis shares with Jesus gives him the vision to see and proclaim that everything on the face

of the earth holds within it the reflection of the face of his Beloved. Not only does creation draw Francis closer to his God, but the love of his God draws him into a deeper love of creation.

We have seen that Francis was truly a mystic. His continual search for the Godhead was flowered with deeply intimate moments with God. His whole life was a journey to the Father. He longed to be perfect so as to be pleasing to the One he loved. The Rule of life he followed was the way of Jesus Christ. He listened to the word of God and opened himself to the possibility of the Lord's speaking in a multitude of ways. He never tried to box in the Holy Spirit or control His operation in his life. He learned through periods of purification how to move with the Spirit. His decision to live in utter simplicity called him to see the Godhead as a Father and the earth as a Mother through whom all that he needed would be given. His walking on earth pointed to a deeper reality. Through symbolic use of creation Francis tried to point to God. He knew that God wanted all persons to enter into a loving relationship with Him. Francis's decision to live "*sine proprio*," moreover was as we have seen a decision to let his soul praise God by being just what he was. He often said, "What a man is before God, that he is and no more

(Admonition 20). Francis's process of self-actualization within the framework of the Church and in the Life of the Holy Spirit was one of self-emptying. In this living of inner poverty manifested by externals, Francis could see and understand the dependence he had on the Father and the graciousness and providence of God. He was so filled with love of God that he found it an impossibility to see events without seeing God present in them. So filled with love was he, that he could not enjoy the beauties of the world without singing the praises of the Creator. He found it impossible to look upon the created world with anything but love and respect for the Hands which formed it all. So convinced of his sonship in God and his brotherhood with Jesus was he, that he could not treat anyone or anything as less than Brother or Sister (1 Cel. 80).

Saint Francis of Assisi brought to creation a new dignity. He saw the importance it played in his own discovery of God—how it had provided him with the atmosphere in which he could calm his soul and find God's presence. But he saw himself as endowed with all those creatures not exclusively for his own sake but

also so as to teach all men. Creation held within itself profound symbols with which he could share the secrets of his inexpressible meetings with God. The oneness his soul experienced with God confirmed his call to be a reconciler of the world, an instrument of harmony between two worlds. His vision was one of love streaming from the reality of the Love he had felt and known in the core of his being. His vision was one of poverty, for he knew that what he saw was pure gift. His vision was one of peace, finally, as he longed for all of mankind to join in the universal song of praise.

This was Francis: a man who was in the world but not of the world, a man who speaks today as he did centuries ago:

At all times and seasons, in every country and place, every day and all day, we must have a true and humble faith, and keep him in our hearts, where we must love, honour, adore, serve, praise, and bless, glorify and acclaim, magnify and thank, the most High, Supreme and Eternal God, Three and One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator of all and Savior of those who believe in him, who hope in him, and who love him; without beginning and without

end, he is unchangeable, unfathomable, blessed and worthy of all praise, glorious, exalted, sublime, most high, kind, lovable, delightful and utterly desirable beyond all else and for ever and ever [1 Rule, 23].

Francis's life stands forever as a call to refer to the good Lord all

the goods and every good of the earth. In doing what he could do, Francis stands as a hope-imparting beacon for a divided and wounded world; from him shines forth the hope that harmony and peace can reign, if we will but change our vision and see the face of God in all created things.

Halcyon

I who have known turmoil,
time's crowded space and frenzy,
have entered—ah! so softly—
unexpected days of gold.

Now timeless hours and moments,
sun-dipped and drenched in stars,
ablaze with beauty, trust, and love,
flow unending in their joys.

Gift so freely given! Giver
omnipotent and tender,
loving, charging leaf and flower
with presence, witness, wonder!

O Triune God adorable!
these tranquil days of blessings
are fragrant with Your love:
stretch mind and heart to freedom
and undisturbèd sing "Amen!"

Marigwen Schumacher

Spirituality of Justice—I

JOSEPH NANGLE, O.F.M.

SEVERAL misgivings accompany this attempt to address a very much needed gospel-centered rationale, a "spirituality," to sustain activities by Christians to promote freedom, dignity, and equity in the world. In the first place, an article like this may appear very "trendy" at this time, one which cashes in on a growing concern for justice on the part of church people. I wonder also about approaching the subject in this periodical: Will the readers of a spiritual magazine such as *THE CORD* understand or accept the overriding premise of the article—that justice is as central to Christian faith as the sacraments or the gospel word itself? I fear, too, that what is said here might be taken out of its very necessary context: serious work on behalf of justice in a real commitment to righting the dehumanizing injustices around us.

And yet the need for a "spirituality" which accompanies our work for a better world, a "spirituality" which is influenced by that work, one which sustains us despite the many failures and few

successes encountered, and which supplies hope even as our contacts with sinful injustice cause us to see how involved and recalcitrant are the problems to be solved—all of this impels me to plunge into this attempt. If we work seriously in the area of social justice and our motivation is Christ-centered, then we need a "spirituality" to go along with that activity. Else we run the risk of becoming unreflective crusaders and activists, eventually unable, I think, to withstand in faith the sin we have set out to overcome.

To begin, then, you have noticed the quotation marks around the word "spirituality" in the preceding paragraphs. They are there, not because I have doubts about the reality and need of "spirituality" and a "spirituality of justice," but rather because I have a certain difficulty with the word itself, especially as it relates to justice. For many people "spirituality," the "spiritual life," and other synonyms for this idea cause a mental dichotomy which places real life outside the scope

of one's "higher life." We hear retreat-givers and retreatants, lay people, priests and religious, spiritual writers and readers speak of their "spiritual life" as though it were something apart from, or above, or even in conflict with the rest of their breathing, loving, eating, hurting, celebrating, mourning selves. Such a view of "spirituality" is bad enough in any case; when it affects the outlook of a person engaged in work for justice, it is fatal. For as we shall see justice, like word and sacrament, must permeate "spirituality," which in turn must underlie action for justice, or there will be imbalance.

Let me therefore offer my idea of "spirituality," then a definition of justice, and see how the two must be wedded.

I. "Spirituality" and "Justice"

AS I SUGGESTED above, spirituality can in no way be opposed to the corporal, the material, the here and now, any more than the Holy Spirit can be considered absent from these dimensions of reality. Spirituality is "life in the Holy Spirit," life in the One sent by the Father and the Son to guide and console, to urge and challenge, and to give repose. Spirituality is our life in the Person who is Love, the mutual Love of Creator and Redeemer, Love between the Parent and the Begotten, Love divinely person-

ified. Spirituality—life in this Third Person of the Trinity—cannot be opposed to matter and life and emotions created by God and redeemed by Jesus; quite the contrary, spirituality has to encompass all that is, and all that will be. Spirituality—life in the Spirit Love—is opposed only to *lovelessness*, to whatever stands in the way of love, to whatever proves an obstacle to love.

This very sketchy description of spirituality as I understand it has profound significance when coupled with the idea of justice. Pope Paul said during his visit to South America in 1968 that justice is love's first and most basic expression; it is love's minimum, below which there is no love possible. Love requires in the very first place that we give the person loved his or her due, and that means justice. Hence, to speak of life in the Spirit Love—spirituality—is to speak in the very first place of justice.

The joining of Spirituality and justice brings us quite naturally to what I stated above as the first premise of this article: namely, that justice is as essential to Christian living as sacrament and the gospel word itself. After what has been said about spirituality necessarily wedded to justice, such a premise should not be so startling. No one would argue against love's being central to our faith, as central as the sacraments or the gospel. What we say in this

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premise, then is simply that love's basic component, justice, must be central to Christianity. The 1971 Synod of Bishops put it clearly when in a now famous statement they said:

Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive structure [Justice in the World, Introduction].

One really cannot insist too much on the centrality of justice. Working for a more equitable society and world is not a corollary to the gospel, something which good Christians might do. It is "constitutive," essential, central to Christian living. Without efforts for justice one cannot be said to live a fully gospel-oriented life.

Having thus cleared, we hope, some of the ambiguity surrounding the term "spirituality," and presented the notion of justice as well as its centrality in Christian life, we can turn to some elements of a spirituality of justice.

II. Incarnation

FOR ME, THE starting point for a spirituality of justice is the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity in the man Jesus

Christ. When God becomes human, when the Divine breaks in on history, when the Creator unites with the created, when the Word becomes flesh, then all human beings gain a dignity greater than that which they previously had; then human history takes on a totally new coloring and importance; then the proper stage for divine-human action becomes this life and this world.

The consequences of the Incarnation for human beings and all creation are enormous. The human condition, dignified through God's uniting with it, must be allowed to flourish, to grow, to become. Whatever stands in the way of humanization, therefore, must be combated, must give way, must be overcome, must be conquered; otherwise God has joined himself to a permanently subhuman race, one which is ultimately unworthy of the divine Presence.

Flowing from God's breaking in on human history is a new awareness of that history's terrible importance. We can no longer view our personal, communitarian, or social history as a kind of stage on which individuals work out their eternal destiny, having no importance in and of itself. In the light of God's insertion into time and place and social reality, all time and all places and all social realities in this life's

journey take on tremendous seriousness and consequence.

Modern people accept the importance of the here and now almost without question, and perhaps without an ultimate rationale. Christians should see the here and now as important for the reason that God dignified our history with his active Presence in it through the man Jesus.

To understand better what I am trying to say here, we have only to look at Jesus's actions during his life among us. He took life in all its manifestations with complete seriousness. He reacted totally to the situations in which he found himself: to a problem at a wedding feast, to the "encroachments" of sick and crippled people, to a shamed woman and a despised man, to hunger, to widows and children. And he reacted against a social-religious caste which was laying heavy burdens on ordinary people. This constant and strong opposition to the Pharisees finally brought about his death. Being thus a man of his time and place and viewing human life with utter seriousness, Jesus gave every time and every place an ultimate worth.

To see the Incarnation this way is necessarily to be about justice. One cannot do less if one accepts the dignity which Jesus gives to everything which is human. Any injustice which keeps human beings from realizing their God-



given potential, any structure or person or situation which denies to men and women or whole peoples the opportunity to become more, is anti-Incarnation, anti-Christ. We Christians who have received talents and the opportunities to develop them, of necessity must be about the development of our brothers' and sisters' talents in the brilliant light of the Word made flesh.

III. Reading the Gospel

ANOTHER DIMENSION of this spirituality of justice flows quite naturally from the view of the Incarnation just proposed. I mean that which has been called a "political reading of the gospel." ("Political" here of course refers to the total life of the people, and not petty or party "politics.") In his Encyclical "On the Development of Peoples," Pope VI gave an example of such a "political reading of the gospel" when he mentioned the parable

of the rich man and Lazarus. The Pope used that parable to speak of injustices not against a single "Lazarus" but against all the "Lazaruses" of the world today. "The point at issue," said the Pope, "is the establishment of a human society in which everyone, regardless of race, religion, or nationality, can live a truly human life free from bondage imposed by men and the forces of nature not sufficiently mastered, a society in which freedom is not an empty word, and where Lazarus the poor man can sit at the same table as the rich man" (Populorum Progressio, §47). In this passage the Pope "takes off" from an individualistic understanding of the parable and moves to a political one. When all the Lazaruses of our planet can sit with us affluent people at the same table of opportunities, then we shall be near the Kingdom: truly a "political reading of the gospel."

Jesus identified with the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, homeless, and imprisoned people; and our response to him in them is his final test of our justification (Mt. 25). To read that twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew in a political way would be to see the hungry not only as the occasional impoverished person one meets on a city street, but also as the nearly half-billion co-inhabitants of our world who do not have enough calories to

sustain life, who are starving. It would see the thirsty as those classes of people who dry up from lack of what we call the basic necessities: milk, pure water, fresh air, green grass, etc. Reading Matthew 25 politically would mean seeing the naked as that stratum of human society which cannot cope with a highly competitive world around them and go under. The homeless in this view would be those groups of people in our inner cities and our Third World who must live in shifts of eight hours, sharing one or two rooms with other families. The imprisoned would be the two-thirds of humankind today which is at the mercy of communism or capitalism—denied human rights by the first system, and supporting with their life's blood the wealth of the second.

A political reading of the gospel takes the parable of the talents, turns it around, and stretches it. The call, therefore, as sounded in the Lord's speaking of talents means not so much that I develop my gifts to the full, as that I make sure my brothers and sisters can begin to develop theirs. And the political reading goes further to look at the social realities of our world wherein whole societies lack any way of realizing their potential of developing their talents.

One could go on and on with examples of how Scripture lends

itself to this social, structural, political reading. I wish here, however, to place one warning sign. This way of reading the gospel is not gimmickry, or novelty, or a violence to the inspired word. The political reading of Jesus' message simply calls upon that message to cover newly discovered realities: hunger on a world-wide scale, man's inhumanity to man, oppression of one people by another, the call for a new world economic order, the evils of communism and capitalism, and so on. And in my opinion the gospel has more than measured up to the call: it has a message if we read it correctly for an interdependent world, a global village, for realities which new disciplines like sociology, economics, and psychology have only recently shown to be there.

IV. Penance and Reconciliation

IN A spirituality of justice penance and reconciliation must have a vital place. When one becomes aware of the terrible injustices and inequities among human beings, of the widening gap between the haves and the have nots, of how affluence has come about by impoverishing other peoples, then one cannot present his or her gift at the altar without some effort at reconciliation, without an act of penance.

Some might say at this point that I am laying a "guilt trip" on good people, on folks who have no part in the current sad state of affairs, on persons who share no blame for today's world. But when one segment of humanity, and a minority at that, lives very well while another, the vast majority, live anywhere from poorly to abjectly—and this in the same world at the same historical moment—then that minority cannot but feel a measure of uneasiness, a sense that things are amiss. We may not consider ourselves directly responsible for the oppression of so many in our own country and the majority of peoples overseas, but we are part of this same history and we need to be reconciled with our brothers and sisters, who, in the words of Jesus, have something against us: their abject condition in the face of our prosperity. Before Eucharist or prayer, then, we must make an attempt at reconciliation.

There is an even deeper reason, however, for taking penance and reconciliation out of the merely personal and interpersonal realm, where we ask pardon for our faults against ourselves and one another, and moving our need for pardon into the areas of local, national, and international injustices. Jesus took on himself the sin of the world. In the words of Saint Paul the Lord "became sin." Not that he was himself guilty of any

wrongdoing but he took it on himself in the paradox of the Cross so as to redeem from it, to overcome it, to put an end to it. We do the same as he when we ask pardon of our common Parent for the injustices prevailing in our world. We imitate Jesus very closely when we not only admit our affluent part in the oppression of human beings today, but go further and shoulder all the sin which obtains in our world as he did in Gethsemane and on Calvary. We thereby further a reconciliation, a redemption; we thereby fill up in ourselves what is lacking as yet in Christ's sufferings.

V. Poverty

THIS VIEW of Jesus's redemptive act on Calvary by which we take on ourselves precisely that which must be overcome, gives us an insight into the ultimate reason for Christian poverty. Religious vow to be poor; bishops and clerics are rightly criticized when their lives do not somehow exemplify poverty; lay people live it, almost through necessity at times, as somehow congruous and necessary for a gospel-centered life. And yet all too often poverty finds no rationale in the minds and hearts of Christ's followers. Or the rationale stops short of its ultimate possibility.

We hear poverty-practicing Christians speak of "traveling

light" as their reason for such a style of life; others feel that in a consumer-oriented society the Christian should be a sign that *having more* does not mean necessarily *being more*. Liberation from a cluttered existence, and efficiency in one's life sometimes are cited as reasons for embracing a poorer way of life. Or the freedom better to serve gives some their rationale for poverty.

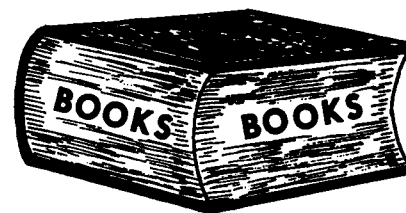
All these reasons are good; all help us in our search for more authentic Christian living. But I suggest that the ultimate, bottom-line rationale for poverty lies in the paradox of the Lord's Incarnation and Redemption. God becomes human to save humans. The Savior dies in order to overcome death. Christ takes on sin so as to conquer sin. How this is, lies at the heart of the mystery we call the Redemption, as we saw in looking at Reconciliation. Logic fails us here, for we deal with a mystery; but its truth is manifest—else the Incarnation and Redemption have no truth at all.

And so with poverty the follower of Christ takes on himself or herself that very reality which must be overcome. We become poor so as to liberate from impoverishment. There is no human logic for this, only the logic of the Cross which is paradox. Freely becoming one

with the outcast, the oppressed, the underdeveloped, the marginalized through a materially poor life has a redeeming effect, as anyone who has ever seriously tried it can testify. In a spiri-

tuality of justice the element of poverty, of an option to be on the side of the poor as Jesus was, becomes very important with tremendous consequences in terms of everyday living.

(to be continued next month)



The Irrational Season. By Madeleine L'Engle. New York: Seabury Press, 1977. Pp. viii-215. Cloth, \$8.95.

Reviewed by Marigwen Schumacher, M.A. (Classical Philology, Radcliffe College). An instructor for several years in the former classics department at the Emma Willard School, Troy, New York, Ms. Schumacher is presently Resource Consultant in Humanities with the Indiana Humanities Project.

The Irrational Season—the season of the heart—plummets us from our cold analytical consideration of human events and divine impersonality into an intense, fathomless inquiry, a surging, searching struggle towards the God of Christianity who is personal and immanent as well as transcendent, and touchingly in love with each particularity of his creation.

The book is a many-faceted jewel

bouncing light-arcs in myriad directions. We read with an effortless compelling that mutely insists upon our continuing until we are caught in the wonder and poignancy of the telling. Madeleine L'Engle writes with superb control of language, of nuance, of verbal intensity, and with the clearest of statements of vision and struggle to be—to become—Christ's person.

Writing in a reflective, conversational tone, Ms. L'Engle weaves anecdotes, incidents from her personal, familial life, her work and prayer experiences—weaves these into her probings of the significance underlying each of the High Feasts of the Christian liturgical cycle. The book is thus—on one level—a series of reflections, pointed and illuminating, stretching from Advent unto Advent. But it is much more than another set of seasonal meditations. Merged into profound musings about ultimate realities are perceptive observations on the dilemmas of our modern world torn by dissension, evil, and pain. Fraught with the antinomies of "sunside" and "nightside," she shares with us her struggles, her "moments of glory," her facing of

events both joyous and pain-filled.

For Madeleine L'Engle is not afraid to admit her continuing struggle: "We are all broken, we human creatures, and to pretend we're not is to inhibit healing" (p. 92). She offers no pietistic, simplistic solutions for coping with personal or worldwide ills—offers none because she has found none but that demanding compelling surrender to the mystery of God: "I seek for God that he may find me because I have learned, empirically, that this is how it works. I seek; he finds" (p. 171).

Busy, active, creative—wife, mother, writer, teacher, and currently librarian at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine—from these multiple roles, she speaks candidly and openly, sharing with us wisdom and insight gained from hard-fought experience:

When we pray with the mind in the heart, sunside and nightside are integrated, we begin to heal, and we come close to the kind of understanding which can accept an unacceptable Christianity . . . (p. 21).

If we have so little control over the world in which we live, can our lives, and the lives of those we love, have any meaning? (p. 103).

But all power is God's and God's power is an expression of his joy, and all earthly ritual is afire with the powerful joy of the Resurrection (p. 148).

One of the special qualities that make this a very special book is the author's gift of moving into song, poem, inspired utterance at depth-points throughout the chapters. One short sample perhaps tells much:

To the impossible: Yes!
Enter and penetrate,
O Spirit, come and bless

This hour. The star is late.
Only the absurdity of love
Can break the bonds of hate.

(The Annunciation, p. 154)

The Mother of God. By Valentine Long, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976. Pp. xvi-288. Cloth, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Dominic J. Unger, O.F.M.Cap., Associate at St. Charles Church, St. Louis. The contributor of numerous monographs on the Primacy of Christ and other theological topics to various periodicals over the years, Father Dominic is continuing his research in Mariology and on St. Irenaeus.

The Franciscan writer of many years, Father Valentine Long, is well known for his pleasant style. He is true to himself in this work on Mary. It is written in an easy flowing, beautiful style, quite in keeping with the beauty of the Virgin Mother of Jesus.

The book has three unequal parts. The first deals with the four great Marian truths that are dogmas of divine and Catholic faith: her Immaculate Conception, her divine motherhood, her total virginity, her glorious Assumption. Maybe the fifth dogma, such at least by the ordinary and universal Magisterium, should also have been treated: Mary's sinless holiness throughout her life.

In the second part, Father Long describes and theologizes on the apparitions of the Virgin. The major apparitions are given separate treatment, some more than one chapter. Some minor apparitions are woven

into various chapters. I said Father Long theologizes in this section. I mean that he brings out the Marian theology proclaimed or involved in the apparitions. As he concludes in the third part: These apparitions honor the faith; that is, they are in harmony with the public revelation as taught by the Church. Also in that third part (which deals with three inevitable conclusions) are these two: the miracles accompanying the apparitions are God's certification of the apparitions and their message; and, thirdly, honoring Mary redounds to God's honor and glory.

This work has been styled devotional. That is true, but I would rather call it popular, to avoid the misconception that it is not based on solid doctrine and scholarship. There are no long footnotes to reflect the scholarship; but everywhere those who have made special studies on Mary will see sound Catholic doctrine shine through. Father Long betrays an overall knowledge of the various areas that enter into Marian studies: Scripture, patristics, liturgy, conciliar and papal teachings. At times, of course, his statements relative to the content of Scripture on Mary will not accord with the conclusions of some modern scholars. Father Long, however, rightly reads those texts as the Church has read them and does read them still.

Some may judge the work a mix-up of doctrine and devotion, of divine public revelation and private revelations. But I think it is true to the real life of God's people; these live by the public revelation on Mary, but they are also influenced by the approved apparitions and their mes-

sage. These apparitions were certainly meant by God for the good of the Church. The faithful will, in their daily lives, bring them to influence their living more carefully according to the public revelation.

I have some criticisms of accidental elements. Too many printing mistakes escaped the eye of the proof readers. Father Long refers to and quotes the Father of the Church and the theologians, but not once does he even mention the great Marian Doctor of the Church, Saint Lawrence of Brindisi, although it would have been appropriate to do so.

The statement that Mary in heaven enjoys a glory greater than what Satan once had (p. 4), needs to be reworded since Satan was never in heaven. The lessons for the feast of the Immaculate Conception ascribed to Saint Jerome (p. 12) are not authentic. Scholars do not hold that Daniel prophesied some five hundred years before Christ (p. 32). The star in Balaam's prophecy referred to the Messiah himself, not to the guiding star of the Magi (p. 34). The Lateran Council of 649 was not ecumenical as seems implied by putting it on a par with the Council of Ephesus and that of Chalcedon (p. 52). The Apostolic Letter in which Pius XII defined the Assumption was not composed by him, but by a group of scholars (cf. p. 66). Irenaeus's main work is not titled *Against Heresies*, but *Against the Heresies* (p. 100).

These blemishes in accidental matters will not hinder Catholics from reading this work with confidence that in it they are getting the teachings of the Church on the Virgin

Mother of God. The book should be a delight.

Give Me Souls: Life of Don Bosco.

By Peter Lappin. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1977. Pp. 366, including bibliography. Cloth, \$9.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard Leo Heppler, formerly a member of the English Departments of St. Joseph's Seminary and St. Francis College (Holy Name Province), and now chaplain to the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in West Paterson, New Jersey.

The life of every saint can be summarized in one word: *love*. The lives of some saints can sometimes be summarized in a one-word aspect of *love*. In this light the Little Flower would be *prayer*. St. Francis would be *joy*. St. Aloysius would be *purity*. And Don Bosco would be *zeal*.

Everything in Don Bosco's priestly life was directed towards helping "his" boys. Day and night he was always thinking how he could assist them. His prayers were for divine aid in his apostolate. His dreams were indications of what he was to do for them. He labored to acquire an Oratory for them. He introduced a successful program of training and education. He struggled against Alpine difficulties to expand his facilities. He founded two congregations to carry on his work. He sent missionaries to Europe and to foreign lands to work with youth. Even when he became a friend of popes and the adviser of political giants, his first concern was the betterment of boys.

Who were these boys? Initially they were the neglected youth of Turin. They were "street people" often lacking the necessities of life. Many were lads who had come to the city to find employment and had failed. Others were unwanted, the throwaways of society. They infected Turin and other cities of Italy just as our own delinquents are the cancer of our cities.

Give Me Souls is the story of one man's effort to save the youth of his day and of the future.

The events in the life of Don Bosco leave the reader open-mouthed. He was born into a family of less than modest means. He had to struggle to obtain the basic elements of an education. Eventually, he was able to enter the seminary, where he studied with a passion. He became a priest, and in a short time he discovered his apostolic work: the salvation of youth. From then on he followed his star wherever it would lead him, be that into obstacles from powerful civil authorities, or clerical criticism, or attempts on his life by assassins.

I think Don Bosco was fortunate in having a clear-cut aim in all his activities. It seems to me that those sincere people who must always wait in the darkness of faith for the Lord to manifest His will in very restricted revelations suffer greater trials than those who are driven by great dreams.

At any rate, zeal for souls is typical of all the saints. It is an outgrowth of love for God. Struggling against overwhelming odds is also common to all the saints. From these twin elements comes a wide variety of saints. From them emerged the kindly, fatherly Don Bosco attracting

the most unlikely boys and leading them to salvation.

Writing hagiography is a demanding task. Each age has its own nuances of spirituality. What was edifying in the thirteenth century may leave the modern reader unresponsive. The author of *Give Me Souls* does not always treat his material most felicitously. It is not that there is any shortage of material; if anything there is too much. And

there are occasional stiff expressions, as though the author were translating literally from the Italian. On occasion the time sequence gets jumbled. And in this age of renewed interest in prayer, reading of Sacred Scripture, desert days, and houses of prayer, we would expect more information on the interior life of Don Bosco. The *zeal* of the author, however, covers minor deficiencies. This is obviously a labor of love.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

My God and My All. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, rev. ed., 1976. Pp. 288. Leatherette, \$2.95.

My God and My All is described as a Franciscan parish prayer book, but it is a prayer book of universal interest, for the style of Franciscan spirituality is one that appeals to far more than those somehow connected to Franciscans. Included in this prayer book are preparations for Confession and Mass (and Thanksgiving), Novena Prayers (nine different ones), Litanies, hymns for Benediction and in honor of the Saints, and some special favorite prayers to our Lady and the Saints. Especially valuable are the prayers for anointing of the sick, the Franciscan Stations, and the Credo of Paul VI. *My God and My All* will prove an aid to devotion for all who use it.

Questions and Answers: A Shorter Catholic Catechism. By Otto Pesch.

Trans. by John Maxwell. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press; London: Burns and Oates, 1977. Pp. 89. Paper, \$2.95.

Questions and Answers is more than a catechism or summary of Church teachings. What the author does in the 21 short essays is to explain in contemporary idiom what the Church is saying in a given area of doctrine or morality and then suggest its plausibility and its basis in Scripture. After treating of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, he goes on to discuss each of the Sacraments and its rationale. He then poses and answers questions like, "Do we have to pray every day?" "Does morality change?" "What is sin?" "What happens after death?" "Are Christians really free?"

Particularly excellent, in the opinion of this reviewer, were the essays on the Mass, baptism, and confirmation.

Definitely written for adults, *Ques-*

tions and Answers is a valuable little work. It does need supplementing by the oral word, however, as the sections on dogma, the priesthood, and the anointing of the sick (pastoral practice in the U.S. has gone far beyond the minimal use referred to in the text), in particular, are incomplete. And some of the judgments of the author might easily be disputed—e.g., that confession once or twice a year is adequate. Still, the helpful catechism should and doubtless will reach with great benefit, not only those already in the faith, but also those considering entering it.

Alone No Longer. By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1977. Pp. 125. Paper, \$2.45.

The publishers describe this book as "a priest's personal account of his profoundly moving experience with **Marriage Encounter**. However, perhaps because I have made a **Marriage Encounter**, Father Champlin's observations come through as objective description and analysis of the M/E movement, as well as personal testimony to its multifarious benefits to himself and encountered couples, their families, and their parishes. What is most significant for us professional men and women of God, is that the 44-hour week-ends that couples give to each other bring them genuinely closer to God. *Alone No*

Longer is not, however, a sustained panegyric. The pitfalls, the occasional bad side effects, such as elitist attitudes, over-enthusiasm, pressuring recruits, are realistically set forth and admitted as undesirable. Father Champlin writes clearly and concretely, and his book is a valuable one—for prospective priests, sisters, or couples seeking to be encountered, for the already encountered, and for those who want to know something about a movement which can so enrich a couple, family, or parish.

Our Name Is Peter. By Sean O'Reilly. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. xii-144. Cloth, \$5.95.

This work is subtitled "An Anthology of Key Teachings of Paul VI" and is dedicated to the Pontiff. But the author, Dr. Sean O'Reilly, a neurologist, has done more than compile papal statements about Mary, the Eucharist, the Role of the Pope, Infallibility, the Council, and the Pope as Teacher. He has woven a wealth of data into a forceful apologia for the Catholic Church's understanding—a self-understanding—of the special position occupied by the successor of Peter. Clarity of expression is Dr. O'Reilly's forte, while a perhaps too polemical tone might prejudice one against the logic of his exposition, a logic in itself nearly flawless. *Our Name Is Peter* is a book that every convent and friary should have.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Harris, Charles W., C.S.C., *Your Father's Business: Letters to a Young Man about What It Means to Be a Priest*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 110, illus. Paper, \$1.75.
- Huston, Joan, *A Hunger for Wholeness*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 87, illus. Paper, \$2.95.
- Lyons, James W., *Steps into Light: A Prayerbook of Christian Belief*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 63, illus. Paper, \$1.75.
- MacManus, Francis, *Flow on, Lovely River*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. 112. Paper, \$1.95.
- Manteau Bonamy, H.M., O.P., *Immaculate Conception and the Holy Spirit: The Marian Teachings of Father Kolbe*. Trans. Richard Arandez, F.S.C. Kenosha, WI: Prow Books, 1977. Pp. xxxviii-134. Paper, \$4.00.
- Murphy, Edward J., *Life to the Full*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. xiv-142. Paper, \$3.50.
- Our Lady Speaks to Her Beloved Priests*. Private ed. available only on written request to a distribution center of the Marian Movement of Priests (Natl. Hq.: St. Charles Rectory, St. Francis, ME 04774). Pp. 199; no price given.
- Powers, Isaias, C.P., *Kitchen-Table Christianity*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. vi-179. Paper, \$2.75.
- White, Jack Noble, *Everything You Need for Children's Worship*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. viii-104. Paper, \$3.25.

COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our May issue have been drawn by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, a novice member of the Franciscan Brothers of the Holy Cross at St. Anthony's Novitiate, Riverton, IL.