

## BOOKS RECEIVED

- Basetti-Sani, Giulio, O.F.M., *The Koran in the Light of Christ: Islam in the Plan of the History of Salvation*. Trans. W. Russell Carroll, O.F.M., & Bede Dauphinee, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. xiv-223. Cloth, \$8.50.
- Cousins, Ewert H., *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites: The Theology of Bonaventure*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978. Pp. xx-316, incl. index. Cloth, \$12.95.
- Kelsey, Morton, *Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil*. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. viii-158, incl. bibliography. Paper, \$4.95.
- Kloppenborg, Bonaventure, O.F.M., *The People's Church: A Defense of My Church*. Trans. Matthew J. O'Connell. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978. Pp. x-184. Cloth, \$8.95.
- Kocher, Paul H., *Alabado: A Story of Old California*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978. Pp. vi-243. Cloth, \$6.95.
- Moorselaar, Corinne van—, *Francis and the Animals*. Trans. David Smith; illus. Sandra Ireland. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. pp. 44. Cloth, \$3.50.
- Perkins, PHEME, *The Gospel according to John: A Theological Commentary*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978. Pp. xvi-251, incl. bibliography. Cloth, \$7.95.
- Walls, Ronald, *Christ Who Lives in Me: Rosary Meditations*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1978. Pp. 144. Leatherette, \$4.95.

## COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The circle used in our cover drawing represents wholeness. We are seen as persons (the red ball) in movement towards becoming one whole. This and the other drawings for the January issue have been furnished by Brother Ronald A. Chretien, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name Province and a full time artist resident at St. Francis Friary, Rye Beach, New Hampshire.

# the CORD

January, 1979

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GUEST EDITORIAL

## Francis: Father of One Brotherhood

FOR THE FIRST TIME in the history of the Franciscan Order in the United States, a common questionnaire was sent during January and February of 1978 to each of the more than 5,000 Capuchin, Conventual, and O.F.M. American friars—including those on foreign assignments. All the friars were queried on two points: the *desirability* of a common celebration of the 800th anniversary of the birth of Saint Francis in 1982, and the *desirability* of working toward the reunification of the three branches of the Order or at least toward greater unity among them.

The brief, two-page questionnaire was designed by an eight-member committee of O.F.M.'s, Capuchins, and Conventuals over the course of the previous year. The committee, which described itself as "an unofficial inter-Franciscan exploratory service committee," wrote to each Conventual, Capuchin, and O.F.M. Provincial in September of 1978, outlining a plan for gathering this information and noting the value it would have for the O.F.M. English-speaking Conference, the North American Capuchin Conference, and the newly-formed American Conventual Conference.

All the respective Provincials endorsed the sending of the questionnaire and permitted the use of their Provincial communications offices for getting the questionnaire to each friar of their Provinces. A Provincial liaison was appointed for each Province, who coordinated the distribution itself among the three branches.

Some 54% of the friars replied, an above-average statistical response, apparently reflecting the growing interest in the reunification issue among American Franciscan religious since the renewal chapters of their three families.

The poll revealed that 70% of the friars believe the time has come to

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*With this January issue we inaugurate a series of articles dealing with the theme of unity among the branches of the Franciscan First Order, most of them to be contributed by members of the committee described in this guest editorial. The survey's results have already been reproduced in Exchange (Contact Paper of the Franciscan Brotherhood in India), 11:5 (5-6/78) and summarized in Franciscan Herald 57:10 (10/78); but in view of the subject's importance, we reproduce it once more following this editorial.*

begin working toward eventual reunification of the First Order of Saint Francis. They also support, by 93%, a proposal to celebrate in common the 800th anniversary of their Founder's birth in 1982.

The survey uncovered for the first time the widespread grass-roots support for reunification among American Franciscan priests and brothers that could only be surmised until now. Some 74% said that they desired more than the current status quo and simple inter-cooperation, and 67% indicated this further step should be a common federation or reunification itself among the three branches.

From another point of view, only 30% of the friars believe the Order has adequately responded to Vatican Council II's directive that religious orders with a common founder should foster efforts toward unity.

Distinctions among the three groups do not seem to be a major obstacle to inter-cooperation, though 22% of the Conventuals, 22% of the O.F.M.'s, and 40% of the Capuchins believe their branch of the order is distinctive.

Franciscan theological schools, common research projects, and communication were seen as three areas where cooperation could begin at this time. The friars also suggested that ecumenical ventures could be made in houses of prayer, justice and peace efforts, publications, assistance to the Second and Third Orders, common novitiates, mixed apostolates, mixed communities, and the missions—in that order.

The friars preferred a national gathering of at least five days in 1982 to celebrate the 800th birthday of Saint Francis, and some 1,300 expressed interest in attending. Regional celebrations were also approved. Asked to volunteer topics for such a national meeting, the friars suggested their common heritage, spiritual life, inter-Franciscan activity, and the impact of Franciscanism on American society. Half of the friars responding to the poll believe that division in the Order has weakened the Franciscan influence in this country.

The members of the inter-Franciscan committee are Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., Our Lady of Consolation Province; Joachim Giermek, O.F.M.Conv., St. Anthony's Province; Regis Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., St. Mary's Province; Allen Gruenke, O.F.M.Cap., St. Joseph's Province; Alan McCoy, O.F.M., St. Barbara's Province and President of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men; Louis Vitale, O.F.M., St. Barbara's Province; Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Director of the Franciscan Institute, Holy Name Province; and the present author, chairman of the committee and Director of Holy Name Province's Communications office.

*Roy M. Gasnick, O.F.M.*  
Communications Director  
Holy Name Province

## RESULTS OF THE INTER-FRANCISCAN QUESTIONNAIRE

Note: T=Total; P=Capuchins; V=Conventuals; F=OFM's

### PART I: A COMMON CELEBRATION OF THE 800TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF ST. FRANCIS

1. The Anniversary should be celebrated in common by all American First Order friars who profess Francis's Rule & Way of Life--OFM's, Conventuals, and Capuchins.

T	Strongly	61%	Agree	32%	Not Certain	3%	Disagree	2%	Strongly	2%
P	agree	49%		40%		3%		4%	disagree	2%
V		62%		32%		3%		2%		1%
F		66%		29%		4%		2%		1%

2. As a witness to our common Franciscan heritage and mission in the U.S., the Ministers Provincial should arrange for:

T	One major	21%	smaller regional	35%	both	41%	neither	3%
P	national	20%	gatherings	33%		40%		6%
V	gathering	22%		36%		39%		3%
F		20%		35%		42%		3%

3. Topics for a common gathering to celebrate the 800th Anniversary should include (total percentages only are recorded here):

Franciscan spiritual life 64%; our common Franciscan heritage 67%; Franciscan reconciliation 44%; areas for possible inter-Franciscan activity 57%; internal Franciscan ecumenism 32%; Franciscan impact on American society 54%. (There were many "other" write-ins here. These will be saved until the Provincials decide upon the 1982 gatherings.)

4. A common gathering of Conventuals, Capuchins, and OFM's should last for how long (total percentages only)?

One day 10%; a weekend 32%; five days 37%; a week 17%; longer than a week 4%

5. I personally would be interested in attending one of these (total numbers rather than percentages are recorded here):

T	National	409	regional	1190	both	776	neither	300
P	gathering	71	gathering	239		197		60
V		88		238		206		45
F		250		713		373		195

(For U.S. Friars outside the country: If I were to be in the U.S. at the appropriate time, I would be interested in attending one of these (totals only are recorded):

National	58	regional	111	both	103	neither	48
gathering		gathering					

### PART II: INTERNAL FRANCISCAN ECUMENISM

6. American Franciscan friars have responded adequately to Vatican II's directive that branches of religious Orders with a common founder should foster efforts toward unity:

T	Agree	30%	Disagree	38%	Not certain	32%
P		23%		40%		35%
V		29%		41%		30%
F		33%		35%		32%

7. Despite our collective numbers, division among Conventuals, OFM's, and Capuchins has prevented Franciscans from having a stronger influence on American society and values:

T	Agree	50%	Disagree	25%	Not certain	25%
P		40%		31%		27%
V		53%		25%		22%
F		53%		22%		25%

8. The branch of the First Order to which I belong has a distinct charism that transcends our common Franciscan charism:

T	Agree	26%	Disagree	46%	Not certain	28%
P		40%		34%		26%
V		22%		50%		28%
F		22%		50%		28%

9. Reunification of the First Order (Conventuals, Capuchins, OFM's) is desirable:

T	Strongly	39%	Agree	28%	Not sure	19%	Disagree	10%	Strongly	4%
P	agree	28%		25%		24%		14%	disagree	8%
V		37%		27%		20%		12%		4%
F		45%		29%		16%		8%		2%

10. The time has come for Capuchins, OFM's, and Conventuals to begin working toward eventual reunification of the First Order:

T	Strongly	40%	Agree	30%	Not sure	17%	Disagree	10%	Strongly	3%
P	agree	29%		27%		24%		15%	disagree	8%
V		34%		31%		16%		11%		4%
F		45%		30%		14%		9%		2%

11. In what areas could Conventuals, OFM's, and Capuchins begin to cooperate? (Totals only are recorded here)

Common Franciscan Research 70%; mission to *minores* (justice & peace) 53%; publications 49%; foreign missions 43%; mixed OFM, Capuchin, and Conventual communities 38%; mixed apostolages 47%; communications 50%; houses of prayer 55%; common novitiates in regional areas 44%; Franciscan theological schools 71%; ministry to 2nd and 3rd Orders 47%; others (these varied much and will be forwarded to the Provincials).

12. The ultimate goal of inter-Franciscan activity should be (check only one):

T	Status	2%	simple inter-	24%	a federation	18%	reunification	56%
P	quo	2%	cooperation	33%		19%		45%
V		4%		27%		15%		54%
F		2%		19%		17%		61%

∞

Number of questionnaires sent: 5178 (P-1060; V-953; F-3145)  
 Number of responses: 2805 (P- 634; V-612; F-1559)  
 Percentage of returns: 54% (P- 59%; V-64%; F- 50%)

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# The Unity of the Contemporary Franciscan Experience

JOACHIM A. GIERMEK, O.F.M.CONV.

**T**HERE IS A ferment that continues to grow and rise within Franciscanism today. It is a leaven that permeates all three Orders of the Franciscan family and every order and congregation that is affiliated to the three primary groupings. This ferment, this leaven, is a desire to seek a more intense and authentic expression of the Franciscan charism in the Church and in the world. It is a desire to be and be seen to be a real extension of the Body of Francis alive today. If, by some doubtful chance, the lived experience of every Franciscan is considered insufficient to support this claim, the contemporary documents that chronicle efforts at reform and renewal leave no possibility of error in asserting that it is so. A thoughtful examination and reflection upon the texts—constitutions, letters of the

Ministers General and Ministers Provincial, letters and speeches of our late Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, statements by general and provincial chapters, affirmations, questionnaires, proposed Rules, etc.—lead to the formulation of specific opinions on the Franciscan experience of the last few years. It is an experience that both reflects and stimulates a sense of underlying unity.

Such an opportunity to read, reflect upon, and discuss these documents was given to me last year,<sup>1</sup> and I would like to share some personal opinions on them, particularly in reference to Franciscanism in America. The period of time covered by these texts is roughly fifteen years, i.e., since the end of the Second Vatican Council. The variety of expressions of Franciscanism manifested by the different authors and

<sup>1</sup>In the preparation of a course for the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University (Summer, 1978) entitled "Contemporary Franciscan Documents."

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groups is surpassed only by the fundamental unity of the experience itself.

## Two Sources of Unity

**T**HERE were two principal events each expressive of God's grace, that came together at the same time to produce a uniform Franciscan experience during this last decade and a half. If one is aware of them, they can continue to bring unity among the separate members of the one Body. The first of these events was the appeal of the Second Vatican Council itself to all religious to examine their origins and traditions and the charism of their founders, and to bring themselves authentically up-to-date in the modern world without sacrificing anything of their proper status. The second, of particular importance to Franciscan renewal, was the appearance of new critical editions of Francis's writings and the writings about him and his early followers. These texts, many of them unknown to the majority of Franciscans for centuries, spurred an investigation into the person and spirit of the "real" Francis and, by implication, of the "renewed" Franciscan. Thus, source criticism came at the fortuitously appropriate moment to support the renewal directed by the Council.

In that relatively short period of time since renewal began, we have already passed through

several stages that are easily recognizable as one reads in sequence the documentation of these years. There was, for example, first following the call for renewal itself, an eager exploration into the "roots" of Franciscanism: the person of Francis, his spirituality, the life of the primitive community, etc. This was followed by just as eager an application of these qualities according to the "signs of the times," very often marked by a haste to get on with the renewal and to enjoy the self-assured fruits of the project. Next came a period of disillusionment which still persists for some today because the hoped-for results were not immediately forthcoming. Many Franciscans stopped hoping and dropped out; but others, continuing to believe that renewal could be achieved, were willing to devote themselves to a painstakingly slow examination and evaluation of the experiments being carried on in the name of renewal, noting the pros and cons of the process. Finally, today, we notice that the focus of attention is on particular themes which aim at long-term results.

Notice that all of this occurred in a relatively short period of time, perhaps even too short to make this type of assessment. Note, too, that the experience of Franciscan religious has been duplicated by every other religious group within the Church

and, indeed, by the entire Church itself. Yet renewed appreciation of the person of Francis and the goals of renewal in the Church have merged to give the members of the Franciscan family an occasion through these last years, not only to grow along similar patterns but, more importantly, to grow together.

### Evaluation

AN EVALUATION of Franciscan renewal, particularly by the ministers and superiors of the Franciscan orders and congregations, has shown that many of the well-intentioned but misguided experiments were prompted more by the "signs of the times" than by the Spirit of the Lord and the spirit of Francis. Many men and women needed and used the early stages of renewal to work out personal and communal developmental problems. Others attempted to link the spirit of Francis to whatever cultural or theological trend was in vogue at the time. The contemporary status of renewal, while sometimes reflecting the difficulties encountered in the past, has moved into a period of careful attention to the essentials of the Franciscan spiritual life—prayer and contemplation, minority and community. Social expression and activism are encouraged, but only if they emanate from and are expressive of a deeper personal-communal life in God, according

to the model of Francis. In addition, it is generally recognized that true renewal is impeded more by a lack of information and education in things Franciscan than by a lack of desire on the part of the friars and sisters. Too many Franciscans still are not familiar with the writings of Saint Francis, the accounts of the early Franciscan movements, the history of their own communities, and their present constitutions and rules. Franciscan renewal, the spiritual leaders have seen, demands patient and careful examination of origins and traditions as well as fidelity to developing a personal relationship with God and his Church. True efforts at renewal will not attract the superficial nor be accomplished by those who seek instant gratification.

### The First Order

WHEN WE examine the documents of these last fifteen years for specific interests or particular conclusions, several areas of great significance appear.

The three orders of Friars Minor, for example—the Order of Friars Minor, the Order of Friars Minor Conventual and the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin—appear to have greater similarities among themselves today than they ever had before in the history of the First Order. This can be seen especially through a careful comparison of the most

recent constitutions of each of these three Orders<sup>2</sup> and through an examination of their General Chapter statements and the letters of their Ministers General, singly and collectively, as well as an examination of the letters addressed to the Orders by Pope Paul VI.

There is a sign of great hope in the annual meetings for prayer and discussion held by the General Curias of the three Orders of Friars Minor, joined by the Curia of the Third Order Regular. So, too, in the work to produce a common breviary for the Liturgy of the Hours and the work that continues now toward a possible common Franciscan University in Rome. Through their prayer and discussion the Ministers General acknowledged that "the Franciscan family professes only one fundamental spirituality"<sup>3</sup> and echoed the testimony of Pope Paul VI that these three Orders are but "different branches of the unique Franciscan root."<sup>4</sup> There are signs on all levels in the First Order of an earnest search for greater mutual knowledge and respect and of developing mutual collaboration.

What is it that continues to

separate these friars? If one limits himself to the printed texts, particularly the various constitutions of the three Orders, it is difficult to find a single reason for division. Even what some might superficially consider to be *the* significant difference—the acceptance of papal approval to hold property in common by the Conventuals—is not a dividing factor. True, the Conventual constitutions mention ownership in common while the Friars Minor forbid it and the Capuchins do not mention it; but in practice each of the three Orders does administer goods in its own name.

Characteristics of each Order do emerge, moreover, that reflect something of each one's history and tradition. Thus the Friars Minor accentuate in their constitutions a respect for hermitages and houses of prayer, and the Capuchins recall their care for the needy in times of public calamity, fasting, particular respect for the Testament of St. Francis and the (optional) wearing of sandals and a beard. The Conventuals emerge as the most tradition-conscious of the three, reflecting on the origin of the term "Conventual" and on the Order's particular educational

<sup>2</sup>The author's thesis, "A Comparative Analysis of the Constitutions of the Three Orders of Friars Minor" will be published by the Franciscan Institute later this year.

<sup>3</sup>*Habere Spiritum Domini*, 8 (September 1976).

<sup>4</sup>Radio message, Assisi, September 29, 1976.

and devotional heritages. Upon further consideration the Capuchins do present a consciousness of upholding the contemplative, prayerful aspect of the Franciscan charism and appear particularly concerned with preaching and missionary activity. Furthermore, the Conventuals exhibit a greater respect for the communal aspects of Franciscanism and, giving a high priority to communal decisions in chapter—friary, provincial or general—do appear to be the most “democratic” of the three Orders.

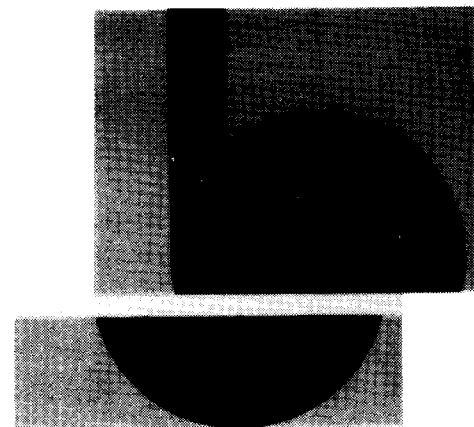
But, over and above these proper characteristics, the three Orders exhibit greater similarities than contrasts. First of all, there is an unanimity in approaching and interpreting their common source, Saint Francis’s Rule, spirit and intentions. There is unanimity in recognizing their Order to be a brotherhood, a community, a family of brothers in Christ. Furthermore, there is unanimity in expressing Franciscan ideals and, finally, unanimity in the ways outlined to adapt the principles of Franciscanism to the modern world. Even in those areas where there exists differences of tradition, these can be incorporated by each Order under the rubric of pluriformity, a principle to which each of the three Orders subscribes in concrete applications. Pluriformity here is not to be confused with the license of each friar to do as

he pleases, interpreting the Gospel life according to personal convenience. Rather, it is to be understood as the awareness by the community of each of the three Orders that Franciscanism can be expressed today in a variety of ways. Pluriformity involves the expression and application of similar principles derived from the Gospel, the Franciscan Rule, and the teachings of the Church. It is this principle of pluriformity which allows traits characterizing each individual Order to be found to some degree in the other two. Furthermore, if one were to compare the lived expressions of Franciscanism in the various friaries and fraternities of these Orders, one might conclude that often individual friaries and fraternities of one Order bear striking similarities to individual friaries or fraternities of another, while two communities of the same Order, even of the same province, are sometimes very dissimilar.

Repeating the question again, then, what is it that continues to separate these Orders? Looking merely at the evidence of the printed word or comparing the lived experiences is often insufficient to explain the phenomenon. Part of the answer lies in the unwritten, implicit influence of history and tradition which, for better or for worse shapes the thinking, the loyalties and the continued separation of in-

dividual groups. Although there really does not seem to be a distinct Friar Minor, Conventual, or Capuchin charism apart from the one Franciscan charism, that still does not permit anyone to disregard the fact that the different histories and shared traditions manifest different aspects of the one charism. While some may look upon this variety as a scandal and as a sign of disunity, others just as adamantly may regard it as an enrichment, a sign of unity without uniformity, and example of the best of pluriformity—and something to be researched, respected, developed and preserved for common enrichment.

Perhaps part of the key to solving this dilemma lies in that last phrase: preserved for common enrichment. This implies, however, at least a mutual respect, mutual recognition and a mutual sharing. It may be that this is what is lacking, particularly in the United States and Canada. The Ministers General have shown courage and leadership in their example of coming together for prayer and discussion, but except for scattered instances on the grass-roots level, the example has not been imitated in this country. The Ministers Provincial of the three Orders have not yet come together to pray and to discuss and to lead their brothers, as only they can,



to common pursuits in the areas of Franciscan theology, research, communications and other areas in which the various traditions could be shared for common enrichment. It may be that, because of the very principle of pluriformity, by which each Order sees itself as already possessing something of the contributions of the others, each order has allowed itself to be concerned only with its own projects, often at the expense of quality and effectiveness. (If this is the case, it is a sad state of affairs, one to be lamented. In such a state there is no witness to the unity desired by Christ which we preach in word alone. What appears to be minimally required to avoid responsibility for real division is mutual contact for prayer and dialogue. In such an environment, who can tell where the Spirit of the Lord would lead?).

## Other Areas

IN REFLECTING further upon the contents of the contemporary documents, we can make several other points. The first is the concern manifested by the Ministers General and Ministers Provincial and the other male and female Franciscan superiors today to maintain unity within their orders and congregations in the face of mistaken applications of pluriformity by friars and sisters who appeal to this principle to hide their overly personalistic approaches to Franciscanism. These are the religious who cling to their own plans and projects while claiming that it is in the spirit of true pluriformity to do as they please. The spiritual leaders of these communities are also saddened by the many examples they witness in the exercise of their ministry of Franciscan men and women who put excessive stock in human plans and who refuse to acknowledge the real possibility of falling into sin when one does not include God in these plans. Such religious, they say, have forgotten one of Francis' most basic admonitions: "Do not forget God!"

Secondly, one cannot but be impressed by the continuity in the messages of Pope Paul VI to the Franciscan family. From the very beginning of his papacy until his death, in addresses to Franciscans and to the Church

at large, this friend of the Franciscan spirit constantly affirmed his belief that we all live in a graced moment of history and that only the spirit of Francis of Assisi can accomplish the renewal of the Church so urgently desired by the Council. Others, non-Franciscan, may in fact be giving better example of the Franciscan spirit in the Church and in the world today, but only we as a united force in the Church can hope to achieve renewal as Francis did because only we who are his sons and daughters truly understand his spirit—or should. It is part of our histories, our traditions. But, Pope Paul also cautioned, the Franciscans will renew the Church, only when they have first been renewed themselves, individually and communally.

A third item that calls for our attention in this period of the Franciscan experience is the intensity with which Third Order congregations of men and women religious are searching for their specific identity. This is true not only of the Third Order Regular of men who are investigating their roots as an Order of Penance and seeing themselves as possessors of a distinctive spirituality, but also of the women's groups, many of which were founded in the last two centuries but are only recently discovering their identity as Franciscans.

There are efforts among some

Third Order groups of men and women toward a greater visible bond of unity among themselves. But there is also great concern expressed by many of these same groups lest their congregation's uniqueness be swallowed up in some general federation according to the lines of a spirituality with which they cannot readily identify. In some cases, they have not even been consulted regarding such possible federations and would like to be able to participate in these discussions when they occur. From the documentation it would appear that the basis for at least a generic type of Third Order unity must be a most general yet most faithful expression of the Franciscan charism which will still allow for a proper manifestation of the peculiar traditions of each congregation.

When one considers the texts that emerge from women's groups, it is evident that they are particularly sensitive on areas of obedience and the exercise of authority—and rightfully so! Any exposure to the inner workings of women's communities quickly reveals that there has often been a great deal of suffering and pain inflicted through unyielding demands of obedience to authority. Even many communities which theoretically admit the Franciscan and theological bases for a more subtle and nuanced interpretation of personal obe-

dience and personal authority must be excused for the time being for not always putting these theories into practice immediately. Despite this, in many ways the women's communities are showing themselves to be ahead of the men's in successfully continuing the challenge of renewal.

Finally, a reflection on the documentation that has emerged from Franciscan renewal during these last fifteen years shows that the focus of concentration for renewal today has been directed to the "converting-Franciscan-in-community." This one phrase is packed with meaning. It conveys notions of on-going personal conversion, of education in and identification with elements of Franciscan history and spirituality, and of viewing the community in which one lives as the arena in which there is enacted the drama of religious life as reflective of the nature of the Church-sacrament.

In this focus, too, attention has been drawn to the community chapters—local, regional, universal—with emphasis on shared involvement and shared responsibility, on the service and pastoral ministry of the local spiritual leader and the recognition of personal talents at the service of the community. While it can be suspected that the emergence of the community chapter as a forum for shared involvement and

responsibility is often merely a response to the directive of the Second Vatican Council, it can also be shown that such chapters are consistent with the oldest practices of the Franciscans, preserved throughout history by at least one tradition.

These reflections have been offered for the sake of showing that Franciscanism in the last fifteen years has shared a unifying experience—unifying each order and congregation within the one family and unifying the entire family itself. Much of this experience has been lived in com-

mon with other religious and with other Christians, but much of it is peculiarly Franciscan, inspired by the same spirituality, the same personality of Francis, the same Gospel. An awareness of this common experience can go far in convincing all of us that the similarities that unite us are far greater than the differences that separate us. At the same time they should serve to remind us of how much still remains to be done, even within our own Franciscan family, to make the prayer of Jesus Christ a reality: "That all may be one."



## Matins

Rain sounds on the roof;  
psalms ballet by the Fire.  
Hearts gather,  
each alone with her Lover.

*Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.*

## Pax et Bonum

DOMINIC J. UNGER, O.F.M.CAP.

WE FRANCISCANS have a good motto and a good greeting—in Latin. Of course, the motto "Deus meus et omnia" is also good in English: "My God and my all." The greeting "Pax et bonum," However, has been a problem in English. In the past few years I have seen a number of different translations even in places like the English *L'Osservatore romano*. It is unfortunate that we have no uniformly accepted translation of this powerful and beautiful greeting. A uniformly acceptable translation is most desirable.

The Latin "Pax et bonum" is concise and rich in meaning. Any translation should be as concise as feasible and as rich in content as the original; if not, it will lose its force as a common Franciscan greeting. There is no problem with *pax*. "Peace" is the only possible translation, and it fits quite well. The problem is with *bonum*. This is an adjective turned noun. It is a concrete noun, not an abstract one. It means all good or all blessings, both natural and supernatural, that one can possess. As an aside, I would note that in that broad meaning it is really a synonym for the biblical *pax*, *shalom*. Now if *bonum* is a concrete noun,

indicating the sum total of blessings, it should not be translated by "goodness," which would at best be ambiguous. Nor should it be rendered "good," in which the true meaning of *bonum* is not immediately apparent. To add a noun like "things" does not help much.

In order to get a discussion started and possibly reach some agreement, and eventually win favor for one translation, I would suggest "blessings" for *Bonum*. In the plural it can stand by itself: "Peace and blessings." This would certainly be concise enough, and in meaning it would include all the blessings of God, natural as well as supernatural. Maybe, however, the force of the Latin would be made stronger if we use the singular and add the adjective "every": "Peace and every blessing." Some might prefer "Peace and all blessing": What do you say?

I think we should strive for a standard translation in English, so that this greeting will be immediately recognizable and become very popular. We should not have to miss out on the value of the greeting so dear to Franciscans: "Pax et bonum." And we should not have to use the Latin for the lay people. And so, "Peace and every blessing."

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# The Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

SISTER MARY LEAH KRAUTH, O.S.F.

FRANCIS of Assisi was, Celano tells us, "not so much praying as becoming himself a prayer."<sup>1</sup> Baptized John but affectionately called Francis by his father Pietro Bernardone, he grew to young manhood and was educated to take his place in the merchant's world of the Middle Ages. He felt called to another way of life, however, and subsequently broke all ties with his family, especially his father. A series of events led him to frequent secluded spots in the hills around Assisi where he could importune the Lord in prayer for guidance. It was during this time that Francis was gifted with a vivid awareness of God's love for him. As Bonaventure writes,

One day as he was praying in solitude, Jesus Christ appeared to him, hanging on His Cross. He made Francis realize so vividly the force of the Gospel words, "If any man has a mind to come my way, let him renounce self, and take up his cross, and follow

me" (Mt. 16:24), that his heart was filled with compassion and burned within him with the fire of love. His soul melted at the sight of the vision, and the memory of Christ's passion was impressed so intimately on the depths of his heart that the wounds of his crucified Lord seemed to be always before his mind's eye, and he could scarcely restrain his sighs and tears. Now that he no longer had any regard for all that he owned in the world, and thought nothing of it for love of Jesus Christ, Francis felt that he had found the hidden treasure, the brilliant pearl of great price mentioned in the Gospel. He was eager to make it his own and he decided to give up everything he had; in a business deal worthy of a saint, he would renounce his position as an earthly trader and become like the trader in the Gospel.<sup>2</sup>

Exactly when this occurred we do not know. We do know that Francis began in his early twenties to seek God's company in prayer, and gradually his way of life changed radically. He

turned from the ways of a rich young man to that of a poor and humble penitent. He mourned for his sins, begging for God's mercy, and earnestly petitioned Him to know what was His will for him. From this initial struggle, he emerged with a joy and gratitude that grew with each year of his life. From then until his death in 1226, he strove with all his being to return the love God so lavishly bestowed upon him.

Consider the change to which Francis's gift of prayer led him, and the transformation which Thomas of Celano indicated became so evident, I propose to look at a few of the extant expressions of Francis's prayer to discover, as far as possible, both his attitude toward God: Father, Son, and Spirit, and the effect such prayer had in turn upon himself.

That Francis valued his gift is evidenced by the fact that he prayed. Numerous witnesses attest to this. As Celano writes of his early days of conversion, Francis

withdrew for a while from the hustle and business of the world and tried to establish Jesus Christ dwelling within himself . . . The man of God . . . would enter the grotto while his companion would wait for him outside; and filled with a new and singular spirit, he would pray to his Father in

secret . . . He prayed devoutly that the eternal and true God would direct his way and teach him to do His will.<sup>3</sup>

Even Francis's fear of his father's anger was eventually turned to courage. Through his almost constant contact with his Lord in prayer, he learned to trust the God he was beginning to know in so personal a way. Celano tells us:

Praying, he always prayed with a torrent of tears that the Lord would deliver him from the hands of those who were persecuting his soul, and that He would fulfill his pious wishes in His loving kindness; in fasting and weeping he begged for the clemency of the Savior, and distrusting his own efforts, he cast his whole care upon the Lord. And though he was in a pit and in darkness, he was nevertheless filled with a certain exquisite joy of which till then he had had no experience; and catching fire therefrom, he left the pit and exposed himself openly to the curses of his persecutors.<sup>4</sup>

One significant prayer Francis uttered in the early days of his conversion was that which he prayed before the crucifix in San Damiano:

Great and glorious God, I pray to You, and my Lord Jesus Christ, to illumine the darkness of my heart. Instill within me a correct faith, a firm hope, and a perfect love. Lead me, Lord, that I

<sup>1</sup>Celano 95; *Omnibus*, p. 441.

<sup>2</sup>St. Bonaventure, *Legenda Minor*, I, 4; *Omnibus*, p. 795.

Sister Mary Leah Krauth, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Millvale, PA, prepared this paper as a participant in the 1978 Institute of Religious Formation in St. Louis.

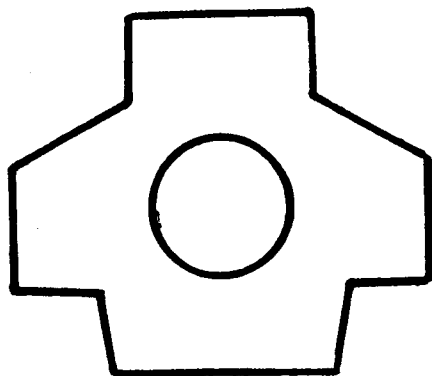
<sup>3</sup>1 Celano 6; *Omnibus*, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 10; p. 238.

may come to know You, and knowing You, may Your holy will truly be accomplished in all that I do. Amen.<sup>5</sup>

This utterance shows that Francis saw himself as greatly lacking in comparison to the One who deserves praise and adoration. He approached both Father and Son, the latter particularly as He shares in humanity, as "my Lord"; and he begged for enlightenment, for the graces that would dispel his inner darkness, and for the virtues that have God as both Source and End. He besought the eminently praiseworthy Lord to grant him true knowledge, which is an experience of Himself, that all God willed might be accomplished in him. This is the cry of a man who has fallen in love, and who aches for oneness with his beloved. And, as has already been indicated, when he was given light, Francis responded with total, grateful love; his joy was boundless.

The persecution he had once feared was now a joy to him—even an occasion for praise.



Celano tells us of his response to a beating by robbers in the woods near the town. Having been thrown into a ditch full of snow, he waited until the robbers had gone and then "jumped out of the ditch, and glad with great joy, he began to call out the praises of God in a loud voice throughout the grove."<sup>6</sup>

Though Francis never ceased mourning for his sins, his prayer soon became more expressive of praise than of repentance. Bernard of Quintavalle "noticed that Francis would pray all night, sleeping but rarely, praising God and the glorious Virgin Mother of God."<sup>7</sup> No doubt it was out of his tender love for Jesus who

gave His life for him that he instructed his brothers to pray, and prayed himself as he tells us in his Testament: "We adore You, Lord Jesus Christ, here and in all Your churches throughout the world, and we bless You, because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world."<sup>8</sup>

The longer Francis lived, the more he recognized God's goodness to him. He could not stop praising and thanking his God for who He is in Himself and for the goodness He continually showered on him. He never attributed any good to himself, but referred it to his heavenly Father. His written prayers are outpourings of his grateful heart. One example is found in his "Praises before the Office: "All-powerful, all holy, most high and supreme God, sovereign good, all good, every good, You who alone are good, it is to You we must give all praise, all glory, all thanks, all honor, all blessing; to You we must refer all good always. Amen."<sup>9</sup> Perhaps by such prayer he was responding to the words of Jesus, "No one is good but God alone" (Mk. 10:18), and for Francis, the word of Jesus was the word of life.

In 1221, when Francis felt obliged to revise the format of the Rule by which he and his brothers lived, he apparently could not

prevent himself from bursting forth in praise and thanks once again. It is another example of his recognition of the Father as the Source of all blessings, and of Jesus as the Way through whom we both receive these blessings and return perfect thanks. His conscious belief in the Trinity is clearly expressed too, as he addresses the Father and explicitly names the Son and the Spirit:

Almighty, most high and supreme God, Father, holy and just Lord, King of heaven and earth, we give You thanks for Yourself. Of Your own holy will You created all things spiritual and physical, made us in Your own image and likeness, and gave us a place in paradise, through Your only Son, in the Holy Spirit. And it was through our own fault that we fell. We give You thanks because, having created us through Your Son, by that holy love with which You loved us, You decreed that He should be born, true God and true man, of the glorious and ever blessed Virgin Mary and redeem us from our captivity by the blood of His passion and death. We give you thanks because Your Son is to come a second time in the glory of His majesty and cast the damned, who refused to do penance and acknowledge You into everlasting fire; while to all those who acknowledged You, adored You, and served You by a life of

<sup>5</sup>K. Esser, *Die Opuscula des hl. Franziskus von Assisi* containing translation by Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv. (Grottaferrata, 1976), p. 356.

<sup>6</sup>1 Celano 16; *Omnibus*, p. 242.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 24; *Omnibus*, p. 248. The prayer, "My God and my All" attributed to Francis in this same incident first appeared in *Actus Beati Francisci et Sociorum Eius* by a Brother Ugolino more than a century after the Saint's death. Though it is certainly an expression of Francis's spirit of prayer, whether it is his own distinct expression is questioned; see *Omnibus*, pp. 1281 and 1516.

<sup>8</sup>Testament; *Omnibus*, p. 67.

<sup>9</sup>The Praises before the Office; *Omnibus*, p. 139.

penance, He will say: "Come, blessed of my father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt. 25:34).

We are all poor sinners and unworthy even to mention Your Name, and so we beg our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, "in whom You are well pleased" (Mt. 17:5), and the Holy Spirit, to give You thanks for everything, as it pleases You and Them; there is never anything lacking in Him to accomplish Your will, and it is through Him that you have done so much for us.

All good is through Jesus, the beloved Son, and in the Spirit. But then he calls on all the saints and angels and begs "them all most humbly, for love of You, to give thanks to You, the most high, eternal God, living and true, with Your Son, our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, forever and ever. Amen."<sup>10</sup> Again we see Francis's realization of his own nothingness before God; and yet we see him so joyously happy because he knows and acknowledges the goodness of the Father who will continue gifting him with all he needs.

In his desire to give himself totally in love, Francis begged with his whole heart to share somehow in the sufferings of his Lord and elder Brother, Jesus.

<sup>10</sup>1 Rule 23; *Omnibus*, pp. 50-51.

The wish of his heart was granted in September of 1224, when on Mount Alverna the wounds of the crucified Son of God were imprinted on his own body and became for him a means of both intense love and intense suffering. The "Praises of God" which he penned with his own stigmatized hand for Brother Leo indicate the fullness of his grateful, self-forgetting praise:

You are holy, Lord, the only God,  
and Your deeds are wonderful.  
You are strong.  
You are great.  
You are the Most High.  
You are the Almighty.  
You, holy Father, are King of heaven and earth.  
You are Three and One,  
Lord God, all good,  
You are Good, all Good,  
supreme Good,  
Lord God, living and true.

Then he breaks forth:

You are love,  
You are wisdom.  
You are humility,  
You are endurance.  
You are rest,  
You are peace.  
You are joy and gladness.  
You are justice and moderation.  
You are all our riches,  
And You suffice for us.

Notice that Francis does not describe God; he names God.

He does not call him "loving," but "love." And he ends by proclaiming again that God is all we really need. He gives voice also to his recognition that it is God's initiative that bridges the distance between Himself and us:

You are great.  
You are gentleness.  
You are our protector,  
You are our guardian and defender.  
You are courage.  
You are our haven and our hope.  
You are our faith,  
Our great consolation.  
You are our eternal life,  
Great and wonderful Lord.

Though Francis's Lord is "God almighty," He is "merciful Savior" as well.<sup>11</sup>

Notwithstanding his special graces, Francis never relied on his own strength or virtue, but in all things turned trustfully to the Father. He ends his Letter to a General Chapter with a fervent plea for the grace to be faithful in following in Jesus's footsteps:

Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God, grant us in our misery that we may do for Your sake alone what we know You want us to do, and always what pleases You; so that, cleansed and enlightened interiorly and fired with the ardour of the Holy Spirit, we may be able to follow in the

footsteps of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and so make our way to You, Most High, by Your grace alone, You who live and reign in perfect Trinity and simple Unity, and are glorified, God all-powerful, forever and ever. Amen.<sup>12</sup>

Again, incidentally, we see expressed our holy Father's explicit awareness of the Trinity as a reality in his life.

It seems to me that Francis's prayer formed a spiral of Love. Through in his prayer expression we clearly see his deep faith in the Trinity, his consciousness of being son of the Father, brother (together with all men and women) of the Son, and one led and made holy by the Spirit; his sensitive sorrow for sin and his gratitude for creation and redemption. His prayer really began with the recognition that God loved him and gifted him with all that he needed for life both here and hereafter. God's love was the source of all the good he knew or possessed in himself, and consequently all good, for him, was gift. He gave thanks and thus opened himself to receive even more from the Source of all good.

Francis's sorrow for his sinfulness and weakness grew out of his recognition that sin is a selfish refusal to accept such love and return thanks for such unmerited kindness. His life of penance was

<sup>11</sup>The Praises of God; *Omnibus*, pp. 125-26.

<sup>12</sup>Letter to a General Chapter; *Omnibus*, p. 108.

a part of his way of returning all to the Father with grateful love, and thus of readying himself as far as he could to receive all that the Father willed for him. Even the grace to live this way, he acknowledged as gift. His whole-hearted response to the love he received from God only opened him to accept a fuller out pouring of the Lord's love, and it was in turn the source of a fuller response of loving praise and thanks to the God who so loved him.

Looking at what Celano and others have written about Francis and his prayer, and at the few prayers of his we have extant, I see a crescendo of praise that eventually burst forth in a total self-forgetting tribute of love to the Other. It begins in a barely audible cry, a response to the call of Love, and reaches a magnificently resounding summons to thank and praise the God of Love through all of creation.

The heights to which his love and praise soared are exemplified in the "Canticle of Brother Sun," composed in the last year of his life. Especially is this true when we consider that the first nine verses were written when he lay in intense suffering in the garden of the Poor Clares' convent at San Damiano. He begins with his usual salute to the "Most High . . . all good Lord," and proclaims that all praise and glory

and blessing belong to Him alone. He then moves to praise God *through* His creatures—not in union side by side with them, but through them. As he names the creatures, he reminds God of the good that He gives us through them and of how they remind us of God's own attributes. In return, all praise is due the Lord, and through them he gives God His due:

Most High, all-powerful, all good, Lord!

All praise is Yours, all glory, all honor

And all blessing.

To You alone, Most High, do they belong.

No mortal lips are worthy

To pronounce Your Name.

All praise be Yours, my Lord, through all that

You have made,

And first my lord Brother Sun, Who brings the day; and light

You give to

us through him.

How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendor!

Of You, Most High, he bears the likeness.

All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and Stars;

In the heavens You have made them, bright

And precious and fair.

And fair and stormy, all the weather's moods,

By which You cherish all that You have made.

All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Sister Water,

So useful, lowly, precious and pure.

All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire, Through whom You brighten up the night.

How beautiful is he, how gay! Full of power and strength.

All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our mother,

who feeds us in her sovereignty and produces

Various fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Not very long after he composed the Canticle and set it to music, he added two more verses in an attempt to restore peace between civil and religious authorities in Assisi. Again he sings that praise comes to the Lord through His creatures who relate to one another:

All praise be Yours, my Lord, through those who grant pardon

For love of You; through those who endure

Sickness and trial.

Happy those who endure in peace,

By You, Most High, they will be crowned.

When his own death was imminent, he added a few more lines praising the Lord through even Sister Death:

All Praise be Yours, my Lord, Through Sister Death, From whose embrace no mortal man can escape.

Woe to those who die in mortal sin!

Happy those she finds doing Your will!

The second death can do no harm to them.

He ends with a plea:

Praise and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks,

And serve Him with great humility.<sup>13</sup>

And so ends the earthly prayer of Francis of Assisi, Seraphic Lover and herald of Peace. May the spiral of love that began in his heart in Assisi continue to grow through the grateful, loving praises of those in whom, by his own response to God, he has inspired a like desire of total, self-forgetting love.

<sup>13</sup>The Canticle of Brother Sun; *Omnibus*, pp. 128-31.



## A Simple Heart

### A tiny seedling

Sprouting forth in the dead of winter  
Trying to live, to grow,  
Someday to bear fruit  
Against seemingly impossible odds  
  
It struggles patiently.

### A little Baby

Born on a late December night  
Into the wilderness called man  
Shivering in the cold  
Starving in hunger  
Clothed in poverty  
Heat cannot warm him  
Food cannot satisfy him  
Material cannot clothe him

He cries in silence.

### A ragged beggar

In a makeshift manger  
Singing so sonorously  
The Word of his Lover  
As the biting wind  
And the cover of darkness  
Envelops this faraway place called Greccio  
His faith refuses to be shaken.

### In a scene so far removed

In a season so cold and barren  
In souls so seemingly dissimilar  
A union takes place  
Befuddling the visionless mind;

### For poverty is not penurious

Innocence is not isolated  
And simplicity is not sterile  
But all bear the fruits of love  
In a heart nourished  
By a stream of never-ending grace.

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

## Connoisseur of Wine

SISTER M. THADDEUS THOM, O.S.F.

**I**T IS true! Jesus, the God-man, was an authentic connoisseur of wine. At Cana he not only tasted, but made wine; and, as if in criticism of the wine already used for the feast, he made wine far superior to what the host had given his guests. As is stated in the Gospel account:

The waiter in charge tasted the water made wine, without knowing where it had come from; . . . then the waiter in charge called the groom over to him and remarked, "People usually serve the choice wine first; then, when the guests have been drinking awhile, a lesser vintage. What you have done is keep the choice wine until now" [Jn. 2:9-10].

Some writers have conjectured that perhaps Jesus felt a bit guilty since he had not come alone but had with him his whole "College of bishops," thus depleting the supply more rapidly. Others have implied that Jesus and his friends were, indeed, party crashers, but, whatever the case, Jesus made ample reparation. In fact, as is always his way, he went beyond the expected

generosity. The best wine!

It seems appropriate that Jesus would begin his public ministry giving the best wine, since he completed his earthly ministry also with the best wine: himself! And it is of further interest for today's woman that Jesus did this at the request of a woman: a woman who was obviously sensitive to the needs of others. She asked him to alleviate the embarrassment which would result for the young couple.

One wonders how important this wine really was. It was, first of all, important to the young couple as the party givers; to the guests for their enjoyment; to Mary as an interested member of the party; to Jesus, in particular, as an expression of his concern for and blessing on married couples as well as his own debut into the public eye. But why wine of such excellent quality? Why not just ordinary wine, such as the couple would normally put out near the end of the celebration? Was it not perhaps to teach his followers and us a few lessons? First, God

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will give only the best; secondly, anyone who asks of Mary will receive in the name of her Son; and finally, those who have faith in him will be given and be given only the best.

It was through the use of wine that Jesus anticipated the opening and the end of his public life. In both instances wine was used for a celebration, and both celebrations anticipated a new life. In both, Jesus was actively involved in the use of the wine, and in both a change was effected. May one not affirm that the water changed represented the hidden, pure life of Jesus which suddenly blushed as he stepped out into the public to proclaim his law of love? And may one not further affirm the wine changed as the drastic act of love we witness at Mass? It is reasonable to affirm a substantial change from water to wine, from hidden life to public life, from public life to glorified life. Just as one can see water and wine, one can recognize an individual emerging into the public eye; and, so too, one realizes limitations as far as the transformation of wine into Jesus's Blood as well as Jesus's attaining his glorified condition. He presented us with the former that we might believe in the latter.

Yes, Jesus really knew his wines. Recall the parable of the wine skins: "No one pours new wine into old wine skins. Should



he do so, the new wine will burst the old skins, the wine will spill out, and the skin will be lost. New wine should be poured into fresh skins. No one, after drinking old wine, wants new. He says, "I find the old wine better" (Lk. 3:37-39).

The aging process of wine and skins must commence simultaneously, so that the wine will be of the finest quality and so that any waste will be prevented which would result from the bad combination of new wine and old skins. This is, then, an on-going process rather than something instantaneous. It continues to be so even in our instant-everything society.

Our Connoisseur expected people to be intelligent enough to understand this parable as a practical application analogous to the human maturing process. Body and soul must grow together to become the best, spiritually, that an individual can be. Just as each wine ages to its own perfection, each person must reach perfection in his own unique way. The pattern for this perfection is, moreover, found in the life of the Connoisseur. He tasted and made only the best wines.

He desired and created only the best of everything—but sometimes, just as wineskins can be split by holding something too potent, fresh new life can be wated by poor or rash judgment.

There are many more concrete images of Jesus and his use of wine or in his role as wine-presser, throughout the Old and

New Testaments, which emphasize the importance of wine to the people as a drink as well as the product of an occupation of their livelihood. And Jesus, as a good teacher, uses only those images which have meaning in the lives of the people.

Perhaps the Connoisseur is well described in these lines:

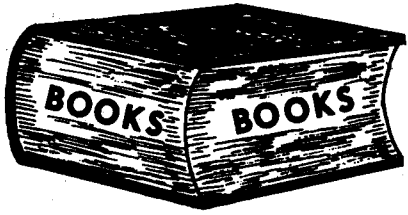
The wine of the feast He changes free;  
upon request—He gives the best.  
Yet—not alone this wine He gives,  
but life and love are truly His  
To place upon the altar bare;  
His life, His blood—is passing there.

Can men this concept fully know?  
Can man distinguish heaven so?  
Jesus speaks plainly to those who hear,  
and for this knowledge He has paid dear.  
Such water—such wine—such life to seek,  
That man who needs shall his soul keep.



### Franciscan Bibliography Available

A Bibliography of Modern English Works on Five Themes of Franciscan Spirituality by Sister Linda Brandewie, S.F.P. The five themes are: the following of Jesus; poverty, obedience, living the Gospel, and Brotherhood. She has compiled a Bibliography on each of these themes consisting of periodicals dated between the years of 1960 to 1978. A book list also includes these five elements. Copies can be obtained from the Formation Office, St. Clare Convent, 60 Compton Road, Cincinnati, OH 45215. Cost \$2.00.



**Spirit of the Living God.** By Wilfrid Harrington, O.P. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1977. Pp. xii-180, incl. bibliography. Paper \$2.95.

*Reviewed by Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., Editor of this Review.*

Father Wilfrid Harrington, Professor of Scripture at the Milltown Institute of Philosophy and Theology and the Dominican House of Studies in Dublin, has placed every Christian in his debt by acceding to the long-standing request of his friend, Michael Glazier, for this book.

The author is not involved in the charismatic movement; but James J. Haley, who has been so involved for many years, rightly welcomes the book (in the Introduction) as a thoroughly competent guide to biblical pneumatology for all, whether in or outside the charismatic movement.

In his first chapter, Father Harrington sketches a brief overview of biblical references to Father, Son, and Spirit, pointing out that except for Mt. 28:19 which is probably a liturgical formula adopted by the sacred author, there is no explicit treatment in the Scriptures of trinitarian theology. Rather than a theoretical discussion of the nature and relations of the divine Persons, there is a functional description of the

roles they play in our creation and salvation.

Succeeding chapters discuss in detail the theology of the Spirit found in the Old Testament, then in Mark and Matthew, in Luke-Acts, in the Pauline and Catholic Letters, and in the Johannine writings. While it is tempting to pass along the many rich insights he sets forth, it seems preferable here, in the interest of brevity, simply to indicate that the exegeses are uniformly good, up-to-date, and thoroughly edifying, containing no surprises.

Two ensuing chapters are more systematic, dealing respectively with the life we live in the Spirit and the Gifts of the Spirit. A final brief chapter consists of a summary of the entire book and a fervent exhortation to devout Christian life in the Spirit.

Father Harrington writes well; in this book he maintains a direct and popular style, with even an occasional touch of humor, as when he suggests a translation (p. 85) of Eph. 5:18: "Do not get high on spirits but on the Spirit." His warning against the Pentecostal error of separating baptism with water and baptism in the Spirit (pp. 166-67 and pp. 170-71) is of great pastoral importance today, as in his repeated insistence that the Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus and that therefore devotion to the Spirit should not be distorted into something "special" and independent in our spiritual life. Filial life in the Son means openness to the Spirit and awareness of his power and presence in our lives.

*Spirit of the Living God* is, as I said, a popular work. It contains no controversial discussions, and even the few references are placed in

text rather than notes. It does have a bibliography of some thirty-one items, most of which are in English, which the reader should find helpful. At the low price of \$2.95, it should find a welcome place alongside the very much longer, more detailed, and finely indexed 1976 book of Father George T. Montague, *The Holy Spirit: Growth of a Biblical Tradition*, which in all candor covers the same ground with equal reliability.

**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.

*Reviewed by Father Wilfrid A. Hept, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Francis Chapel, Providence, Rhode Island.*

Recently the Anglican bishops in conclave at Canterbury overwhelmingly voted in favor of accepting the ordination of women priests. The National Assembly of Women Religious meeting in Pittsburgh expressed their belief that Roman Catholic women who feel called to the priesthood have the "right to have their call tested just as men do." In view of this trend, is the Roman Catholic Church being oppressive of women's rights by not admitting women to ordination for ministerial priesthood? The publication of the Vatican decree *Inter Insigniores*, along with the official commentary sponsored by the sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and a collection of nine essays by outstanding church leaders gives a definite "No" to this question. The

Decree *Inter Insigniores* was signed and approved by the late Pope Paul VI on October 15, 1976, the feast of St. Teresa of Avila.

While it will not end the discussion of the subject of the ordination of women priests, this short volume of 145 pages gives the theologian and the informed Catholic lay reader a good resume of the official Roman Church's teaching and the thinking of some outstanding Catholic scholars and churchmen. Each essay as well as the decree itself has a good set of footnotes for further study and scholarly pursuit of this subject.

The first twenty pages are devoted to the text of the decree and the commentary prepared at the Congregation's request. Many readers will be familiar with this, and it suffices to give the ordinary reader the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on the ordination of women to ministerial priesthood. The rest of the essays give a more detailed expose according to scripture and tradition as to why the Church does not admit women to ordination, while insisting that the Church is now and has been the champion of women's rights. "In fact no one, male or female, can claim a 'right' to ordination. Therefore not to ordain women would be an injustice only if ordination were a God-given right of every individual; only if somehow one's human potential could not be fulfilled without it" (p. 145). Both the essay "The Advancement of Women according to the Church" by Raimondo Spiazzi, O.P., Professor at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, Rome, and "The Ministerial Priesthood and the Advancement of Women" by Archbishop Joseph L.

Bernardin, past president of the U.S. Episcopal Conference give well documented evidence of the concern of the Holy See for the rights of women. "The Male Priesthood: A Violation of Women's Rights" considers what is essential in a candidate for the sacrament of Orders. Two other essays shed light on the nature of the priesthood by considering the theological formula, "In persona Christi" and "The Mystery of the Covenant and the Ministerial Priesthood"; they are by Monsignor Martimont and Gustave Martelet, S.J., respectively. The essays are rounded out by a consideration of the Mystery of Mary and the Ministerial Priesthood.

Finally, a new generation of women and a new age demand reasons; hopefully this volume will shed light on the real nature of ministerial priesthood and the fundamental human rights of both sexes. It should make the reader aware of the diversity of roles in the Church, in which equality is not identity. And it should foster the realization that "the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven are not the ministers but the saints." Thus in a less complicated time St. Therese of Lisieux could pray, "The vocation of the priesthood—with what love, my Jesus, would I bear You in my hands when my words brought You down from heaven . . . yet, with all my longing to be a priest, I admire and envy the humility of St. Francis of Assisi and feel myself drawn to imitate him by refusing that sublime dignity."

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**Pope Paul and the Spirit: Charisms and Church Renewal in the Teach-**

**ing of Paul VI.** By Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. xiii-258, including 3 appendices. Paper, \$4.95.

*Reviewed by Father William A. Meninger, O.C.S.O., St. Joseph's Abbey, Spencer, Massachusetts.*

(Let us begin parenthetically by forgiving Father O'Connor for calling Pope Paul VI "the great Guru of the West.")

In his brief introduction to this helpful book, Cardinal Suenens calls it "an exhaustive survey of what Pope Paul has said about the Holy Spirit." He recommends the book to those in the Charismatic Renewal, especially in reference to those texts involving discernment of spirits, the connection between charism and hierarchy, charism and sacramental life, and charism and Mary.

Father O'Connor wishes to acquaint "all who are open to the spirit of Jesus" with the teachings of Paul VI, "a real man of the Spirit." Obviously the book has special meaning to those in the Charismatic Renewal, whom, the author feels, are very little acquainted with the late Pope's teachings, even though Paul VI "has been somewhat reserved in his appraisal of them" and his comments "rather heavily laden with cautions and warnings," admonitions which Father O'Connor feels are "salutary and pertinent."

The book is well planned and documented. There is no index, but the Table of Contents gives a comprehensive review of the contents. There are two Parts and three Appendices. Part I is "An Over-

view of the Pope's Teaching." This contains Father O'Connor's reflections (with extensive quotations from Paul VI and dozens of footnotes) on the Pope's personal charism, his attitude towards the Renewal, his misgivings, and his admonitions. Some of the more platitudinous sections could have been dispensed with. We know that Paul VI approves of the Holy Spirit and hardly doubt that the Spirit has a significant role to play in Church renewal! Perhaps, however, some of this is necessary for completeness.

Chapter Four, on the Rome Conference of Charismatics (May 16-19, 1975), is well written and worth some attention. A genuine attempt is made to assess frankly the cautious approval indicated by Paul VI's presence and in his four addresses (printed in full in part II). Chapter Eight gives careful attention to the Pope's remarks on the sacraments, the hierarchy, and Mary—areas that other denominations find perplexing. "Even Catholic Charismatics not rarely have a difficult time relating [them] . . . to the action of the Holy Spirit."

Part II comprises the actual texts of Pope Paul VI, complete with footnotes. These begin June 21, 1963, on his election to the Papacy, and conclude on May 19, 1977. Together with Father O'Connor's comments in Part I, it is worthwhile having easy access to these texts.

As a whole, the book is a significant manifestation of the growth (and guarded approval) of the Charismatic Renewal in the Church from the time when Father O'Connor wrote the "first definitive study of the move-

ment from the standpoint of Catholic theology": *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Ave Maria Press, 1971).

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**Authenticity: A Biblical Theology of Discernment.** By Thomas Dubay, S.M. Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1977. Pp. 208. Cloth, \$7.95.

*Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Associate Editor of this Review and Head of the Philosophy Department at Siena College.*

Discernment of God's will is not a matter of mastering certain techniques or processes, but rather of openness to being guided by the objective norms of the Bible and the teaching Church. Father Dubay reminds us of lessons we heard in our novitiates and perhaps have almost forgotten in this subjective age of ours. *Inspirations must be tested*, and that means that they must be submitted to the judgment of a spiritual director, a superior, a bishop, the doctrine of the Church. That we are all too likely to deceive ourselves is not only abundantly taught in the Bible, but also confirmed by what psychology teaches us about unconscious motivation.

God cannot contradict himself. If we hear God speaking to us something other than what he has revealed, we have garbled his message (cf. Gal. 1:6-9). Both the pastoral epistles and the Pauline corpus reject any illuminism, or private interpretation of the message of Jesus.

Especially valuable in a work uniformly valuable throughout, are the analysis of the experience of God,



the specifying of conditions for discernment (humility and readiness to be corrected are primary), the reminder that lifestyle (holiness vs. selfishness) is one of the basic indicators of the origin (divine or human) of inspiration. The unearthing of the skepticism inherent in the false theological pluralism which plagues us today is a special bonus. Father Dubay masterfully points out that such pluralism is as self-refuting as any skepticism.

*Authenticity* is a book for every priest, religious, and educated Catholic. But it is, of course, a book to be lived, not just read.

**Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil.** By Morton Kelsey. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. viii-158, including bibliography. Paper, \$4.95.

*Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Philosophy, Fordham), Associate Professor of Philosophy at Siena College and Associate Editor of this Review.*

In this age of charismatic renewal, more and more of us meet people who have had religious experiences like speaking in tongues, being healed at a prayer service, or being slain in the spirit. Those who have heard about or witnessed such events wonder whether they are from the Holy Spirit, from an evil spirit, or perhaps only from man's own psyche. The most substantial chapter of Morton Kelsey's latest work is devoted to a description of the phenomenon of slaying in the Spirit, its parallels in primitive religions, its possible sources (he lists eight),

and criteria to apply in evaluating it. The criteria, as one might suspect, indicate that where self-seeking and feelings of superiority are present, we do not find the action of the Holy Spirit, whereas where faith, hope, healing, and love are, we do. Kelsey regards "slaying in the Spirit" as a start on the way to conversion and argues that follow-up is most important.

He also builds an excellent case for the existence of angels and devils by a thorough documentation from New Testament sources. He indicates how the existence of good and evil spirits is really a presupposition of the very concept of salvation as well as of the Lord himself. Criteria are furnished for distinguishing the angelic from the demonic; here again, the seeking of power over others is a sure sign of an evil influence.

Kelsey continues with a discussion of myth and language, pointing out how the "parrational" type thinking of the former is valuable in explaining the existence of evil. The need to acknowledge the reality of evil, and the conquest of it through sacrifice are among his most important themes.

In his penultimate chapter the author offers a description of various stages of life and an imaginative, original account of the human psyche. He closes by treating of discernment in counseling, with special emphasis on the need for the counselor's himself having found meaning in life.

Discerning readers can find in *Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil* some worthwhile suggestions and insights.

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**1979 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**