SUMMER 1978

# Franciscan Growth Opportunities Abound In New Spiritual Direction Program

## CALENDAR

## ACADEMIC YEAR OFFERINGS

Registration	
Classes Begin	
Modern Language	Exam:
Final Exams	7

Monday, June 26 Tuesday, June 27 Friday, July 14 Saturday, August 5 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 Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 10:20-11:25, Room 302 Required for students in tracks one and two.

## Fl 511 Medievai Latin: Franciscan Texts

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

#### Fl 522 Franciscan Vaiues

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

## Fl 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

#### Fl 599 Independent Research

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

#### Fl 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.



June, 1978

0010 8685

Vol. 28, No. 6

## CONTENTS

ANGELS AND MEN	162
Review Editorial	
SPIRITUALITY OF JUSTICE—II	164
Joseph Nangle, O.F.M.	
FRANCIS AND THE CHURCH OF SINNERS	169
Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M.	•
I LOVE YOU	174
Timothy James Fleming, O.F.M.Conv.	
PRAYER OF THE EARTH	175
Sister Dorothy Klaas, O.S.F.	
HEALING OF MEMORIES: SUMMIT OF POVERTY	179
Patrick McCloskey, O.F.M.	
A MODERN MARIAN CREED	184
Cletus J. Dello Iacono, O.F.M.	
THE LITTLE BROTHERS OF SAINT FRANCIS	185
THE HOLY BIBLE	187
Sister M. Mercedes, P.C.C.	
HERE IN LISBOA	188
Leander Blumlein, O.F.M.	
BOOK REVIEWS	189



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: \$8.00 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 Friary, Loudonville, N.Y. 12211.

## A REVIEW EDITORIAL



# Angels and Men

A "JEWEL OF A BOOK," the publisher calls this on the jacket flap; and so it most assuredly is. If the author didn't refer to it a few times explicitly as a "book," with no indication of a different origin, I would be sure it was a series of retreat conferences. The style is irresistibly direct, abounding in first and second person usage, clear, simple, and compelling.

The book consists of twenty very short chapters ("meditations") if we include Foreword and Afterword, each devoted to a specific theme regarding the angels, their creation, nature, glorification or fall, governance of the visible universe, and role in salvation history. The first "meditation" sets the key, as it were, for the rest. Taking the appearances to Saint Joseph as his text (Mt. 1:20; 2:13; 2:19f.), the author emphasizes the angelic functions of bringing us help, mediating salvation, and assigning us tasks to perform.

Boros wears his erudition lightly. His citations from Scripture are abundant and are supplemented by only a few references to Thomas Aquinas and to his own friend and teacher, Romano Guardini. He sets forth, in this book, a consistent and quite traditional hypothesis (cf. Col. 2:15; Eph. 1:21f., etc.): that Jesus has, in the Incarnation, "displaced" the angels in their headship of creation (pp. 8, 32, 103-04). But this does not mean that their services were terminated; only that the incarnate Lord is their center and head as well as ours, and that their sublimest function is to lead us and all things to unity in him. Far from dwelling apart in some unknown "region," they are an integral part of the one creation.

In a fashion reminiscent of Tobias Palmer's An Angel in My House,

Boros skillfully blends the literal and the metaphorical, explaining that now Jesus is our only "angel" and that we are "angels" to one another. Similarly, he blends the existential emphasis (the meaning of biblical texts on the angels for our concrete daily lives here and now; cf. p. 59) with the literal, insisting that he "would never wish to 'demythologize' or 'dissolve' the reality of the angels" (p. 126).

Some readers may have difficulty with Boros' diffidently expressed hope for Satan's ultimate salvation—but it is set forth only as a personal opinion and does get some scriptural support (at least if we accept the author's somewhat doubtful interpretation of Zech. 3:1-2, Jude 9, and 2 Pet. 2:11—cf. p. 83). Another difficulty I had is a minor one, involving only a degree of consistency and coherence. On p. 21, man is said to be the "apex of creation," since Jesus "did not become an angel but a man." But on p. 76 we read: Lucifer "did not wish to serve the human being in Christ, a creature below him in the hierarchy of creation." There is no contradiction here; but the apparent one should have been explicitly resolved.<sup>2</sup>

Angels and Men rightly deserves this editorial prominence, and a very wide circulation. This business of attaining salvation and fulfillment, in which each of us is engaged, is a cosmic affair. Far from being a speculative decoration of theological systems, the angels are real, powerful, important, and deeply involved partners with us in that cosmic affair. Any reading material which will keep our attention turned toward them is therefore needed and welcome. When such reading material is so engagingly written, elegantly translated, and fascinatingly illustrated, we can only be delighted and grateful.

Fr. Michael D. Mailad, of



<sup>2</sup>I like to think I did something like this in my book, From Order to Omega (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966), pp. 37-38: "It is pointless to speculate, in this context, about the comparative excellence of human and angelic nature in the abstract. This particular human nature [of Jesus], opened as it is onto the fullness of the Word's Being, is by that very fact raised to a unique level of existence. Certainly the raising in question is essentially supernatural; but it is not without its effect, in the concrete, on what has traditionally been referred to as the natural dimension of Christ's humanity."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1975. See our short notice in the January, 1976, issue, p. 32.

Angels and Men. By Ladislaus Boros. Illustrated by Max von Moos; translated by John Maxwell. New York: Seabury Press Crossroad Books, 1977. Pp. 128. Cloth, \$6.95.

## Spirituality of Justice—II

JOSEPH NANGLE, O.F.M.

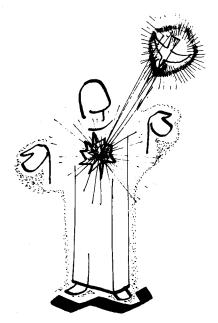
## VI. Sin and Grace

SPIRITUALITY has concerned itself traditionally with the notions of grace and sin. A spirituality of justice, too, needs these categories, for they are very real in the one history of salvation which concerns us. For the Christian actively engaged in the struggle for justice, all the inequitable situations described throughout this article, the realities which hold human beings down, can be described as sin-filled. The struggle, therefore, is against sin, just as it was for Iesus. The Bishops of Latin America described the situation of that continent as "institutionalized sin." They referred, obviously, to sin which is not only personal but also social, structural, political. They referred to people's turning away from God, neighbor, and self, thus creating social evils. They referred to the institutionalized dark areas of life in Latin America, areas which affect so negatively the majority of people there, areas which must be combatted.

The believer who is engaged in promoting justice must understand the evils to be overcome in the category of sin so as not to lose a Christian perspective. And the category is real. "The light shines on in the darkness, a darkness that did not overcome it." What could this darkness be if not those areas of life which are not as yet grace-filled, which are oppressing humans, which are sin-filled. The struggle for the person of faith is between the powers of light and darkness, between grace and sin. "Where sin abounded, grace did more abound" is Paul's explanation of the struggle which continues to this day.

Grace, therefore, means as it always has the Life and Love of God, pushing back the dark areas of human existence through efforts of good men and women everywhere. Grace does not only push into our interior selves —though it most surely does that-to reduce the dark ness in all of us. Grace, God's Life and Light, seeks also to permeate a world of economic, social, and political structures which are still much sin-filled at every level. Realities which are more and more full of God's Life and Light will come about only

Father Joseph Nangle, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province, has been affiliated with the U.S. Mission Council in Washington for the past two years.



through the efforts of good people to ameliorate things. This is the Christian view of struggles for justice and love, and it sustains us in those struggles.

## VII. Prayer

WHILE IN A very real sense the integration of justice and the Spirit does make a prayer out of all tasks which promote human welfare, no one could deny the absolute need for what we call "solid times of prayer" or "moments of sheer prayer." Recent emphases on the necessity and value of praying in the Christian life take on even more strength when seen through the prism of action for justice. This is so evident as not to need further elaboration here.

This categorical affirmation

becomes even more clear when we consider the content of prayer, the "stuff" of our solid moments before the Lord. For persons actively engaged in efforts for justice those very efforts and the problems which they seek to overcome appear as natural leads into prayer. Must we not bring the Kingdom values of dignity and freedom and liberation, as well as the violations of them and our struggles in favor of those values to our prayer? Is it not logical to present ourselves before the Lord with the everyday efforts we and our fellow human beings make towards a better world? We speak to the Lord of these things, listen for his word about them. Not a quiet time for mapping out strategies in the struggle for justice, this way of praying is an acknowledgement once again that in the Incarnation all of creation is called to union with its Maker and in the Redemption all must enjoy its fruits. This area of a spirituality of justice cannot be stressed enough.

In this view of prayer contemplation and the contemplative life take on renewed importance. There is great need for moments of contemplation that will shed gospel light and insight on our activities for justice. Thus there can be no good Christian activist who is not at the same time a Christian contemplative. Prayerful, reflective action is the only kind which will keep alive the faith dimension of our concerns for justice. We need too the help of our full-time contemplative brothers and sisters to fulfill in faith this same task. Thomas Merton and others since have made great contributions and provided real challenges for us regarding our obligations to build the Kingdom in our real world—and this from their contemplative viewpoint.

## VIII. Eucharist

IN OUR consideration of a spirituality of justice we look finally at the Eucharist-the most sublime expression and reality of Life in the Spirit, and a central action in the spirituality we have been describing. "When we eat this Bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory." To say this prayer after the consecration of the gifts is to acknowledge that we enter into the death of Christ each time we participate in Eucharist. And if the death of the Lord was the efficacious sign and final seal on his efforts to overcome sin and liberate humankind from sin's effects, then we enter into the Eucharist on those precise terms. During the moments of Liturgy we re-present, relive, reenact, share in and witness to that saving death. Hence to celebrate Eucharist is not only to acknowledge the Lord's death until he comes in

glory, but to pledge oneself to the battle against whatever endangers that salvation, whatever militates against the already saved and yet to be saved human person. It is a pledge to struggle against lovelessness—injustice.

Saint Paul put all of this much more graphically, and I wonder why so few have ever read him in this light. In a letter Paul wrote to the Christians of Corinth, he tells them of the Lord's Supper and describes in detail how the Lord effected the Eucharist. But the context of that Pauline revelation is a very stern criticism leveled against that same Corinthian community, wherein among other abuses surrounding the Eucharistic celebrations "one person goes hungry while another gets drunk." Paul asks them: "Would you show contempt for the Church of God and embarrass those who have nothing?" (1 Cor. 11:11-27). In effect the Apostle is telling the Christians of Corinth that they run the risk of making a mockery of the Lord's freeing and saving act, the Eucharist, by the inequities rampant among them. Does not the same situation prevail today on a worldwide scale? Can we not read this passage in the light of some eating too much while others go hungry all over the world today? The consequences for our participation in Eucharist need not, I think, be spelled out.

If the Lord's Supper is Christ's

continued action for total human liberation, then anyone who celebrates it must be about the same thing: liberation from whatever stands in the way of freedom. That is why the Eucharist has been called subversive: it overthrows and urges the overthrow of anything which prohibits true human freedom. Eucharist is the deadly enemy of ignorance, poverty, hunger, excessive power, uniust social contracts, exploitation of workers, violence against the weak, the arms race, the present unjust world economic (dis)order, the threat of nuclear destruction, overdevelopment in an underdeveloped world.

And for this reason the Christian engaged in the struggle against any of these sins finds in the Eucharist a motive, a hope, the consolation and a reason for continuing. Eucharist sums up a sustaining spirituality of justice.

## Conclusion

ONE TERRIBLE risk inevitably run by those engaged in promoting justice is that of discouragement, a sense of hopelessness, the temptation to despair of ever effecting the changes needed for a more humanized world.

The dropout rate for social activists is extremely high, a fact admitted by all who have been there. There is, too, the increasingly common phenomenon of persons who are working for social justice having turned aside

from their original Christian. gospel-centered motivation to a very humanistic, political clout kind of activity, not bad in itself, but far from where they began. So many persons who see the message of Jesus as a clear call to help bring about a world more in line with the values preached by the Master, eventually find the road of Calvary, or patient long-term work too slow and confining. Results are sought. Again, there are those who despair of the institutional Church's ever really placing itself squarely on the line for social change in our country. And this disheartens those with a broader vision than that currently projected by the organized Church, at least the Church in the United States.

For all socially conscious Christian people, but especially those just described—those tempted to give up because of the terrible obstacles encountered, those tempted to resort to



political expediency, and those tempted to take scandal from the institutional Church—there is a common reason for hope which must sustain. I speak of the Resurrection.

In my own life I have been faced with the consequences of structural evil: children of the poor dying in numbers because of the lack of the most basic health care; women in our parish clinic who were beaten down under the weight of too many responsibilities, too little food, no income and nowhere to turn: workers pleading simply to work, to earn, to produce with the sweat of their bodies something for their families to eat, and denied. In such situations and so many similar ones, two alternatives opened: belief in the Resurrection or weapons.

Hence the final word in an article on the spirituality of justice has to be Resurrection and what it says. No pie in the sky doctrine this, the Lord's final triumph after the Cross offers the only basis for hope. Death in the search and struggle for justice leads to a sharing in his Resurrection. Failures in the battle for justice must be seen as a share in the Lord's own colossal failure. one which somehow leads on to triumph. Weapons may alleviate for a time the sufferings of those who wait for a better world. But only those who are willing to work without seeing the effects of their efforts, who know that the task will surely take many centuries, who are with Jesus in Gethsemane and on Calvary—only these can sustain hope in themselves and in all who share their concern for a better human life. Only these can witness to a new Easter when justice breaks forth from its grave and the world is finally the Kingdom.

## **Postscript**

LOOKING BACK over this attempt at outlining a spirituality of justice, I get the distinct impression that so much more should have been said. Each of the several headings in the article deserves greater depth in its treatment. The interlocking and complementary nature of them all should be better pointed out. And concrete struggles for justice, presupposed from the beginning, could have been cited profitably as vivid examples of what I was theorizing over.

Hence, if the article's opening words spoke of misgivings regarding its readers, these final ones express the same about its content. May we all see the entire effort as one of the first attempts to address in some ordered way what will surely be treated much more extensively by those more knowledgeable than I. The need to underpin, sustain, and permeate our justice-oriented actions with a Christian spirituality adequate to those actions is very real.

## Francis and the Church of Sinners

SERGIUS WROBLEWSKI, O.F.M.

The massive defection of youth from the Church is almost universal. The articulate among them have given an explanation. Their allegation is that the Church of today is unfaithful and radically different from the Church Jesus founded. There is a vast difference, they contend, between the Jesus of yesterday and the Church of today, between the Gospel that Jesus preached and the religion that Catholics practice today.

Consequently, the trend is not to attach any importance to one's being inside or outside the Church. The main thing, so the argument goes, is to live in loyalty to the Gospel; and to do that, it is not necessary to belong to any institutional Church. What puts one in communion with Christ is sharing the condition of the poor for whom Christ meant the message of salvation. To choose the poor in opposition to power and money is to draw close to Christ.

After all, the Church Iesus founded was a brotherly Church, comprising equals living in a fraternal climate of charity, prayer, and participation. But the institutional Church which often discriminates and exploits cannot be the realization of the Church of Christ. The only place one finds the kind of Church Jesus envisaged is in the freedom of the communes which are satisfied with a room, a Bible, a little bread and wine to remember the Lord's death and resurrection. In any case, many conventional Catholics who were born into the Church-but not necessarily "born again"—are put off by a Church that looks more like the "Church of sinners."

In his Theological Investigations<sup>1</sup> Karl Rahner has a chapter entitled "The Church of Sinners," in which he observes that too little attention has been given to what everybody knows from experience: that the supposedly "holy Church" is unholy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Karl Rahner, S.J., "The Church of Sinners," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 6 (trans. Karl-H. and Boniface Kruger; New York: Herder & Herder, 1969), pp. 253-69.

Father Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., a member of the summer faculty of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, is the author of several books on Franciscanism, including St. Francis: Yesterday and Today (Franciscan Publishers, 1974).

From the very beginning the faithful have agonized over a sinful Church; Tertullian, for example, maintained that the universal Church of his time was not the true Church of the Spirit and of spiritual men but a house of whores! Again and again, seemingly dedicated Christians have rejected the Church as sinful and founded or joined some new church as the holy one. Luther, Calvin, Wycliff and Hus—to mention some of the principal dissidents—preferred to start another church while declaring the old one nothing less than a Babylonian whore!

These purists could never tolerate sin in the Church, whether they were Montanists or Novationists or the Cathari and always favored the permanent exclusion of the sinner from the Church rather than absolution. Their complaints were always the same: the clergy do not practice what they preach, and the churchgoers are hypocritical in their conduct.

Rahner reminds us that sinners are members of the Church: not only those who have lost grace by sin, but even those who are foreknown by God as eternally lost. Their membership may not be fruitful, but it is valid. Rahner adds that no member of the Church militant is without sin. Holiness and sin coexist in every baptized person. This holds just as true for the official representa-

tives of the Church, bishops and priests, who thereby do not fatally pollute the sacraments even when their personal behavior is gravely sinful.

Like every generation, Francis and his brothers faced the same crisis. After they left all things to follow Christ, they continued to live in a Church which was institutional, authoritarian, and wealthy. But the more they found themselves at odds with the clergy in their lifestyle, the more Francis insisted on loyalty to the Church. They fully recognized the Roman Catholic Church as the Body of Christ and as the universal sacrament of salvation.

Let us make a quick review of the moments when Francis demonstrated his loyalty to the Church.

principal inspirations came to Francis in churches. The voice from on high came to him at San Damiano and the Portiuncula. The call was to reform the "Church of sinners." Most often, admirers of Saint Francis assume that his vocation was to follow Christ. That is not entirely true. The more accurate description is that his vocation was to repair the Church of Christ by following him. These two parts of his vocation were not divorced. any more than the Church can be separated from Christ, the Head from the Body.

It was providential that the inspirations occurred in churches

which were vivid symbols of a Church in disrepair: in the dilapidated San Damiano and the neglected Portiuncula. At first, Francis hardly understood this call. He obeyed the injunction "repair my church," given him at San Damiano, by taking up masonry and tuckpointing four churches. As yet, he did not discern the larger sense of the message. In this connection, Saint Bonaventure observed that "he was quite willing to devote himself entirely to repairing the ruined church of San Damiano, although the message really referred to the universal Church which Christ "won for himself at the price of his own blood' (Acts 20:28) as the Holy Spirit afterwards made him realize and he himself explained to the friars."2 But as he continued to follow Christ and to take his words to heart as the only norm of conduct so that he "walked in the Spirit," he was more open to God's word.

For that reason the call came to him a second time at the Portiuncula—in that mean church with a mean priest presiding, as if the liturgical circumstances were reminders of the sorry state of the Church—the Gospel was read, in fact, Iesus's missionary discourse:

Preach as you go, saying, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers,

cast out demons ... take no gold nor silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff" (Mt. 10:7-10).

The call was to preach an eschatological message and to live an eschatological life style. The very next day, after spending a night in prayer, Francis preached. From that moment on, Francis dropped masonry and took up the ministry of the word. God's will was clear to him: he should edify the church by the living word, and bring the faithful back to Christ, to his person and message.

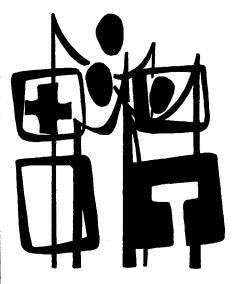
It may very well be that Francis would never have received this call to repair the Church if he had not previously demonstrated his loyalty to the See of Peter. It was only after Francis made the trip to Rome to honor the tomb of Saint Peter that he got the call. He was unlike many reformers who were zealous but not loyal: who followed Christ in his poverty but denounced his Church in her clergy, who instead of repairing the Church split her into sects.

It is not surprising that upon reaching the apostolic number twelve the little company of the Poverello sought papal authorization. Who else could authorize a vocation to repair the Church except the Head of the Church?

<sup>20</sup>mnibus, p. 640.

Legend has it that Innocent III was moved to this official act by a dream of the Lateran on the verge of collapse but, at the same time, upheld by a little poor man. Perhaps this was a medieval literary form used to enunciate a general conviction that Francis indeed fulfilled his call to repair the Church.

Certainly Francis, more than any other twelfth-century person-



ality supported the sacramental system. In his letters as well as his Rules Francis was emphatic: the Eucharist, the sacrament of penance, the word of God—all are to be reverenced along with the clergy who alone can administer them. In his Testament this

support of the hierarchy and the sacraments is unmistakable. Esser wrote in his commentary on the Testament:

Time and again he requires that the Catholic Church is to remain authoritative. In this Church alone the objectivity of the saving process seems safe to him. "It was always his opinion," wrote Celano, "that above all and in everything we must believe in, honor, and obey the faith of the Holy Roman Church; in her alone do we find the means of salvation for all." That is the basis for his respect for the priesthood of the Church even if they might be sinful. Thereby Francis professed his utter taith in the sacramental Church. One can find important elements of the Franciscan movement in others of his time, but here is something new that separated Francis and his brothers from all similar, contemporary and radical groups: their orthodox faith and their devotion to the Church.3

Francis's loyalty to the Church was visibly located in his devotion to the sacrament of the altar, which was for him the very heart of the Church.

Karl Rahner observed in his book, The Dynamic Element in the Church, that Francis remains a force in the Church precisely because he remained loyal to it while other dissenters have long since been forgotten. Rahner

<sup>3</sup>Kajetan Esser, O.F.M., Das Testament des Heiligen Franziskus von Assisi (Munster/Westfalen: Aschendoffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1949), p. 156.

wrote that Francis's loyalty to the Church brought him many disciples who continued to express and transmit the Franciscan charism:

What would Francis mean to the Church if he had not found disciples throughout the centuries? He would not at all be the man of charismatic gifts in the sense we have in mind here, but a religious individualist, an unfortunate crank, and the world, the Church and history would have dropped him and proceeded with their business. But how could he possess disciples, many disciples who have written into the actual history of the Church something of the everyoung grace of the Spirit, if these disciples and the soul of the poor man of Assisi had refused on principle to be taithful to this Spirit of theirs under the yoke of ecclesiastical law, of statutes, vows and the obligation that derives from the liberty of love?4

It was becaue Francis submitted to the ecclesiastical authorities that he attracted followers who struggle to realize his ideals to this day.

Two other events indicate Francis's love for the Church of sinners: (1) the Portiuncula Indulgence, and (2) the Stigmata. He requested the former of Pope Honorius for the benefit of the many sinners in the Church,

that there might not be any impediment to their union with and growth in Christ. The second gift was from the Lord Jesus, who filled Francis's heart with his own compassion for the Church and marked his body through an angel with wounds similar to His, so that he might have the occasion to lay down his life for the Church.

In this way Francis bore the Church's burden of sin as his own. Never did he deny sin in the Church; nor did he ever sweep it under the rug. Rather, he felt for the Church just as his Savior had had compassion on His Bride, even when she was like the woman caught in adultery.

Perhaps that is why he ever noticed the miracles God works through the Church, as Rahner so beautifully put it:

That, in spite of everything her hands are today as yesterday over-flowing with grace, that the entreaty of the Spirit and his in-expressible groaning still ascend from her heart, that the angels of God still carry the prayers of the just in this Church like incense before the throne of God, that her voice still proclaims the Lord's word faithfully, that she conceives life for her children ever anew in her maternal womb, that the Spirit of Love continually wakens men

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Karl Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in the Church* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1964), p. 59.

to holiness within her, that in her the Lord's act of redemption continually takes place till the end of time.<sup>5</sup>

The Church, sinful though she is in her members, continues to be

and will always be the instrument of God's grace.

Today the inclination of many is to flee the Church, but the Franciscan attitude, an essential part of the charism of the founder, is to feel for it.

## I Love You

We are different, yet one.
You call out to me; I call out to you.
Our hearts embrace and grow ever fuller in love.
But it seems that as soon as we grow close
You are gone, we are separated.

And then I see a new heart. At first I'm cautious and reserved, But all of a sudden, I look again, And I see that the heart is you.

It is different, yet the same.
You call out to me, and I respond.
Our hearts embrace and grow ever closer—
Ever fuller in love,
Until we are separated again
And I find someone new,
Only to discover that this heart is you too,
Loving me in the bittersweet loneliness of Chastity.

Timothy James Fleming, O.F.M. Conv.

# Prayer of the Earth

SISTER DOROTHY KLAAS, O.S.F.

MIGHTY and gracious One, Creator and Lord of all, I praise You for making me a mother, a bearer of life enshrined in so many splendid and varied forms. You have blessed me and made me fertile. All living creatures from the greatest to the least depend upon me. They are, in fact, made of my very substance. It is I who supply them with the water, carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, iron, potassium, other elements which compose their bodies. And some day, when they die, their bodies will slowly crumble and the various elements will be returned to me to be used over again. New plants sinking their roots into my soil assimilate those same materials and grow to maturity. Lord, you really are an old pro in this recyclying business. Human bebeings have been so slow in imitating You. They boast today of their ability to recycle paper, tin cans, and old cars. You must smile. From the beginning You ordained that most of the stuff around should be recycled thousands and thousands of times during the course of my history. How wise, how ingenious You are!

I praise You, O Holy One, for the marvelous succession of seasons—each with its special beauty, each bringing unique gifts. In particular I bless You for springtime, the season of miracles. Only a few weeks ago, trees, grass, and flowers lay rigid in apparent death under a blanket of snow. Then as the air grew warmer, the black arms of trees became flexible again, their ioints swelled with the fluid of life, buds appeared, and delicate leaves began to emerge. Blades of grass gladdened the beholder with the brightest green imaginable, and blossoms shyly unfolded their petals on tree and bush. "Glory to God," they sang. "He made us, we are His. He is great and good." Birds joined in the symphony of praise with their melodious songs while brooks and rivers broke their bonds of ice and once again skipped along in lovely rhythms. At the same time seeds stirred in their tombs and behold! tender new plants rose to my surface. None but You could have devised such a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Rahner, "The Church of Sinners," p. 268.

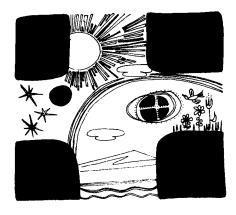
Sister Dorothy Klaas, O.S.F., Community Retirement Director at Mt. St. Francis, Dubuque, IA, since 1968, has taught Philosophy and Psychology at Briar Cliff College, Sioux City, and to her community's novices in Dubuque.

masterpiece as one tiny seed and given it such incredible power. You, O Lord, are worthy of the highest admiration.

I praise You, too, for making me a storehouse. With a father's indulgence. You have planned a perpetual treasure hunt for the children of men. For indeed, Your sons and daughters are surrounded by treasures. In field and forest, in orchard and vinevard, in lake and stream, You generously provide their every need. You give them grain, fruit, meat, and fish in abundance; in addition, all the materials necessary for clothing and shelter. In my depths, You have hidden vast quantities of oil, salt, sulphur, coal, gold, silver, iron, metal of every description. Diamonds, granite, marble, and limestone were Your inventions: and you lovingly prepared these surprises over the course of milof years.

Of all the planets, You have bestowed on me alone that most holy, most versatile, most precious liquid, H2O-water. Its presence on my surface is essential to life; its presence explains why I have been named the Blue Planet. Omnipotent, good Lord, I praise You for creating water and entrusting it to me.

I thank You, O my Creator, for allowing me to be a veil before Your adorable face. The beauty of my sunsets, majestic mountains,



and rolling oceans, the power of cascading water falls, high winds, and erupting volcanos, the gracefulness of birds in flight, of deer, of trees and flowers: all of these are a reminder of You, the Author of all beauty, power, and grace. You are present in all Your works, keeping them in existence from moment to moment. This is indeed a holy place the dwelling place of Divinity. Unfortunately, for many individuals. I prove to be a thick, opaque veil. Or perhaps they are blind: seldom do they catch a glimpse of Your face. But then there are others: poets, artists, and saints who have inner vision. For them the veil is nearly transparent, and they are able to see You in a thousand places. Francis of Assisi was such a man. The sight of water, fire, sunlight, clouds, birds, and beasts filled him with tremendous joy. In them he sensed Your presence and Your Love. As someone expressed it. Francis seemed to

"feel the heart beat of God pulsing through all creation."

The Jesuit poet, Gerard Man-

ley Hopkins, became almost ecstatic as he contemplated the loveliness and variety of nature:

Glory be to God for dappled things— For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow: For rose-moles all in stiple upon trout that swim; Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls, finches' wings . . . .

in the world—this was the ex-

Meeting your Son at every turn perience of another poet, Joseph Plunkett, who wrote:

I see His Blood upon the rose And in the stars the glory of His eyes, His body gleams amid eternal snows, His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower; The thunder and the singing of the birds Are but His voice—and carven by His power Rocks are His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn, His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea. His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn. His cross in every tree.



All thanks to You, my Lord, that You have made me an instrument to feed, to clothe, to teach, to inspire, and to sanctify Your sons and daughters. "You have done all things well."

I have but one petition. Do You not see the sorry state to which my streams, the air, and the land are being reduced by wasteful practices, greed, and thoughtlessness? Today's inhabitants are committing crimes of pollution which will surely choke all life in a few decades unless this trend is reversed. Forgive me, O God. Perhaps I exaggerate. With all my years of experience, I ought to realize that Your mercy and Your power are unlimited. Though many of Your children have little reverence for the beautiful home You have given them, though selfish brothers seem bent upon bringing about a de-creation of the earth, Your Holy Spirit still hovers over me. Let me draw hope and comfort from that poetpriest, Hopkins, who recognized the wounds inflicted on me by men but who never doubted that You are in control of my destiny. He wrote:

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil

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

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;

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

And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil

And for all this, nature is never spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And through the last lights off the black West went Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

It is with complete confidence in Your Goodness that I pray as Your Church prays: "Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your divine Love. Send forth Your Spirit, O Lord, and they shall be created, and You will renew the face of the earth."

#### $\bigstar$

# Opuscula S. Francisci Assisiensis

A new Latin critical edition of the Writings of Saint Francis, edited by Kajetan Esser, O.F.M., has been published by the Collegio S. Bonaventura this year. The 436-page volume is available in paperback for \$11.00 and in clothbound form for \$13.00 when ordered from the Franciscan Institute. This is the all-Latin Minor edition of the original Die Opuscula des hl. Franziskus von Assisi (1976), in which the studies of the Latin works were in German. Order from

Franciscan Institute Publications St. Bonaventure, NY 14778

## Healing of Memories:

# Summit of Franciscan Poverty

PATRICK McCLOSKEY, O.F.M.

Have you yourself ever said something like this?

\*You know, I'm really not appreciated for my work. I gave my life to build up that parish (school, hospital, mission, chaplaincy). Now what do I have to show for it all? The community decided not to staff it any more.

\*I got "burned" because of him (her). He (she) will never do that to me again.

\*I gave everything I had to that community and got practically nothing in return.

\*When I was younger I believed all that "will of God" stuff about my superior. When I saw what that got me, I changed my mind.

Have you ever run into a Franciscan who kept a very long and detailed record of offenses suffered and who readily shared this recital of woes?

If you have never said any of these things to yourself or have never heard a friar, sister, or lay Franciscan say them, stop reading this article. It cannot make any sense to you at this time. But if these complaints sound familiar, read on.

What do I mean by the term "healing of memories"? Michael Scanlan describes healing as the process by which what is wounded or sick becomes whole and healthy; it is the mending of a hurt. The healing of memories concerns a hurt lodged in the mind, the will, the heart. People sometimes savora painful memory much as European students once prized dueling scars. Strange as it may seem, sometimes people would rather keep an unhealed memory and the sympathy it may generate than have it healed. Unhealed memories can help rationalize failures and win attention.2

Richard Rohr describes bitterness in a person as the image Satan creates. Those who let

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Michael Scanlan, T.O.R., *Inner Healing* (New York: Paulist Press, 1974), p. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

Father Patrick McCloskey, O.F.M., author of St. Anthony of Padua: Wisdom for Today, and a regular contributor to St. Anthony Messenger, teaches religion and English at Roger Bacon High School, Cincinnati.

themselves be loved by Jesus are gentle and generous.<sup>3</sup>

By itself time does not heal all wounds; forgiveness does. The most common block to inner healing is therefore an unwillingness to forgive. People sometimes feel that forgiving certain memories would be an admission of failure on their part. The peace of Iesus Christ comes from a reordering of one's life, a transforming of the past and the present. Painful memories carefully withheld from the saving power of God shackle people. 4 When those memories are surrendered to God's grace, the person becomes more free and gains more trust in God.

The healing of memories takes a crippling memory and looks at it from the Spirit's viewpoint.<sup>5</sup> This healing prays that resentment may be replaced by God's forgiving love.<sup>6</sup>

What Johannes Metz said of poverty of spirit certainly applies to the healing of memories:

To stick to oneself and to serve one's own interests is to be damned; it is "hell." Here a man discovers, only too late, that the tabernacle of self is empty and barren. For man can only find himself and truly love himself through the poverty of an immolated heart.<sup>7</sup>

An immolated heart forgives painful memories.

The healing of memories is based on the truth, the whole truth as God sees it. Here there is no pretending that the painful memory does not exist, that a harsh word or vindictive action never occurred. The healing of memories is a decision to forgive and not be warped by that memory. God alone can see the whole picture and judge accordingly.

Forgive: that is the key word. Are we totally unwilling to forgive? No, but we tend to set conditions. "If he makes the first move, if he grovels for a while, then I may forgive him," we tend to say. Such forgiveness is conditional; the healing of memories demands unconditional forgiveness.

In the story of the prodigal son (Lk. 15), the father did not

decide to forgive the son as they were standing in the roadway. The father forgave the younger son long before going out to the road and looking for the prodigal. We love the story of the prodigal son. Rarely do we stress that the father's forgiveness was in effect long before the younger son came to ask for it.

In the *Teleketics* film on the sacrament of penance, the young girl injured in a car accident forgives the driver of that car long before the driver finds the courage to go to see her in the hospital. "I knew you would come," she says.

Scripture's most memorable stories are those of forgiveness. Jacob feared the meeting with Esau (Gen. 32); yet when it occurred Esau readily forgave his brother (Gen. 33). Joseph had his brothers in a completely vulnerable position, and then he forgave them (Gen. 45). Hosea forgave Gomer's many infidelities (1-3). As he was being stoned, Stephen prayed, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (Acts 7:60). Christ prayed on the cross, "Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing" (Lk. 23:34).

Was there ever a martyr for Christ who went to his (her) death cursing the executioner? Thomas More forgave Henry VIII and the headsman. Before she died, Maria Goretti forgave the man who tried to rape her.

In all these examples, the injured party forgave before anyone asked for forgiveness. But what if no one ever asks us to forgive? If we have forgiven anyway, we are more ready to do whatever else God may ask of us. A refusal to forgive until we have seen the other person crawl and prove his (her) sincerity beyond any doubt is a sure formula for bitterness and self-imposed stunted growth.

The healing of memories occurs in a body living the life of Christ. The community unbinds people and encourages them to become a new creation in Jesus Christ.8

So, what does all this have to do with Franciscan poverty? How can I call the healing of memories the "summit of Franciscan poverty"?

Francis tells his friars not to appropriate anything for themselves, "neither a house, nor a place, nor anything else." Francis tells them not to be ashamed when begging since God made himself poor for their sake. We could ask, however, "When God made himself poor for our sake, wasn't forgiveness essential to that poverty?" The poverty of Iesus was not simply material:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Richard Rohr, O.F.M., "Jesus, The Healing of God" (cassette published by St. Anthony Messenger Press).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Scanlan, p. 28. On this subject readers may wish to check Jean Rosenbaum's "Don't Be Trapped by Your Past" in the January 1978 issue of the St. Anthony Messenger.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Dennis and Matthew Linn, S.J., *Healing of Memories* (New York: Paulist Press, 1974), p. 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Johannes B. Metz, *Poverty of Spirit* (Paramus, N.J.: Newman Press, 1968), p. 34

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Rohr, loc. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>Rule of 1223, chapter 6.

it included a spirit of unconditional forgiveness. Wisely then does Francis warn his friars against condemning those who wear soft clothes and live luxuriously.<sup>10</sup>

Forgiveness and the healing of memories is the summit of Franciscan poverty because unhealed memories are the last "appropriation" we surrender. Friars, sisters, and lav Franciscans suffer a common temptation. They may check the urge to acquire material goods: yet they may jealously guard selected painful memories. They can avoid fancy clothes and very well furnished living quarters. They may re-evaluate and modify their hobbies and vacations. But for all this external poverty, they may be piling up inner "riches"-unhealed memories for later boasting and plays for sympathy.

The most barren cell may contain a friar bursting with painful memories which he will not give up for all the world. I am not arguing against material poverty, but only reminding myself and readers of THE CORD that such poverty is the beginning and not the end of Gospel poverty.

Francis carefully resisted the temptation to be materially poor yet rich in unhealed momories.

In his last year was Francis a bitter man, grabbing every opportunity to save his Order from friars proposing relaxation? Is his Testament a deathbed attempt to head off changes in the Order? Did Saint Francis give up all his material possessions only to die swollen with painful memories that "his" ideal was being defiled? No.

The goal of Franciscan poverty is union with Christ crucified. The sons and daughters of Francis have set as their goal Saint Jerome's phrase, "naked ones following the naked Christ." Bonaventure ends his *Itinerarium* by praying:

Let us silence all our care, our desires, and our imaginings. With Christ crucified, let us pass out of this world to the Father, so that, when the Father is shown to us, we may say with Philip: It is enough for us.<sup>11</sup>

If we are to be naked following the naked Christ, then forgiveness and the healing of memories must be part of that nakedness. If we are to be united with Christ crucified, then we must be joined to a Savior who was not bitter even toward those who taunted him on Calvary.

In the Sacrum Commercium, Saint Francis meets two old men LOVE

who tell him Lady Poverty now lives on a high mountain. "Therefore," they continue, "if you want to get her, remove the garments of your rejoicing, and put away every encumbrance and sin entangling you, for unless you are stripped of these things, you cannot go up to her who dwells so high above." 12 In the quest for Lady Poverty, nursing yet never healing painful memories is definitely an "encumbrance."

But perhaps the power of forgiveness and its connection with the healing of memories is best shown by this story from Eccleston's chronicle:

There also grew up among them the very religious custom never to swear to anything but simply to say "Know that it is so." As soon as any of them was reprimanded either by a superior or by a confrere, he would immediately answer, "Mea culpa, I am at fault," and, frequently, he would even prostrate himself. For this reason, the master of the Preachers, Brother Iordan of happy memory. said that the devil told him when he appeared to him once, that mea culpa took away from him whatever he thought to gain amongst the Friars Minor, because they confessed their faults one to the other if one had offended against the other.18

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>De Adventu Fratrum Minorum in Angliam, trans. Placid Hermann, O.F.M., in XIII Century Chronicles (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1961), p. 118.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>Sacrum Commercium, trans. Placid Hermann, O.F.M., in Omnibus, p. 1556.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>Ibid., chapter 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>St. Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, Introd., trans., & commentary by Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M. (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1956), p. 101.

## A Modern Marian Creed

I believe in Mary, the chaste Spouse of Joseph,
Immaculately conceived, by a singular grace and privilege
of Almighty God, free from every stain of sin,
and born of Anna and Joachim.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, she gave birth to Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior of the world, and thus became the mother of God.

For us men and for our salvation, she suffered by sharing the pains and death of her Son, Who died for the Redemption of all mankind.

For our sake, she accepted at the foot of Calvary a mission that was inseparable from her divine Motherhood.

On the Cross, our dying Savior gave her not only to the Apostle John, but to each one of us when He said: Behold your Mother.

I believe, therefore, in her role in the plan of Redemption and in her function as our spiritual Mother.

I believe in her Assumption into heaven, where she, body and soul, now gloriously reigns as Queen of the Universe.

For I believe that the Mother of Life Himself is lifted up to life by Life Himself and that neither death nor the tomb could hold the Mother of God.

I believe Mary is the perfect Image of the Church.

In heaven, she is a kind of sign, reassuring and comforting the wandering and pilgrim People of God, who are still on earth.

I believe in Mary, the Mother of the Church, sent by God to make all men one, in her Son.

For she is the Mother of God and Mother of men, who helped the beginning of the Church by her prayers.

I believe that Mary, now raised above the angels and saints, will intercede with all the saints to her Son, until all families of people, whether Christian or not may be gathered together into one People of God, for the glory of the Trinity.

I believe that Jesus is the Source of all Truth and Holiness and that our devotion to Mary should lead us to him.

For Mary is the true and perfect Christian, and what has been accomplished in and for her is something that will be bestowed upon all faithful believers.

I acknowledge Mary as the Example of what we can accomplish through Jesus Christ.

And through her intercession and mediation, I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Cletus J. Dello Iacono, O.E.M.

## The Little Brothers of Saint Francis

THE LITTLE Brothers of Saint Francis are a contemplative community of Brothers, who have as their cloister the noisy streets of the inner city, and as their cell the deep center of their hearts where they foster an interior life of union with God.

The Brothers strive to rediscover the authentic charisms given by the Holy Spirit to Saint Francis and his early friars. Responding to the exhortations of Francis in his earliest rules, including a little known rule for eremitical and contemplative life. they center their lives in the "mystery of the Lamb that was slain" with daily Community attendance at the celebration of the Mass and one hour of Eucharistic Adoration each evening. They strive to imitate and experience the three great loves of Saint Francis: (1) Eucharistic devotion and liturgical prayer, (2) ministry to the "lepers" of our society. and (3) actual poverty like that of Christ and his Apostles.

Founded in the Archdiocese of Boston in 1970, the Little Brothers follow the rule for Regular Communities of the Third Order of Saint Francis and a set of unique guidelines

for their way of life approved by His Eminence, Humberto Cardinal Madeiros. Autonomous in their government and formation program, they are under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Immaculate Conception Province of the Order of Friars Minor and enjoy the fraternal blessing of Father Constantine Koser, O.F.M., Minister General.

Candidates are accepted for a three to six month Observership, a six-month Postulancy, and a one year Novitiate before being admitted to Profession. Final Profession follows five years of temporary vows.

Participating in the Church's official liturgical prayer, the Brothers regularly chant the Divine Office in common and allow in their daily horarium for periods of silence, meditative reading, and personal prayer. Their communal prayer is one of Praise, Adoration, Thanksgiving, and Intercessory Petition for their fellow Christians.

From the end of Night Prayer, with its traditional singing of the Salve Regina, until after Mass the following morning, they observe "Grand Silence." Silence is a necessary condition for hearing

The text of this article is reprinted, with minor adaptations, from the vocational brochure distributed by the Little Brothers of Saint Francis: Fraternity of Peace and Love, 789 Parker Street, Mission Hill, MA 02120.

# PEWY

and being responsive to the call of God. It contributes to a rhythmic way of life that facilitates habitual union with God. They place special emphasis on personal holiness, acquired in communal life through penance and encounter with the Lord in his true humanity: tender in the manger, sorrowful in his Passion, and joyfully transfigured in his Resurrection.

Led by the Lord to an "evangelical street ministry," the Little Brothers encounter Jesus in the many homeless men and women who populate our city streets. Among these poor little ones are alcoholics, drug addicts, the mentally disoriented, and just plain outcasts, who together share a common loneliness and rejection by a materialistic and impersonal society. They bring to these people the healing love of Jesus, listening to their individual problems, giving them hope, and sharing with them the happiness of the Gospel message. They also share a hot meal with them when means are available, and they distribute sandwiches and hot cocoa when possible.

Since the Brothers do not aspire to professional careers,

they cooperate with existing agencies and assist the needy to the hostels, soup kitchens, detox centers, and institutions that can better meet their needs. The Brothers' ministry and daily sustenance are provided by the Providence of God, by generous Christians, and by whatever income they can earn from part-time crafts and odd jobs. They are always more than adequately provided for at "the table of the Lord."

Obedient to the Church, the Holy Father, and their Superiors, and submissive to the will of God in their lives, and as a means to true conversion, the Brothers embrace humility and actual poverty, living in small rented inner-city fraternities and assuming the simple circumstances of their neighbors. Each Little Brother has two pair of dungarees, some underwear, a pair of sandals, and a blue denim habit. A woolen jacket and waterproof boots are added for winter months. They deny themselves all other personal items, and to facilitate the contemplative life they forego television, radio, smoking, and many other diversions.

The Brothers embrace a chaste

and celibate lifestyle as an eschatological witness to the Kingdom of God. Obedience and celibacy free them from the tyranny of self-centered impulse so that they can dedicate their lives to Jesus in a service of love to their poorer brothers and sisters. By returning each day to their contemplative communities, they are able to replenish their spirit in the love of Jesus, the Lord.

The Brothers see their vocation to the Brotherhood as a sign of the humility and obscurity that

characterized the life of the Holy Family at Nazareth. Their lifestyle is intelligible only in the light of faith. Saint Francis, in a very early text, exhorted his Brothers: "Do not argue with unbelievers, but be humbly subject to all creatures for the love of God, and thus bear witness to what Christianity really is."

Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. The Little Brothers seek to be consumed in his flame—to be the hands of Jesus to the poor and the smile of Jesus to the whole world.

## The Holy Bible

In the beginning was a story The story was here But it got pushed out

it wandered here

It got ended here.

But there was an Author; so it continued after it ended.

It begins today.

Sister M. Mercedes, P.C.C.

## Here in Lisboa

I stood at your death-place,
saw through the votive hearts
and tinsel wreaths,
found you there
behind the green marble,
felt the tears come
as we linked hands
there is Padua
over seven long centuries,
Father, Brother, Anthony.

I stand now at your birth-place, and wonder:
however could you leave these beautiful banks of the Tagus?
Though deep down I know—the call of the Canons, the bones of the martyrs, and Francis, the Gospel, its marrow, His way.

## Father and Brother,

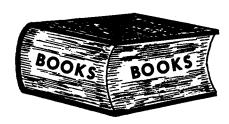
I have long knelt among your clients asking to find knowledge and wisdom and virtue, articles lost by the way.

Today, a pilgrim and beggar again here at your birth-place, Dante-like in a dark wood, I fear I have lost the way: I touch the trees and I bleed.

Here, under the blue skies and brilliant sun of your Lisboa, I reach again for your hand:

Father, Brother, Finder, help me to find His blazings on the bark.

Leander Blumlein, O.F.M.



Variations on a Theme. By Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. viii-100. Cloth, \$5.00.

Reviewed by Father John F. Marshall, O.F.M., author of several well received series of Conferences for Religious and presently Assistant Pastor at St. Mary of the Angels Church, Allegany, New York.

Instant satisfaction! Joy! Inspiration! This was my experience in reading and re-reading this gem of a poetic treasure trove.

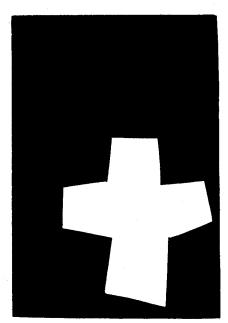
I recall "huckleberry" days when as a boy I used to sit on the branch of a sturdy tree and so perch myself over a quietly flowing ribbon of a river and gaze into the water in search of fish. The longer I looked, the more fish I saw, the more varied the shapes and sizes of submerged rock, the more visible the camouflaged species of water life.

In reading this timeless tome of tender beauty I was again that free spirited boy on the limb (and since then many a time out on the proverbial end of it!). With each poem and a re-reading thereof, like a deep sea diver overcoming his fear. I dove deeper and deeper, overcoming the fear of misinterpretation. As from the bottom of Shechem's cool and refreshing well, I drank in delightful droughts of poetic pleasure. Thanks to the obvious gift of intuition that belongs to Mother Mary Francis, I was privileged with keyhole glimpses of beatific beauty. My first reaction was to run off and share my own insights.

Variations on a Theme is an ensemble of fifty-eight poems assorted into six general categories. As Mother Mary Francis says, all of them were gleaned from "her riper years." And what a harvest! All "stacked" yellow ripe according to the following themes: Days of Our Life; Vocation; Francis and Clare; Life, Joy, Pain; Christ the Lord;

and End of the Day. In the reading I really "made hay." In the reflecting the grain became bread, and in the tasting the bread became communion.

In the reviewing of poetry, how does anyone do justice in the attempt when he is a poet himself only by disposition? Is a "foot in the door" competence enough to judge the "interior" of the home? Well, whatever, the recognized gift that Mother Mary Francis has of transitizing the abstract and the neutral was enough to move my heart and settle my soul. As though led by the hand, I have been escorted from ordinary experiences (never ordinary to her) such as guimpes hanging on a line (what are these?), a friendly loitering cat, or an autumnal scene, then been taken on a tour through the pages of Scripture, and finally offered a "take-home" soft punch line that left



me content with the entire content. Ponder, e.g., this concluding couplet:

Sweet is the love that never knew a wound,
But deeper that which died and rose

But deeper that which died and rose again.

It takes courage to read good poetry, the kind that it takes to pen it. May I encourage the readers of this review to peer into the depths of these poems and keep looking until there is revealed at least some of the varied joy and inspiration that is so satisfying in the searching and finding. May I also ask forgiveness of Mother Mary Francis for daring to review what in words of poesy are surely the very breath of her religious life.

Invitation to Luke: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke with, Complete Text from the Jerusalem Bible. By Robert J. Karris. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Image Books, 1977. Pp. 279. Paper, \$2.95.

Invitation to Matthew: A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew with Complete Text from the Jerusalem Bible. By Donald Senior. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Image Books, 1977. Pp. 279. Paper, \$2.95.

Reviewed by Father Cassian F. Corcoran, O.F.M., L.S.S., S.T.D., Assistant Director of formation at Holy Name College, Washington, D.C., and Professor of Sacred Scripture at the Washington Theological Coalition.

These two books form part of a new series of commentaries on the Word of God. One of the aims of the series is to introduce the educated laity to the contributions of technical scholarship.

Father Karris, to begin with the volume on Luke, certainly achieves this purpose without confusing the ordinary person with footnotes or scholarly apparatus. Another significant feature is the lucid manner and apparent ease whereby the author shows how the Christian community with which Luke was familiar was the catalyst prompting him to write his gospel as a means to encourage his Christian audience to persevere in prayer and faith in Iesus. This commentary singles out teachings that address themselves to and have interest for men and women today. Some of the issues which are discussed are these: Iesus and women, the Eucharist, encouragement for relentless adherence to Jesus, prayer, suffering, God's promises, and forgiveness.

The book's format is simple. The gospel text is presented in units (e.g., Lk. 1:3-38; 1:39-56, etc.). The major theme of each unit is explained. A study question for reflection and discussion, which relates the theme to living out the gospel teaching concludes each unit. Men and women who read, study, and reflect upon the gospel text and this commentary will learn much about Jesus and his message. The author's engaging style as well as his enthusiasm and interest in the gospel will bring any serious reader into contact with the bedrock of the gospel tradition. Iesus of Nazareth. This book is highly recommended for anyone interested in personal or group study of the gospel. It is rich in insights into Lucan spirituality.

Father Donald Senior introduces

with a brief but fascinating analysis of the turbulence that beset the Christian community to which Matthew addressed his gospel about 80-90 A.D. One must sense the crisis and tempo of the first Christian century if the gospel is to come alive and the reader is to get caught up in its story and feel the impact of its message. Matthew's portrait of Jesus, moreover, reflects the hopes and aspirations of Christian men and women of these crisis-filled days. Although several sections of the book might be selected to give the reader an idea of its value, a few samples should suffice. The infancy Narrative is treated in four separate units. Each unit points out some teaching that underlies the colorful events that describe Jesus's birth. For example, there is an adequate explanation of the theological meaning of Jesus's genealogy. The name Immanuel, one learns, is the biblical way to say that Jesus is the embodiment of Yahweh's covenant with Israel, its definitive renewal, and the fulfillment of God's promise to be with his people. Another interesting section of this commentary is the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus is presented as a new Moses proclaiming a new revelation which challenges people of faith to hear and obey the will of God. Throughout the commentary there seems to have been a conscious effort to highlight those things that have particular interest in the thinking of today's Church. Some of these interests are community, leadership, Jesus's law, gospel attitudes, change of heart, healing with love, and faith in Jesus. Reflection on and careful study of this com-

his commentary on the first gospel

mentary will be a helpful guide to open up the richness of Matthew's gospel and elucidate its meaning for Christian life and spirituality today. The book is very well written, most interesting, and truly inspirational.

The Franciscans and Italian Immigration in America. By Leonard F. Bacigalupo, O.F.M. Hicksville, NY: Exposition Press, 1977. Pp. 80. Cloth, \$4.50.

Reviewed by Father Cyprian J. Lynch, O.F.M., Archivist of Holy Name Province, Editor of its Annals, and a member of the staff of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University.

This useful little volume is an expanded version of a paper prepared for the Sixth Annual Conference of the American Italian Historical Association in 1973. Described in its Foreword as "a brief history of the Province of the Immaculate Conception," it fills an obvious gap in the literature of American Franciscan history. An account of the friars' apostolic labors among Italian immigrants has long been overdue.

After sketching the development of his province from its foundation in 1855 to the present day, the author outlines the history of the several Italian parishes founded by his confreres in the eastern United States and Canada. In the third chapter, entitled "An Evaluation," he concludes that "the Italian American today has identified with his Church, and plays an important role in its growth and development as it moves from the Irish Catholicism of the past to a more universal Catholicism ac-

cording to the mind of Vatican II."

One of the book's most valuable sections is its eight-page "Bibliographical Essay" containing an annotated listing of both archival and published sources. Only American archives, however, are surveyed. Until European record collections, especially the Archives of the General Curia of the Order, are thoroughly searched, the early history of the province cannot be completely reconstructed. It was, no doubt, an oversight that Tomasi Silvano's Piety and Power: The Role of Italian Parishes in the New York Metropolitan Area, 1880-1930 (Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies, 1975) was omitted from the list of published sources.

In an appendix, English translations of four key documents in the province's history are reproduced: the contract between the Bishop of Buffalo and the Minister General of the Friars Minor that gave the Italian friars a residence at Allegany, New York (1855), the decree erecting the Custody of the Immaculate Conception (1861;, the decree separating the Italian from the Irish members of the custody (1901), and the decree raising the custody to the status of a province (1910). The book concludes with a reprint of the author's article, "Italians in the U.S.," from the New Catholic Encyclopedia (vol. 7, pp. 746-47).

The Franciscans and Italian Immigration in America fittingly commemorates the 75th Anniversary of the decree of 1901 that guaranteed the legal autonomy and ethnic identity of the custody that nine years later became the Province of the Immaculate Conception.

## **BOOKS RECEIVED**

- Barclay, William, The Men, the Meaning, the Message of the New Testament Books. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976. Pp. xi-149. Paper, \$3.95.
- Boros, Ladislaus, Angels and Men. Trans. John Maxwell; illus. Max von Moos. New York: Seabury Press Crossroad Books, 1977. Pp. 128. Cloth, \$6.95.
- Finley, James, and Michael Pennock, Your Faith and You: A Synthesis of Catholic Belief. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. 2 vols, paper. Text, pp. 270; \$3.95; teacher's manual, pp. 118; \$2.25.
- Heidt, William G., The Book of the Apocalypse. New Testament Reading Guide Series, n. 14. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1962. Pp. 129. Paper, \$0.80.
- Howell, Clifford, S.J., Of Sacraments and Sacrifice. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 3rd rev. ed., 1977. Pp. 197. Paper \$3.95.
- Hunt, Marigold, A Book of Angels. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, rev. ed., 1978. Pp. 143. Paper \$3.95.
- Jungmann, Josef A., S.J. The Mass: An Historical, Theological, and Pastoral Survey. Trans. Julian Fernandes, S.J., ED. Mary Ellen Evans. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1976. Pp. xvi-312, incl. indices. Cloth, \$9.95.
- Lauder, Robert E., Loneliness Is for Loving. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 143. Paper, \$2.75.
- Manton, Joseph E., C.Ss.R., Ten Responsible Minutes: A Pleasant Approach to Homily Headaches.. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. 232, incl. index. Cloth, \$9.95.
- O'Connor, Edward D., C.S.C., Pope Paul and the Spirit: Charisms and Church Renewal in the Teaching of Paul VI. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. xiii-258, incl. 3 appendices. Paper, \$4.95.
- The Order of Priesthood: Nine Commentaries on the Vatican Decree "Inter Insigniores." Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. xiii-145. Cloth, \$7.50.
- Shlemon, Barbara Leahy, Dennis Linn, and Matthew Linn, To Heal as Jesus Healed. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 107. Paper 1.95.

## **COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS**

The cover and illustrations for our June issue have been drawn by Sister Marie Monica, O.S.F., of Sacred Heart Academy, Klamath Falls, OR., except those on pp. 165 and 167, which were drawn by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, F.F.S.C., of St. Anthony's Novitiate, Riverton, IL.